

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 - 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, December 14, 1993

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 p.m. on Tuesday, December 14, 1993.

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. WEEKES, G.C.M., J.P., (Speaker)
His Honour T. C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., LL.B. (Deputy Speaker)
Rt Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A., (Econ.), J.P., (Prime Minister, Minister of Economic Affairs and Minister for the Civil Service)
Mr. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B.
Hon. B. M. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B. (Hons.), (Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Leader of the House)
Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Q.C., B.A., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs and Leader of the* House)
Hon. M. A. KING, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of Justice and Minister for CARICOM Affairs)
Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P., (Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce)
Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc. (Econ.)
Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.), (Leader of the Opposition)
Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Q.C., LL.M.
Hon. C. V. WALKER, J.P., (Minister of Health)
Mr. L. L. BRATHWATTE, J.P., (Chairman of Committees)
Hon. E. E. GREAVES, G.C.M., B.A., Ed.M., (Minister of Tourism, Culture and International Transport)

Hon. W. W. HALL, G.C.M., H.B.M., J.P. (Minister of Labour, Public Works, Community Development and Sports)

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN, M.A.
Mr. R. L. MORRIS, B.A., Cert. Ed.
Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.), (Minister of Finance)
Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Q.C., LL.B.
Mr. L. R. TOLL, Q.C., M.A.
Miss B. A. MILLER
Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, J.P.
Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc. (Econ.)
Mr. J. O. TUDOR, J.P.
Mr. D. W. BOWEN (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
Mr. G. W. PAYNE
Mr. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A., LL.B.

Prayers were led by Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: Minutes of Tuesday, December 7, 1993.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes of December 7, 1993 of this Chamber have been circulated. I, therefore, move that they be taken as read and confirmed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no objections, please let these Minutes stand confirmed.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Bill entitled the Handicraft Workers Pensions Act, 1993 be read a first time.

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

The question that the Bill be read a first time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Watson Pension Bill, 1993 be read a first time.

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

The question that the Bill be read a first time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

Mr. SPEAKER: I would request that we revert to Private Members' Notices. If there are no objections, we shall revert to that Item. Before the Honourable Member for the City who indicated to me that she wanted to say something on this Item, I think it is necessary and most pertinent that I, too, make my own contribution to this Item.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: I shall repeat that. I, too, want to make some contribution to this Item since in my view it has very pertinent implications for the functioning of Parliament in its practices and procedures. I am really referring to the Motion brought by the Honourable Member for the City which you would recall sometime ago I mentioned that the previous Resolution could not be in order at the time because of certain events. Therefore, we agreed that there should be some significant amendments to the previous Resolution.

I think that this whole matter has been very long in resolving itself and I am satisfied after the number of interventions that have been made and contributions from other people that we should determine this matter once and for all. It is in that context that I having received that amendment yesterday evening obviously made it very difficult for any real and serious in-depth conclusion to the matter. But at the same time whatever discussions there were, it would seem to me that there will not be any kind of agreement on a Resolution that is suitable and which I deem to be necessary for debate in this Chamber.

If I am a bit long, just let me sum up.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Shall I repeat everything again? I said that I wanted to make a contribution to this Item before us because I consider it pertinent to the functioning and preservation of parliamentary life. I, therefore, feel that over the period I have made a number of comments, I have listened to other people and I have also taken all those comments into consideration. It is, therefore, necessary that this matter which is around for a very long time should be dealt with decisively and as soon as possible. Yesterday evening I received the amendment on the Resolution brought by the Honourable Member for the City. I already said that the Resolution as it stood on the Order Paper was not in order because of certain events that took place. We all agreed and that is my understanding that we would have an amendment to the Resolution which would be deemed acceptable according to the principles, rules, etcetera of this House.

Now I said yesterday evening would not necessarily permit a long discussion on it certainly since the time that we have been looking at it we have all formed our own opinions on the best way that this Resolution can be debated. It, therefore, seems to me even at this time that the amendments to the Resolution still do not conform in my view to what is required for the debate to take place in this Chamber.

I am just giving a run-down of how I saw the events. On August 21, 1993 the Honourable Member for the City gave a notice of a Resolution which states in operative part:

"Be it resolved that this House has no confidence in the Honourable Minister of Health and calls upon him to resign his office."

The recitals refer to the Honourable Member for Saint Michael West as Minister of Health.

On 1st September, 1993, there was a reallocation of Ministerial duties involving the Prime Minister and at least 10 Ministers. The Honourable Member for St. George North then became Minister of Health and the Honourable Member for St. Michael West took office as Minister of Foreign Affairs. At that time the Resolution ceased to be in order. If subsequently any Honourable Member had raised the matter of the resolution on a point of order, I would therefore obviously have ruled the resolution out of order. 12.30 p.m.

A motion of No-Confidence in a Government is valid so long as that Government is in office. So that if a Government demits office during the life of a Parliament and another Government takes its place, a motion of No-Confidence against the former Government ceases to be valid, even if debate on it had begun before the change.

Such a motion cannot then be lodged against that former Government. A new Government is formed by the issue of a commission after a general election, whether or not to the outgoing Prime Minister, or to a different Prime Minister during a Parliament, even if the Members supporting the new incumbency are the same as before the change.

The same principles apply to a Minister. A No-Confidence motion does not follow a Minister from one ministry to another. A No-Confidence motion must relate to the Ministry in which the Minister is serving throughout debate on the motion.

I would just interject here that one must be satisfied with that, simply because I myself was part of No-Confidence motions against Ministers and there were also previous Presiding Officers who did the same thing, probably based on the precedents more than anything else. But what was consistent throughout all of those votes of No-Confidence, the Minister was always the substantive Minister. If it continues to develop in that pattern, precedents start to grow and one gets the feeling that the interpretation of that particular approach is based on the fact that the Minister is the Minister who is in the substantive post.

Our Standing Orders provide for debate on a No-Confidence motion in Government. The practice of our House, which has existed for many years, is to allow motions of No-Confidence in individual Ministers, as was just pointed out, by precedents more than anything else.

Our Constitution provides for no-confidence motions only in the Prime Minister and details the law applicable when such a motion is successful. The Constitution also speaks of collective responsibility, which I have also before indicated to the Chamber how I felt about such matters. That is the law, not a convention in that sense.

If the motion of the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown had been against the Government it would be valid even now, for the Prime Minister's commission is the same as when the motion was filed. There can be no motion of No-Confidence against a Member as such.

It was, therefore, in the light of the changed circumstances that, on the motion for the adjournment of a recent sitting, I indicated to the Honourable Member that she should reconsider the whole position in relation to her resolution as presented.

It seems clear that the House as a whole took the view that the Honourable Member should have that opportunity, and raised no issue on it. The House also recognised that the Honourable Member should not lose her place in the order of business, a position which I would

protect, and I still believe that, because I still believe that there is a place for a Resolution to be determined somehow in this Chamber, and that is the position which I protected as well, if the defect should be cured by a further submission. Any measure proposed for debate must be valid in its terms before it can be called and before debate on it can begin.

On the principle of pursuit of a No-Confidence motion, the supervening defect has not yet been cured. That is the difficulty in trying to get the wording of the Resolution to suit the objects and purposes of the Honourable Member.

Meanwhile, there is no question but that other avenues remain open, and I will give you what I consider the avenues open for a debate of this nature in the circumstances. I am prepared to have the debate carried. I think Members must also retain the right to determine how.

I cannot write the Resolution for the Honourable Member, but therefore I will give what I consider is acceptable to the House in terms of a Resolution of this nature, which I believe will serve for a useful purpose. I would just like to suggest that if we are bringing Members who have been moved from one Ministry to another, and we allow that to go as a precedent, the Honourable Member herself, being a Member of the House and who has been a Minister before, may very well find that some other Member may want to bring up a resolution in retrospect. I think we should guard against this whole idea of bringing resolutions in retrospect. I just say we should guard against that, because if we set a precedent that a Minister, even though he is not a Minister at the time, but he becomes an ordinary Member, it would suggest to me that we should be able to bring that resolution against a past Minister. That is my observation, but it may not be other people's.

In conclusion - I said all that to sum up my own position - the Resolution can be debated in this Chamber in my view, if only the Honourable Member will be willing to take the advice I will give, since in her own Resolution, which is out of order, which suggests that the Cabinet is now part of the new Resolution, also brings to my mind that we are now moving to a No-Confidence motion in the Government.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: The latter part of your statement which determines that the Honourable Member is a member of the Cabinet, which obviously means he is a member of the Government, which means by implication the Government now becomes part of the Resolution.

In my view that would supply the feeling that you have that the Resolution can be brought against the Government in which all the matters which are raised now can be brought against the same Minister. In other words, a vote of No-Confidence in the Cabinet or the Minister obviously gives you the right to talk on any Minister past or present. That is one area in which I think you can proceed.

The other area in which I think you can proceed is the question of a Resolution in the Ministry of Health which will cover the same objectives that were laid out in the same Resolution. If Honourable Members can add further to that, I will be glad.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am much obliged to Your Honour, but on a Point of Privilege, Sir, with much respect, I beg to differ with Your Honour's opinion.

There is on the Order Paper today, as there has been for some time now, a Private Member's Resolution standing in my name. It is to be found at No. 5, and it reads:

"Miss B. A. MILLER: To move the passing of a Resolution that this House has no confidence in the Honourable Member for SL Michael West as Minister of Health."

Notice of this Resolution was given on 24th August, 1993. 12.40 p.m.

As Your Honour rightly points out, on September 1, 1993, within days of my Resolution having been tabled, the Honourable Prime Minister saw fit to reshuffle the Honourable Member for St. Michael West out of the Ministry of Health into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Your Honour goes on to state that at that time, and I assume that time being September 1, 1993 the Resolution ceased to be in order. I beg to differ.

I cannot conceive of a Resolution which is not in order being on the Order Paper of this Honourable House week after week after week, even unto today, December 14, 1993. I would like to submit that Your Honour has been ill-advised. This is now a reflection on Your Honour's original ruling that this is on the Order Paper at all. This is your House, Sir, and it gets on the Order Paper because you rule it to be in order and in my submission that motion being on today's Order Paper it is at this time still in order.

On November 9, according to my handwritten note, I asked Your Honour about No. 5 under Private Members' Business, my Resolution. I indicated on November 9th to Your Honour that it would require an amendment which it

would not be possible for me to amend until the matter was called. Your Honour opined - and I am reading from my note, Sir - that only in Barbados is a motion of No-Confidence to be found in the Standing Orders and Your Honour spoke of collective responsibility and said that Your Honour had consulted certain British counterparts while Your Honour had recently been in Cyprus.

Mr. SPEAKER: I need to put that right. I said No-Confidence in a Minister.

Miss B. A. MILLER: "...in a Minister." I accept your correction. Your Honour opined that only in Barbados is a motion of No-Confidence in a Minister to be found in the Standing Orders and spoke of collective responsibility and said that you had consulted British counterparts while recently on a CPA trip in Cyprus.

I would wish to start, Sir, by quoting our Standing Orders. There is no reference in our Standing Orders to a No-Confidence being found in a Minister. In our Standing Order No. 23(1) it speaks of Relevancy of Amendments and I will quote:

"1. When any motion or Bill is under consideration in the House or a Committee thereof, an amendment may be proposed to such motion or Bill if it is relevant to the question or matter then under discussion;"

Then it goes on with a proviso which has to do with parliamentary questions rather than motions. What Standing Order 23(1) is saying is that relevancy is the test that Your Honour must apply when an attempt is made to amend a motion such as my motion. I would further refer Your Honour and this Honourable House to Order No. 30(7) of our Standing Orders to be found at page 39 of the Standing Orders headed Private Members' Business and I read, Sir:

"In a debate of any matter of Private Members' Business, the speech of a Member shall not exceed 30 minutes, provided that this time limit shall not apply to a Member in moving a motion of "No-Confidence" in the Government and a Minister who speaks in final reply to such a motion,"

and it goes on with another proviso to do with the mover of the motion.

Your Honour, in my submission, what Standing Order No. 30 is saying is that in a debate of No-Confidence in the Government - the Standing Order does not speak to No-Confidence in a Minister - that there shall be no time limit applied to the Member who is moving the motion or to a Minister who speaks in final reply to such a motion. That is all Your Honour will find in our Standing Orders.

Mr. Speaker, you go on to say in your recent statement that a Motion of No-Confidence in a Government is valid so long as the Government is in office. I quite agree with this. Your Honour also goes on to say that the same principle applies to a Minister and then Your Honour delivered himself of this statement:

"A No-Confidence Motion does not follow a Minister from one Ministry to another." I beg to differ, Sir. Your Honour further went on to say that a No Confidence Motion must relate to the Ministry in which the Minister is serving throughout debate on the Motion. I have tabled an amended Resolution which reads as follows:

"I am seeking to amend my Resolution:

WHEREAS the Honourable Member for the Constituency of St. Michael West has, in the execution and performance of the office of Minister while in the Ministry of Health (underlined in red) been party to and collaborated in breaches of mandatory provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act, Cap. 5 and rules made thereunder with respect to tenders for Government contracts and to the award of such contracts..."

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Now, Sir, I am not raising the question that I have not seen any amendment to the Resolution. I am not raising that at this point. I have gotten the impression that Your Honour has not given the necessary permission for what the Honourable Member is reading to become part of the record for resolution. To read it now, Sir, would make it part of the record when in fact as far as I understand it Your Honour has not yet given that approbation to the amendment.

If that is so, Sir, this is a backhand way of getting this Resolution into the record because the matter has first to be settled by Your Honour, the Speaker. Therefore my position is that the matter is out of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand what the Honourable Member has said but I have to preface my original remarks. This is an important aspect of parliamentary life and if I need to do some giving and taking I will do that. I think the Honourable Member who just spoke would have the opportunity to make that comment which I eventually will determine and which I have not yet determined whether the Resolution is in order or not. But I hope at the end of the day we can determine that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am much obliged to Your Honour. You see, Your Honour is correct because our Standing Orders are silent on the question of Notices of Amendments and I am entitled to get up here and now under Private Members' Notices to give notice of my

amendment which I am in the process of doing and Your Honour has ruled correctly.

I continue to read:

"AND WHEREAS the same Honourable Member, as the responsible Minister under the provisions of the St. Joseph Hospital Act, 1989-30 has, without lawful authority, personally exercised functions allotted to..."

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a Point of Privilege, Sir. I am the Member for St. Michael West

Mr. SPEAKER: Let me get it right. The Item we are dealing with is the one which I introduced as Notices of Questions and I spelt it out Whatever members may get up and say does not necessarily refer to what I know I have said. We are dealing with Notices of Questions and if the Honourable Member is putting that into the records as an amendment, then I will; but I am prepared to give the widest latitude on this matter.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: With the greatest respect, Sir, and with great latitude, the Honourable Member is submitting during a Point of Privilege a statement that says something negative about the Member for St. Michael West. I am objecting to that.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take the Honourable Member's point and I will rule it is not a Point of Privilege.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I continue, Sir.

"AND WHEREAS the same Honourable Member as a responsible Minister under the provisions of the St. Joseph Hospital Act, 1989-30 has, without lawful authority, personally exercised functions allotted to the St. Joseph Hospital Board established by Section 3 of that Act and contrary to section 5 of its provisions and continues to be answerable to the Public Accounts Committee in respect thereof and by extension to the House of Assembly;

AND WHEREAS the Honourable Minister has, by public official statements and assertions, acknowledged his dereliction of ministerial duty described in this Resolution;

AND WHEREAS the arrogation to himself by the Honourable Minister while holding the office of Minister of Health..." 12.50 p.m.

I repeat, Sir,

"while holding the office of Minister of Health of duties and responsibilities beyond his legal authority

has violated the constitutional principles inherent in his functions and justifies the gravest censure:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this House has no confidence in the Honourable Member for St. Michael West as a Minister and member of the Cabinet and calls upon him to resign from the Cabinet forthwith or failing his resignation for the Prime Minister to dismiss him from the Cabinet forthwith."

Now, Sir, on the question of notice, I have taken advice from the British Parliament and from the Australian Parliament. My advice -1 can make this a document of the House - in answer to my specific question this is the answer from the new South Wales Legislative Assembly (this is persuasive for Your Honour's guidance). The answer is "Yes". A motion of No-Confidence of this kind can be brought and can be amended as I have sought to amend it.

The New South Wales Legislative Assembly has had a tradition of moving No-Confidence Motions against individual Ministers though in New South Wales the more common form of the motion is a vote of censure against a Minister. Their Standing Orders permit for that. A typical example, Sir, the most recent case in April of this year - you were ill-advised in Cyprus - was "that because of his maladministration of the Home Fund Scheme (and these are the words) "while holding the office of Minister for Housing and Minister for Sport, Recreation and Racing, no longer possesses the confidence of this House." As you would gather in the case above, Sir, the Minister was reshuffled to another portfolio. I am quoting from a facsimile sent to me only this morning from New South Wales. The motion reflects this.

It goes on to say, among other things, Sir, that "to prevent the House (and this is where I would want to assist Your Honour) from debating a motion which might make it look foolish" - in other words, a motion which has been overtaken by certain events, as ours has been - "we would use our Standing Order 109" - that is the New South Wales Standing Order 109 - "which provides that a member alter the terms of a notice of motion by handing in at latest during the sitting of the House preceding the day appointed for such motion". Yesterday I handed an amended notice. That does not deprive me of my right, since our Standing Orders are silent on notice, of standing up on my feet in this House today and giving notice.

But it goes on to say, Sir, for your guidance, that "this amended notice must not exceed the scope of the terms of the original notice. Alternatively, it is advised the mover may move an amended motion to reflect any portfolio changes. In the New South Wales Legislative Assembly with recent practice it would be the most unusual of circumstances that such a motion would not be debated."

I go on, Sir, quoting from House of Representatives Practice, page 346, supplied to me by the Clerk of the House from Parliament House in Australia. It says "Ministers." "From time to time a specific motion of want of confidence in or censure of a particular Minister or Ministers may be moved by the Opposition. The first case occurred in 1941 but the motion lapsed for want of a seconder. During the 1981-1988 period, 35 such motions and two amendments were moved, 13 of them involving the Prime Minister." This is not a Prime Minister in Australia clearly who hides Ministers from Motions of No-Confidence because he had 13, "While the Standing Orders provide that a motion for want of confidence in the Government may attract precedence over all other business" and it goes on. "After notice of a motion" this is in respect of a Minister - this is for guidance again, Sir, - "has been given, it is often the practice for the Government to suspend Standing Orders to enable the motion to be moved forthwith." And that, in my submission, Sir, is what should have happened on August 24, 1993 when I put this motion down. A motion of such importance in other Commonwealth Parliaments is dealt with forthwith.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: "Forthwith" means immediately, for the uninitiated and the illiterate, instantly. I am saying that it would be more than passing strange if the Public Accounts Committee, as we well know...

Mr. SPEAKER: But No. We cannot go any further than that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: But Your Honour does not know what I am going to say.

Mr. SPEAKER: Say it.

Certain remarks made by Miss B. A. MILLER were ordered by Mr. SPEAKER to be expunged from the records.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am saying, Sir, as Your Honour quite rightly pointed out just now, there is a practice in this Parliament where a vote of No-Confidence may be brought in a Minister. I am further saying that I am seeking to amend my Resolution and that the amendment is as close as it can be to the original, and falls within the scope of relevance, as our Standing Orders require.

I would like to read for Your Honour's further guidance, and this is coming now from the British Parliament. "It would be possible in the Commons," meaning the House of Commons, "for a motion to express that this House has no confidence in Minister X who, while Minister for Y, did Z". I repeat it, Sir, "that this House has no confidence in the Member for X who, while Minister for Y, did Z".

Mr. SPEAKER: One minute. I did not get the first introduction to that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: This is from the British Parliament. This is a facsimile which came to me today through the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association at my request. It says that the basic rule on motions is that they must be in parliamentary language - I submit that mine is, and that they must deal with substantive matters - I submit that mine does. It goes on to say it would be possible in the Commons for a motion to express...

Mr. SPEAKER: Would be possible but not so.

Miss B. A. MILLER: It would be possible but it is not a fact. I can only say what I see here, Sir, that it is possible.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that is the underlining phrase. Would it be possible? LOOP.m.

. Shall I tell you what they do in the British Parliament, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: Let me say...

Miss B. A. MILLER: They bring a motion to deprive the relevant Minister of his salary. That is how they deal with it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let me intervene here. We do not have Standing Orders relevant to those matters...

Miss B. A. MILLER: I quite agree.

Mr. SPEAKER: ...and therefore, this is a problem.

Miss B. A. MILLER: This is for Your Honour's guidance that it is possible for a motion to read that this House has no confidence in the Member for X who as Minister for Y did Z. I am submitting that that is in essence what my amendment says, that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West who while Minister of Health did certain things.

The British have offered an alternative:

"Alternatively"
then go on to say:

"a motion here directed at a particular Minister could be broadened to express"

and Your Honour may find favour with this one:

"no confidence in the Government for permitting something to take place in a named department while a named Member was the Minister.

Best wishes for the festive season."

That is how it reads. That last alternative might find favour with Your Honour because Your Honour I think you are correct in your judgment that for the public and this Honourable House it is important that this matter should be debated. This House is seen as its own disciplinary Committee, not unlike the Barbados Bar Association and transparency more than in any other organization needs to be seen here.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think you have made the point. I do not want to...

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am offering this alternative as a possibility which may...

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the alternative?

Miss B. A. MILLER:...according to the last few words that you said about the word Cabinet in my amendment, find favour with Your Honour. I repeat it:

"A motion directed at a particular Minister could be broadened to express No-Confidence in the Government for permitting something to take place in a named department"

in this case the Ministry of Health:

"while a named Member" in this case the Honourable

Member for St. Michael West:

"was the Minister."

I am asking therefore that Your Honour would permit when Private Members' Business is called on this day, as agreed by the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition and myself, that this Private Members' Business, this Motion may be debated. I am prepared to proceed with it, as it is. If Your Honour does not find favour with it I am prepared to amend it between now and when Private Members' Business is called as "A motion of No-Confidence in the Government for permitting something to take place in a named department while a named Member was the Minister.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise on a Point of Privilege.

Mr. SPEAKER: No.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Can I speak on this?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Hon. B. M. TAUT: Thank you, Sir. Mr. Speaker, let us start off by saying in whatever form, by whatever manner, I implore Your Honour to agree to allow the Honourable Member for the City to debate this Resolution in whatever form Your Honour finds acceptable but in some form today, as they say in Eagle Hall "tonow".

This Resolution or proposed Resolution or imagined Resolution has been used quite successfully to impugn my integrity in this country. The concept of a Resolution in Parliament has been used most skillfully by those whose business it is to be skillful in these matters to give an impression, first of all, that the Government sought to hide the former Minister of Health, and secondly, that the Government is running away from debate on this matter.

And thirdly, Sir, I would make it a document of the House, but even in the Editorial of the *Advocate* today there is a reference which suggested...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. ...that all that we have seen and heard has been pre-planned and included the writer of the Editorial because the writer of the Editorial today indicated that the Government and the Speaker, they intimated there is a collusion between the Government and the Speaker and that the Democratic Labour Party Administration would not allow the debate to go on. That has been making the airwaves for the last umpteenth weeks. I was away when the arrangements were made. Nobody consulted me about the arrangements. But that was acceptable to me because the Leader of the House is an honourable man and the Leader of the House fixed a date for the debate. The Honourable Member for the City had an opportunity last call day. The last time we met in this House the Opposition had an opportunity. Any one of them could have brought an amended motion and/or a motion which Your Honour would have been able to rule on then. But they deliberately brought it in yesterday, last night at the last hour even though it is clear that the Editorial writers who work for them - I am sorry - on their behalf...

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not want the Honourable Member to broaden it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I said I withdraw the word. ...seemed to have had full and prior knowledge of the tactics that would have been attempted.

We came here to debate whatever Resolution they had. If we wish to adjourn for 6 minutes, if we have to do

whatever is necessary to be done let us debate now, Sir. I am suggesting to Your Honour that Your Honour accept an amendment in terms that are acceptable to Your Honour that would allow us to debate the issues which they wish to debate today, Sir. I have no difficulty. I just wanted to say, in passing however, that the Honourable Member is submitting what purported to be the Resolution left in the record, matters which I took objection to. Those matters having been left in the record I wish to deny them for this part of the record. I deny them categorically for this part of the record.

The Honourable Member, in her submission, left certain impressions. I deny categorically that I acted illegally at any time while I was Minister of Health in the Ministry of Health. I deny that.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think in conclusion I would just like to add that the Honourable Member for the City has given me the courage that I thought that I was sure I had and what I had to do was to correct it.

The Honourable Member has already indicated that the Standing Orders do not permit any such thing and therefore, in truth and in fact, it should not have been at all because there is no record according to the Honourable Member which I agree that these motions did not really come out of Standing Orders. They were precedents set long in the 1940s that came right through by Ministers of both Parties. That is when you create precedents. Whenever you create precedents that is always the problem. Therefore we were operating outside the Standing Orders. Now that we have got that correct we have been able now to move to what I consider was always the correct position that as long as the Member was not in his position as Minister, it would be better served all the concepts, all the purposes, whatever the Member had in mind if it had been brought in a no confidence in the Government. 1.10p.m.

All the concepts, all the purposes, whatever the Member had in mind, if it had been brought under a no confidence in the Government, that is legitimate and fair enough to be done. If the Honourable Member is prepared so to go, I am prepared to accept that kind of amendment because we must accept that a no vote of confidence does not necessarily mean a personal vendetta against anybody it is really a principle we are dealing with and therefore I submit to that.

The second point was, I said earlier that it was a rare occurrence where you find these things operating. It does not mean they do not exist at all. They exist here and there but it is not an established thing. I know a lot about the Australian situation, probably more than you think. I

will not go into that but those Parliaments are different from anywhere else in some respects.

The other point which the Honourable Member raised was true. In the British Parliament most of these things are done under Standing Rules. We do not have the relevant Standing Order so I have to use my discretion so that whenever I put something to the House that for future reference it could probably stand the test of time. Now, if the Honourable Member is willing to go the road in the last section of the article she read in terms of the Cabinet I am prepared to have the motion on the Order Paper.

The other point I want to say to the Honourable Member, again it is discretion. I did not, when I made that suggestion to you it was my intention not to remove the entire resolution from the Order Paper if it was going to be just a minor amendment which would normally be done the same day and could have been replaced on the Order Paper. Being on the Order Paper was giving you an opportunity to see what kind of amendment you would come up with. Therefore I am going to rule if the Honourable Member will make the Resolution in the form that I suggest there will be no need for any time limit but the Resolution itself can now be taken in that space. We cannot debate the Resolution on the Order Paper. It will have to be removed. In other words it will have to be taken from the Order Paper.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am quite clear that Your Honour is quite properly now ruling that the Resolution which is on the Order Paper today is not in order. You are ruling it out of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Miss B. A. MILLER: And I am submitting an amended Resolution. This amended Resolution will say much in its preamble, or ...

Mr. SPEAKER: I am going to set it up properly so that we will have the substance of what we discuss as being done. I will ask the Honourable Member to ...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is the problem. I want to say this very clearly. What happens in other institutions is not going to happen in this Parliament or whatever kind of behaviour happens out there is not going to happen here. Neither do I want anyone to believe that the Press can dictate to me what my conscience is. They will not. The only Members who can do that is the very Honourable Member and I will say that to others. I will say to others, all who want to advise me try and get in here and advise me. I have no time for those kinds of discussions.

I am saying to the Honourable Member, I am anxious to get this matter resolved. Would you be able to sit with the Clerk and ...

Miss B. A. MILLER: I have the Resolution in my hand, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Resolution that you are reading now, we have to be very careful that we have everything so I am asking ...

Miss B. A. MILLER: The amendment in the terms I have ready now.

Mr. SPEAKER: But I am still saying to the Honourable Member that we have a system in which we make sure that we have the correct....

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will now suspend that Item until I can get the Resolution that is suitable and then we can proceed to the next item. That Item has been suspended.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. I can suspend the whole House. What I am saying is, I am going to ask that this be done in the proper way in which I am accustomed to doing my own thing. Let the Honourable Member and the Clerk go together and they sit down and we have this done in a proper way and then I will be satisfied when it comes to me as it did come to me. Even if you all agree and there is something wrong with it I will say so, so I am saying the Honourable Member and the Clerk could get together and sort that Resolution and I am prepared to have it done.

Miss B. A. MILLER: As Your Honour pleases. I am hoping it will get to be debated today.

Mr. SPEAKER: There are many things which I am surprised that we are not appraised of. Usually in any Parliament where there is a no vote of confidence it is treated as I have treated it, with seriousness. I would advise the Leader of the House, despite what the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has said, it would be a better thing if the Honourable Leader of the House would designate a day this week, tomorrow, next week or any other day, for that.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on November 9, I sat with the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the Member for the City privately, but in my capacity as Leader of the House in order to determine and set aside a day for debating this particular Resolution. The day set aside was today and the House was on the

very day so informed. Today, Sir, I want to make it absolutely clear that we on this side are quite prepared to debate any Resolution brought down today. That is our position.

Mr. SPEAKER: Fair enough. I was not made aware that today is the day. I understand that any time from today. That was my understanding. If it is so and the Honourable Member can proceed I will accommodate whatever the House wants.

Miss B. A. MILLER: What time are we likely to start Private Members' Business? I cannot confer with the Clerk until we break.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the custom that has been developed here is that both Leaders of their groups ...

Miss M. A. MILLER: Sir, I wanted to get an indication. Are we likely to have Private Members' Business called after lunch?

Mr. SPEAKER: Ask your Leader of the Opposition who will communicate with the Leader of the House and he will tell you.

Call the next Item please.

Could I have some silence, please?

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Statement on the role of the RSS and the threat to the security and stability of St. Kitts and Nevis.

Barbados is engaged in the peaceful pursuit of the goal of economic development and improved standards of living for its people. For this objective to be achieved, freedom from external aggression and internal breakdown of law and order is highly essential. A framework of stability, not only in Barbados but in the wider markets include the Eastern Caribbean, to which we are bound by ties of history, culture, and other linkages such as agreements relating to Caricom and to the Regional Security System.

All of the countries of the Eastern Caribbean face difficult economic and social problems. The crisis and emergency which has surfaced in St. Kitts and Nevis, and by extension the security and stability of those countries in the Eastern Caribbean with close ties to it.

On Thursday December 2, 1993 I received a request from the Rt. Hon. Dr. Kennedy Simmonds, Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis for units of the Regional Security

System to be activated and sent to St Kitts to provide support for the St. Kitts and Nevis Police Force, including assistance with the protection of sensitive security points in the community.

Mr. Speaker let me briefly restate the background against which this call was made. General Elections were held in the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis on Monday November 29, 1993 which resulted in an equality of seats for the two main political parties in St. Kitts, the people's Action Movement and the Labour Party. Each of these two parties gained four seats in the first-past-the-post elections. In these same elections in Nevis, the Concerned Citizens Movement won two seats and the Nevis Reformation Party gained one seat. Following negotiations, the Nevis Reformation Party continued its coalition with the People's Action Movement, while the Concerned Citizens Movement maintained its position that it would not align with any party in St. Kitts to form a Government. 1.20 p.m.

^k The Governor-General, Sir Clement Arrindell, proceeded to appoint the Rt. Hon. Dr. Kennedy Simmonds as Prime Minister, who together with ministers identified by him were sworn in as the new government on December 1, 1993.

Violence soon erupted, including massive outbreaks of lawlessness, vandalism, bottle throwing, stone throwing, attacks on business places, private homes and vehicles, and clashes between the public and the police on Wednesday, December 1. Official reports out of St. Kitts indicated that the building housing the Ministry of Health, and Women's Affairs, and the South East Peninsula Development Board had been set on fire and that the airport had to be closed because of threats to the safety of its operations.

A State of Emergency was declared by the Governor-General on Thursday, December 2, and a dusk to dawn curfew was imposed. In his statement to the nation announcing the State of Emergency, the Governor-General said: "I am satisfied that action has been taken by certain persons of such a nature on so extensive a scale as to be likely to endanger the public safety and to deprive the communities or a substantial portion thereof, of services essential to life, safety and liberty..."

Mr. Speaker, Article IV of the Memorandum of Understanding of the Regional Security System states at Sections 1, 4, and 5 that, and I quote:

" 1. The purposes and functions of the System are to promote co-operation among the Member States.

- (a) in national emergencies, search and rescue, immigration control, fishery protection, customs and excise control, maritime policing duties, natural and other disasters and pollution control;
 - (b) in combatting threats to national security, drug trafficking and terrorism, in the prevention of smuggling, and in the protection of off-shore installations and exclusive economic zones.
4. The Member States shall consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the democratic institutions, territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of them is threatened.
 5. If, having so consulted, the Member States consider that they should take action to protect the democratic institutions, territorial integrity, political independence or security of the Member States, they may, individually or collectively, take such action as may be necessary."

The facts are as follows:

"As a result of a request from the Prime Minister of St. Kitts/Nevis, consultations took place between the Member States of the Regional Security System. Barbados, St. Lucia, Grenada and Dominica agreed to respond favourably to the request for assistance.

In the case of Barbados, a Proclamation was made by the Governor-General, for the employment of a unit of the Barbados Defence Force on active service outside of Barbados in the public interest and for the purpose of ensuring the security of the Eastern Caribbean region.

A small party of twenty including three Barbadians as well as Dominican, Grenadian and St. Lucian policemen, arrived in St. Kitts early December 3 and were housed and located on stand-by at the police barracks since then. They would only be committed operationally on the orders of the Regional Security Co-ordinator who himself would consult me in my capacity as current Chairman of the RSS Council of Ministers, before giving such an order.

Another group of twenty-eight policemen, eight of whom are Barbadian, arrived in Antigua at mid-day on December 3 and remained there on stand-by, pending further orders. This group was made up of seven members of the Barbados Defence Force attached for logistic support only for the policemen, and were not equipped for offensive operations. In fact, the group consisted of one

officer, two medical assistants, two radio operators and two drivers. The total number of Barbadian personnel involved in the operation therefore stood at eighteen.

In all cases, the understanding was that the RSS policemen would be used only to relieve members of the St. Kitts and Nevis Police Force in guarding static locations and that they would not be used in any confrontational situation in contact with the public in St. Kitts. In other words, they would be used to protect government property and essential services, thereby allowing the St. Kitts personnel to get much needed rest and to be able to carry out other local policing duties, whether normal or of an emergency nature.

Individually, Member States of the RSS have generally been unable to develop security forces which are large enough to deal with massive outbreaks of lawlessness on the scale seen in St. Kitts. Instead, they have opted to establish the RSS in order to provide a ready source of reinforcements capable of reacting in a timely fashion, and before irrevocable damage is done to the peace and security of individual countries and of the Caribbean region as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, the action which was taken to put units of the RSS on alert in St. Kitts was a response to an appeal from the Prime Minister of St. Kitts based on his assessment of the situation, as well as mutual recognition of the fact that if the situation had deteriorated, timely action could be hamstrung by the fact that the RSS does not have dedicated transportation to move its personnel from point to point, at short notice. The response of the RSS was precautionary, timely, sound from a tactical point of view, and not premature.

The RSS must monitor developments in the region, and must be in a position to respond in a timely manner to threats to stability in the region. Such action should in no way preclude people from demonstrating peacefully under the laws of their respective countries.

The situation seems to have normalised somewhat, if not resolved, and the dusk to dawn curfew has been lifted. The RSS units have now returned to their respective bases. The units had all departed St. Kitts for Antigua on December 8 and by December 9 had all returned to their respective bases.

I repeat my view that it is essential that a peaceful resolution which is acceptable to all sides be found to the crisis. However for this process to take place, calm and tranquility should prevail rather than violence and destruction.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I am sure that all Members of the House will join me in the hope that there is a

speedy long-term solution to the crisis. I issue a call once more to all sides to sit down and find a solution which allows St. Kitts and Nevis, and the entire Eastern Caribbean region to continue on the path of development unhampered and without crises and emergencies of the kind which erupted in St. Kitts and Nevis.

I exhort the St. Kitts Christian Council and the St. Kitts Evangelical Association, and other individuals and groups to continue in their mediation efforts to ensure that the voice of the people should prevail at all times in a democratic, constitutional and peaceful way".

CONGRATULATORY AND/OR OBITUARY SPEECHES

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay a tribute to the life and work of the late Honourable Wynter Crawford. His passing has engendered in me, as indeed in a wide cross section of Barbadians, a sense of deep grief, shock and sorrow. 1.30 p.m.

Sir, death comes to all of us and will come to all of us at some time. We expect it to come, and yet when it comes it certainly creates in us a sense of grief, a sense of shock and a sense of sorrow. It is against that background that I speak, and Sir, in proportion to the contribution that an individual has made to a community or to a country, or in a wider sphere, the grief, the shock and the sorrow are all the more numbing.

There is no doubt that the Honourable Wynter Crawford was a substantial figure in the history of Barbados. He lived through a period of transition, a transition from a colonial constitution and a colonial state of socio-economic affairs in Barbados to a state in which independence came.

His was an active life during the 1930's when there was social and economic turmoil, when there were the beginnings of the democratic movement, and when our nascent institutions were emerging. And it took men of courage to assist in the emergence of the new society and the emergence of the new institutions which would help to mirror the expectations, the hopes and the aspirations of the people in Barbados. Wynter Crawford was one such person who not only lived through the times but made a very valiant, a very deep and a very thoughtful contribution towards the evolution of Barbados from that prior state to the state that has made it into one of the leading small, independent countries of the world.

Sir, he lived a diverse life. There may be others in this House who may have known him more intimately than I did; but certainly that will not stop me, however, from

giving my impression both from the record as well as from the knowledge that I have of him.

He was a journalist, Sir, and when the Agricultural Reporter newspaper came to an end he courageously launched a weekly newspaper which mirrored his thoughts and the thoughts of persons who were seeking change, improvement in conditions, and the amelioration of circumstances in the country. Sir, it was not a middle-of-the-road journal; it was one that took up positive positions against the entrenched planter class of the day, and he was not afraid to express within the columns of the newspaper his views on how the transformation should come about.

Sir, he joined with the democratic forces which were then seeking to have a say and to be included in the power arrangements of the day. So in the movements which emerged during the 1930's he played a significant part, whether it was with the Democratic League, the Progressive League, or in the first stirrings of the Union Movement. In all of these areas, so long as there was a progressive, forward looking movement, he was part of it.

He helped to found the Barbados Labour Party. He was a member of the Barbados Labour Party. He founded his own political party, the West Indian Congress Party, and that party was dedicated among other things to the development of West Indian consciousness and the unity of West Indian peoples, and he crusaded for that.

He served, Sir, as a Member of this Legislature, being elected as a Member of Parliament, as an independent first of all, and then later as a member of his party, the West Indian Congress Party. He was for a while a member of the Executive Committee of Barbados, which was a forerunner of the Cabinet system which was to emerge later on in Barbados. Above all, Sir, he was a man of independent views and was never afraid to express those views as cogently and as persuasively as was his might, or with the forces at his command. He later joined the Democratic Labour Party and served as a Minister, as a principal spokesman, rising to the position of Deputy Premier. He was not afraid to put forward his viewpoint, whether there was agreement with his position or not. So he quarrelled with the Barbados Labour Party, quarrelled with the late Sir Grantley Adams and the hierarchy of that party and left the party. He quarrelled with the Democratic Labour Party and left the Democratic Labour Party. He demonstrated, therefore, that quality which I believe was the hallmark of his life, that whatever he believed in, he believed in passionately. He held to his position, and as the Bajan expression goes, "he stuck to his guns". 1.40 p.m.

Such persons, Sir, are the stuff of which our country has been made down through the years. It is part of that

fierce, democratic tradition, and no one would wish to see it otherwise. Right or wrong, we take a position and so long as you have the conviction of your views, then you express those views and you stick to those views. That is the democratic position and Mr. Wynter Crawford was an exponent of that particular position.

As I indicated, Sir, he was a journalist. He later became an industrialist and a spokesman for industrial development in Barbados. He was a promoter of industrialism in Barbados; and I think at a time when all hopes were pinned on sugar, he was indicating that some diversification in the economy of Barbados was desirable. He sought with the resources at his disposal and the position which he held to promote that particular development.

He also tried his hand at tourism development and himself was a small hotelier promoting that particular segment of the tourism sector. With that kind of contribution in the major areas of the economy, and also from the platform of his leadership of the masses to get or obtain adult suffrage and to rise to the commanding heights of the political system, the social system and the economic system, I think there is no doubt at all, Sir, that he made a sterling contribution to the evolution of the politics and economics of Barbados, and that he was an outstanding member of this Honourable Chamber. It is therefore fitting that we should pay tribute.

I move the usual resolution of condolence, and I hope that we will approve it in the usual way, and that the surviving members of his family would accept the tribute from this House as a fitting memento to the life, work and times, and the contribution of one who did not start out with any distinct financial assets, but who was able to rise above the limiting circumstances, and speak out and live out a life that has made us all the richer for his being amongst us.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the motion of the Rt Honourable Prime Minister. I had the privilege of knowing the late Wynter Algernon Crawford from a very early period in my life. He was the owner of Pegwell Manor in Christ Church and I lived less than 100 yards away from Pegwell Manor. In addition, he was the owner of San Remo in Maxwell in Christ Church and that is an area in which I spent a considerable amount of time as a young man following politics in Christ Church in which such distinguished politicians as the late Mr. Hill, C. Edwy Talma, the late Jack Ashby and Wynter Crawford spoke on many occasions from the steps of a very famous rum shop in Oistin town.

I was captivated by their capacity to speak and by their interest in not only the politics of Barbados and the improvement of Barbadians, particularly black Barbadians,

but also by their interest in a West Indian movement. It is in this area of activity that I had a tremendous interest in the views and thoughts of the late Wynter Crawford. On many occasions we would speak on Maxwell Beach about the need for Barbados and Barbadians to appreciate that really and truly as a small entity in the larger world we had little hope without being part and parcel of a larger West Indian nation.

Later in life when I returned to Barbados, Mr. Crawford became a member of the now defunct Southern District Council and I was appointed legal advisor to that Council. I was able to observe Mr. Crawford functioning in his capacity as a member of that Council. I can testify to his interest in the development of the southern area, St. Philip, Christ Church; to his interest in improving the infrastructure particularly such things as roads, water, light and the improvement of the then almshouses which each parish had within that Council.

I would say, Sir, that I learnt a few things from the late Wynter Crawford. I have admired a few things. Some I did not copy. Maybe, Sir, to my disadvantage, but I will say this, Sir, that he did give me a bit of advice on one occasion in 1971 about the need for politicians, particularly in Barbados, to understand the psyche of Barbadians.

He was very famous for his mastery of the hyperbole of politics. He always recounted a famous story about his famous cable in 1946 which he read on the last day of the election - he always insisted it was necessary to read it just before the campaign finished - in which he received this famous cable about 50 000 Barbadians going to Brazil. He always spoke with his hands so he would tell you "It magnified the audience". He once told me about the impact that such a cable would have from all the Japanese big companies.

Sir, he really studied human psychology and he learnt his politics, as he would tell you, in the era in the United States of America in which people such as Marcus Garvey were the dominant figures in politics particularly among black people. He spoke with genuine affection for Garvey and also there was another politician whom he always spoke to me about, a Trinidadian called Mr. Jack, whose son became a Borough President in the United States of America.

Mr. Crawford was not only a politician. Few people realised that he had a genuine interest in industrial development. He always spoke of the need to diversify Barbados' economy and he even envisaged at one stage that Barbados could enter into the world stage and have a world fair at Cave Hill. If one recalls the days of the magnificent promises of 1961... I think I see him now with his bow tie saying that it was not beyond the capacity of

Barbados to have a flour mill or a shoe factory and to have a world fair at Cave Hill. Of course at that particular period of time Sir Ronald Mapp had just acquired in 1959 all of the land around Cave Hill for development of a greater city. Mr. Crawford took that, Sir, and he was able to embellish it. He was a past master at that.

He also had interests in the hotel industry. He was a lover of tourism and indeed, he loved to travel. He would always speak of his travels in South America and other parts. Asia. He loved when he came back from these trips to tell you about the experiences that he had in those areas. There can be no doubt at all that he made a tremendous contribution to the development of Barbados to making Barbados what it is today for all of us. Without his sacrifice, many of us would not be in the position in which we are today. Perhaps we can really appreciate the contributions that persons like Mr. Crawford made if we reflect upon the fact that today in Southern Africa people are still fighting to gain the political freedom that we gained here in Barbados as long as the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. From 1937 on the movement started and he played an integral part in that. 1.50 p.m.

Because of his great contributions, Sir, I was privileged to be among the members of the Cabinet when the time came after he had retired for him to be honoured and he was duly honoured. I think it was in 1982 that he was made a Companion of Honour of Barbados so that his contribution was recognised in that way. It is strange that because of the way how things are in Barbados that that was the recognition that persons who had made such an overwhelming contribution received, much in contrast to some of the honours that are bestowed on others whose contribution is more limited to the commercial area and palling to insignificance in relation to the larger role that is played by politicians in this country. But that is it. No doubt in the abundance of time the contributions of politicians will be placed in their rightful perspective.

I also, Sir, recall too his interest in music and literature. He was a great fan of music and literature. As has been said, he loved his books and the fruits of his love of literature were reflected in his journalism. He was proud of the "Observer" newspaper. He was proud of his ability to speak and his ability to write. I am told that in this House of Assembly - I did not have the privilege of serving with him in the House of Assembly as he went out in 1966 as I came in 1966 - he was regarded as one of the most outstanding debaters in Parliament, that he mastered procedure and he mastered the particular topics that he used to speak on and that he really made tremendous contribution to the legislation and the progressive Bills that came before this House in that period of the 1940s, 1950s and the 1960s.

I do share the view that he was a man of fierce independence of thought, for he quarrelled, as the Honourable Prime Minister said, with everyone who had a different point of view. But the point was whatever one may say of him, he was a person that when he had a point of view and he had arrived at that conclusion it was not easy to move him.

I remember his speech in Queen's Park when he departed from the Democratic Labour Party over their stand on the "Little Eight" and on the independence of Barbados. To his last days, and I had the privilege of up to a year ago when he was residing still in Atlantic Shores, before he became infirmed and moved back to Pegwell, of still speaking with him on that. He held firm to the view that Barbados' future will still only be fully realised when we are able, together with the rest of the Caribbean, to fashion out some form of integration which would permit us to realise that unity is the best form of going forward.

So, Sir, I join in supporting this Resolution and in extending our condolences to his relatives on behalf of the Opposition.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I cannot speak with the same degree of authority as the previous speakers but I think it would be remiss of me if I did not ensure that the gratitude of the organisation I represent was recorded for the life and the contribution which Wynter Crawford made to the social upliftment of the people of this country.

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Like the previous speaker who just sat, I remember the rapt attention which one was forced to pay to Wynter Crawford as a speaker, the command he had of the language and his ability to persuade by the force of his argument. But it is rather in the contribution which he made to the social upliftment of the masses that I would wish to speak in this very brief intervention.

Wynter Crawford appeared, Mr. Speaker, before the Moyne Commission, following the disturbances in the 1937 period in Barbados. Even before he appeared there he had made very many very important contributions to the debate which was important for our progress because it was a debate that saw us moving from the level of socio-economic deprivation to the occasion through which we were able to move towards having the possibility of having a greater say in the life and development of ourselves as a people.

When he appeared before the Moyne Commission, Mr. Speaker, he spoke very forcibly on behalf of the underprivileged and the dispossessed in this country. It is clear that his contribution to the enquiries under that Commission must have gone very far in influencing Lord Moyne and Walter Citrine who were part of that

Commission because their findings reflected to a very great extent the kinds of demands that Wynter Crawford was making for the Barbadian people. Specifically they were able to look to and make recommendations for the formulation of that three-pronged social development programme that saw Barbados off and running. I refer to the movement of the Progressive League with the Barbados Friendly Society and the Barbados Workers' Union together moving towards new platforms from which the masses of people were able to take off in their effort to be able to grasp some heritage from the soil of Barbados for the masses of our people.

It is interesting to note that when we look back at the foundations of organisations like the Barbados Workers' Union, we hear from time to time the more outstanding names, and that is as it should be, but sometimes names like Wynter Crawford are not heard, as indeed the name of Hilton Coulston is not recognised although he has recently departed and was buried some 4 or 5 weeks ago. But it must be a tribute to the public spiritedness and to the social conscience of people like Wynter Crawford and Hilton Coulston, one a journalist, the other a teacher, but still sufficiently concerned with the suffering of the masses that they were able to join together with Attorneys like Sir Grantley, industrialists and other people to give birth and support to the fledgling organization that became the champion of the underprivileged people of this country. 2.00 p.m.

His concern for the masses was one that made him realize that the Barbadian working man and working woman was not a position which the Barbadian could capture for himself or herself alone but that we had to see ourselves as working together as a Caribbean person or as Caribbean people if we were going to be able to achieve anything of any significance in this region. Though that was a position which he adopted some 50 years ago and it has not yet become the total reality that it used to become, it is significant that that vision which he had for the region is a vision which many others are progressively beginning to see more and more as a reality of the Caribbean. Surely a person like Wynter Crawford ought to be person whose memory, whose contribution becomes part of the heritage of our country.

It is very regrettable that people who have made these kinds of contributions when they pass on, except for the few who remember because their lives have touched closely, they are generally forgotten by the masses of our people. We remember very much about Michael Jackson or some, of these other pop stars that we could see from time to time on our television screens and who very often make the centre pages of our paper in very large photographs. It is really very regrettable that when people have served that not much is said or written about them, except the occasional little note in some obituary column and that we

are not therefore given the opportunity to have our children and our children's children learn from the lives, the contributions and the thoughts of those stalwarts like Wynter Crawford who have served before us. I think it is very important, Mr. Speaker, that we make another effort to make sure that our people especially at the level of schools manage to have their lives touched because they are able to read or to be exposed to statements regarding the contributions of people of this sort because a country that plans to go forward cannot do so unless it is able to build on the work of such great persons.

I would want this House and Wynter Crawford's family to recognize that the Barbados Workers' Union appreciates the contribution that his life, his thought and his efforts have made to what is now the Barbados Workers' Union.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, it appears that there are other persons who would want to speak on this particular matter and therefore I am going to move that the sitting be suspended until 3.15 p.m. today, Sir.

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

ON RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not wish this occasion to pass without adding my quota of tributes to those already generously paid to the memory of the late Wynter Algernon Crawford who as you well know was a Member of this House for 26 years.

I knew him at fairly close range after he retired, as it were, from public life, that is, in the post 1970 period. But I got to know him much better, I believe, as a student of the history of the period 1937 to 1966 where he emerges as one of the premier political personalities in this country. His reputation rests not on his performance in office, because in his 26 years in Parliament he was really only in office, if I may so put it for 5 year, from 1961 to 1965; 4 years under the Democratic Labour Party's first term and as a member of the coalition between the West Indian National Congress Party and the Progressive League from 1946 to 1947.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am not too sure myself when that difference in name came. It is very interesting that when I consulted, as I had to do recently, the record of the period up until the time of the Bush experiment 1946

and that election in 1946 we were still going, that is the Barbados Labour Party, to the country under the banner of the Progressive League.

His reputation rests, it seems to me, principally on the relevance and the enduring quality of his ideas. He was one who helped to set the political agenda in this country for 50 years from the riots until today. He fertilized the political system. He richly deserves to be remembered but mostly as one who helped to set the political agenda and fertilize the political system.

But it is on other bases too that we ought to remember him. To begin with, he was an outstanding Member of Parliament and an enduring Member too for some 26 years. In Parliament he was knowledgeable; he was skillful as a debater; he was alert on his feet and he enjoyed the same reputation in Parliament which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South now enjoys in this Parliament as a debater.

I think that he will be remembered too as a campaigner in St. Philip where he was effective and formidable and, at one stage his was a household name not only in St. Philip but throughout the sugar belt as covered by St. Philip, St. John and parts of St. George and St. Joseph. In that part of Barbados he is very fondly remembered particularly by the agricultural workers.

He will be remembered too, Mr. Speaker, as a liberal and crusading newspaper proprietor and journalist. You will recall that he founded the Observer newspaper, which was weekly, in 1934 or thereabout. Therein could be found very bitter attacks against the Colonial Office and the colonial system; very liberal and progressive ideas for the development of the country and, particularly for the working classes. I may add that therein was also to be found very bitter attacks on the Progressive League, its leadership and, in later years, the Barbados Labour Party.

The Democratic Labour Party is much indebted to Mr. Crawford. I think it is fair to say that he played a large part in the victory of Errol Barrow in the by-election of 1958. In fact the newspapers of the day have him literally holding Mr. Barrow's hand and certainly walking with him throughout that campaign. He was a major force in St. John and St. Philip. I think it is accurate to state that he had a large part to play in Errol Barrow's return to politics. You will remember Barrow had suffered 3 devastating defeats in the 2 years preceding that and he had a large role in his return to politics in 1958.

It has been agreed too that he played a major role in giving the Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party in

1961 an aggressive and forward look that de-emphasized constitutional development and emphasized opportunities through job creation and economic and social development. He also played a big role in the consolidation of power in this country by the Democratic Labour Party when he agreed to the merger, as it were, of the remnants of the Congress Party with the Democratic Labour Party. Because you will recall that E. T. Branker and Talma and Crawford himself were all members of the West Indian National Congress Party.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you cannot escape the feeling that he was a visionary; his ideas for political development particularly through industrialization; his ideas for the improvement of the workers through workmen's compensation; the improvement of the conditions particularly of agricultural workers; his emphasis on economic enfranchisement, a notion that is still perhaps the dominant notion on the political agenda even today. In all of those respects he was a visionary, but like most visionaries he demonstrated in his political life a certain element of naivety and it would appear that both in 1947 when he resigned from the coalition and, again in 1965, he trusted too much in his political colleagues and he might have been misled or not supported as he was promised by people like Edwy Talma, A. E. S. Lewis and Blackman in 1947. Again in 1965 it is interesting that Talma's name appears again as one who might not have given him the support which he had promised and so too did Reynold Weeks and Ellison Carmichael in an episode that is fresh in the minds of many of us. 3,20 p.m.

But his naivety apart, and it must be seen either as a political weakness, or as a weakness of his nature, I think that on balance we must give him credit and recognise that he made a significant contribution to the development of modern Barbados and, I do not think it would be fair to dwell on his limitations because he emerges as one of the heroes of the period. And I hope that at a soon date we will revisit the contributions of Barbadians, particularly those in the political arena in the period 1937/86 and give them the recognition which many of them deserve and have not got. We tend too much to speak of the period in terms of Adamson and Barrow without recognising that there were a lot of other figures that also made significant contributions. I am happy to lend my support to the Resolution before the House and to join with the House too in an expression of solidarity with the family at this moment of their loss in the passing of W. A. Crawford.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to join with those Honourable Members who have so fittingly expressed their appreciation of the contribution made by the late Wynter Algernon Crawford to the public life of

Barbados. I do not propose to repeat any of the sentiments which they have expressed as they meet fully with my approval; but I would crave your leave to speak only on two aspects of his life.

I knew Mr. Crawford from the time I was a youngster growing up at my adopted parents' home in Hastings. He was a very frequent visitor to our home. As you know, my adopted Father was a member of the Congress Party together with Mr. Crawford, Mr. Brancker, Mr. A. E. Lewis, Mr. Garner and others whose names have been mentioned in here. As a result I would often listen to them discuss the burning questions and topics of the day and the strategy which they would follow to put into effect their ideas. My adopted father ran unsuccessfully with the Congress Party for high political office at the national level. He was however successful in attaining political office at the Local Government level. I think in many ways, although at the time I did not recognise it, their discussions and their sentiments and their ideas have influenced the way in which I have developed an interest in politics. In retrospect, I would think that Mr. Crawford was perhaps one of the most creative political thinkers of his time and had the imagination to chart the future course of events in Barbados and to predict how things would develop in the world at large, particularly among what would then be referred to as colonial territories.

He was a man of very warm friendships and once you were his friend he held you close to his bosom. People will speak of the close friendship which existed between himself, for instance, and Sir Erskine Ward. That friendship held right up to the death of Sir Erskine, and I would say, it manifested itself particularly at the time of resignation of the two of them from the Democratic Labour Party on a matter of principle.

He was very dedicated to the federal idea and he believed that the West Indian territories would only truly manifest their greatness by integration and by the closest political union. It was on that principle that he broke with the Democratic Labour Party and gave it something that is not often done in Caribbean politics, he resigned as a Minister in circumstances where his convictions would not lead him to support the stance being taken by the Democratic Labour Party.

I am glad I am given the opportunity by his passing to put right the still continuing misrepresentation which one hears about the views held by the late Wynter Crawford, Sir Erskine Ward, myself, the Under Forties and others on the issue of independence. None of us argued against independence as such. Our contention was always that all of the other territories also had the capacity to become independent and it was better that we should all go into independence again. That is why the late Wynter Crawford

was willing to make one last effort to have the little 8 or even the little 6 or the little 7 move together as a nation rather than Barbados go ahead on its own. Neither he nor the Under Forties or any of us doubted the capacity of Barbados to be independent of the Colonial Office.

So, Mr. Speaker, that idea has not died. It is significant that even now people keep returning to it and to that extent Wynter Crawford, like other persons before him and some of us who have come after him, learning from him, has been a man ahead of his times. The tragedy is that we have still not learnt the lessons that he saw so clearly and learnt so well. Therefore, I am saddened by his passing but happy to say that his life certainly contained many examples of the qualities which we in public life should emulate.

I wish, on behalf of my family to recognise the close association which has existed between him and our family, the assistance which he gave to my adopted parents and the opportunity which was provided to me to learn from his accomplishments and from his ideas. I have much pleasure therefore in speaking to the sentiments which have been expressed whilst at the same time feeling the grief which one must of necessity feel on occasions such as these.
3.30 p.m.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, in rising to say a few words about the late Wynter Crawford, I have to say up front that as the present representative for part of St. Philip I share with my colleague from the North the feeling of loss at the passing of Wynter Crawford. A lot of people may be saying, "Well, this Member may be a bit too young to know much of Wynter Crawford". But that is really not true. I remember as a young man growing up in Six Cross Roads, St. Philip that the other fellows and myself never missed any of Wynter Crawford's meetings. Tyrone Estwick, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East who is a product of Brereton Village, St. Philip as well, was a young person who used to go around to these political meetings for enjoyment not for education. But the point that I am trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is this. At that time I was a young man growing up in Six Cross Roads and we never missed a meeting held by Wynter Crawford. I can still recall the manner in which he spoke in very short sentences, but there was always a great degree of wisdom. As an aside, I would like to say that when we were growing up we often used to hear about people wearing turtle framed eyeglasses. I suspect that Wynter Crawford was probably the first person that I ever saw in turtle framed eyeglasses. In fact, that was my idea of turtle framed eyeglasses.

Mr. Speaker, I still recall in 1966 when the debate was raging as to whether Barbados should go into a federation with the other islands of the Caribbean or whether Barbados should go into independence by itself. I

still recall those meetings that Wynter Crawford kept in St. Philip because I attended the one in Blades Hill. I can still remember vividly the one that he held in Ruby. The reason why I find it extremely difficult to forget the one that he held in Ruby was that I believe that that one was kept on either a Wednesday or Thursday night and my immediate predecessor in this office as representative of St. Philip South, Mr. Reynold Weekes, was on that platform. On the Sunday afternoon two fellows and myself who were older than I was - I can call their names because they would not be known by anybody and there is nothing disrespectful that I will say about them...Cyrus Burke and Lloyd Alleyne - were passing through where Mr. Reynold Weekes lived at Marchfield at that time. Mr. Weekes came to his front door and said, "Gentlemen, what do you all think?" I knew that he was asking about the federation and the independence argument. I did not go into Mr. Weekes' house because I was walking with two senior persons who were older than I was and those persons went into Mr. Weekes' house. Before they went in to speak to Mr. Weekes, we shouted from the road saying, "If you continue down that road you are going, you are going to lose your seat too". Those two persons went in and spoke with Mr. Weekes and, by the Tuesday in this Chamber of the House of Assembly, Mr. Weekes said that he had seen the light and from then onwards he decided that it was Mr. Barrow that he was going with.

The point is, as the Attorney General said, I helped a little bit in helping him to see the light. I think that Mr. Crawford was a visionary. I can still remember the number of times that I would hear him say that Barbados should have a flour mill. There was something about a flour mill that meant so much to him that we should have a flour mm.

Mr. Sneaker, I am very sad at the passing of the honourable gentleman as, as I said, I do not know if my colleague from the North will speak. But obviously, I believe that I have spoken for him as well because both of us at that time used to enjoy going around on Mr. Milton Greenidge's truck from Four Square Valley, and most people would know him, to Mr. Crawford's meetings to hear his words of wisdom. I would like to associate myself with all the sympathies and messages that have been sent forth to Mr. Crawford's family.

Thank you.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, I would just very shortly like the record to show that on behalf of the people of St. Philip North and that section which was once represented by Mr. Crawford that I would like to join in the tribute being paid to Mr. Crawford.

I met Mr. Crawford quite early since some of the influence politically came through my father who was very

closely associated to Mr. Wynter Crawford in the Brereton District. So on every occasion that he visited, obviously I would have the opportunity to hear and speak to him a little bit.

The other Members who have spoken gave a clear indication of his contribution and therefore I would like only to say that on behalf of the people of St. Philip North and St. Philip as a whole that we, the two serving representatives of St. Philip North and St. Philip South, would like to join in the appreciation of his work during the time he represented the people of St. Philip in this legislature and otherwise.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, as a former representative of the constituency of St. Philip North, I too wish to pay a brief tribute to the late Wynter Crawford. In 1966 in the general elections of that year Mr. Garfield Sargeant on the night of the elections said that there would be no more Wynter in St. Philip and that night, in fact, Mr. Crawford's active political year came to an end. He had served the people of St. Philip in excess of I think 25 years. During the period of 1971 to 1981, his name was still legendary in the parish often associated with Mr. Garner. But Mr. Crawford had tremendous following at a very personal level in the parish of St. Philip. It is not well known but I think that I have a duty in order to ensure that the historical record is accurate, but Mr. Crawford assisted me greatly in the bi-election of February 1976 and again in the general elections of 1976. He used to call me at least two or three times a week to ask me how the campaign was going and to give me the benefit of his knowledge and experience of the parish, but particularly I wish to thank him as I did in 1976 for having introduced me to a number of his canvassers particularly in the eastern part of St. Philip. They rallied to me and the Barbados Labour Party in 1976 and ensured that we got a victory. Mr. Crawford did more than that during both elections. He ensured that he was driven into St Philip personally at strategic times and spoke to friends of his and canvassers and enlisted their support. I believe that that appeal from Mr. Crawford assisted in my elections in St. Philip and I am very grateful to him. 3.40 p.m.

I first heard him, as a boy, on the platform that was the top steps of St. Philip's Boys' School, speaking under a light from the porch of the school, and at that time he and D. D. Garner had broken and he was putting some "licks" in Mr. Garner. In his very staccato style he was advising the constituents why they should not vote for Mr. Garner and a beetle passed across in front of him, and without pausing for thought or breath he said: "Move, Garner" with a brush of his hand. I found that a very funny experience as a boy of 16 in 1956. It showed the quickness of mind and thought on his feet, something that has been

written about him in the last few days. He apparently was very quick witted and sharp of intellect, especially on his feet. That bit of repartee has lasted with me, because I saw it more as a joke then, but now in the light of what has been written it appeals to me as evidence of the quickness of his mind and his response to various situations. Just a beetle evoked that from him and of course it evoked tremendous laughter on the night.

There is no doubt that he was a progressive patriot and a man who was in the forefront of the progressive movement. I share with the Honourable Member for Christ Church South the observation that our positions today are perhaps largely due to the pioneering and courageous spirit that was part and parcel of Wynter Crawford, and that he shared with other pioneers such as Payne, Adams, Springer and those who were around in the late 1930's.

It is with a deep sense of pride, as one who has followed in the footsteps of Mr. Crawford in the representation of the people of St. Philip, that I pay tribute to him and I convey regards and condolences to his relatives who have remained behind.

Mr. SPEAKER: In associating myself with the remarks, I just want to point out that at the time of my advent into political life Mr. Crawford was at the exiting end and therefore I am not in a position to say and pay those tributes which we heard today in those terms. However, I am satisfied that those comments made today speak very highly and in glowing terms of the Honourable Mr. Crawford who served in this Chamber.

My only connection with him was when he was Minister of Trade and I was working in one of the clinics. He was interested in introducing manufacturing into Barbados. At that time we were discussing the whole idea of manufacturing drugs in Barbados and he was giving very good support. It is on that basis that I was able to observe some of the qualities which the Members spoke of today. I think that is about the only contact I have ever made with him, but I would also say that in the few moments I had when I was much younger, I would come to Parliament and I was amazed at the way some of the politicians in those days could deliver themselves forcefully and convincingly to put over their points of view. I have no doubt that his contribution to Barbadian life and in Parliament in particular will serve many a young person who is aspiring to be a representative of the people and a contributor to our own development would do well to pay heed to the life and works of the Honourable Wynter Crawford.

In our way of showing our respect to such persons, I will invite you to stand for one minute in silence as a way of showing our appreciation of the Resolution which will be sent on to his family.

Members stood in their places in silence for one minute.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of the conduct of the business hereafter, I am going to move that Standing Orders 6,16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of the day's sitting.

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

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has called for an Item, but I understand that the motion is not quite ready and I am going to suspend.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Sir, I understand that there is some preliminary work to be done before we get into Private Members' Business. Therefore I move that the sitting be suspended for 10 minutes.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 3.50 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member and myself, the Leader of the Opposition and the Clerk have tried to find a solution to what appears to be a hindrance one way or the other to the thinking of all of us. The Resolution I have in my hand which was delivered to me has 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 clauses which I agree to. Since then, an addition has come up which I find inconsistent in a way to put into the Resolution itself. I will read it for you.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: To my mind, if the Honourable Member is prepared to accept all the clauses that came to me for the Resolution without the one that has just come,

Mr. SPEAKER: But this is not a debate on that. What we are dealing with...

Miss B. A. MILLER: I have not said anything yet

Mr. SPEAKER: I don't want you to say anything else Before me is a resolution which... I am very concerned. Order, please. This is a very serious matter. This morning I indicated to the Honourable Member to join with the Clerk of the House who is responsible for assisting Members in drafting resolutions to so do. Now that the Resolution has come to me in printed form, the Honourable Member is saying that this is not her Resolution. 4.40 p.m.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I said so from the beginning. I do not like it.

Mr. SPEAKER: So I cannot rule on anything because the Honourable Member says she has nothing to do with this Resolution and, therefore, what is before the House?

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I was very interested to hear the Honourable Prime Minister suggest that we would try to have agreement between the sides as to what we would debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is a matter purely for the Presiding Officer.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I agree.

Mr. SPEAKER: Nothing to do with no sides of any House. This morning I gave instructions and it is also a reflection on the Clerk because what is happening is now that having instructed the Clerk to sit with the Honourable Member to produce a resolution, now I am told that this is not the Resolution. What I am prepared to do... In these circumstances where there is a lot of uncertainty as to who is drafting the Resolution, and how the Resolution should be drafted, I am now going to rule that since the Honourable Member says this is not her Resolution there is no Resolution before the House and that the matter cannot now be debated as it stands unless...

Miss B. A. MILLER: But the amended Resolution is with you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: You said this is not yours.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Not that one, Sir. My amended Resolution is the document from which I read this morning with my amendments underlined in it and highlighted so that there is no doubt as to how it differs from what is now

on the Order Paper which is the original. What the Clerk has drafted is not acceptable to me.

Mr. SPEAKER: No one said this to me. My instructions were that you and the Clerk would resolve the matter and I would give my decision on the matter. This was presented to me and I was satisfied that this was an agreement between the Members and therefore...

Miss B. A. MILLER: What was given to you, Sir, had my own manuscript here. I gave that to you in your Chambers just now. I gave you what the Clerk handed to me. I did not sit down and confer with the Clerk and I cannot accept that what the Clerk has drafted is what I want The Clerk has omitted every single amendment that I put into the Preamble, every one, including the magic phrase "while holding the office of Minister of Health".

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I would like to help if I can as a Member of the House. Earlier today when the Honourable Member was reading from her assistance from the various places, the Honourable Member finished her submission by saying that in somewhere, I do not remember whether it was in Britain, that the method would be that this House has no confidence in X while he was functioning as Y and so and so. I got up and supported the Honourable Member because I too wish the debate.

I think, Sir, without prejudice to Your Honour's ruling, the House should give us leave to help the Honourable Member for the City on this occasion only without setting any precedent and move that paragraph as her operative paragraph so we can get the debate. All of her amendments that she had before, whatever she said, whatever it is, let us just get that and the last paragraph whatever the Honourable Member says it is. I am imploring Your Honour, without prejudice to Your Honour's views, to give leave to the House to debate whatever the Honourable Member for the City wishes to debate so we can get on with it. My fear, Sir -1 have to be honest with you...

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the Honourable Member has said enough. I have recounted that I have no resolution before me as it stands because I have none before me. The one on the Order Paper was ruled out of order this morning. That was out of order so there is no Resolution before us. I am going to make one last effort. I am going to suspend for 10 minutes.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

This Parliament is known to be one of the most democratic Parliaments in the Commonwealth and I

intend to keep it that way. Therefore, I will suspend for 10 minutes. I will meet with the mover of the Resolution and we will decide finally what it is.

SUSPENSION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is suspended for 10 minutes and I want to say when I come back my ruling is final. I have done enough to accommodate everyone. My ruling is going to be final and that will be the end of the matter. This sitting now stands suspended for 10 minutes. 4.45 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure that Honourable Members recognise the difficulty one has in dealing with situations such as these where there are so many different presentations to this sort of decision that it was necessary for me to go through the whole exercise as one would expect in a democracy to make sure that any conclusion reached may, at least, to the best of my own experience, be a compromise of what may exist between the different opinions. Therefore I have deliberately taken enough time to try to sort this matter out.

My decision may in some way be somewhat flexible in view of the fact that Parliament, under a democratic system, is not cast in concrete. It ought to be able to move and shift where necessary even in some cases where you have to create new positions. I am not given to creating new positions very easily because Parliaments which have existed over a thousand years have found it difficult to shift too much. Since we met and the Honourable Member made the point that the Resolution which was read out was not the Resolution which she had submitted, is to let the Honourable Member read the Resolution that she had proposed to do and thereafter I will make a ruling and I will make a suggestion as to what I consider the best approach to the problem bearing in mind that it seems to be the desired wish of both sides of the House to debate this matter. If I deviate from what is known to be the correct principle, I am bending so that we can have this matter discussed. I will now call on the Honourable Member to read her Resolution as she had it.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am much obliged to you, Mr. Speaker, Sir. I will read my amended Resolution and it reads as follows:-

"WHEREAS the Honourable Member for the constituency of St. Michael West has, in the execution and performance of the office of Minister, while in the Ministry of Health, been party to and collaborated in breaches of mandatory provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act, Cap. 5, and rules made thereunder with respect to tenders for

Government contracts and to the award of such contracts in connection with the St. Joseph Hospital:

AND WHEREAS the same Honourable Member as the responsible Minister under the provisions of the St. Joseph Hospital Act, 1989-30 has, without lawful authority, personally exercised functions allotted to the St. Joseph Hospital Board established by section 3 of that Act and contrary to section 5 of its provisions and continues to be answerable to the Public Accounts Committee in respect thereof and by extension to the House of Assembly:

AND WHEREAS the Honourable Minister has, by public official statements and assertions, acknowledged his dereliction of ministerial duty described in this Resolution:

AND WHEREAS the arrogation to himself by the Honourable Minister while holding the office of Minister of Health of duties and responsibilities beyond his legal authority has violated the constitutional principles inherent in his functions and justifies the gravest censure:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this House has no confidence in the Honourable Member for St. Michael West as a Minister and Member of the Cabinet and calls upon him to resign from the Cabinet forthwith or failing his resignation for the Prime Minister to dismiss him from the Cabinet forthwith."

Mr. SPEAKER: Now that is the Resolution which should have been read this morning by the Honourable Member. It is clear to me that there are aspects of this Resolution that are not keeping in order with the normal procedure of things. I therefore would now propose to the Honourable Member my suggestion. I cannot impose my Resolution on the Member. It has to be a free and voluntary wish but it is one with which I seek to try to compromise my position as well so as to have this done today. I will now ask the Clerk of the House to read my compromise Resolution to see if that will bring us to the end of the problem.

THE CLERK OF PARLIAMENT:

"WHEREAS the Honourable Member for the constituency of St. Michael West in the execution and performance of his former office of Minister of Health was party to and collaborated in breaches of mandatory provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act, Cap. 5, and rules made thereunder with respect to tenders for government contracts and with respect to the award of such contracts:

AND WHEREAS the same Honourable Member, as the Minister then responsible under the provisions of the St Joseph Hospital Act, 1989-30, personally and without lawful authority exercised functions allotted to the St. Joseph Hospital Board established by section 3 of that Act and contrary to section 5 of its provisions:

AND WHEREAS the Honourable Minister, by public official statements and assertions, acknowledged his dereliction of ministerial duty described in this Resolution:

AND WHEREAS the Honourable Member, as Minister of Health, arrogated to himself duties and responsibilities beyond his legal authority and violated the constitutional principles inherent in his functions and those acts justify the gravest censure:

BE IT RESOLVED this House has no confidence in the Honourable Member for St. Michael West as a Minister and Member of the Cabinet and calls upon him to resign from the Cabinet forthwith." 5.50 p.m.

Miss B. A. MILLER: This is acceptable to me, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Thanks so much. I want to thank all the Members who have, in some way, contributed to the conclusion of this matter and I am sure that we can now move on to the Resolution itself.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 5.

RESOLUTION OF NO-CONFIDENCE IN THE HONOURABLE MEMBER FOR ST. MICHAEL WEST, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Order No. 5 was called - To move the passing of a Resolution that this House has No confidence in the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the St. Joseph Hospital has a long and controversial history in Barbados. This Hospital was established in the 1960s by the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother Catholic Order operating out of Chicago in the United States of America. They established the Hospital at Ashton Hall in the parish of St. Peter and it was published at the time that there was an understanding - I have no way of knowing if that understanding was ever reduced to into writing but I very much doubt it - that they had arrived at with the Government that the Hospital would operate as a private Hospital for the most part but that a certain number of beds would be always made available for the use of Barbadians

who could not afford to pay. They did not, as I understand it, specify then that these Barbadians had to come from the north, the south, the east or the west of Barbados.

That Hospital, Sir, under the management of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother proved to be a failure as a private Hospital. In all of its years of operation by them it never achieved as high as a 40% occupancy. It is also true to say that the promise of free beds for Barbadians was something which never materialized at that Hospital either. What happened was that by the 1970s the Hospital was well established as a private institution where private gynaecologists in particular but other doctors as well, but mostly obstetricians and gynaecologists carried on their private practice. They had people as patients in that Hospital for a fee. It operated on a fee for service basis exclusively.

It became clear at an early date to the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother that what is called the critical mass and in particular in this case we are talking about the number of beds in the Hospital and the support services in the Hospital were never going to make it a viable concern. The Headquarters of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother is a very businesslike operation and they had said to the Sisters in Barbados you have to make it self-sufficient or close it down. In an effort to make it self-sufficient the Sisters approached the then government in the form of the then Minister of Health Dr. Ramases Caddie and to my information and belief approached every Minister of Health thereafter with a proposal that the Government of Barbados should buy the St. Joseph Hospital and add it to the institutions which fall under the management of the Ministry of Health. Dr. Caddie wisely resisted the blandishments of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother and took a sensible businesslike decision not to accept the Offer.

When my turn came in the Ministry of Health between the years of 1976 and 1981, as they had gone to other Ministers of Health before me, so too they came to me. I looked back at the files which were long, read everything and arrived at my own conclusion. I showed them the courtesy of a meeting and I asked pertinent questions about occupancy rate, recurrent running cost, capital expenditure, that sort of thing. I took advice from officials in the Ministry of Health and in other departments of Government such as the Ministry of Finance. I also sought the advice of my Cabinet colleagues and a decision was taken that it was not in the interest of the health service of Barbados or the health of Barbadians that we should purchase this Hospital because...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No. I have unlimited time.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Only half hour?

Mr. SPEAKER: My understanding is half hour.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Only half hour. Very Well. All right, all right. I can do as much damage in half hour as I can do in 3.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the up shot was that I said to the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, thank you but no thank you on behalf of the Government and the people of Barbados, that it did not make sense to acquire, at great cost, and I would then have to spend even more than I paid for it to refurbish it to bring it up to the standard to which Barbadians had grown accustomed from Government health institutions, to provide another general hospital or an apology for it would have been a general hospital in the parish of St. Peter which would still have to rely on the support services at Bridgetown. In other words you would have to have ambulances speeding to and fro between Speightstown and Bridgetown in respect of support services like sophisticated X-ray services, lab services and a whole host of other support services that are necessary. It did not make sense. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital was well designed in 1961 to take care of the needs of Barbados down to the year 2020, and that is still true today.

Mr. Speaker, before 1986 and leading up to 1986 which was an election year in Barbados, Members on the other side and in particular the Honourable Member for St. Lucy put it out to the people of Barbados that it was necessary to have the St. Joseph Hospital acquired so that it would be a Hospital to service the people of the north. It was the first time in my life, and I am a political animal from birth, that I had ever heard of an institution in Barbados that was going to be specially for the uses of a particular part or portion or cohort of the population of Barbados. 6.00 p.m.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is for all Barbadians, every Polyclinic in Barbados, every Health Centre was always for all Barbadians. If you happen to be from St. Philip and take sick in Speightstown and you went to the Maurice Byer Polyclinic nobody could turn you back and tell you that you did not come from the North, go to the one in St. Philip. Of course you know that if you took sick in St. John, the Honourable Member for St. John would tell you that what they have up there is a grass piece. So where would you go for any thing?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it was put out then that we needed this hospital. The Barbados Labour Party cautioned,

warned, advised against this purchase. The advice at the time was that even the purchase price was way in excess of what was reasonable in the circumstances. The valuation at \$15 million was way in excess of the true value of the hospital which had been in a state of near dereliction. This hospital had run down because it had ceased to have patients for quite some considerable time. The Sisters were asking \$15 million for the hospital - a pipe dream. Well the Democratic Labour Party won the election in 1986 and had at that time like every new Government has, a chance to assess the reality with the promises of the platform and chose to purchase the St. Joseph Hospital. I was way back in 1987/88, as far as my memory takes me. The hospital was purchased and since that time, as far as the estimates of expenditure laid in this House tells me, Barbadian taxpayers have spent in excess of \$22 million refurbishing this hospital.

It is important that Honourable Members take the time to go down to St Joseph and see where that money has gone. The hospital is still in a quite shabby state. A great deal of money has been spent - millions, more than the Government saw fit to spend on housing for Barbadians who are walking about homeless. You see homeless people on the streets now in 1993 like we never saw before. That money could have been spent on a whole host of other things that I could go into now but because of time constraint will not suffice it to say, Sir, the Government chose to squander it as we would have it on this side on the St. Joseph Hospital.

The process took an inordinately long time. There was a stage where we were told there were at least 5 watchmen watching an empty building, being paid salaries but not one patient could be found in this hospital. Not unlike Sherbourne, we heard of many possible uses that the hospital might have been put to. We know there is a lot of steel in there, Sir. Somebody from the other side is jogging my memory. We know that a lot of steel is in St Joseph Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, not unlike Sherbourne we were told that it was going at one stage to be a half way house for psychiatric patients. At another stage we were hearing rumours that it might have been a convalescent hospital.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, we heard all of that. I have it here. I have a whole file of press clippings. Yes, we were told it was going to be a half way house for drug rehabilitation. At another stage there were rumours abroad in Barbados that it could have been a convalescent hospital for rich people who would come from abroad and convalesce here. At one stage I heard a rumour that there was a hospital in the United States of America negotiating to buy it

Mr. Speaker, Sir, eventually ...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: You may think so, but you would be amazed who speaks to me. Mr. Speaker, Sir, a mish mash is what the Barbadian public has ended up with. The St. Joseph Hospital today is the same as it was 15 years ago. It is still, largely speaking, a hospital where private doctors carry on their private practice for large fee for service. It is not a hospital to my knowledge where ordinary Barbadians can go free of charge at the hospital to receive services of any kind. There was a great deal of publicity surrounding the fact that a baby was born there earlier this year. We have heard nothing of it since then. The reality is that that hospital, just as it did during the time of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, enjoys less than 40% occupancy. There are some days, Sir, when it enjoys less than 10% occupancy but the taxpayers have to pay for the running of the same. All the lights are on. This is true of all Government offices. It amazes me every night. You drive up Collymore Rock and you will see the Barbados Mutual, R.S. Kirby and all the other big firms there with a few lights on and the building with all the lights on is the Government building. So whether there is one patient at St. Joseph, which is not unknown, or 10, certain basic services have to run and the taxpayers have to pay for that. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that we are not getting any decent return on that investment and it is believed that it is a continuing investment because the whole job of refurbishment has not been completed. The Government is hoping and praying that somebody or something will take it off their hands.

But what is before this Honourable House in this Resolution has to do with matters which came to pass during the time of the work on the construction and on the refurbishment at the St. Joseph Hospital. The Public Accounts Committee, Sir, summoned before it, certain persons who were invited to speak and give evidence in respect of a number of breaches of the Financial Administration and Audit Act, Cap. 5, and the rules made thereunder with respect to tenders for Government contracts and to the award of such contracts. It turns out, Sir, to those of us who have read and digested the Interim Report of the Public Accounts Committee that works were carried out without proper contract for the work having been made, without proper tenders such as are to be expected when Government works are undertaken having been put out and that works were awarded - I can't say tenders because none were put out - to certain builders and contractors without the proper procedure.

There is a Tenders Committee in Barbados and the public must understand that all works undertaken by the Government of Barbados which exceed \$25 000 must be the subject of the Tenders Committee. 6.10 p.m.

In other words, the Tenders Committee must put out to tender and invite bids from contractors whether they be local or otherwise and the Tenders Committee will consider those bids. The bids then go back to the Minister in the client's Ministry, whichever is the Ministry doing the work and in this case the Ministry of Health. If the Minister of Health has no quarrel with the findings of the Tenders Committee, the works may proceed as recommended by the Tenders Committee which would say that they have looked at all the bids and this is the one which we think is the best. If the Minister has a quarrel with the Tenders Committee or has an interest which he or she wants to declare, the Minister must then take the report of the Tenders Committee to the Cabinet and only the Cabinet can vary from the Committee. Do not look so doubting former Honourable Minister of Health. I bid on several polyclinics and I know of what I speak. You go to the Cabinet. Only the Cabinet can change the recommendations of the Tenders Committee. No Minister by himself or herself can change the recommendations of the Tenders Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I regret to say that in the case of the St. Joseph Hospital none of this happened and that is why the Permanent Secretary and Chief Project Officer in the Ministry of Health had to be summoned by the Public Accounts Committee to give reason why this procedure was not followed. Mr. Speaker, it turns out that the evidence given by these persons who were called is a shocking thing. The evidence given by the persons who were called before the Public Accounts Committee was shocking. They had to tell the truth and they had to admit that the tendering procedure was not proceeded with and that contracts were awarded without ever having been signed and that a person or persons in their personal capacities decided who would have work down there and who would not have work down there. All of this was in contravention of the mandatory provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act.

Further to this, Sir, has to do with works and construction. In preparation for the opening of the St. Joseph Hospital, we are told that the then Minister of Health, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West having to go abroad to the United Kingdom on Government business came to an arrangement - I am choosing my words as carefully as I can, Sir - with the Board of the St. Joseph Hospital quite improperly, *ultra vires* as you would say. The Board had no right to delegate to a Minister any function or role to hire or fire or interview anybody. Let me say it now for all to hear. Ministers in our system of Government cannot hire or fire anybody, Sir, because they do not pay anybody. They have no access to any money in that way.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: That is perfectly true. The same Honourable Member for St. Michael West many years ago when he was holding another Ministry attempted to flagrantly breach the rules. The Honourable Member sent a member of the Public Service home and the Prime Minister had to intervene and say that that was wrong. Go back to work young man. It cannot be done. Ministers have no power to hire or fire.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member. I categorically deny ever having fired anybody anywhere as a Minister. I know of nothing what she speaks.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would just like to say to the Honourable Member...

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am going to stay with the St. Joseph Hospital.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have tried my best to produce a Resolution. The Resolution sets out in terms what the parameters are.

Miss B. A. MILLER: It is a shocking thing, Sir, that the Honourable Minister would take it upon himself as a Minister of some long experience when he is on Government business in the United Kingdom to interview allegedly persons who might be employed as nurses at the St. Joseph Hospital. Now again there are rules and regulations which govern the employment of Government servants. We have a High Commission in the United Kingdom. It is the custom that when there are persons in the United Kingdom who want to apply for jobs in Barbados and have to be interviewed, in order to save the cost of a passage home, the Government's employees in the High Commission interview those persons on behalf of whichever is the client's Ministry. That is a time-honoured practice in Barbados and it is true of every mission abroad. We could hear how the Minister interviewed these persons in a hotel suite.

Now Mr. Speaker, Sir, again this is unheard of. There is no decent hotel today which does not have what they call a Business Centre. Nobody has to interview anybody in their room nowadays. I can speak with authority on this.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member obviously has not been interviewed in her room recently or ever. But I did not interview anybody in a room. There is no evidence even in the Report from which she is saying that I interviewed anybody in a room. Please do not put that in the record. Ask the Honourable Member to withdraw that, Sir. I did not interview anybody in any room anywhere.

Mr. SPEAKER: Once a member has refuted that, the Honourable Member will not be able to use it in the debate unless evidence is supplied.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Sir, my information is that the Honourable Member said that he had to have a suite because people had to be interviewed.

Sir, expenses in the order of some \$17,000 were incurred by the Minister and it was then sought for the Board of the St. Joseph Hospital to reimburse this money which had been expended because the Minister was allegedly doing the business of the Board. All wrong, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I hate to interrupt the Honourable Member. That is not true. I categorically deny it. It is not true. It is simply not true.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, all of this is wrong, wrong, wrong. When I said in the Resolution that the Minister has arrogated to himself while holding the office of Minister of Health certain duties and responsibilities beyond his legal authority, this is one of them. This is a very serious debate. As I have said already in this Chamber today, this House has the privilege of being its own disciplinary committee. If we cannot be seen to keep our noses clean and to keep ourselves on the straight and narrow, very harsh is going to be the judgment unhappily not only on some but on all. Not only on this House, but on the whole parliamentary process in this country. The whole process is being brought into disrepute. 6.20 p.m.

We are hearing up and down this country today that we are all the same and we are no use and we will "thief¹". That is what we are hearing today. That is not what I came in here for, Sir. With respect, I came in here to represent the interests of the people of the City of Bridgetown and in the wider context the best interests and welfare of the people of Barbados. You cannot be a lawmaker and a lawbreaker too, at one and the same time. Our primary function in here as legislators is to make laws for the protection and the governance of this community and this society in which we live. And we above all others cannot be seen - even like Caesar's wife, we must be above reproach - to be thinking about a breach.

Something has to be wrong. It is a shocking thing that while works are going on at a government institution, being undertaken by a particular contractor, that that same contractor at the same time the works are going on at the government institution is carrying on works at the residence of the Minister whose ministry is the client ministry. That would be a shocking thing. It is not a laughing matter. I am hearing from the other side somebody saying like Joy Edwards. I hope you see what has been visited on him today.

I am saying it would be a shocking thing and worthy of censure and discipline in here because this is the highest court in the land and this is the place where we as parliamentarians have to be disciplined. I am saying it would be a shocking thing if works were being undertaken and carried out at a certain government institution, any government institution, and the contractor who was carrying out those works was at one and the same time carrying out works at the private residence of the Minister in charge of the client ministry.

Any Minister would have to know in the circumstances that there is something called a conflict of interest or lack of integrity; that the only conclusion to which people would jump is that if these people are carrying on works at a government institution and the same contractor is carrying on works at the residence of the Minister and the Permanent Secretary and the maid and the gardener... What do you expect people to think, Sir? All of this is what is in the public domain. I am not worried about the report. It is in the public domain. That is what is being said about us as parliamentarians out there on the street. I did not bring this Resolution for sport. The reputations of us all...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member must remember that the Resolution points to a particular member of this House and therefore any statements made... that is one of the reasons why we had difficulty in settling this Resolution. If we set out the parameters of the Resolution then we cannot go beyond that. The Honourable Member has been mentioned specifically in the clauses of the Resolution and therefore I will take it that any reference made maybe construed as directed to the Minister.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, all I am saying would be moot if the Honourable Member for St. Michael West had not publicly acknowledged his wrongdoing. On the 19th of August in this year 1993 he told a news conference that is the practice; that no one has ever gone out to tender for architectural services. "So I am saying that in the unit that was responsible for the refurbishment of the St. Joseph Hospital they had precedents and they therefore believed they were acting in good faith".

It turned out that at the St. Joseph Hospital, Sir, the architects and the builders were all one firm. I am not saying that that is not necessarily a good thing or that it is necessarily a bad thing but there is a process for tendering and contracting out

Mr. SPEAKER: Two minutes.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, what I am saying here is that there is a deep fundamental breach not only of the behaviour that is expected of a Minister of Government but breach of the law. In any other situation this would be

a matter for the Director of Public Prosecutions who has failed... These breaches of the law are a matter and still are and continue to be a matter for the Director of Public Prosecutions who has failed to prosecute. I don't have to send anything to the Director. That is the business of the Director who has failed to prosecute.

What it has done, Mr. Speaker, Sir, is to bring, as I said, the whole process of Government, the style of Government, into serious and grave disrepute in Barbados to the point where the Members on this side and they are joined by many members of the Barbadian public who have no confidence in the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and the Minister in any portfolio as a Member of the Cabinet and call upon him to resign.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for the City was ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. SPEAKER.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member's time is up.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Thank you, Sir. I obey the Chair and I beg to move the passage of this Resolution.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I rise to second it

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I have been around Parliament for a very long period of time and I have participated in this House in a number of resolutions brought by Members of the Opposition when this Government was in Opposition and the now Opposition was in Government.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: On a point of order, has the Honourable Member seconded the Resolution?

Mr. SPEAKER: I assume that

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: No man can tell me what I have to say.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Two Honourable Members are on their feet.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Nobody is going to tell me that I have to get up and say I second the Resolution. 6.30 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Honourable Member control himself.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am trying to uphold the rights of Parliament.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are not hearing me.

Certain remarks made by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN were ordered by Mr. SPEAKER to be expunged from the records.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I am saying is that any Honourable Member has the right to ask a question. Only the Chair will determine whether that question is valid or not. No Honourable Member should pass judgement on another Member. The Honourable Member has rightly asked for the seconder of the Resolution because it has to be reported in the records. If it is not seconded then the Resolution falls through. Therefore the Honourable Member is just enquiring for the records sake, which I presume that all of us know that the Honourable Member is seconding the Resolution. There is nothing wrong with that. It is common practice.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is unprecedented for an Honourable Member to get up to ask another Member whether he is seconding the Resolution. I am not going to say at this stage of my speech...

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not arguing with the Honourable Member. What I am saying is ...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I have to continue. I am a Member of Parliament. The Opposition moved a motion. I am a Member of the Opposition. I have to be allowed to continue. Do not give me any foolishness in here.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member must control himself.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am controlling myself. I want to hear your ruling, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not control.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I know the rights of Members in here.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I am saying is that any Honourable Member has the right to enquire of the Chair. He can enquire of the Chair. Honourable Members do not address each other. They address the Chair and therefore the question was directed to me and no one can answer for me. Therefore, I would say to the Honourable Member my understanding is that the Honourable Member will be seconding the Resolution. What is wrong with that?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I would have thought commonsense would dictate that if a Member of the Opposition speaks first the second person who is speaking is seconding it. Commonsense would dictate that Do not take off my time. I know exactly when this started.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure you know I will give time.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: As I was saying, Sir, this is the most serious Resolution that has come before this House and it is serious because it strikes at the root of the integrity of the parliamentary system, and that is a point that we must never try to evade for we are debating today this Resolution which arises out of a report of a parliamentary committee which has a constitutional function which is well known in all of the countries that practice parliamentary democracy as we know it.

This is not a resolution that is brought by the Opposition out of facts which have been garnered as a result of gossip or as a result of some malicious investigation by a newspaper or any other source. This is a resolution that has been brought as a result of a serious report by people who are carrying out a responsible constitutional function, namely the Public Accounts Committee.

What is more, the Report was signed by Members of both sides of the House and what does the Report say? The Report says "that this House voted money for a function which was set out in the Laws of Barbados either in the Estimates or as a result of provisions made to comply with a statutory obligation under a Bill of Parliament, the St. Joseph Hospital Act."

It goes further and it says "that in the administration of public money in the opinion of that Committee a number of grave breaches of Law as well as constitutional propriety took place and that an active participant in those breaches was a particular Minister of Government" That is a very serious thing.

It is my opinion that this Opposition would be failing in its duty if it did not bring this matter before Parliament so that the processes which Parliament envisage should take place in accordance with the Laws of Barbados are exposed when they take place without compliance with those Laws and that is the serious nature of the debate. This is no sporting debate. Grave and serious allegations have been made about the conduct of the Honourable Minister of Health at the time. Today one of the more serious ones has been made. It is not a question of whether the Committee reported or not.

It is said that at the time when the contractor was carrying out the works at the St. Joseph Hospital that

works were being carried on at the residence of the Honourable Minister by the same contractor.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. I categorically deny that the same contractor was carrying on any works at my house. I categorically deny it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has denied it. If any future reference is to be made to it...

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Honourable Member has denied it. That is why the allegation was made. It is a grave and serious allegation. You cannot deny that it is a grave and serious allegation because you got up to deny it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am saying that it should not be repeated if the Honourable Member refutes it because the rules of this House provide that any accusation made by any Member should be produced for that.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I want it to be understood by all and sundry that this House passed a Bill in 1989 called the St. Joseph Hospital Act. This House in that Bill stated very specifically that it was creating a statutory corporation. This House very specifically in that Bill stated that funds would be provided by Parliament for expenditure by that Board. The Committee Report indicates quite clearly in the Appendix to it that in January 1990 an estimate of \$4.2 million was the figure given by architects named therein as the amount that would be required to rehabilitate the Hospital.

Under the terms of the Act passed by Parliament the responsibility for carrying out the works was vested in the St. Joseph Hospital Board. The Committee's Report is replete with facts which indicate the Board never performed that function. That is a clear breach of the intent of Parliament.

Let us go further. Under the Hospital Act, Parliament set up a scheme for accountability. Under the scheme annual reports were to be given to Parliament by the Minister responsible together with accounts. Now, Sir, this is 1993, almost 1994. I have searched and all Honourable Members on this side have searched the records of Parliament and, as requested, not a single report has been filed. All of that took place during the time when the Honourable Member was the Minister responsible. There can be no doubt about it that under the Administration of the Honourable Minister at the time that a statutory corporation created by Parliament flagrantly violated the obligations cast upon it by the law that created it. There cannot be any doubt about that. Is anyone going to say that an opposition party worth its salt is not entitled to say that, in its humble opinion, that conduct is worthy of the greatest censure particularly when we know that \$4 million was the amount envisaged to be spent and to date, according to the

very same Report over \$22 million have been spent. The Public Accounts Committee Report. The evidence that has been led indicated that \$22 million was spent. 6.40 p.m.

I just want to make it clear. I regard it as a prime duty of an Opposition to draw these matters to the attention of the public and to this Honourable House. If the House wishes to condone such conduct so be it. We have discharged our responsibility. But to me at least the evidence shows clearly gross maladministration, gross lack of supervision and an indifference to public accountability to Parliament. At least the evidence shows that.

Let us go further because it is my humble opinion that it is also the duty of Parliament to ensure that where money is voted by it, particularly in these times of stringent financial conditions that every effort is made to ensure that the money was well spent. What does the evidence also disclose? That architects were invited to submit a fee proposal and a fee proposal was put in by the architects. The architects said very clearly that their fee proposal was for a combined fee of 16% of the overall cost of the project excluding telephone calls, telefaxes and surveys. That was what the evidence disclosed. Notwithstanding that fee proposal...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Do not tell me give the breakdown. The Reports made it clear 16%. ...you mean a man says I will work for you for 16%. Do you know, Mr. Speaker, according to the evidence in the contract that the man was awarded the contract at 20%? Four per cent above the amount that the man said he wanted. That is also a matter of great and serious import to me because it would seem to suggest to me that there is great laxity in the administration of this contract. Under our system somebody must be responsible.

The position is very clear that the public of Barbados is owed an explanation as to how it is that a man says that he will contract with you upon the basis of 16% and you award him a contract on the basis of 20% four per cent above the amount the man said that he would work for. What happened to the 4% difference? Tell me that. Why is it that there is a 4% difference? Who authorized the 4% difference? For what reason was it authorized? These are grave and serious matters. I would have expected that an honourable Minister who was in charge of this department would have raised an enquiry himself against such fiscal irresponsibility.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is debating this Minister in that capacity and he made a statement. The fact is that if we had the verbatim record of the Public Accounts Committee as part of the laid document in the House we would have

seen that explanation which was given by the accounting officer who is the person responsible for the awarding of contracts.

Hon. H. B. St JOHN: My information is that that is a blatant misstatement of facts. The truth of the matter is, Sir, this House is deserving of an explanation as to how it is that a Minister of Government who is responsible for the proper supervision of the expenditure of Government money...

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a point of order, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. Please take your seat. Two Honourable Members are on their feet. Whenever a Member rises on a point of order, the Honourable Member must sit.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, the Honourable Member is saying to this House that the Minister is responsible for the supervision of the accounts of the department and that is blatantly untrue. The Financial Administration and Audit Act at Section 4 ...

Mr. SPEAKER: The point of order has been taken.

Hon. H. B. St JOHN: I say that the Minister is accountable to Parliament *for* the proper administration of money voted by Parliament for his department. He is accountable to Parliament. You are accountable to Parliament and that is where you are today. You are accountable to Parliament and you are before the bar of Parliament. You are the one who has to give the explanations. How is it that in your department you sat down and allowed an architect to quote 16% and your department award it 20% and not an iota of questions or investigations were asked by you. You are guilty of grave dereliction of duty. Get that straight Those facts are irrefutable.

Sir, the position also is that we therefore must pursue this matter to the bilt It cannot be evaded. No responsible Member of Parliament on this side or that side can lend his hand to this fiscal irresponsibility.

In my opinion this is so grave a matter that the Minister, the architect, the Chairman of the Hospital Committee, the whole Board, everybody should be forced in the interest of public accountability to provide an explanation for this extraordinary behaviour and performance at the St. Joseph Hospital. I was not a Member of the House at the time when the Act was passed. I try to illicit questions in here at Estimates debate Committee because I cannot follow how it is that

Parliament passed an Act and charged the Hospital Board with a responsibility. Five million dollars is the estimate. Five million dollars is the estimate and subsequently \$16 million more was voted in addition to that \$5 million and still we do not have an explanation. That is in essence, the nub of the question that we have to deal with. It is an important point of principle. It goes beyond the occupant of the office. Whoever was in charge of the office, if those were the facts that occurred during the course of time that you are in charge of the office, you should expect that simple justice demands that you be called upon to account. That is what we are saying here. Let us make, by this Resolution, others responsible for this mal-administration be accountable to Parliament otherwise there is the opening of the flood gates. Parliament cannot vote money in here and all the institutional framework that is established in the Financial Administration and Audit Act, the Public Accounts Committee, all the mechanisms flouted, treated with total indifference and then we sit down and fold our hands and say, "that is the system". That is not the system. And if it was the system it is time that the system changes. If that is the system we need to have a major change of the system because value for money audits is now a thing that has to come into fore. It is no longer a question of a simple mechanical process of saying that Parliament voted \$100 and \$100 was spent. The question which now arises is, if Parliament voted \$100 whether that \$100 was well spent and whether it could not be done for \$80, or whether it could not be done for \$60. 6.50 p.m.

So that, Sir, is the second point because I am summing up. I am not dealing with any peripheral matters. I am dealing with the nub of the question here. There can be no peripheral matters in this matter. Parliament has been insulted. Parliament has been treated with grave indifference. It is Parliament that is on trial. The Honourable Minister is only the occasion. If we cannot have a system whereby when we vote money that there are mechanisms to ensure that that money is spent in accordance with the wishes of Parliament we could as well shut up shop and quit. That is why the Opposition takes this Resolution very, very serious. Important points of principle are involved. We cannot evade it Any Minister of Finance far less a Prime Minister should be interested in this. It is a very serious matter.

Now, Sir, there are other bits of evidence in here that are deserving of comment. Up to the time when the Committee reported, as I understand it ^ and I have read and re-read the Report - nobody was able to tell the Committee how much was in truth and in fact needed to finish the hospital. Up to today this Parliament has not yet had the opportunity of hearing from the Minister or from the Board in accordance with section 11 by way of an Annual Report. I want to read it because we must get this thing clear. There is a lot of talk about the purpose of

this Resolution. This Resolution is inspired by a desire to ensure that the Parliamentary process is adhered to - Section 11 of the St Joseph Hospital Act, 1989-30 -

"11. (1) The Board shall as soon as possible after the end of each financial year and in any case not later than the 30th of June in each year, submit to the Minister a report containing

- (a) a detailed account of the activities of the hospital during the proceedings of preceding financial year, and
- (b) a statement of its audited accounts, certified by the auditor.

(2) The Minister shall lay a copy of the report referred to in subsection (1) before Parliament as soon as possible after the receipt of the report."

Now, we look forward to hearing from the Minister when he received the report. As I understand it the Minister was specifically requested by the then Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee a copy of that report. So again, Sir, the Minister has a Board that refuses to comply with his obligations under the Act. The Minister has such a Board. Questions were asked. This is the point Questions were asked of the Minister periodically in that period of time between 1989 and when the Minister ceased to function as to the expenditure. Questions were asked by way of Parliamentary questions. In 1989 they were asked. In 1988 they were asked. In 1990 they were asked.

Certainly since I have been in this House in 1991 I distinctly recall in the course of a debate in the Estimates requesting of the Minister. If the Parliamentary process is such that the Opposition, whose business it is to act as a watchdog of the finances of this country can persistently be ignored by a Minister with impunity, then we know that our system has broken down. The traditional checks and balances have fallen to the ground. That is what this debate is about so if we are going to be told now that what we did we would do again and no man can question us, we will know what the position is about. If the attitude is that it was done before and therefore it can be done again, then we will know. The public will know that that is the attitude. We would have discharged our responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I second this Resolution, Sir.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my colleague on this side and to reject out of hand the Resolution tabled by the Honourable Member for the City. My intervention will be informed by a search for the truth, by a commitment to the highest principles and ideals of our Ministerial form of Government which obviously includes

the whole notion of collective responsibility. I have searched my heart, Mr. Speaker, I have come to a conclusion. As you know, Mr. Speaker, I am a member of the Public Accounts Committee. I was the only member who did not sign the report and I had a reason for that. As I speak, I will develop my very serious problems and concerns which I had and why I could not sign the report. To my mind, Mr. Speaker, this evening's exercise of the Resolution is a culmination of a compendium of scurrilous gossip which has emanated from the Opposition benches and which obviously... 7.00 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the Honourable Member has gone over the crease. I think that the Honourable Member could either rephrase what he wants to say in much more temperate language. Order please.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, when I attended the first meeting of the Public Accounts Committee to deal with this matter, I was met on the outside by two members of the Public Accounts Committee who carried me in a room and told me that concerning the matter we were discussing that there were two issues which I should be aware of even before I attended the meeting. These matters were:

- (1) that the representative for St. Michael West was paid a sum of money to carry out certain recruitment exercises and so on;
- (2) that some member was paid a certain sum ...

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one minute. I am not going to allow this disturbance. If a Member wants to speak, he can wait until I give him the opportunity to do so. I am hearing the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central as I did hear the Honourable Member for the City in silence and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South with a limited amount of interference. Can I hear the Honourable Member in a similar way?

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the problem is that you are hearing the truth from this side. The truth always confuses them.

Mr. Speaker, the contribution of the Honourable Member ...

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I said that the two persons said that there were two issues: The payment of the sum

of money for recruitment exercise and the payment of a sum for some legal fees. What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that right away the lines were drawn and it was clear that this was a witch-hunt.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: On a point of order, Sir. I am a member of the Public Accounts Committee. Since the Honourable Member said that two members of that Committee took him in a room and gave him some information, I want to make it quite clear that this Honourable Member was not one of the members.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I would suggest to this Honourable Member...

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment The Honourable Member has risen on a point of order. May I have some order please? Now I can hear the Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Member has failed to call the names of the two people who took him in the room and identify the room and even, if they took him in the room, we want to know what are the two matters he is talking about. I only heard one mentioned.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well, that would not be a point of order. No point of order. Order please.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, the point that I am making to sum up is that it was a witch-hunt and that they had reached a conclusion before the evidence was heard.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. I am taking strong objection to the Honourable Member who is a member of the Committee and who on every paragraph of the Committee went through and was voted on making an allegation that the Committee was acting on improper motives on a witch-hunt. I resent that very strongly, Sir, as the Chairman of the Committee. On a matter of principle, I have been in this House for 23 years and I am not going to let any Member get in the House and suggest that I sat down and chaired a Committee for a witch-hunt. It is absolutely improper.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, the contribution of the Honourable Member for the City and the Honourable for ...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has complained that the word "witch-hunt" is not acceptable to

him. I think that the Honourable Member could possibly rephrase it another way to convey what he wants to say.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Okay, Mr. Speaker, I said as I concluded that they had reached a decision before the evidence was heard.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: I will rule again. The point of order is a legitimate exercise unless it is fraudulent. I will only be able to determine that when I hear the point of order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I need to be very clear on the persons to whom the Honourable Member *far* St Michael...

Mr. SPEAKER: That is a question. But the Honourable Member cannot ask that That is a question. That is not a point of order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am not finished. It is a prelude to a question. I have not yet made the point yet

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not a point of order to ask that question.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I have not finished making my point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: The point of asking a question...Is the Honourable Member saying that..

Miss B. A. MILLER: No, I am trying to make a point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: But it seems to me that this point of order is taking a very...

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

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, let me set the record straight I made it abundantly clear at the Public Accounts Committee that I had serious reservations with the terms of reference and the scope of the inquiry. In the interest of expedition in allowing the debate to flow, On a number of occasions I asked the Recording Secretaiy through the Chairman to record my disagreement with most aspects of what was going on. But I sat there because I knew this day was coming and I made my notes. So I never agreed to anything. To sit down and draw up a 50 page document and say that I agreed to every paragraph except one is crazy. As a matter of fact, there were two areas...

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The verbatim reports of this Committee...

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: May I have some order please? I will adjourn this debate and I will adjourn it for a long, long time. There shall not be any shouting across the Chamber. I am prepared to adjourn this debate until Members can keep themselves in control. There is not to be any person heard speaking but the Honourable Member or a Member on a point of order. I will accept that Any other Member who speaks loud enough for me to hear I will ask them to leave the Chamber. 7.10 p.m.

I speak on a point of order. Every word said by any person in front that Committee or by members were recorded and those minutes were circulated to every member of the Committee. So the Honourable Members can not make allegations suggesting that someone has misrepresented anything that he has said or done. I am saying as a fact that every paragraph of the Committee's Report was put to all of the members, Any reservations that they had were noted and taken care of and they were approved. That is the position.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a further point of order.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I have a point which was moved by the previous speaker, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: You see, if you say a point of order I take it that you are making...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It relates to a point made by the Honourable Member. I have contended always...

Mr. SPEAKER: As I said, that is not customary.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, to speak on this Report without the appendices which would have included the verbatim Report makes this Report itself not worthy.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I am saying to the Honourable Member is that we seem not to understand the procedure. If every other Member gets up on a point of order after another Member speaks on a point of order then we will exhaust the whole debate without a person making a proper input. So I am not accepting a point of order on a point of order in any circumstance.

As I have said before, allegations are made and Members refute them. My position is that that allegation will cease until the relevant information can be produced to show where the true position lies. As presiding officer, I

cannot retain all the clauses of the Report in my head so I have to rely on the Members to produce that evidence. If a Member refutes a charge, that matter ceases until the relevant evidence is produced.

Continue.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I am going to wind up this aspect of what I am saying with respect to my not signing the Report. There were 2 fundamental issues which I will develop as I go on.

One was the question of culpability.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member need not dwell on signing the Report. I have already given my decision on that matter and therefore there is no need to repeat that because that is a matter of a statement I made.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The question of culpability and the other question was the one regarding the whole concept of recruitment; but I will come back to those.

Mr. Speaker, the contribution of the 2 previous speakers has reduced the representative, the Member for St. Michael West in his then capacity as Minister of Health, to an accounting officer. This is where I have certain fundamental difficulties.

Now, at Part II, section 4 of the Financial Administration and Audit (Supplies) Rules, 1971 states:

"(1) An accounting officer is personally responsible for the efficient and prudent conduct of the financial business of the department of which he is appointed accounting officer."

It goes on to say at section 5:

"The accounting officer must be prepared to account to the House of Assembly through the Public Accounts Committee for the regularity and propriety of the expenditure of the votes and accounts and for the receipt of public moneys for which he is responsible."

This has to be taken in context with section 59(1) of the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly which states:

"There shall be a Committee of Public Accounts, for the examination of accounts showing the appropriation of the sums granted by Parliament to meet the public expenditure..."

This is the salient pan.

"... and of such other accounts laid before Parliament as the Committee may think fit."

This is where I had my difficulties because there are no accounts before Parliament so what this exercise has effectively done is to attempt to reduce the then Minister to an accounting officer.

Mr. Speaker, a lot has been said in the public domain about the question of the financial proprieties or improprieties of the Member for St. Michael West and whether or not he was guilty of financial wrongdoing. It was further put out that the Government, indeed the Member for St. Michael West, is seeking solace in the fact, as they put it, that it was done before. It was said by both Members on that side that they did it already. I am wrong but the others before me were wrong also. This is an oversimplification of the issue, Mr. Speaker.

The issue of the accounts at the St. Joseph Hospital cannot be taken in a vacuum but must be taken against the background of the accounting procedures in the wider public service. I am going to develop this point. I am going to use as my primary example the signing of contracts and the award of tenders to which both Members spoke, not eloquently, but nonetheless spoke.

For example, Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General has identified 38 cases between 1981 and 1982 when the now Opposition was the Government. He cited 38 cases where work was started without the signing of a contract That was integrity. That is their idea of integrity. Thirty-eight contracts and there are more.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The impression must not be given there were any improprieties or any infelicities. The only reason is and will always be the case until we do something about the Ministry of the Attorney General where contracts are not signed. It does not mean that it did not go properly out to tender, that bids were not properly taken and that tenders were not properly awarded. 7.20 p.m.

The Honourable Member is going into a speech now.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I would want, Mr. Speaker, through you to thank the Honourable Member for the City for agreeing with me.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: The Airport 1985-1986, over \$4 million. What was the position with respect to the

tender? The Honourable Member for the City made the point that during her regime at least six polyclinics were built. I want the Honourable Member to get up and tell me for which of these polyclinics a contract was signed before it started for architectural purposes. Tell me anyone. Not one and you know this is true. Not one was signed so this - you do not like the word "witch-hunt" but before I sit down I am going to find the correct word. It is not a witch-hunt but I will find the truth. That is what I am seeking, the truth.

The next issue that I want to speak to, I am satisfied that this Resolution is not built on any strong ethical or moral grounds. This is a political issue. This is what this is. This is a political issue that we are going to live to see haunt the Honourable Member for St. Peter who was one who felt that the St. Joseph Hospital was a waste of time for his own constituents.

As I said, there is nothing moral about the Resolution. As a matter of fact, I am not even too sure...

Mr. SPEAKER: There is too much noise.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, I believe that you recognise the interruptions and that I will...

Mr. SPEAKER: Sure. You will be given the adequate time. Do not worry about it

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, the next issue I want to raise relates to the question of the overruns. It is so easy to state that the contract was for X dollars and that in the end X plus Y dollars was spent But we have to look at the final scope of work and there are a number of extensions and other additions which were done which were not in the original contract and I will give you an example.

The extension to the Administration Block, a new pharmacy, a new mortuary, a new laboratory, a new doctors* and nurses' lounge, landscaping, new airconditioning, the UPS standby generator, all of these are additions to the original contract so we cannot just state that there were costs overruns without trying to get to the bottom of the reasons for these overruns. Added to this, and you would agree, is the fact that any time one is undertaking renovations, one does not know with any degree of certainty the scope of work that one is going to finally be called upon to carry out. It is more or less a guesstimate. I had this experience when we repaired the building at the National Union of Public Workers where the original contract was for about \$75 000 and when the work started we ended up spending over a quarter million dollars.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have no difficulty in letting you speak for an hour. If Honourable Members do not want to behave you can speak *ad lib*. Continue.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to clear the issue with respect - I do not have the Resolution before me but clearly the Resolution spoke about the then Minister undertaking duties over and above those assigned to a Minister. It pointed to the question of recruitment One of the areas targeted was this area of recruitment. Anyone who has a passing acquaintance with human resource management, and more particularly with personnel management, would know that an interview or a talk with anyone was just one of several steps in the overall recruitment process.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West during the Public Accounts Committee admitted that on several occasions when he was a Minister of Government and he was overseas he spoke to Barbadians and entreated them to come back to Barbados not only to invest from a financial standpoint but from a human resource standpoint, that is, to come back and work. This is precisely what the Minister was doing and if I were to go away tomorrow I would do the same thing, Mr. Speaker. Any chance I have to encourage Barbadians to return to Barbados to serve the country I would do that and I would do it tomorrow.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. As I said, as a member of the Public Accounts Committee I have a duty to get up and disassociate myself from the remarks that were made which run contrary to what I know. As far as I am concerned a letter coming from the Permanent Secretary stated quite clearly that the Minister went on recruitment

Mr. SPEAKER: But that is not a point of order at this stage. Continue.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: As I was stating, it was not recruitment The Minister was not in a position to offer anyone any jobs with the attaching conditions of employment, with the attaching commencement date, termination date and so on so it could not be seen as recruitment It is something that any rightful, thinking, patriotic Minister would do, encourage Barbadians to return home to serve their country.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not understand why there has to be this cross-talk. Furthermore I am not so sure that you all were serious about the debate. I spent a long time trying to get it on track and now I have got it on track we are trying to derail it. Will Honourable Members observe Standing Orders?

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, as I said at the outset, the Resolution has its specific purposes which will not succeed. The Resolution has the same purposes that the marches had, and the marches did not succeed. 7.30 p.m.

There would be an ongoing attempt...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Order please. Your extra time is mounting. Your extra time is going. Order, please. You know at Christmas time we give bonuses.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not retracting what I am saying. I am a trade unionist at heart

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN There were persons and companies sympathetic on that side, Mr. Speaker, who have resisted unionisation in this country for several years who sent out the workers to march. That is what I mean by that. I am not talking about the genuine trade unionists who marched.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. I am going to continue to repeat what I have said. By accepting the kind of compromise Resolution that we have we have narrowed the scope of the debate to only what the parameters are and, therefore, I will not be permitting Members to go outside those parameters. I would say to the Honourable Member refrain from that direction.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Speaker, may I still rise on a point of order?

Certain remarks made by Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN and Hon. D. W. BOWEN were ordered, by Mr. SPEAKER, to be struck from the Record.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Honourable Member continue.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please, Order, please. Can I hear the Honourable Member for St Michael South Central? You have already accumulated 5 minutes and if they want to give you 5 minutes I am prepared to give you that.

Hon. D. W. BO WEN: Mr. Speaker, the mover of this Resolution is asking me, is asking this side to call for the resignation of a Minister who has brought a sense of dignity to the medical profession in Barbados, a Minister who has increased the role of nurses because we know the abysmal record that the Opposition had, when in Government, regarding training. The nursing complement at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was about 450 when the Honourable Member for the City....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going to allow the Honourable Member to broaden to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I think the Honourable Member should try to keep within the scope of the Resolution. Try to keep as close as possible to that.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker the nursing complement at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital when the Honourable Member for the City was the Minister of Health was about 450. She cannot deny that.

Mr. SPEAKER: I accept that as a passing comment. What I want to say to the Honourable Member is that I accept that as a passing comment but not for debating, at this point. Will the Honourable Member continue.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker the Honourable Member for the City is also asking this House to express a vote of No-Confidence or calling on the former Minister of Health to resign, a Minister who has almost singlehandedly presided over the establishment of the angiographic suite at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. These are signal achievements. They would not want to hear this.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one minute. It is a strange thing that senior Members in this Chamber - and I am going to say it - should set that kind of example to new Members who are now taking up that kind of thing. It is not going to happen in here. Senior Members shouting across the Chamber interrupting the debate. That hinges on the very question of what we are trying to debate in here. Will Honourable Members stop shouting across the Chamber.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, they are going to have to put up with me for several years to come, well into the year 2 000. I would not be like the Honourable Member for the City who is in and out, in and out. I would be in all the time.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has one minute. I have already given you overtime for the interruptions.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker I would wind up. I end where I started that this debate is not predicated on any ethical or moral grounds.

Certain remarks made by Hon. D. W. BOWEN were ordered by Mr. SPEAKER to be expunged from the Record.

,Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I rest my case, Mr. Speaker. The level of interruptions convince me that I have made my point

Asides.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING Hon. P.

M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, Sir,... *Asides.*

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot hear the Honourable Member.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: ...I am not quite sure how long we have been sitting but I know it is about time that we have a break and I am moving, Sir, that the sitting be suspended until 8.30 p.m. this evening.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly at 7.40 p.m.

RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: The sitting is resumed.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I joined this debate with some reservation. We are called to debate a Resolution which I would say at the onset is a Resolution that I would have some difficulty with. The Public Accounts Committee, during 1991-92 and during 1993, held a number of meetings to discuss, among many other things, the general conduct of public administrators towards the dispensation of public funds.

Sir, I took that Committee extremely serious and the then Honourable Chairman of that Committee would surely confirm that certainly with this Honourable Member, that he had tremendous support in terms of attendance at all of the Public Accounts Committee meetings.

Sir, very early in the sittings of the Public Accounts Committee meetings the Auditor General's Report became a focus for discussion and at a very early stage the Auditor General indicated to the Members of the Committee that breaches were occurring contrary to the Rules of the Financial Administration and Audit Act.

Sir, if you go back from 1972 to the last Auditor General's Report, together with Appropriation and other Accounts and come through every subsequent year you will find a number of comments in the report. For example, if you took the year ending March 1987 and you looked at page 16, Sir - Establishment - General Administration - Head 14.1 Appropriation Accounts - Expenditure totalling \$4 753 231.36 in the account agreed by the corresponding amount shown in the account of the Treasury. However this sum includes payments totalling \$199 858.93 which could not be readily verified because the relevant pay sheets were not made available for audit examination as requested.

Sir, if you go through several other Heads in these reports, under almost every Ministry within the system you will find that there have been breaches where offices have not been submitting the appropriate vouchers for proper auditing of the Public Accounts. That was what we considered in the Committee, a very serious breach and a matter which we had to address.

In addition to those breaches, Sir, the Auditor General drew our attention to the fact that under clauses 125, 126, 127, and 128 of the Financial Rules the ceiling fixed in relation to Government contracts had not been revised since 1979 - I think that was the year he said - and that there were genuine breaches of those rules. He suggested to the Committee that consideration should be given to fixing realistic limits based on inflation which had taken place since 1979.

Sir, Rules 125, 126, 127 and 128 referred to the award of contracts. I do not propose to read all of them because they form part of this document and I think you pretty well know what they say.

Basically 125 says, "Petty Contracts of job work involving expenditure not exceeding \$5 000 will be given out without tender...."

Rule 126 says, "Expenditure in respect of the supply of goods or the undertaking of works or services in excess of \$5 000 but less than \$25 000 may be arranged without tenders being invited..."

Rule 127 which we have some dispute over says very clearly, "Where the expenditure in respect of the supply of goods or the undertaking of work or services is in excess of \$25 000 tenders shall be invited by the department concerned and a contract drawn up in a form approved by the Solicitor General or another legal officer appointed by him shall be entered into between the Accounting Officer or the officer authorised to act on his behalf and the successful tenderer."

Sir, the Financial Rules identify the Accounting Officer as follows: 4(1) An accounting officer is

The Accounting Officer in each department, Sir, is in our understanding, the Permanent Secretary of that respective Ministry. The Permanent Secretary is the Chief Accounting Officer so I do not want anybody to believe that it is some accountant. The Chief Accounting Officer is the Permanent Secretary.

Section 4(1) says "an Accounting Officer is personally responsible for the efficient and prudent conduct of the financial business of the department of which he is appointed accounting officer." The votes are regarded as entrusted to him and it is his duty to ensure that the funds expended are applied only for the purposes intended by Parliament.

Section 5 says "the Accounting Officer must be prepared to account to the House of Assembly through the Public Accounts Committee for the regularity and propriety of the expenditure of votes and accounts and for the receipt of public moneys for which he is responsible."

Sir, section 127 makes absolutely no reference to the Minister having any business to do with the awarding of contracts or entering into any agreement with anybody. Sir, my understanding of this issue is that these rules do not apply to the Minister or any Minister and I think, Sir, that is where we have a divide.

Now, when the Report was filed, Sir, I found myself in a peculiar position where I had to acknowledge that breaches were occurring within the system. Sir, these breaches are wrong. I think we have to send a message to the public service officers. The Members over there all have a responsibility to the public. Certainly the Government Members on this side also recognise that we have a responsibility to ensure that public money is being properly spent and properly accounted for. We have a record, Sir, and we supported the Opposition because they chaired that committee. Now, I divide on them because my interpretation of the rules does not include my Minister, the Minister whom we are presently discussing a motion against

One of the difficulties we have, Sir, is that the press got hold of several innuendos, totally unrelated to what the Committee of Public Accounts was conducting. In all fairness to the Members of the Committee I really do not support the view that there is any witch-hunt because I know that those Members over there treated persons who came before the Committee with a lot of respect. Sir, that is true. They treated them with a lot of respect. In fact they treated them with the kind of respect that was beyond the limit to some extent. Because, Sir, even when they brought people before the Committee based on innuendoes that

had been thrown out by the Press and interrogated them for two and a half hours - I am talking about Mr. Leo Leacock. After it was done, Sir, they treated him with champagne and they said that we have to play a little politics. None of them can dispute that They treated him to champagne and they said, "Leo, boy, we have to play a little politics. I know you would understand". Mr. Speaker, I had some of the champagne too. In other words, I do not really support the view that there was any witch-hunt. They treated Mr. Leacock properly, Sir, and they satisfied themselves that Mr. Leacock was in order and they celebrated that by giving him champagne. 8.40 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I know that the Honourable Member has a lineage of joking behind him. What he said, Sir, has not happened in the memory of any of us. Nobody was fighting with anybody. But I do not know what all of this talk about champagne is all about

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, he opened the champagne. I do not tell lies. That is a fact.

Mr. SPEAKER: Remember that you are speaking to the Chair when you say "he".

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: I withdraw that remark. The Honourable Member for St. Peter opened the champagne, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir. This is a very serious matter because the implication is being cast that members of the Committee after having met entertained a witness before that Committee to champagne and that I was the person who opened the champagne. I want to say that there was no such event as part of the activities of the Public Accounts Committee nor was I part of any such event in which the Honourable Member now wants to attach to me. I want to say that categorically and I really ask that all of that be struck from the record.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I really am surprised because I just threw that in because it is a fact. I am surprised that the Honourable Member who has recently attained leadership in this country would willfully get up and say something that he knows that he was very much part of an exercise where they gave Mr. Leacock champagne. Mr. Henry Forde, the Members for Christ Church West and St. Michael South East, and Mr. Leacock were present. I also was present. That is a fact so you must not say that because it is true.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. I know of Parliament providing lunch for the Committee on one occasion when I rather believe that the caterer provided wine. The Auditor-General went on and, in fact, I followed to try to get him back to have lunch. That is the only

occasion that I can recall and I rather believe that whoever were the witnesses on that day joined the Committee. That is the only occasion that I recall that lunch was provided for the Committee but not at the other meetings.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I hate to be distracted but this did not take place in the lunchroom. It took place in the Leader of the Opposition's chambers in the back room.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Certainly, I had no champagne in the office when I was the Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Member well knows that I myself do not drink.

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: You cannot attack me because I am very clear in my mind where I stand. Mr. Speaker, that afternoon prior to that meeting I was invited into a corner by two members of the Public Accounts Committee and they gave me the impression that the Honourable Minister of Health at that time had received money for doing interviews in London. This is how it was put to me, Sir. An entry from the Ministry of Finance says in one column: "Paid to the Honourable Branford Taitt \$17,000 for interviews in London".

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I too is a member of this Committee. I want to state for the record, Sir, that at no time that I as a member of the Public Accounts Committee, did any person enter any room to discuss any payment to a Minister or anything else. I want to say that for the record as far as I am concerned. I want to know who did that.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, that disturbed me very badly. When we were in the Committee, I deliberately provoked the question to Mr. Leacock. I have copies of the verbatim report that should have been laid because the Committee agreed that every verbatim report would have been laid along with the progress reports that was submitted by the Project Officer. All of those reports we agreed in the Committee would be part of this document today. 8.50 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. Sir, members only beg to lay a report in this House. Ministers on that side will beg to lay a report They do not physically come and put them on the table. The Report and all the minutes and the verbatim evidence on the day before this Report was sought to be laid in this House were handed by the Leader of the Opposition at the time to the Clerk who was servicing the Committee and he was told that the Report would be laid the next day. All of those documents had a right to be on the Table.

The Chairman came and moved a motion that he would lay the Report and begged at the time to lay the Report. Let us go back to the minutes of June 22nd or whenever it was. The Chairman came in here and stood to his feet

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He begged to lay the Report which was in the hands of the Cleric and they should have been laid on the Table. Everything was together.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a point of order, Sir, on Tuesday the Report was laid and the Honourable Member came in and he said there are only 2 copies of this Report. He had 2 copies in his hand which were bound and there were no attachments, no anything else and the Honourable Member sitting in that chair laid the Report This has been my contention and there were no...

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: What went to the printers and what was sent to Members, if the Report was properly laid, the verbatim report or some reference to it would have been made and circulated to Members. No verbatim report was ever laid.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of privilege, Sir. My name has been removed from the Public Accounts Committee as a member of the Committee of Public Accounts. I was likewise an *ex-officio* member of the Management Commission and it has not been removed so that I do not understand the reason why my name was removed. Since allegations are being made, let me make it clear that when I was Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee it was made absolutely clear that the verbatim reports with every document was to be laid before that Committee. The Honourable Member was on it, Sir. So there is no misunderstanding of the position. Those documents are within the bosom of the House. If any Honourable Member wants them they are there to be seen.

I have never seen the verbatim reports of Committees published but I have seen the reports of Select Committees published without the verbatim report The verbatim report is normally brought here and made available.

I have served on several Select Committees of this House so the Honourable Member knows that. That is why I am raising the matter. The verbatim reports are there. They are not being hidden from anybody. The Honourable Members can look at them. They are there to be seen by any Member of the House.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: If a document is laid in the House it becomes a public document and every member of the world should be able to read that document. One of the deficiencies of this document which I alluded to from the very beginning...

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now, the Honourable Member cannot sit and speak from his chair. That is totally disrespectful of the Chair.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I have alluded from the very beginning that the Report was incomplete. Even the letter that was written to the Honourable Member which should have formed part of the appendices because it is standard procedure in the House of Assembly. If there is a committee that took evidence, that evidence has to form part of the Report because the Committee is reporting back to the House and therefore if it took evidence the evidence should appear.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think from time to time you would probably get these little variations but what I want to say as well is that I want to draw to Honourable Members' attention we are not really discussing the Report because Standing Orders provide that if we want to discuss a report it should be brought as a motion. That has not happened; but inasmuch as it was laid in the House it certainly can be alluded to where members can use it for that purpose.

I am saying that whatever may be the problems at this moment we can only allude to what was laid on the Table.

Will the Honourable Member continue.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, as I was saying, I was presented with information that suggested that the Honourable Minister had received money for doing interviews in London. That annoyed me as a member of that Committee. I was upset to learn or be given the impression that the Minister had taken money for doing interviews. Immediately on leaving, in fact, I called and made contact with the Minister from here and I was provided with information that sought to identify exactly what the expenditure was directed for.

Our understanding was that the Minister was provided with a budget of some \$17 000 and he completed his expenditure and returned some \$200 or \$300 to the Permanent Secretary. I am really not getting into that business at all. Neither would I like to dwell on the business dealing with the recruiting. Sir, I am not dealing with that aspect of it. The itinerary that was presented did suggest that the Minister was indeed recruiting people.

As I have made the point to several people, I think it is proper and in order for any Minister whether on this side of the House or that side that if they are in an environment where they can influence overseas nationals to return home I think they should do so.

I think the Minister's itinerary during the period May 1991 from the 16th when he arrived from Geneva and went to the hotel to address West Indian nurses, 75 of them as I understand, when he left one day after and addressed another group of Barbadian nationals at the Joseph Chamberlain College in Birmingham and then he had discussions with the High Commissioner and the Deputy High Commissioner and then he addressed Barbadian nationals at Moat College... Sir, I can make this a document of the House if we want it.

I have no difficulty, Sir, as long as I realise there are breaches within the system. I think we must be man or woman enough to stand up and say that there are breaches occurring within the system. I have no difficulty with that. But when people want to take those breaches and use political ploys to destroy an honourable person, a person who has given dedicated and tremendous service to this country, I have to divide with them.

Asides.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: I signed the Report and I can speak very clearly about it. I signed the Report because in my own conscience I recognise that breaches are occurring within the system and I think breaches should not occur. I think I should be man enough to stand up and say so; but I do not believe that the Minister is guilty of committing the breaches. I said so in the Report. I will say something else, Mr. Speaker, What further provoked me was that the newspapers in this country the very next morning even though I put in a minority report indicating that I did not consider that the Minister was culpable still published in the newspapers that I said that the Minister of Health was guilty.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I just wish to say that if you have received a minority report from that member of the Committee, then this side and I certainly have not received the minority report. He said he put in a minority report.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas were ordered to be expunged from the records by Mr. SPEAKER. 9.00 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAUT: When the Honourable Member for Christ Church West laid the Report he said that the Honourable Member for St. Michael East found himself...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I heard him, Sir. I heard him say that the Honourable Member for St Michael East had indicated that he could not support an aspect of the Report and he had signed accordingly and that is in the Report The two Reports that were filed had a note in them about section 127 of the Financial Rules which was signed by the Honourable Member.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St Thomas made certain remarks just now to the effect that I do not have the intelligence...

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already struck them from the record even so because it does not form part of the point of order.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: If you want to play politics I will play politics. Let me know.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Honourable Member lower his voice.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker,...

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment This debate needs to be continued according to what the rules say. I want to make a point on points of order. We are having a number of points of order in which they are not really points of order. They are just wasting time. What I want to say is that I will be sticking firmly to Rule 32:

"No member may interrupt another member except by rising on a point of order when the member speaking shall resume his seat and the member interrupting shall simply direct attention to the point of order which he desires to bring to the notice and to submit it to the Speaker or Chairman for decision."

The truth is I am not accepting any getting up and saying point of order and proceeding with something else. The point of order must be directed to what the member considers to be a breach of the rules in some way of .the House. Any long interruptions will be removed from the records of the House. Continue.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, the point of order I want to make relates to the representation of the Honourable Member about the minority report I will draw Honourable Members' attention to paragraph 89 of the Report of the Public Accounts Committee in which it

is expressly stated "Mr. Tudor has expressed his reservation as to whether Rule 127 applies to the Minister. Signed: J. Tudor."

Also paragraph 124.1.

"The Honourable David Bowen, M.P. has expressed his reservation that he is not fully convinced that the Minister's action can properly be classified as recruitment in the strictest industrial relations use of that term. No evidence was adduced to show that the Minister made any firm offer to any person who subsequently accepted that offer and undertook employment at the Hospital. In the circumstances Mr. Bowen reserves his approval of paragraph 124 of this Report and his reservations are recorded in the Minutes of the Proceedings of this Committee."

When I laid the document I also said that Mr. Bowen had explained to me that he was not signing the Report but he intended at some time to lay a minority report but I had not received that minority report up to that time. I wish Honourable Members would not misrepresent my position because it is quite clearly stated here and that is the position.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, the point that I am making is that at no time was I of the view that the Minister was to be held responsible or culpable for the breaches of the Financial Administration and Audit Act I signed the Report and wrote my reservation into the report. We were told that only two copies of the interim Report would be printed and the only two copies that would be available were to be laid in the House. By the next morning the Press was saying that I signed the Report saying that the Minister was culpable. The copies of the Report I know were made at the private office of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. I am not accusing him of giving them to the Press but it is a strange...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. Let it be clear because the Minutes of the Committee show that certain members of the Committee were asked to do the drafting and members of the Committee did the drafting. It is a fact that we could not get the work done in Parliament. It was put on my computer and two copies were punched out....

Aside.

Certain remarks made by Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS were ordered by Mr. SPEAKER to be expunged from the records.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will probably have to ask the Honourable Member to withdraw.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: I beg your pardon, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: This exercise and episode is worse than what is purported to be the Resolution we are discussing. I would never have thought after paying such tributes to a distinguished person who elevated this Chamber that we would see the products of today's Chamber reducing Parliament to a level worse than what we find at the street corner. I have said over and over again Parliament is a special place. It is not a place for any and every sort of thing going on. It has its rules and regulations. I will not sit here and allow the dignity of Parliament to be reduced to such a level. And, moreso, when it comes from senior Members I will ask them simply to walk through the door and do not return until I say when. All of that has been removed and, from now on, until we have finished the debate, I do not want to experience that kind of exercise again. Is this what we want to televise? It will not be permitted by me when we expect persons to set good examples in a community which is suffering from examples all around, political, religious or what have you. Parliament should set the lead. I have done today what many presiding officers will not do. I have compromised my own position for what I consider the correct procedure for this particular exercise. But because Parliament wanted to do it I said I would take my position and I will compromise it I am not even setting it as a precedent because I do not consider it a precedent. But I consider it an exercise in promoting democracy and freedom of speech in this Chamber. 9.10 p.m.

I am pleading to Honourable Members, if they need to have this debate to continue, I will not accept that kind of behaviour any more. Please let us have a debate that is centred on the Resolution and the conditions which it sets out Will the Honourable Member continue.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the concerns that I had was that the press were waging a bundle of innuendoes. And whoever leaked the information to the press betrayed the trust of the Committee when they indicated that they would only produce 2 copies. But they did not know that I had hand written my reservation into the Report The copy that went out to the press did not have my hand written reservation. That is where they ran into trouble. Because the Honourable Member that leaked it, Sir, to continue the show in the press to convince the members of the public that the Honourable Minister, Leo Leacock and all these people carried away money, they had to find some sort of credibility to carry to the press to convince the public that even the members of the Government agree that the Minister is a thief. I have to disassociate from that kind of behaviour.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I laid the Report of this Committee. I have the proceedings of the House Debates on that date the 22nd June. I will draw Your Honour's attention to pages 3651 and 3660 in which I made the position absolutely clear. I had asked earlier for your leave to defer the item Reports from Select Committees. I had informed the House that we were going to lay the Report which had been signed by some Members and that I was waiting for 2 other Members to sign. Later that day before the Honourable Member for St Michael West moved for the House's adjournment I laid the Report as commanded by the Public Accounts Committee and went on to say that each section of the Report had been put to and been approved paragraph by paragraph by Members of the Committee, either approved or amended and then approved. The Report has been duly signed. I now quote from Hansard:

"The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has asked me however to state that subject to the reservation which he made yesterday and his not being too sure of the Terms of Reference of the Committee, he will not sign the Report but will, in due course, issue a Minority Report.

The Report however has been approved in Committee by all members of the Committee. I therefore beg to lay the Interim Report of the Public Accounts Committee dated June 22, 1993. I am laying 2 copies and I ask that they be printed."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have allowed me to read from Hansard. I want to get the record straight, because one of the things I was extremely careful about was to ensure that the 2 copies of the Report which I had in my possession were laid in the House.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: That is for you all to go and find out, not for me. I want it put in the records of this House that up to the time that I had responsibility as Chairman of the Committee, no press report was given by me or by any Member of the Committee. I raised the matter of press reports in Committee on more than one occasion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Has the Honourable Member concluded his speech? I repeat, I will not entertain any further discussion that would lead one to conclude that we are discussing the Report as it stands. Each side of Parliament had an opportunity to bring the Report for debate before the House. None of them has so done and therefore the Report is just laying on the Table for action.

What we are really doing and I repeat again is that we are only alluding to the Report. Therefore I will not

entertain any full scale debate on the Public Accounts Committee Report as such. You may allude to it, probably make your point but there will not be any full scale debate on such.

Certain remarks made by Mr. J. O. TUDOR were ordered[^] by Mr. SPEAKER, to be expunged from the Record.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I am just recalling that it is a fact that the very next day comments relative to the Interim Report that had been laid in Parliament were published in the press the very next day. They offended me because they suggested that I joined with other members for credibility of the Report to say that the Minister was culpable. I have a divide because, at no time, and if they are genuine members they will all accept that I never, ever accepted that the Minister was culpable.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member should conclude. The Honourable Member has 2 minutes to conclude.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Sir, they took up 40 minutes of my time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Your time would have expired at 9.05. But I have given even more than 15 minutes.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry I did not get an opportunity to explain a few of the deliberate acts of that Report as well. I must explain one other before I wind up.

The Interim Report deals with sections 8(1) and 8(2) of the Financial Administration and Audit Act Rules. It deliberately leaves out 8(3). This Report leaves out section 8(3) of the Financial Administration and Audit Act Rules. 8(3) says that if the Minister adheres to a decision he shall communicate that decision in writing to the accounting officer who shall accept the decision and carry it into effect, Sir. At no time, Sir, can anybody within the Committee produce any evidence in writing to indicate that the Minister directed his Ministry down a particular path of awarding anything to any body and I will not, under any conditions support any motion of no-confidence against the Honourable Minister in question. 9.20 p.m.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I think we have been on this for a while now and I think we have to come back on this particular matter on another day. All I am doing at this point, Sir, is moving that further consideration in this matter be postponed.

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 have spoken to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and we agreed that we would do two Bills which were read a first time this morning. These are Bills relating to the Handicraft Workers pensions and pension payable to Mr. Watson.

I move, Sir, that Government business should be taken in order that we may dispose of these two matters.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government business is the order. Order No. 6.

ORDER NO. 6 - THE HANDICRAFT WORKERS PENSIONS BILL, 1993

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, this Bill seeks legislative approval to pay to certain workers who were employed as handicraft workers pension and a reduced gratuity. By an Act of Parliament the Barbados Investment Development Corporation replaced the Industrial Development Corporation and the Export Promotion Corporation with effect from 1st December 1992. The new Corporation at that time dismantled the handicraft division and as a consequence terminated the employment of Frank Watson, Arlene Bourne-Welch, Gene Brereton and lone Butcher who were employed there as well.

These 4 workers were once officers of the Handicraft Development Centre which went under the supervision of the Welfare Department until the Cabinet Meeting of 1967. The Handicraft Development Centre was transferred to the Ministry of Trade, Tourism, Community Development and Youth Affairs. In 1971 it was placed under the aegis of the Industrial Development Corporation. As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, it was thought necessary to bring this legislation before Parliament to seek Parliament's approval for the payment of retirement for these persons.

In the case of lone Butcher, Mr. Speaker, it is a gratuity of \$40 525 and a reduced pension of \$9 726. In the case of Gene Brereton a gratuity of \$40 525 and a reduced pension of \$9 726. In the case of Arlene Bourne-Welch a gratuity of \$51 723 with a reduced pension of \$12 413. Mr. Speaker, there is a special Bill for Mr. Frank Watson because Mr. Frank Watson's case is different and he is entitled under the salary paid by IDC which was higher than his old salary to a gratuity of \$60 625 and a reduced pension of \$14 550.

These two Bills before the Parliament are necessary since the Auditor General said there were no legal arrangements under which these persons could have been

paid their gratuity and pension otherwise and therefore I now seek Parliament's approval of this Bill before the House to enable the gratuity and reduced pension to be paid to lone Butcher, Gene Brereton and Arlene Bourne-Welch.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I beg to second it, Sir.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I am not satisfied with the manner in which the Government handled this business because I said from the time I heard about the amalgamation that Government should have sat down and worked out the details so that the people's money could be paid as quickly as possible. What has happened is that these people would have incurred lots of bills waiting for this and some of them, I have heard the names but I am not going to call the names of persons, have been embarrassed because they owe people and the people have been on to them. I told Government there ought to be better arrangements to facilitate people who are severed.

When this matter of amalgamation came before this Chamber the Opposition told Government then that these were some of the problems that they would have to face up to. I am not happy that at this time of the evening, just before Christmas that this matter is being dealt with.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: You are talking about after Christmas. It should have been paid ever since. There are many other persons within the service who have been severed who have not been paid and I am hoping that Government realises that delay in paying severance money will cause undue hardship to those persons. I am happy to support it because these persons have suffered enough but I would hope that in future when Government is thinking in terms of amalgamation and it involves the laying off of people that they will do their business better. At the same time I want to make this quite clear. Do not do it the way you are doing it, laying off these people and bringing in new persons to work. That is what is happening. In the same corporation these persons have been severed, they are now going to be paid out but persons have been recruited and are working fresh. It is not a fair practise. It is a way of getting rid of persons who are alleged to have supported a party other than the Government in power. You must not do it that way. I am seeing it happening with this. Some of these persons should have been retained. That is the point I am making. They did not opt for severance.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Private operation what? It can't be a private operation when Government money is involved. Don't let me open up the debate. I know the

handicraft section. You have gone out there and virtually closed down the handicraft section and you are still asking people... What kind of viable tourism product do you have when you have shut down what was once a viable handicraft section? I understand what this is all about. These people once had jobs that they could turn to. Now you have severed them and thinking because you have come in here to ask Parliament for approval to pay them that is satisfactory.

Let me say this to you. The money you are paying people is not enough for them. The people still have to look for work and there is no work out there. I would have preferred your keeping the people or finding ways and means of finding them work, rather than being happy with a situation where you fire people and then talk about compensating them in terms of gratuity and severance. It is not a tenable situation and I want the Minister to understand what I am talking about. He knows of what I speak. Persons from abroad came in and are filling some of these jobs and are well paid. I would hope that you reconsider some of these people for employment. I think that would satisfy me. Give them the piece of change but make sure that they are re-employed in some other capacity.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, first let me explain that this was a last resort. There was a technical difficulty. The Auditor General said he had no legal authority to pay and we looked at it and decided the only way we could do it was by getting a Bill before Parliament and this is why it is before Parliament. Just for information, the handicraft section has been privatised and there is now a new company called Pelican Pride and Industry which is formed by most of the old members of the Industrial Development Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time. 9.30 p.m.

The question that the Bill be passed was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 through 4 were called and passed.

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

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

ORDER NO. 7 - A BILL ENTITLED THE WATSON PENSION ACT, 1993

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, this is on the same occasion but this is one for Mr. Frank Watson. I beg that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

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

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, that concludes Government Business for the moment. I do not want to say for the day, Sir, and I will move that the sitting be now suspended until December 17, 1993 at 10 o'clock in the morning to resume consideration of the Private Members' motion on other matters as are convenient

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 9.40 p.m.

RESUMPTION Mr. SPEAKER:

This sitting is now resumed.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that Private Members' Business be resumed. When the adjournment was taken we had moved that further consideration of No. 5 on Private Members' Business be postponed. I now propose that we resume consideration of that order.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I rise to take part in this debate and to put certain matters into true perspective. I am a member of the Public Accounts Committee set up by this Parliament which, as you know, Sir, consists of 4 Members from the Opposition and 3 Members from the Government. Therefore, I have an interest and I also want to state here that I have a bounded duty, a moral duty to myself, to this Parliament and to the wider Barbados to denounce any criticism that I feel is unjustified and unfair. Untrue statements will find no favour with this Honourable Member.

I sat here during the course of the debate last Tuesday and listened attentively to contributions made from Members on this side as well as Members from the Other side and I was very shocked to hear certain statements in this Honourable Chamber. It is unfortunate that they were made in here because at a time when the young people of Barbados are looking for role models, at a time when the interest in politics has waned significantly and we as politicians are trying to inculcate in the young people an interest in politics, we have got coming from some Members rather irresponsible and far from truthful statements. It is regrettable.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now, I am prepared to keep this debate on line. I think the Honourable Member should look at the conditions set out in the Resolution. I am not saying that you cannot respond to other Members; but I am not allowing this debate to extend very far away from that

I want to repeat. There is nothing wrong with responding but Members should bear in mind that the Resolution sets out the terms of the debate clearly and therefore my ruling is according to that

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I know the parameters. I have been around for a very long time and I am not seeking to be irrelevant. Although I thank you for your guidance, I want to assure you that it is my duty and I feel I have a responsibility to try to uphold the integrity

of politicians, especially in this Honourable Chamber. I have a duty.

When I listen here and hear an Honourable Member, and I am going to be particular, the Honourable Member for St Michael East get up in here and say that there was a party being held in the Opposition office and I was present drinking champagne I am going to take issue with that.

Mr. Speaker, for the records, on the 26th day of April of this year I was 52 years. On the 26th day of this year I attended a Public Accounts Committee and on the 26th day of April this year that is the day that the Honourable Member was referring to.

I want to put things in its proper perspective. After the meeting of the Public Accounts Committee the Chairman of the St Joseph Hospital Board invited me to take him home, to give him a drop because he did not have transportation. I volunteered but on my way down my colleagues recognising that I was 52 on that day decided to...

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: It worries me. That was not and is not an unusual thing. Let me proceed because I know what the impressions are and what is written in the records. The Honourable Member for St Michael East was not invited but he came to that Chamber. It is part of the records and I have a duty to defend....

Mr. SPEAKER: No one is going to tell me how to conduct this debate. I have already said that the Public Accounts Committee Report has not been debated. I would allow reference to be made to it but I am not allowing any full debate on such. If you are making a reference to something in the Public Accounts Committee, quite well. I will allow the Member to make a reference but not a full scale debate on it

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. SPEAKER. 10.10 a.m.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, as I said, it was not my wish to get involved in this. This is not my style but, after all, what I had to suffer in the past because of innuendos and statements made, I could not live with this because my family was asking me what had transpired so I said I would come in here and explain it because the Press carried it and I felt it was my duty to say that there was no witch hunt and no such thing transpired. I felt I had a duty to explain this to this Honourable Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, we must get back to the debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: Precisely. This is what I am saying.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The Resolution before this Chamber calls on the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was then Minister of Health, to resign and the introducer of this Resolution...

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order. Just one minute. I am not going to allow any kind of disruptions in this Chamber. We have a very important matter before us which must be dealt with in the correct way, as I see it. Honourable Members may not always see it the way I see it but the way I see it, it must be done in the correct way. I am not allowing any kind of interference with any Member. Will the Honourable Member please proceed.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Yes. The Honourable Member for the City who introduced this Resolution sought to establish the reasons why she felt following the tradition of the Westminster system the Honourable Member should resign. We have seen no-confidence motions in this Chamber and they all serve a purpose. They assist us to correct some of the problems inherent in our parliamentary system. I do not believe that a resolution of this sort is prefaced by malice. I feel that it is an attempt to find a solution to problems to see how best we could improve our parliamentary system and to see how best we could look at areas that have plagued and concerned us over the years. It is not sufficient to say, because it happened in the past, that it should continue. Let us understand that We must come closer to the reality and understand that we are living in 1993 going to 1994 and I, as an Honourable Member, recognise that things in the past were badly done. What we are trying to do is to highlight certain things to try and see if we could put in place the mechanisms in order to safeguard a recurrence of these things.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say this. I find difficulty, and I have raised this matter with the Honourable Member for St. Michael West - I spoke to him. He and I speak. I said in the very Act, the St Joseph Hospital Act, it sets out very clearly, in section 5(1) that there are certain persons named in the Act who may be authorised to act on behalf of that very Board. That is why I said that I felt that we needed to look at that particular area. Since this is a debate we could not so explore all the areas and have the corrections done. I thought that if a Resolution came here and it was cited that we could look at it because that Act says that the Chairman, two officers named are the only ones... Let me be specific, Mr. Speaker.

It says at 5(1) "The Board may delegate such of its function as it thinks expedient for the purpose of effective transacting the day-to-day business of the Board to the Chairman, the Hospital Administrator, any committee

appointed by the Board or to any of its officers." Having read this Act and having been part and parcel of making a contribution to the passing of this Act, I cannot find an interpretation or any way in this Act which says that the Board was authorised to delegate any power or authorised the Minister other than those persons named in the Act to do work on its behalf.

I am saying that the Board could have acted *ultra vires* and this is my contention, going outside of his powers. I am also saying that the Minister or any Minister must be able to recognise when something *ultra vires* is being done. I am only saying that. You need not be a lawyer. All I am saying for clarification and guidance is whether you can take this section here and interpret it to cover what was being done. Let us face it People may say you are witch-hunting or you are going after someone. That is not the point. I am not quoting what someone was saying...

Mr. SPEAKER: I want to make it explicitly clear. When that word was used I took the Honourable Member for Christ Church West's offence to the word and I said that I would prefer the Honourable Member to use different language. This in itself meant that I did not accept the word.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I take your word, Mr. Speaker. What I am saying is that the Committee, of which I am a member, went about its task to examine all areas of irregularities and it also took a deliberate decision to look at other areas which it felt could improve the system of auditing. Now that is it and that is why the St. Joseph Hospital was dealt with.

I must say that there were so many other areas that the Public Accounts Committee dealt with and that it is rather unfortunate that people would seek to think that the Public Accounts Committee occupied its attention only with the area of the St. Joseph Hospital. It is unfortunate. I must say that there were other recommendations that were made to the Auditor General. I will say this because that is why I said I want to put things in its true and proper perspective.

It was the comments of the Auditor General that caused the Public Accounts Committee to pursue this work in this manner. Therefore, there could not be any pre-occupied idea to go about its work in a particular fashion. This is what the Public Accounts Committee had to do. Now if you find something that is wrong or questionable, is it not right and fair that we draw it to this Parliament's attention? I submit that is fair. What I have said repeatedly is this. If it is that the Permanent Secretary wrote the letter stating that the Minister was directing him to do it then I feel something is wrong with our

system because the Permanent Secretary has a bounding duty as an accounting officer to advise the Minister. Where he feels that the Financial Rules will be breached or when he feels it is impinging on the Law he has a duty.

I am saying that the Minister might not know but I am saying as a Minister, or any Minister in our parliamentary system he has a duty to give guidance. Now this is it that this might be a sin of omission. If we do not want to improve the ministerial system what are you telling me? Are you saying that the Minister is paid to advise his Ministry on things that would affect the country and he cannot do that? I am saying that is where I take issue. I feel that the Minister was not vigilant enough and he should have recognised that. 10.20 am.

I am saying this, even when the contract for 16% was awarded and there was a significant change of 4%, Mr. Speaker, from 16% to 20% for the contractual services, I am going to suggest very strongly that the Minister should have recognized that. It was a very serious blunder. It would have impacted on the economic situation of Barbados because let me tell you what it means in money terms. If you have \$20 million expended on the Hospital, 4% of \$20 million is \$800 000. That is what has happened. At this time and during the time of this St Joseph Hospital business people were laid off, the civil servants cannot get their increase. That \$800 000 that comes out of the Consolidated Fund should have gone towards keeping those people in work or for the purpose of paying the civil servants their 8%. The \$800 000 could have assisted, could have been saved. Prudent management demanded that something should have been done and the \$800 000 could have been spent on the unfinished building in St John, the polyclinic. Go to St John and you will see what I am talking about. When you have cost overrun and a prudent management takes over it means that other projects will suffer and we the taxpayers will be called upon to pay that money. The welfare services will suffer because the poor people cannot get their money because that money has to be paid out to contractors. That is ministerial irresponsibility.

If we do not find ways and means to correct the situation you are opening the floodgates and I do not want to be any part of a political system that opens or lends to people doing any and everything, breach in the law. We are followed very closely in these times, Mr. Speaker, when times are good, people would allow a lot of things to happen and go unnoticed. In these critical times, people are dotting the "Is" and crossing the "Ts" and all of us in here Government as well as Opposition and you, Sir, Mr. Speaker, as a politician are being condemned by the public. We are ridiculed.

All I am seeking to do and this Resolution is seeking to do is to find out what can be done to discipline a Minister under whose department these things take place.

Mr. Speaker, do you know what disturbs me? Even in trying to find ways and means of bringing a Resolution, we are not quite clear, although we boast of following the Westminster system. Something has to be wrong. Because I know by convention in England and it is only by convention, there is no law which says that a minister must resign if something goes wrong in his department. But in Britain if something had happened in his Ministry or even if some criticism, a scandal or rumour took place in his Ministry the Minister would tender his resignation. That is the reason why such a Resolution was brought here. Nobody is going for the job either of the Honourable Member for St Michael West. We are saying that as a Minister it is unfortunate that he had to be the presiding Minister. But this could have happened with any other Minister. We want to make sure that we highlight these things and find ways and means of dealing with them.

Mr. Speaker, I am no fool I know that some things were done and from time to time Ministers would renege on their responsibility. But this debate today will assist greatly in sending the message to Ministers at present and in the future that this sort of behaviour will not be condoned and that they must be more vigilant and they must be prudent in dealing with matters pertaining to the public purse and public expenditure.

It is not sufficient to come in here and say... the Honourable Members can say what they feel like in defence of your colleague. I expect that. I expect even to have a majority vote on this. I am no fool but I am saying this. It is a pity that some people cannot stand up like men and chastise your own and warn them to desist from certain things. All the defence coming from the Government and maybe trying to ridicule the Opposition and say what happened in the past by the Barbados Labour Party. That will not suffice. It can be said but I am not talking about that because I say I am not going to be responsible for what my father says. I stand to be judged in my individual capacity. I am saying that we have to understand this.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The Honourable Members on that side must recognize that we have had signs in Barbados of persons losing faith in the political leadership of this country. That is why people are out there wagging their tongues on us. Let us fool yourselves in here today. Fool yourselves as Government Members. Fool yourself that you have scored a psychological battle, you have got numbers and you are able to counter attack the Opposition and think that that is justified. The public will judge you. Because they will be watching. They would

say to you, you did not chastise. That is what they are saying. I do not want to hear that defence.

The Honourable Member and I have a good relationship but I say he is wrong on this occasion. A sin of imprudence. He did not see to it that things were done in a manner that I feel should come from a good Minister.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, when the Minister sets about to state publicly about this thing about the small man; Let me say this to the Government Ministers through you, Mr. Speaker. That is not going to go down well with the public. Forget this small man business. Make sure that whatever you do is done in a democratic, above the board and fair and just manner. My advice to Ministers present and future. Do not tell me that you could justify the gravamen of a contract and say that it is done because you know as a small man. That is not enough. Let us realize, the public is not buying that.

Let me say something about it. There are a lot of small men out there who are catching their royal bellies and they cannot get any work. Do not let them say I am with the Government because they got in. A lot of them are just scrutiny, scrambling.

I would say something about this contract. It was an open-ended contract. It is the worst type of contract ever to be entered into. There should have been a fixed price contract or a contract with a figure allowing for certain changes and amendments to it. Let me tell the Government now they are not fooling people that because a contract is not written that it is not a contract, because it is not a written contract in the contract. A verbal contract with certain ingredients that contributes to a contract. It can be varied only by the agent. Do not come in here and fool the public. When you entered with Sandiford and Small or whatever have you, that was a contract. Do not say it was not written. And then you are going to justify that the Barbados Labour Party Government did not have a written contract. Do not fool the people with that. Tell the people the truth. The Government sought to justify, sought to go back to trace where a contract was not entered into. Do not mislead the people. I am no lawyer but I understand that. 10.30 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, you like me understand the law and they cannot force us to accept their explanation. What they must understand is this because the type of contract that was entered into is a bad contract. Let me explain to you why I said it is bad and the Minister should know and the Minister must understand. The same man that you gave the contract to he was allowed to build, pull down, replace and he was paid a percentage of the work that he also authorised. That is some kind of mad contract? That is the maddest contract I have ever heard about. You tell a fellow

come to your house, pull down and whatever you replace, the eventual cost, you charge me a percentage on that. What I am saying is this. Who knows whether he put in three toilets, the plumbing was bad and he pulled it down and then he went back at the same thing. The eventual cost is what the man's 20% is based on. Now tell me something. We have something in here to be proud of when we come to this?

Mr. SPEAKER: One minute more.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, these are the things and I will contend that these are the things that you have to look at. I am asking the Government at this time to examine that. I know that Permanent Secretaries have a way when they want to please a Minister they allow these to go and they catch the Minister - Permanent Secretaries have their agenda too - that is right and I am going to say to the Minister, you are still the Minister and I am going to advise you to be very, very careful with the advice you get coming from your officers.

Mr. Speaker, let me say this. This whole thing about the St. Joseph Hospital did not come from the Public Accounts Committee, it came from the Ministry in exchanges of correspondence pertaining to the cheque that the Minister had received. It came from the Ministry of Finance and the Public Servants were talking about it and that is what led me to ask a question directly. I did not want to hear any rumour. Tell me something about this money. Is it a fact that the Minister got money? That is how I got it, Mr. Speaker, so you can say I was able to extract what was circulating as a rumour. I am going to say to the Minister, we did you a favour and you should not condemn this Opposition.

I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that I support this Resolution and I hope that Members from that side would understand that the public expects support of this Resolution and let the Minister realise that his conduct, his behaviour, lack of imprudence and overseeing ability is his problem. I hope that he will learn from what has happened during this debate. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to join this debate and I hope to be able to assist this Parliament in coming to the conclusion that the administration of the work at the St Joseph Hospital was carried out according to the accepted professional practice and there was no indication, unlike what the report has said to induce squandermania or unreasonable expenditure.

Let me start, Mr. Speaker, with the Resolution and first of all let me get out of the way that I have never had any doubts in my mind of the integrity and the correctness in the workings of my colleagues and therefore I cannot support this Resolution.

Let me try in the short space of time to deal with it. Mr. Speaker, a lot has been made about the 16% and the 20% and I am going to make some documents available to the House which this Committee did not see fit to put in.

Mr. Speaker, on the 15th January 1990...

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

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot hear the Honourable Member.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Committee has not omitted any document that was produced to the Committee. The Minutes of the Committee will show that we have asked the Chairman of the St. Joseph Hospital Board for documents which he promised to give and we concluded that part of our Report with his not having given documents. That is a fact

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Whatever document he is bringing. Do not make these allegations. Fight your political battles without having to nasty how a committee has for the first time...

Mr. SPEAKER: That last part is not a point of order.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, the Honourable Member is insinuating that the Committee deliberately withheld documents and did not put them in. I making the point that that is not true.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now, the Honourable Member has made an objection.

Order please, because what I am saying I will not be repeating throughout the debate.

If a Member objects to a statement being made that statement ceases to be repeated unless the Honourable Member who made the allegation can prove such a statement. The Honourable Member objects to it and therefore once it is an objection it cannot be repeated.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to impute any improper motive to the Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member is saying that a statement is being made that is not true.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, on the 15th January 1990, under a letter from Mr. McDonald Estwick to Sandiford and Small he invited Sandiford and Small to

provide a fee proposal to the Ministry of Health being aware that as prime consultants they are responsible for all other consultants required to expedite the work. That was on the 15th January 1990.

In the report, Mr. Speaker, and you will see in this Report that there was a response to that letter which is included and I will try to find the response very quickly in which Sandiford and Small referred to the letter that they wrote and said that they would be prime consultants...

Mr. SPEAKER: What we have to be very careful with is that if you are alluding to the Report, be as precise as you can without any extensions. You have to make the point without having to develop anything about the Report itself.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Thank you. In that response, Sandiford and Small quoted the fees normally paid to consultants and those fees amounted to about 23%. He also stated in the letter that he recommended that the work be done internally and that if the work was done internally that there would be some savings and he would be able to reduce the fee to 16%. Mr. Speaker, I would like to go on record to say that he did receive 16% for some time - about one year. 10.40 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a little bit about construction.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order again, Sir. I would refer the Honourable Member - that was the February 1990 letter - to the letter in the Committee's report at page 17 of May 30, 1990, where the fee of 16% is proposed by the same Sandiford and Small to include all of those matters.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Honourable Member continue?

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, may I draw to the attention of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West that the first letter in which that was put out was of 27th February to the P.S.? The letter to which he is referring is when the Chief Project Officer came on board. At 67, Mr. Speaker, a lot was made of the fact that Sandiford and Small acted as contractors. I am certain everyone out there knows the difference between a construction manager and a contractor. On page 12, paragraph 67, of the report you will see Mr. Yarde specifically said that he interpreted it as managing the construction. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, you will see as well that at paragraph (e) a contractor is directly responsible for payment of all subcontractors. There is a letter here in which the Ministry paid the contractors directly, on the instruction of Sandiford and Small.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will read from the letter:

"It has been further agreed that direct payments would be made to the various subcontractors, as you so instruct, based on the valuation of the Quantity Surveyor and on your certification."

Therefore, it is very clear in my mind that at no time did Sandiford and Small act as contractors, but assumed the role of construction managers very much to the benefit of the Ministry of Health, and I will tell you how it was assumed.

Before the contract, Mr. Speaker, it was agreed that the contractor would get 17% on the labour and materials, 6% on subcontract. All the Honourable Members on that side who have dealt with renovations know that this is not unusual. This Parliament was done that way. If you note in the letter from Sandiford and Small, the recommendation that it be done by this work was because it was renovation and he said to prepare a tender document they would have to include numerous provisional sums, because it is expected in a contract of renovations when you do not know what work to expect, the contractors would come in very high and it is very likely therefore you would have a very inflated finished product. Therefore, he recommended that the best way to do it is by cost plus.

Let me deal a little bit with the innuendoes about squandermania, which is very unfortunate. Mr. Speaker, very early the Ministry appointed the firm of Design Collaborative as the Ministry's Quantity Surveyors. The normal thing for payment of work, which was made very clear at the first site meeting, and I repeat, the Chief Project Officer stated that all communications on the project should be made directly to the Chief Project Officer. All payment of fees should be approved by the Architect and Quantity Surveyor and all disbursement of funds certified by the Chief Project Officer.

What is the procedure, Mr. Speaker? I am going to make this a document of the House. What I am worried about is the attempt to heap scorn on young professionals in this country that have set about to do their work deliberately. Mr. George Holder from Collaborative Designs is a Quantity Surveyor of long experience and integrity. The job of a Quantity Surveyor is to measure the work that was done and to make sure that the work was certified and done in an appropriate way. First of all, when you want to get a payment, the Quantity Surveyors come in and measure the work, it is then certified by the Architect, then by the Chief Project Officer, so all procedures were in there to make sure that work that was not done or not done properly was not paid for. To say that you had squandermania would impute some compliance and some connivance by the Quantity Surveyor, who does the measurements, by the Architect, who also has to do

that, and by the Chief Project Officer. All I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that all the procedures were in place and I cannot see how that statement could be made.

Let me get back to the 20% and 16%. Sandiford and Small started as prime consultants and agreed to 16%, then they assumed the role of project managers and moved it to 20%. Earlier in the contract the contractors were paid 17% on labour and materials and 6% on subcontracting. If you had gone out to tender and you had a fixed contract, as all of you know, at the end of the contract you have overhead and profits. At that point most contractors would have put in between 20 and 30%, and a single 30% in a case where there are renovations. So if you have a fixed contract, the GAP would be between 20 and 30%, as against a renovation at cost plus where you now have a 17%. The 17% represents the overheads and profits. With a fixed contract, as long as you have consultants, you have to pay the consultants' fees, so it is misleading to state at any time you had two sums of payment coming out, the consultants' fees and the 17%. In any agreement you would have had that, Mr. Speaker. If it was a fixed contract, the OAP would be in that fixed contract, 30%, as well as the consultants who still would have got their 20%. Without appreciating what was done, they are trying to mislead this House that there is something going on down at the St. Joseph Hospital which is not regular. This is not true.

Let me deal with the cost, because this is also what is happening. Let me deal with St. Joseph Hospital. To date these are the expenditures:

Structures	\$ 6 960 529
Air conditioning	860 325
Sewerage Plant	1 177 363
Furniture - (I won't take that).	
Electrical Renovations	\$ 654 710
Landscaping and grounds	87 150

giving a total structure cost of \$9 652 928, added to the purchase cost of St. Joseph Hospital for \$6 112 760. What has the Ministry got? It got a property of 27 acres of land. It got an administration bloc of 1 765 square feet, a chapel of 1 878 square feet, a surgical bloc of 14 233 square feet, a maternity bloc of 6 149 square feet, a treatment block of 15 521 square feet, a mortuary of 792 square feet, a medical accident and emergency bloc of 13 046 square feet, a laundry and plant of 4 578 square feet and Villa Maria on 37 164 square feet, a tennis court, a swimming pool, extensions to the administrative bloc, a new pharmacy, a new laboratory, new doctors and nurses lounge, new switch gear from a transformer unit, a standby generator and new air condition units. Mr. Speaker, that gives you a covered area of 95 000 square feet, nearly 100 000 square feet 10.50 a.m.

If you went to the St. Joseph Hospital, and all of you know the reproduction cost, and you took that, there is no way you could reproduce that specialty at less than \$200 a square foot. Therefore to reproduce that, you are talking about \$20 million plus the cost of land. The Barbados Government today has expended \$15 765 000 and there is an in-built contract for renovations to Villa Maria of \$1.2 million which is going to make a total expenditure of \$416.8 million.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at what is going on at the St. Joseph Hospital, when you look at the amenities that you are getting there and when you look and put in place all the procedural arrangements, the safeguards that have been built in, when you look at the professionals recruited and who have acted in the best way on all of these...

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church South just after we did the tribute to Mr. Crawford make the statement that somebody got a knighthood for little preliminary work done in the commercial field and the contribution of the political people has never been acknowledged. Mr. Speaker, the contribution of political people could never be acknowledged because as I have always said the only set of people I know of - and I suffered for it - who seem to set about to pull down and derail everybody on suspicion and innuendos are political people in this country. Then we wonder why there is no respect for political people when we ourselves set about to destroy it and this when you look at the excessive language in this Report I want to read some of the excessive language in the Report.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: No. No. No.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, when you read something like "squandermania" and "unbridled ... of the public purse" that could only be impugning the integrity of professional people in this country. It is unfortunate that the integrity is being impugned now when there are people like us; but when you had the Tomlin Vosses and you had the Gardiner Austins who were of a different complexion from us that did the very same thing, Mr. Speaker, and were expected to carry out the very same duty, you never heard of any imputation of wrongdoing, on the Kenneth Gardiners of this country. But all of us in this House, Mr. Speaker, are of the same complexion. Through our educational system people have been made professionals and you are going to impute by innuendos or otherwise that they are part and parcel of it.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please. One of the persons who should be listening attentively without interruption is the very person who introduced the Resolution. I have given that Honourable Member the opportunity to make a point. I do not see why another Member should be interrupting at times when he is making his point. You may disagree but no shouting across the Chamber.

Continue. The Honourable Member has 2 more minutes to go.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker the last document I want to make a document of this Chamber is a signed agreement of the contract which as far as my memory serves the Report said that they did not see. I am going to make this a document of the House. It is a signed agreement of the contract signed and certified. I did not see it in the Report and this can be made a document of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I want to end by saying that I hope I have helped this House. I have set out where all the procedures that are normally put in place have been put in place; where the procedures as carried out at the St. Joseph Hospital were done because it was suggested that there would be a saving if it was done this way because of the unknown renovations and therefore the fact is and I get back to the \$4 million it must also be put on the record that after that \$4.2 million was estimated by Collaborative Designs they came back and said that another \$3.3 million must be made which is \$7.6 million. As I have said before, today the structures would cost \$6.9 million. The collective structures together with the airconditioning is \$9.652 million which you have done as a result of extensions.

There is nothing at all in this Resolution that I can support. Earlier there was talk about financial precedents and we have to be one way or the other. The Rules make it very specific that the Permanent Secretary is responsible for the vote. Sometimes it pleases us to talk about ministerial guidance and on other occasions it is ministerial interference. Sometimes it is interference, sometimes it is guidance. In this particular case, Mr. Speaker, I act as a Minister and I expect my Permanent Secretary to carry out his function under the Financial and Administrative Rules and I am certain that this is what happened.

The other part about acting on behalf of the St. Joseph Hospital has been talked about already. On numerous occasions I have acted and met with Barbadians and invited them either to invest or to come to Barbados and I see nothing wrong. Therefore as far as I am concerned the Resolution has no substance and I cannot support it.

Thank you very much.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had intended to intervene in this debate at an appropriate stage in order to correct the unjustified criticisms being levied at a Report which is the second report that this House has had from its Public Accounts Committee despite the fact that the Public Accounts Committee had been operating since 1967.

The House itself should be more than grateful that at long last one of its Committees has started to function and has functioned, in my submission to this House, in an objective manner, in a fair manner and in a manner that sought to bring before the full Committee of the House the unvarnished truth in relation to the operations of the Ministries of Government.

The Public Accounts Committee has a duty in a bi-partisan manner to ensure that monies voted by Parliament are properly expended for the purposes for which they were voted. It also, in my view, has a duty, although at the moment the law does not seem to write this into it quite clearly in relation to the functions of the Auditor General, to ensure that when money is spent - public funds, that they are not only properly accounted for but equally as important that in the end result the public gets value for money.

One of the clearest conclusions which this Committee had to make and to make unanimously was that the public of Barbados was not getting value for money in the expenditure of funds in relation to the St. Joseph Hospital. Whatever the Members may say the Committee is concerned with justification that experts would have given an estimate that the work to be done should not exceed \$4.5 million and at the end of the day those persons who appeared before the Committee could not give us an accurate figure of what funds had been expended to date. Those persons who appeared before us, the officials of Government, and the Chairman of the St. Joseph Hospital Board, could not give to this Committee an accurate figure of the funds expended up to the time the Committee completed its work in relation to the St. Joseph Hospital. Not only could we not get that figure but there was some doubt in the minds, certainly of the Chairman, as to what was done at the St. Joseph Hospital. 11.00a.m.

Now, I am concerned, after being in public life for 23 years, that public affairs should be run in this way and run under a Minister who has a duty to ensure - and I am not going any higher than this - that when public funds are voted that they are voted and used for the purposes for which he came to the House and asked us to vote and he must ensure that they are properly spent. I am not asking the Minister to sit down day-to-day and to go over a vote book and to be adding up and subtracting but he has an overall responsibility. That is the convention. Why

members would duct these conventions I certainly do not understand. That is a convention that ought to be followed in Barbados and understood quite clearly because it is the only way that people who have responsibility in public life for the running of the Government will ever be accountable to the public at large. That is one of the questions that this* Committee has posed for this House.

Now, Sir, I am going to say a little bit about how the Committee did its work. The Committee was looking at the accounts of the Ministry of Health for the period 1986 to 1992. We had determined that we were going to do all of the Ministries so nobody set out to pick out the Minister of Health in order to fire shots at him personally. We set out to look at the whole of the Ministry based on the Reports of the Auditor General and his concerns. This Report addresses those concerns. It not only addresses those concerns. It not only addresses the St Joseph Hospital. It addresses the general dereliction of duty that has occurred in the Ministry of Health while the Minister was the Minister of Health and if the dereliction of duty in law is caused by the failure of the accounting officer to perform his task properly, then in my submission to this House the Minister has a duty likewise to draw that dereliction -of duty to the higher authority. Finally the Minister must explain to the Committee whether or not he carried out his part of the bargain.

Sir, it is a pity that we do not have the tradition here. I have seen, and the Clerk of Parliament could give us, reports of the Public Accounts Committee in England criticising not only the public officials, but Ministers if they do not ensure that works are being done. I will give the Honourable Member after lunch the copy that I have because I brought one dealing exactly with the contract and I showed it to members of the Committee, including the Honourable Member for St. Michael East. I did not go about this duty lightly and unwantonly.

Now, Sir, two Honourable Members on the other side spoke and one Honourable Member in particular, who is not in his place at the moment, in this context spoke on the first day of this motion. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central gave the impression to this House that this exercise of the Committee sitting was a political exercise and that it had one and only one purpose which is to attack the Honourable Member for St. Michael West. He used words to which I took the strongest object, and which I understood you had ruled out of order but they appeared in the Press nonetheless, and I am going to deal with them.

I say that it is an untruth for anybody to suggest that the Committee conducted its business in order to be a witch hunt of anybody at all. No time during the sittings of the Committee did any Member, including the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, raise any question about the *bona fides* of the manner in which the other

members of the Committee were performing their duties. I believe that if members want to be taken seriously, that it is mighty strange that that Honourable Member will wait only until now to get in here and protest in that manner and did not have the courage before us in the Committee to make any such allegation. The verbatim reports of the Committee are there.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The Honourable Member being very experienced in this House is probably aware, I am sure he should be aware, he cannot say that Honourable Members do not have the courage to do anything. That has been ruled out of order on numerous occasions, as is well known.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure the Honourable Member has no difficulty in correcting that

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: If he does not want to, he did not have the guts. He was not man enough. What is the point if a Member is going to come in here and make a complaint and behave as though he is a child and cannot speak out his mind when he is before men. I say he cannot possibly be speaking the truth because I would say...

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: No, Sir. The clear implication here is that the Honourable Member has been telling lies and I am submitting that is not in order or in keeping with the rules of this Chamber.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I am saying that the facts do not accord with the Honourable Member's recollection and statement here at all today and his previous conduct. That Honourable Member, like all Honourable Members, was given every opportunity to ask any question of any witness. 11.10a.m.

We extended every courtesy to all of the witnesses. The Report was given and we went through every word of that Report verbatim. The Honourable Members could get up and say if I am telling lies. Where Honourable Members took objection to the wording of the Draft Report the wording was changed and that included not only Honourable Members of the Committee. But to the extent that the Auditor General's work may have been affected that included the Auditor General as well, Sir. I was sure to ask Honourable Members whether they agreed with particular paragraphs just as we put paragraphs and make them stand part in here.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael East objected to one paragraph and he himself made a change to it. You will see at paragraph 89:

"Mr. Tudor has expressed his reservation as to whether Rule 127 applies to the Minister."

That was in the Report and it was done. We did not have to sign the Report but I will tell you why I myself wanted the Report signed. In my experience if you allow Committee members to function and function objectively they would come to their decisions. Their conclusions may not meet with the approval of everybody and, in my experience, you would therefore find afterwards people taking different stands. That is my experience of Committees. It was important that whatever compromise was agreed to was acceptable to everybody. Therefore when the full Report went through paragraph by paragraph and was accepted by Honourable Members I made sure that Honourable Members saw the final version as well before I laid it in this House. At that stage Mr. Tudor signed it but he wanted specifically to note that his reservation was there.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central on the other hand only the day that I asked him to sign the Report, he told me to wait. I had to ask this House, ask you, Sir, to defer the item. Later he came back and said to me that he had some difficulty with the term "recruitment" whether what the Minister was doing was recruitment or not and that he was therefore no signing the Report. That is the only reservation he told me of. That is reflected in the Minutes of this House for the date on which I laid the Report. I am not going to *ex post facto* say anything. He never descended from the criticisms that were made, except to the extent that I have explained in this House. The statements that appear in this Report, the only reservation the Honourable Member for St. Michael East had is the reservation noted at paragraph 89.

I do not understand Honourable Members having agreed that this is what their findings were, having signed what their findings were or having said the reason why they are not signing can now find other reasons on the Floor of the House in order to attack the Committee and the proceedings and the integrity of the Committee.

I say that one of the things that disturbed me very much was the role of the Minister in relation to the work carried out at the St Joseph's Hospital. The money was voted by this House. One of the Honourable Members who has spoken have given the mistaken impression that we had no right to enquire into the St Joseph Hospital at all. Because the accounts of St. Joseph were not before us. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Auditor-General's Report showed that this House had voted funds for St Joseph which were then spent from the Ministry on the St. Joseph Hospital and were being spent from the Ministry on the St. Joseph Hospital despite the existence of the St. Joseph Board and the coming into effect of the act. That is what was shown.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member has said *sotto voce* the Board was being managed. If the Board was a rubber stamp, there was a duty on us to say that it was being treated as a rubber stamp. If the Board was a rubber stamp we have a duty to tell Parliament that it was a rubber stamp. That is virtually what the Chairman confessed to. He said nobody ever showed him any contract he was merely signing cheques that were sent down to him. This is what he said. He came with his lawyer.

I say to this House that if the Government is going to bring serious legislation to this House and expect us to pass it and set up a statutory Board and then the functions of the Board are going to be exercised in the Ministries and the Minister is going to sit down and allow that to happen, the Minister is in dereliction of his duty. I want to make this point, Sir. The Minister was not summoned before the Board. The Minister was invited to come to the Committee. This Report clearly shows why the Minister did not come. We were very critical of the people who served the Committee for the manner in which they communicated with the Minister the Committee's request that he comes before us.

Sir, I saw a lot of newspaper reports at the time as though we were seeking to insult anyone. One of the reasons why members were anxious, every member was anxious to get the Minister there was not to persecute the Minister but to have the Minister give his side of the matter so that it could be properly reflected in Parliament. Let me say this - the Minister went to the press saying he was not coming. - I have precedent of the Audit Committee in England, absolutely clear...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Not only in England but in Trinidad, if you want to, in other countries of the Commonwealth. ...where a Minister is invited because a matter which may affect him xxxurred he comes before the Committee.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, My recollection is that Your Honour has ruled on that matter. My recollection is that Your Honour in a very deliberate written statement ruled on the question. The Honourable Member is now begging this question.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am not begging any question nor am I questioning any ruling that you give. But I am saying if the Speaker has given a ruling as to whether you could come by invitation before and does not think you can come by invitation before a Committee that is a matter for Mr. Speaker. I am saying that there is an abundance of precedent in the Commonwealth that Ministers do go before Committees. 11.20a.m.

Sir, the Report clearly shows this Minister was not summoned.

Mr. SPEAKER: I gave the Honourable Member the opportunity to speak in a wider term than normally I would have, simply because the Honourable Member, as Chairman of that Committee at that time, obviously would have had to make some input and response to what the other two Members said. I am satisfied that the Honourable Member has done his duty in respect of what I believe he was asked to do. Therefore I do not think there is need for us to go back over the same thing all over again or even start to discuss the Report because the Report is still lying on the Table waiting for it to be discussed.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am not going to go over trodden ground. I am making the point, Sir, that it is not waiting for a Resolution to come before this House to ask the Minister questions. The Committee itself set out in order to hear the Minister's version of the matter. The position is, Sir...

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going down that road.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The position is, Sir, none of the Honourable Members who are objective could deny that Rule 127 of the Financial Rules were infringed. One Member had his reservation as to whether it applied to the Minister. His reservation, however, did not extend to the fact that the Committee found as a fact that there was breach of the Financial and Audit Rules. There were serious treaches of the Financial and Audit Rules in relation to the St Joseph Hospital and one of the concerns was that a contract was awarded to Sandiford and Small in circumstances where any intelligent, objective person would know that whether it was being done subsequently by subcontracts or not that they would all be awarded subcontracts well in excess of the \$25 000 in the Rules which they were allowed to do without going out to tender. That stared us in the face.

The verbatim reports will show that we put this to the accounting officers. I say that the Ministries must stop playing the fool with the Laws of Barbados by finding ways to beat the laws and expect us to condone breaches of the laws in that manner. And all Honourable Members in this House, including the Minister ought not to want to condone breaches of the law in this manner. If the amounts ought to be raised, raise the amounts but when we raise the amounts as we have raised the amount here, for instance for the Central Bank, you turn around and you break that too. So this Government cannot talk. This Government is a Government that has a reputation of law breaking even when they change the law.

We are saying, Sir, that the public has to understand and we have to understand to make them understand that we have to comply with the rules. If the Minister is

in charge of his department and his Permanent Secretary and Accounting Officer is sitting down there as Accounting Officer and allowing the rules to be breached, the Minister has a duty to do something about that

What concerned me is that the Permanent Secretary and the others who gave evidence before the Committee led the Committee to understand that the Minister approved of the award of the tender in that manner. Now the Minister must give his defence to the House to that They have led us, in the Committee, by their evidence...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I will deal with that point, Sir, because it has been raised.

Mr. SPEAKER: But you cannot raise a point sitting in your seat.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: A point I want to deal with to assuage the Minister's mind. A decision has been taken and it is shown in the Minutes of the Meeting of June 11th at J-2 that the Minutes would have been laid and we asked the Deputy Clerk who was acting to bring those Minutes right here on the very day, Sir. But, Sir, if they do not produce them here with me what am I to do?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Sir, the Clerk cannot speak for himself and it is well known. The Clerk is not a Member of this House. Only Members of this House can lay documents. There is no Clerk of this House who is competent to lay any documents whatsoever.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, only Members could lay documents and this Committee took the decision that the Minutes should be laid and as far as I am concerned the Minutes are here at the Table of the House and they should publish them. They are there. But, Sir, if they want me to make a copy of them now, I tokenly make them a copy.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am saying that we were given the clear understanding...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, the Honourable Member just cited that at J-2 somewhere, and I have looked in this Report that was laid and I see no J-2. I wish to be able to follow what is going on. The Honourable Member is saying they made a decision to lay the verbatim record. The failure to lay the verbatim record has resulted in a massive misunderstanding outside of and

inside of this House and therefore it is crucial that this issue of the failure to lay the verbatim record, the Honourable Member is making statements now about evidence was given. We have no way of knowing if the Honourable Member's mind has recollected exactly what happened. We would have to see the evidence in a document that is raised.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the verbatim reports of this House are with the Clerk of Parliament Will the Honourable Member shut up and let me finish, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish Members generally would allow other Members to speak in peace. I would rather that

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am going to go back to the substantive point The breaches have occurred. They cannot be denied and in my submission constitutionally, finally the responsibility for the running of that department must be taken by this Minister.

I am going a little bit further, Sir. The issues of the recruitment that took place overseas have been fully adverted to in the Report Now, Sir, once again it shows a degree of slackness of administration. If a Permanent Secretary writes to the Chairman of the Board in these terms, I can only use the words, letter dated 12th April, 1991 and I am quoting from page 23:

"It is likely that the Honourable Branford M. Taitt, M.P., Minister of Health, will be attending the World Health Assembly meeting scheduled to be held in Geneva from the 16th to the 17th May, 1991. It is customary for the Minister to use this opportunity to meet with nurses in the United Kingdom in an effort to recruit some of them to work in Barbados.

The Minister proposes to devote time on this particular visit to concentrate on the recruitment of staff for the St. Joseph Hospital. Preliminary discussions have been held with the Deputy High Commissioner for Barbados and arrangements will be made to meet nurses in London.

It is also planned to visit Birmingham where there is a large concentration of Barbados nurses. The Minister will remain in the United Kingdom during the period 19th May to 1st June to undertake this recruitment drive. I am accordingly seeking your concurrence to meet the cost of hotel accommodation and other expenses from the funds of the St. Joseph Hospital Board. The cost excluding inter-city travel is estimated at \$17 379.50 as follows:

Yours faithfully,
Permanent Secretary."

11.30a.m.

The Chairman replied on 16th April:

"This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated April 12, received on the 16th. I am quite sure that the Board and myself will be delighted to have the Minister assist us with recruiting of staff for the Hospital during his visit, if this materialises."

Now, Sir, the Committee had a duty to enquire about that, given the provision in the St. Joseph Hospital Act, given the responsibility for funds voted by Parliament and given our understanding of the correct role that Ministers must play in relation to the hiring or non-hiring of staff. The Committee would have been in dereliction of its duty if it did not enquire about that

Certain remarks made by Mr. H. deB. FORDE were ordered by Mr. SPEAKER to be expunged from the record at this stage.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: But, Sir, there is a paragraph 112 on the role of the Permanent Secretary, which is in the report, and the role of the Board, and in my submission the report gives a balanced view of the evidence which was before it and of the respective roles which they should play. The report points out that having regard to the provisions of the St Joseph Hospital Act, then in those circumstances Ministers should not even give the appearance of being engaged in recruiting of staff, because it was a delegation that was not open to the Minister.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: It is clear, Sir. Well, then the Minister is going to tell me that his Permanent Secretary and the Chairman of a Board over which he presides sends out letters in these sorts of terms and that that is acceptable to him? That puts him in the stew? Is he going to say that that is acceptable to him? When, therefore, the Committee makes its findings on the irregularities, at page 27, it has done so on the basis of the evidence which is presented in this report and was presented before the Committee.

Let me end up in this minute here, Sir, on some serious positive recommendations. There is no doubt that the Government has come down to vote on this matter as a political party. Let me give some positive recommendations for the future. The first positive recommendation I am going to make is that the rules of this House in due course, the Standing Orders of this House, be altered in order to make the hearings of the Public Accounts Committee public. It is the public's business, there is nothing to hide. We said that in our discussions and I make that recommendation very seriously, Sir. Then you will not have the sort of allegation that you are hearing at all today.

The second thing I want to say is not only that the Committee's hearings must be public and open to the Press, I believe as well that officers, including Ministers, must take more seriously the necessity for the Public Accounts Committee to exist and to function.

Thirdly, Sir, one of the things that have come out quite clearly is that the Committee's work could have been frustrated by the failure of the Board to make timely reports. That cannot be strange to the Minister. I wrote to the Minister on the matter, I raised that matter in this House, that the first report of this Board should have been made since 1990. We are now in 1993, the Committee's report has come before the House and the Board's report has never been brought before the Committee. Who is to take responsibility for that? The Minister cannot say that he asked the Board. Fire the Board, even if he has to fire friends on his Board. The Minister has to take the beating in this House if there is confusion, and not by making fun at the Committee, he has to take the beating for the ineptness and ineptitude of his Board in reporting in time.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member's time has expired.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, I will start off exactly where the Honourable Member for Christ Church West ended, by saying to him that I now have responsibility for the Ministry of Health and the report will be laid.

Mr. Speaker, the allegations given here in this Resolution are basically in two areas, as I see it, one referring to contracts and the Financial Rules and the second dealing with recruitment. Again, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, who just spoke, dealt with recruitment. Mr. Speaker, in my view recruitment is very broad. On a daily basis we hear on the television and on the radio stations by individuals who take time to encourage people to take particular jobs, whether with the Government or indeed within the private industry. That, too, is recruitment and no one at any time complains that an individual who is pursuing such a course is not so doing in the interest of the country or the company.

Mr. Speaker, it was just mentioned that the Minister went on this so-called recruitment drive. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West just read the letters. It was not that he got up one day and said "I am going off to recruit people," there was communication with the Board and that communication clearly identified the purpose of the visit.

The second thing, Mr. Speaker, has to do with the methodology for reviewing tenders and decisions by the Tenders Committee. This point was made by the Honourable Member for the City when I was sitting here and she was speaking. She was making the point that

the Minister has a responsibility, if he does not agree with the Tenders Committee, to go to Cabinet Mr. Speaker, that was so. I am sure she is now aware of the correction, because the courts of this country have ruled in a recent case, so we have to deal with what the law is. The Minister, under the Financial Rules, is the Minister of Finance. 11.40 a.m.

We have to clear the air on this whole question of a Minister and his or her responsibilities during his or her tenure for the sake of the history of this country. We now have before us something called an Interim Report I ask a few questions about the Interim Report. Where is the final report? When are we going to get it?

If this is an interim report I ask how much detail is missing. We have been hearing for the last 2 days in here that there is something called a verbatim report. Mr. Speaker, I do not know about you, but I have not yet seen any verbatim report All I have is this one document which was handed to me so I am not privy to any verbatim report. If Honourable Members on the other side are privy to verbatim reports then I think we are entitled to see them as well.

Mr. Speaker, I will go one step farther. We were told that there were only 2 copies of the verbatim report.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order. Let me explain again to Honourable Members. It is my understanding of parliamentary practice and I believe May's Parliamentary Practice will bear this out that when you come in and you lay the report that the series of minutes are automatically laid with it.

Asides.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Send a note to the CPA and find out This is my understanding that it should be printed in that way. Now if the report is adopted - I agree with Mr. Speaker, it is open to members to ask that the report be adopted - once you lay that report as a matter of practice and in the best parliamentary tradition the minutes are automatically laid.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Speaker we were told...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am hearing the Honourable Member for St. George North.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: We were told that an effort was made to have 2 copies of this document prepared. We were told that no one was available from Parliament to produce these 2 documents. We were also told that there was a volunteer, someone who volunteered to produce^

these 2 documents. We were also told, Mr. Speaker, that this was done in somebody's office.

Now I ask a simple question, Mr. Speaker, who did the data entry? Who put in this document? Point No. 2. Who printed the documents and thirdly, how many copies were printed? Mr. Speaker, on the completion of the printing of these documents, did any member of the Committee supervise the destruction of that file or do we have files and copies floating around? No wonder, Mr. Speaker, that on the following day we were treated to a copy of this in the Press. I ask why. I ask who did it How did these copies get into the public domain as an interim report so called?

Mr. Speaker, it is said that we should not allow this to be seen as a political divide. I think that is exactly what we are making of it. Then we get the little remarks that we should protect each other and understand the responsibilities that we all have because we know that some come and some go. Some will come and some will go that is the way it is.

Mr. Speaker, in the whole exercise here and we know that the whole exercise of Government needs reform. There is no question about it I will agree with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Yes. We are operating in 1993. We cannot operate in 1823.

Mr. Speaker, no where so far in this document or in anything said in here in this debate has anyone been able to convince me that the Minister acted in his own interest There is no Minister on this side or that side who would have acted at any time other than in the interest of Barbados first Yes. We might have had a few accusations of people who might have done some other things but basically when they set about to perform their duties they do so in the interests of the country.

The Honourable Member for the City in her contribution to this debate mentioned, and in her Resolution talked about breaches by the Minister. Mr. Speaker, I will go from my memory. In 1986, somewhere between January 20 and January 23 when we talk about people awarding contracts without going out to tender that was happening and the Honourable Member for the City would have presided in one day in January 1986 over 8 that were given - Structural Engineering, Quality Surveying, Electrical Engineering, Technical Engineering.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am on a point of order. I have never presided over any such thing.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member a few days ago in here said that she presided over the construction of many polyclinics. The Honourable Member like any other Minister...

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in 1986 I was in the Ministry of Education and I had been there since 1981.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Ah. Mr. Speaker, in 1986 in the Ministry of Education. As I said, Structural Engineering, Quality Surveying - 8 in one day. 11.50a.m.

The note, simply as I recall said: "We spoke. Kindly execute."

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, the same Honourable Member very well recalls that there were problems with construction out at a school in St. John and there was a member of that Board who once occupied that Chair, albeit on the other side, in which money again was spent without going to tender. Mr. Speaker, electrical work, yes. The Auditor General has from time to time albeit we have heard that there was only one Report from the Public Accounts Committee but the Auditor General every year has been putting notes in his Report questioning the award of tenders of lack thereof, questioning money spent on particular projects and questioning overruns. This is something that has been going on. The Auditor General has been questioning overruns throughout the length and breadth, and year after year in this country. That is a fact.

Mr. Speaker, in 1971 when these Financial Rules were put in place, as a country we did not deal in the kind of detail that we now have to deal with agencies such as the World Bank, the IADB and such like. We know that certain things have to be started within a time frame. There is no way, based upon the performance of the legal profession sitting across the board, that you can have contracts completed in time before a job starts within the Government. I do *not* know if we have got 5 done in a whole year where the contract is negotiated and completed. As a matter of fact, we in this Honourable House have been coming in here one year after, 2 years after, I do not even know if we have not reached 10 yet, where the legal aspect of documents have to be finalised so therefore we have a confused law. The confused law is that you must have a contract and you cannot start the work.

I agree with the Honourable Member for Christ Church West that things like these need changing. We will always in this country have to start to do the work that is required in this country without these contracts. As I said, many of them over there are members of the legal profession. They know the facts.

I want to speak now, Mr. Speaker, on the whole question of responsibility and authority. When we speak of

certain members of the Public Service having responsibility, we also speak of certain members having some authority. When we speak of the Minister we always hear that a Minister has the responsibility for everything that goes on within his Ministry but little do we know that he has very little authority.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The Honourable Member *sotto voce* is saying that is the practice so if he does not have the authority, he has the responsibility. Yes. He is responsible to this Honourable House, Parliament. He is responsible to Parliament. He is not responsible to the Public Accounts Committee. But if he has to come here we also have to look then at changing the whole question of responsibility and authority. If you are running a government the Government is a big company. In the corporate world no manager has all responsibility in one right hand and no authority. It is the system we have. I agree but it does not necessarily mean that we have to continue with a system in 1993 which creates problems for us on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, dealing with the question of responsibility and authority here is a simple example. If a Permanent Secretary says to a Minister to do A and the Minister approves, questions are asked. The Minister therefore according to what we have just said is held responsible. Scenario B, Mr. Speaker. The Permanent Secretary says do B, the Minister does not agree. Now herein comes the question where you have the difference and the dilemma of responsibility and authority. The Permanent Secretary has the right to say, "Mr. Minister I may not agree with you and I am going to write it on file that I do not agree with you." When questions are asked the Minister is held responsible. The Financial Rules, therefore, as we are talking about them have to be changed. We have to look at them.

Mr. Speaker, let us now get to the question of approval of actions as we relate now to this particular question of contracts and to a lesser degree the question of the recruitment. There is a Board. There is responsibility by the Board. 12.00 noon.

The two unfortunate situations, the first one I spoke about is that no accounts have yet come to this Chamber.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The other one is the fact that the whole scenario of the work and the starting up of the Board were all around the same time. The Board was actually incorporated in 1989 and in March 1990 there was a Board. But when did acquisition of the Hospital start? Therefore the decision after the acquisition was that

work should be done and that work should be done by the technical staff within the Ministry of Health. That again, Mr. Speaker, is one of the unfortunate situations which led to some of the so-called confusion that people have about what actually transpired.

Mr. Speaker, when the work at the St Joseph Hospital was going that work was being carried out as the Honourable Member for St. Philip North clearly detailed, the whole question of contract and how the terms of cost per contract are worked out. The Minister and no Minister dictates to the contractor his terms. The records will show that the Minister, at no time, dictated to any public officer that a certain course should be taken, a certain individual should be given a contract.

Mr. Speaker the question coming up from time to time about if the Minister or if something is done in the presence of a Minister. One of the statements which was raised by the Member for St. Michael West was that he had to meet with his staff on a regular basis. If you can consider meeting with your staff and in the process things are discussed you will have to call that consultation.

I want to say this. We are here dealing with something that we all say that we have to look at. But underlying all of this we have seen this not necessarily in this Honourable Chamber but certainly outside in the broad domain that this was projected as a total political exercise. I say that this Resolution cannot and will not be supported by me. Thank you.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there has been an attempt by the Members on the other side to trivialize this debate and to swing it from its essential purpose and focus. The essential purpose and focus of this Resolution is to draw attention to the conduct on the part of the Minister that has been revealed as a result of the investigations of the Public Accounts Committee and which conduct in the opinion of the Public Accounts Committee has shown that the Minister acted wittingly or unwittingly contrary to the best principles of constitutional practice that should attend the performance of Ministerial duties.

Let me say at the very outset that I was one of the persons delegated by the whole Committee to assist in the drafting of the Report. There were two other persons who assisted in the drafting of the Report. When the draft was finished it was submitted to every member of the Committee, to the Auditor General and to the Accountant-General who were in attendance at every meeting of the Public Accounts Committee. Before the Interim Report of the Committee was laid in here, every Member had the opportunity to agree or disagree with each paragraph of the 143 paragraphs.

About a week before the Report was laid part of the Report which had been drafted at the time and that part of the Report which did not deal with the St Joseph Hospital, the early part of the Report, that is, was given to every member so that they could have time to study the draft and make comments. When we had the final meeting, members had therefore been appraised of the contents of the Report and had ample time to make any amendments or emendations or whatever, the corrections, whatever they chose.

On the 21st June there was a meeting which began in the morning for the final approval of the Report. The Chairman called each paragraph by number and took corrections and objections to the Report and they were made. In fact the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said that in relation to paragraph 124 he had some concerns about how it was written and the findings of the Committee, as expressed in that writing. He was of the view that the Minister's conduct could not have been characterized in the strictest industrial relations sense of the word as "recruitment". 12.10 p.m.

He ought to tell you that, sitting next to him, I re-drafted what he was concerned about, read it to him, gave it to him, he agreed and what appears as paragraph 124.1 is the redraft taking into account the concerns of the Honourable Minister of Agriculture. That was the only paragraph to which he took exception. The Honourable Member for St Michael East...

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, that statement has to be taken against the background that from the very start I had expressed reservation over the whole scope and terms of reference of the Committee and the road that we were going down. And that is where I lay my case. I made 2 points, the one with respect to recruitment and secondly the issue of culpability. Those were the 2 points that I expressly asked that within the Report my objections should be noted but it must be taken, as I said, against the background that I was not in favour of the report.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is his explanation. The Minutes will show that that explanation, in my view, is not a correct - I am not going to say it is not true - version and certainly was never understood as he put it, by the vast majority of the Committee Members.

The Chairman asked for signatures the next day. The House was meeting the next day and the Chairman asked if we would prefer to sign the report between 11.00 o'clock and 12.00 o'clock that day. Well, nobody said on the Monday that he was not going to sign on Tuesday. When we came on Tuesday the Chairman was looking for

the Minister of Agriculture and the Honourable Member for St. Michael East for a long time to append their signatures. He could find neither to do that specific function. But I think everybody knows that the Member for St. Michael East was in the Clerk's room being lambasted by Members of his own side for what they considered his folly in agreeing to sign the Report, as he confirmed to us later. And I will call the names of those whom you said, including the Deputy Prime Minister...

Mr. SPEAKER: There are two Members on their feet.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I do not curse anybody so do not put it in the record that I curse anybody.

Mr. SPEAKER: Two Honourable Members on their feet. Let me hear the Honourable Member.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. As soon as I arrived at Parliament, Sir, on that day the Honourable Member for Christ Church West recognised that I had just arrived in Parliament, he invited me to the Committee Room and I went straight to the Committee Room with him before I communicated with anybody else.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not swiping, the essence of what..

Mr. SPEAKER: I have indicated already if a statement has been made and a Member refutes it, it stays as it is until the Member can produce that evidence to substantiate the point he is making. I am not allowing any backwards and forwards. The Honourable Member denies it. Unless the Honourable Member substantiates his point that is the only way I would listen to it But that issue now becomes a dead issue.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All I am indicating to Your Honour is that on the Monday they were both willing to sign but on the Tuesday one fellow said, I am going to hold my signature. I am not signing. That is what happened.

Mr. Speaker, when the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central spoke in this debate he began by saying there was a witch hunt against the Minister or he formed the impression...

Mr. SPEAKER: I will draw to your attention for the third time during the day that I have said that that word "witch hunt" did not go down with me and I asked the Honourable Member to rephrase his words and I take it that is no longer a word valid to the debate.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sorry, Sir, but I did not hear that ruling but it appeared also in the newspaper. What did not appear in the newspaper was that on Tuesday night after the Honourable Minister of Agriculture had spoken the Member for St Michael East also spoke and he said that he did not think it was any witch hunt and that we worked properly. And that contrast of the two positions between two Members on that side was never divulged to the public of Barbados.

The Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Sir, behaved on Tuesday night in a manna* that betrayed the level of his intelligence. He began by saying...

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know if the Honourable Member read the clauses in the Resolution but certainly it has nothing to do in the terms as you are referring to the Honourable Member. If you are responding to what he has said, I accept that but to go beyond that does not fall within the terms of the Resolution. Respond to the points.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: When Member spoke, Sir, he said that he attended the first meeting of the Public Accounts Committee to deal with this matter and he was met by two Members who took him in a room. When I heard that he was taken in a room I thought somebody had him handcuffed. This is what he said, Sir, "and they told me to be aware of two matters" -1 did not get the first one at first but subsequently - "Payment of money for recruitment exercise and payment of legal fees".

Now, Sir, first of all it cannot be true, what he has said because there was never any discussion in the Public Accounts Committee about legal fees and as a Member of the Committee the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central should know that. There was never any discussion...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He said he was told... What he was in effect saying was that the agenda items that we were dealing with concerned the payment of money for the recruitment exercise and legal fees. All he really was saying on Tuesday night is that he was briefed as to what the Committee would be dealing with.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that so far there is no Member in this House on either side who has spoken and who has said that anything that appears in the Report is untrue. There is no Member who has spoken so far in this debate who has challenged the veracity of the statements in this report. 12.20 p.m.

I want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, in a ruling earlier this year Your Honour did not appear to like the fact that evidence was worked into the report, but I want to assure you, in your ruling earlier this year, with which I took public exception, that if evidence had not been worked into this report we would hear that it was a set of value judgments without any factual basis. There is evidence in this report backing every finding of the Committee.

Hon. B. M. TAUT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member did say on which no one has spoken, and I have not spoken as yet. However, he went on to say that evidence has been worked into the report and arising out of that I think I can rise on a point of order to say that the Honourable Member is misleading the House. There is a paragraph in this report...

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not allowing any part of the report that has not been dealt with before.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member says there is no part in the report that is not true.

Mr. SPEAKER: Why did the House not take my advice when I said discuss the report before you discuss this? It would have been easier to do that. I have to be going between the lines in order to keep the debate going. At times you seem to be drifting into debating the report and at other times you lose sight of the report and debate the Resolution. I would advise Members to stick as closely as they can to the clauses of the Resolution. When the time comes for debating that report, then we can discuss that I am not going to be guilty of encouraging a debate on something I know should not be discussed at this time and I am asking Members to desist from it.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, in fairness, Sir, other Members have alluded to the report and I am claiming...

Mr. SPEAKER: Which is legitimate, but I do not want it to be broadened beyond the point that it becomes...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not going to prolong it, Sir, but you allowed liberal reference this morning. I claim no less.

Mr. SPEAKER: Which you will have.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Before the Honourable Member got up I was going to say that there was in the report, as a result of something said by the then Cleric to the Committee, a misinterpretation as to whether communication to the Minister was oral or in writing or by telephone.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not saying that at all, because he said he spoke to him about 5.30 one morning and told him the Committee wanted him. But that is another matter. There is a sentence in the report that the Minister challenges. I accept his challenge. He would know the facts better than we, but we were given one version.

What really are the complaints? The complaints are, contrary to what the now Minister of Health would have us believe, that where Parliament votes millions of dollars - and included in the disbursement of that vast amount of money contracts had to be awarded to persons - that there is a procedure that is to be followed under the law of Barbados. It is nothing to do with practice. The procedure is that if it is for more than \$25 000 they have to go to tender.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: For works and services. The rule says works and services. What the Committee has found, and what this Resolution is accusing the Minister of, is heading a department where in 1986 a firm of experts carried out an investigation into St Joseph Hospital and found that it would cost over \$3 million to fit it up and refurbish it properly. Therefore, late in 1986 when the Government had that report, they ought to have known that whenever they came to do the work at St. Joseph, be it then or in the year dot, it would cost more than \$25 000, therefore you have to go to tender.

Some time later, using King as the basis, work was started at St. Joseph Hospital. No contract was signed at the time. The Minister of Education, in his innocence - I do not say ignorance, you do not like those words - comes in here and says you have to change the rules because the rules say - he says they are confused - that you must have a contract before starting building. I ask anybody in Barbados, who has \$100 000 to spend on his house, if he would let anybody come and just start work without proper plans and without a contract saying how he is to get this \$100000.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, it happens at Sherbourne, but that is another part of the investigation. I am submitting that in accordance with common sense and prudence, to know what work you have to do for the money that is to be spent and that it should be written in a contract. Where the confusion came in this case is that when we were looking for a contract one was produced. The Ministry had a contract to give the work to Sandiford and Small, but when you looked at the contract, it was the JCT standard form that some of us are familiar with. When you looked for the date of the contract, it was blank. Articles of agreement made the blank day of 19 blank,

but the date is blank and the money that Sandiford and Small are to get is written in, because they had it typed in - this is what they are to get - 20% of the total refurbishment cost, then somebody's handwriting, 20% of the total refurbishment cost. The total cost of labour, materials and plant used in executing the work, plus 20% of total refurbishment cost, plus another 20%. I cannot add too good, but 20 plus 20 is 40. You look for the Government to sign, where it says "Signed by the employer" and for the contractor to sign "Signed by Sandiford and Small" and all that is blank. That is what the Permanent Secretary produced as the contract Work had been going on since 1989 down there without a contract and the Minister must have known that or is deemed to have known that in public law. 12.30 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member said the Minister is deemed to have known that. It has been said in this House and the Committee may have not understood it that the work that began at St Joseph Hospital in 1989 was being done in the Ministry of Health by technical officers of the Ministry of Health. There was no question of contract. The work was being done like all the work is done, continuously, every year, by the officers in the Ministry of Health. The question of a contract arose much later.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, Sir, even if we take him at his highest and accept all that he said, the facts which are undeniable, which were heard by every member of the Committee, were that at a meeting when it was being discussed as to who should get the contract or, let me put it another way, who should do the work, the Permanent Secretary and the Chief Project Officer said that the Minister was present when the decision was taken to give the work to the contractors, Sandiford and Small, without a contract. They said that about him - 2 people who work in his office, 2 heavy boys.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. First of all, Sandiford and Small are not contractors. It cannot be true. I categorically deny ever sitting down at any meeting anywhere and saying that. He cannot now come here again when I have denied that and put it in the newspapers. That is not right.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is the end of that matter. Will the Honourable Member conclude? If you have made your point of order, it stands. That matter...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am saying what was said to the 6 or 7 members of the Committee. We reported it because you asked one person and he said "Yes. The Minister was there." You ask the next person and he said, "Yes. The Minister was there." Therefore we are saying

that even though - and the Honourable Member for St. Michael East would never be able to comprehend that there is praedial promise. He would never be able to understand that - the Financial Rules of this country...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honorable Member has just 1 minute more to go.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No. Sir. I started at quarto-past

Mr. SPEAKER: No. You did not. You started at 6 minutes past

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, Sir. I checked there before I started.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Two minutes. The Clerk says 2 minutes more.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right, Sir. With no valid JCT contract, the work was going on, not in or by the Ministry but down at St. Joseph by Sandiford and Small, all in 1990 and 1991.

The Honourable Minister, the Member for St Philip North, came in here today and produced a contract; but we have that contract published in the Report. Do you know what it says? It says this Memorandum of Agreement is made the 30th day of March, 1992 last year between the Crown and Sandiford and Small for work that was going on for 2 - 3 years before. The contract is dated last year 1992. Can you tell me this is good administration? Last year, 1992. It is so foolish that it says:

"Whereas the client (meaning Government) is proposing to refurbish the St Joseph Hospital."

In March 1992, the Government is proposing to refurbish the Hospital when work has been going on there 3 years before.

We are saying that over all of this the Minister of Health presided. It is a clear case of financial mismanagement and incompetence and he is as much to blame as the public officers who served him so well.

I just want to wind up, Sir, by saying this. The Honourable Member for St. Philip North made some odd observations about the role of politicians today because he was suggesting that even if a politician is seised of evidence showing infelicity and misconduct on the part of somebody on the other side he should not disclose it because we are black people. That is what he said about the attacks on politicians by politicians.

Mr. SPEAKER: Two Honourable Members on their feet. The Honourable Member has come to the end of his time.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: I referred to the time when the Honourable Member for Christ Church South drew the House's attention to the fact that politicians would never.... I said the problem with that is that we sometimes make innuendos and on unfounded truth make the wrongest allegations against each other. That is what I said, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, 7 Honourable Members undertook to carry out an analysis of expenditure at the St. Joseph Hospital. I said there were 7 Honourable Members because all members of this House are deemed to be honourable. I am concerned because I have to speak the truth and nothing but the truth because I have no one to please except myself.

What I heard on Tuesday, Mr. Speaker, put me in an extremely difficult position. The reason why I intend to tell the truth and why I will always tell the truth in this Honourable Chamber and I have said it before is that I cannot keep in my head what I say today and next year. So if I tell the truth, I can completely forget what I say today because I am not going to lie. If you lie, you have to keep remembering what you have said. People do not understand that.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say this. No. I am not purporting as I heard *sotto voce* and I resent that statement and I will deal with it outside... I am going to say this Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that I am a holier than thou person. The only thing I have is my credibility, my truthfulness, and I will stand up for it.

This document which I have was prepared in accordance with the evidence taken at the Public Accounts Committee. Not a single person so far has said that anything in this document is wrong. Whatever is reflected in this document would have to be in the verbatim report. That is obvious. If that were not so, Mr. Speaker, it means that the 7 of us who are expected and who are deemed honourable people would have to be stupid and dishonest.

If you want to criticise this document the only part of this document that anyone could criticise would be where opinions are drawn but you cannot criticise the facts.

There are a lot of extraneous matters being brought into this matter, Mr. Speaker. Let me tell you why I have to speak the truth about this matter. The first reason is that

if I as a politician want to tell a lie to an Honourable Member for anyplace, that is a matter for him if he wants to lie. That is a matter for politicians if they want to lie. But at these meetings, Mr. Speaker, there was the Auditor General, the Accountant General and their officers. So they must know what took place at those meetings. They must know when and if other people objected. They must know if someone did not object and he says he objected on numerous occasions that that is not what took place when they were there; and they turned up at every single meeting.

Mr. Speaker, there is another more fundamental reason for telling the truth. If you say you objected on several occasions when the meeting was taking place and that is not reflected in the verbatim report it means that the stenographers were either inefficient, sleeping, biased or lying. It would have to be in the verbatim report if you were objecting.

Mr. Speaker, one has to understand that when one is speaking, one's credibility is on the line. I am not going to get into the matter about the champagne because I felt it was irrelevant nonsense because if any person came at my house with the most serious matter, for instance that their mother had died and he wanted \$1 000 to help bury her, whenever that serious conversation is finished, once I have champagne at me - I don't have it at me often because I cannot buy it - I would tell that person to fire a drink with me before he leaves. That is what I would do and that is a normal practice. It does not mean, and the impression cannot be given that because someone is given a drink after a meeting therefore the evidence that the gentleman gave previous to the meeting an hour or 2 hours before was wrong or was irrelevant or was paid for or was bribed or anything like that.

It is wrong and irrelevant and it has to be said in here. We have to stop using irrelevant nonsense when we are discussing serious matters in this House. This matter is too serious and let me say this now because the time is moving fast. It does not matter at all as far as I am concerned what the Democratic Labour Party thinks or what the Barbados Labour Party thinks. It is what the people out there think. We can get in here and bring in all sorts of irrelevant nonsense. It is what the people out there think. It is not how many times wrong doing has occurred in this country, the people out there want to know if we are going to do something to stop it.

I do not think the people out there want to crucify any person. They only want to know when are the people whom we have elected to represent us going to put a stop to things which they believe are wrong. I have not accused anybody of wrongdoing. Mr. Speaker, let me proceed because I will not be diverted from what I am going to say. When I speak there are times when both sides quarrel

with me. There are times when one side agrees and the other does not agree but I have to speak as far as I am concerned because, Mr. Speaker:

"... to thine own self be true. And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man." 12.45 p.m.

That is my position. Let me say this. Our problem and the problem that has happened with the speeches on this matter is that we seem to be equating observations and general comment with objections. They are not the same thing. If you object it has to be put into the records. I would like to go on record here today saying that I congratulate the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. If there is one person who, in my view, never occurred to him at all about any witch-hunt, of which I do not use the word, but I will use just for the records, that Honourable Member...

Aside.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: I can only give my opinion. I was sitting on the Committee, Mr. Speaker, and that Honourable Member was straightforward. He managed the affairs of that Committee in a manner that I will sit on a committee with him tomorrow, tonight, next week, anytime with that Honourable Member chairing that Committee. That is how I feel about that, far from doing a witch-hunt. I can sit wherever I want to sit.

I believe what has happened is this, and I am going to move very quickly. I believe that it was unfortunate that the Honourable Minister did not take the long sighted view instead of taking a narrow restricted view. As I said this is only my opinion. Let me explain what I mean. I am going to say here now, Mr. Speaker, that in these sorts of situations you will always get the yardfowls, the quacks and the invalids who will say to you, "Man, do not resign. It has been happening 50, 60 times before you did it. Do not resign." They told me, "sit down and draw your money." You will always have that because that is the narrow and easy way out. One has to look further down the road and see what it can do to you if you take a certain decision and I am only giving you my opinion. I may be wrong. There may be very few people in here who agree with my analysis.

I felt that that evening when the Minister gave the Press Conference, he should have resigned. That is how I felt. Not that the Minister had committed any crime but the Minister said in that Press Conference that his Ministry operated in a manner and they did not think that they were doing anything wrong because this thing had been - I am only paraphrasing - as accustomed. He then mentioned that there were about 39 occasions or something like that when

it had happened before. Okay. Whether it had happened by custom or not, the point is that it was illegal and it was breaking the law.

Mr. Speaker, I am not Prime Minister. I do not expect ever to be Prime Minister but I will just say what I would have done. I would have hoped that the Minister on that afternoon would have resigned, and if he did not resign, and I were the Prime Minister I would have called him, very quietly, and say "B^{ft} I am going to move you out for a couple of months because I believe that - and this is my personal view - the punishment has to fit the crime. I do not believe that you go down the road destroying any person when what he has done has been done all along. But we have to let the people out there know that we are going to put a stop to what is going on.

I personally believe that had the Honourable Member resigned in a situation where he could show that this matter was being done before him for a long time, the people of Barbados would not go for him because that Honourable Member, the Member for St. Michael West is beloved in this country. He is a man that is loved beyond any other in the Democratic Labour Party and I believe that if he had taken that stand he would have risen triumphantly over this matter. I believe that if the Democratic Labour Party had taken that stand this party would have risen triumphantly as well because the people out there, as I have said, on many occasions are not stupid.

Whenever I think about this matter one person comes to my mind and I could hear him saying on a matter like this, "Man look what luck I have. People have been doing this all the time before me and look my luck. Anyhow, my Ministry did something wrong and I am going to take the blame for it." That is how Sleepy Smith would have said it Sorry to call him "Sleepy" but I have the greatest respect for him - Sir Frederick. That is the way I thought he would have said it

Mr. Speaker, let me just say this. A lot of people seem to forget that about 2V₂ years ago P. J. Patterson was asked to resign from the Cabinet in Jamaica because of the alleged involvement in the oil and gasoline scandal. Who is the Prime Minister of Jamaica today? The same P. J. Patterson because he took the long-term view. He knew how popular he was in his party and today he is called die "Fresh Prince of Jamaica". He resigned because he felt that the people out there had to be satisfied. It has nothing to do with what you think or what we think. The people have to be satisfied and the people are going to judge us very severely.

Mr. Speaker, let me proceed. The matter of this document. I sat for nearly a year. I did not go to all the meetings. I missed a few. I would recommend that this document be read by every single soul in this country,

not because it is saying any Minister did wrong or anything but it reproduces evidence that was given by reputable people in this country. As I said, you take the document and you could say "Well. I disagree with that opinion. I disagree with the other opinion," but you can look in here and see the facts that are reported.

Let me tell you why, Mr. Speaker, this thing about attaching verbatim reports - the verbatim report are in the House. Anybody who wants to go through all of that can go and read it. The next time you will hear that each of these should have the verbatim report hooked on to them so each one of us will have to be bringing motor cars in here to carry home this. If you want to read the verbatim reports, go and read them. This is a faithful reproduction of the evidence produced at that Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know how many more minutes I have.

Mr. SPEAKER: You still have about 12 or 14 minutes.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: You see, Mr. Speaker, I have said in here that I speak according to how I feel. I have said and I believe I may be wrong because I am not God Almighty, that the Honourable Minister and this Party could have been transformed if certain decisions had been made because the people out there are asking and who better to have started a new Barbados, a new political feeling in this country than the Democratic Labour Party. 12,55 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say, because I am not going to hold up the House long. I just want to say this. The Resolution that stands before me, right down the Resolution paragraph 1, no problem. Paragraph 2, no problem. Paragraph 3 right down, no problem. When I get to the final paragraph, this is where I have a problem. I will read the paragraph. The paragraph says:

"BE IT RESOLVED THAT this House has no confidence in the Honourable Member for St. Michael West as a Minister and member of the Cabinet"

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have given this matter extreme thought for months and I believe that if at any time I went any part of Barbados and told anyone that I have no confidence in the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, as a Minister I would be doing an dishonesty to my conscience. I have gone all over Barbados and I have told people for years that as far as I am concerned the Honourable Member for St. Michael West was probably the best Minister in the Democratic Labour Party.

Asides.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker by saying a person is the best Minister does not mean that if the Minister is responsible for a Ministry and something is wrong with the Ministry that he should not pay his dues. Nobody is going to force me to do anything that I do not want to do.

Let me say this, I believe that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West - and it does not have anything to do with Combermerians or anything. It is a feeling I have and if there is anybody else in that Cabinet that I felt the same way about or anybody over there, I would say the same thing. That is how I operate. I believe that his capacity, his experience, his knowledge of Government and everything else qualifies him to sit in any Cabinet whether it is the Adams Cabinet, the St. John Cabinet, the Sandiford Cabinet, any Cabinet, he can sit in it and he will come out the best. It does not mean that you should not take responsibility for what has been done in your Ministry. That is something else.

Mr. Speaker, let me give you 2 examples of my view with regards to the Honourable Minister.

Aside.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: I said he should have resigned when he held the press conference. I am saying that when I was in the Cabinet this Honourable Minister the Honourable Member for St. Michael South with all due respect - this is no Cabinet secret, I am speaking the gospel truth - to all the other lawyers inside that front bench, that Honourable Member was the one person when any legal matter comes to Cabinet who could explain it for the smallest child to understand CM* for a man ignorant of the law, like me to understand. Am I to vote that he is to come out of the Cabinet when I have learnt so much from him, inside the Cabinet? I am not doing it

Mr. Speaker, this is another example. He is one of the few Ministers that regardless of which Ministry he is in he consistently on his overseas trips gets funding for Barbados. If he is in Health he gets PAHO or WHO or whoever. You would hear there are giving \$2 million to such and such a Ministry. I said in any Ministry you put him in he gets funding for this country on those overseas trips. I cannot say it about a lot more people because some go overseas every 2 weeks and cannot come back with anything. It is as simple as that.

I have given my view on this matter. I still believe that if a decision was taken then this Honourable Minister could have risen triumphant in this matter. I believe that.

Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you, Sir. Thank you.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, I get the impression that this matter is being discussed in 3 courts

at this time. The first court is this Honourable Chamber which has constituted itself as a court to discuss charges against the Honourable Minister. The second court is the editorials of the newspapers of this country and the third court is supposed to be public opinion what the citizens of Barbados believe. It is my belief that the third court, the court of public opinion, will be guided largely by what happens in these first two courts, this Honourable House and the court that sits in 2 places in Fontabelle. Those are the 3 courts. But in terms of this institution, it is one court.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very, very important court, the one that I stand to speak in. This court of the Parliament of my country. I recognize a certain difficulty involved in the proceedings of this court as it relates to equity and justice and fairness, if we put a member of this court to trial in this particular Chamber. First of all in this particular case the Member is being tried by information that was garnered at a Committee. If I look at that Committee, Sir, it comprises more of the Members of the Opposition than of the Government to which the Honourable Member belongs. Secondly the Members of the Government have made themselves clear about their position on that Committee. 1.05 p.m.

That Committee had witnesses before it; evidence was given to that Committee and that Committee called those witnesses and examined and cross-examined them as to the lightness of the evidence they led. This court does not have that opportunity so this is a talking court. It is a court that can get up here and say anything at all about this Member without it being supported by substantive evidence. In fact, Sir, if I want to find out who is the Prosecution in the Court, I could assume we are talking about the Honourable Member for the City and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir, I think that the Honourable Member has the wrong analogy. This is more of a disciplinary Committee and I said that in my opening remarks. We are our own disciplinary committee and that is one of the reasons why what we should do should be very transparent. Not so much a court, as a disciplinary-committee we have to be seen to discipline ourselves.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: A disciplinary committee is a court and any disciplinary committee has to have the same proceedings as a court if there is going to be equity and justice - natural justice. Why are you making differences between a disciplinary committee and a court? All disciplinary committees must follow the rules of natural justice. To that extent they should be bound like a court. The difference is that we have to be very careful that when the Honourable Member for the City sets up herself as a Prosecutor or the Honourable Member for Christ Church

South or any of them, prosecuting a Member in here, Sir, we have to ask questions about the prosecutors themselves.

Mr. Speaker, I tried to look at the Prosecutors, the persons who are laying the charges and who are giving evidence about the charges that are being made against this Honourable Member. I need to ask some questions first of all about the Committee. Was the Committee the mechanism for getting information to lay charges against the Honourable Member? I want to ask questions about that Committee. Why did the Committee limit itself to any wrongdoings after 1986? What is the magic about 1986? Why not 1981 or 1982, unless there was a certain intent? Why didn't they go right back? I just want to know why 1986. I did not ask why they did not start from 1972. I want to know why they started from 1986. That is a different question. Why did they start from 1986? Are they interested in the way how the public sector performs and how politicians perform. Why 1986, what was magical about 1986? That is the first question. Could there have been a certain intent?

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, why if they had the Auditor General's Report that spoke of difficulties in so many Ministries, why did they zero in on Health? Could there have been a certain intent again? They have to answer those questions, because of the question of justice where you set out to judge a matter with predetermined intent. I am not saying anybody was on any witch-hunt. That is a different thing. What was the intent on going for post 1986? What was the intent of going for health? Does it have anything to do with the Prosecutors? Who are the Prosecutors? Let us examine the Prosecutors.

Mr. Speaker, there was a no-confidence motion in this Honourable Chamber constituting itself as a court in 1985. Those who were on the defence at that time included the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who was then the Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. Peter, the non-durable Member for St. Michael South East, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and the Honourable Member for St. George South. There was a vote of no confidence against the former Member for St. Michael West Central, a man called Mr. Vic Johnson, at the time the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South, then Prime Minister, was leading the defence. I want to quote from him. Here is what he said in this Chamber on June 25, 1985, page 2749 of Hansard.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is one of the best lawyers in this country. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is a distinguished Q.C. A man seized of integrity of the highest order. He said:

"The responsibility for accounting in any Ministry resides with the public officers in that Ministry. The Chief Accounting Officer is Permanent Secretary of the particular Ministry and the general supervision of the total accounting procedure in Government is the Director of Finance and Planning, subject to the Auditor General's audit and subject also to the scrutiny of the Public Accounts Committee, presided over by the Leader of the Opposition".

He goes on on page 2752:

"The Honourable Member knows and the public should know, that no Minister of Government spends Government money.... Anybody who tries to tell them to spend money when they do not have the money voted is wrong, and I know the Director of Finance and Planning is always telling them that nobody could make them spend money which has not been voted or make them spend money for the purposes for which it is not being voted. So once you have these rules in operation nothing can happen with the public finances of Barbados."

He then said:

"The Government will not be supporting this Resolution".

Listen to the people who said no vote of no confidence against Vic Johnson: The Member for Christ Church West, the Member for St Peter, the Member for St. Michael South East, the Member for St Thomas, the Member for St George South, not the other Members who were not in here at the time.

What is different in this situation now? Which Minister here now is accountable? Which Minister here is accountable when that Minister at that time was not accountable? I just want to know. Listen to the Prosecutors. The Prosecutor at that time was the Defence and the argument they used was that the Minister was not culpable. He could not be. Listen, I do not want any sophistry to creep in my country. I do not want any sophistry or any hypocrisy to guide my country. You cannot be leading one kind of argument when it is a Member on your side and another kind of argument when it is a Member on my side. I want to be very clear about that.

Now, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is a Queen's Counsel of great experience, a man of integrity, a man of honour. I have said so many times, even if he is vulnerable in politics. A good man. That is the truth. But tell me why he would get into arguments in support of Vic Johnson that he would now use against the Honourable Member, except for politics.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Because they put you in the position you did not want to be in. Do not mind that The principle remains the same. The arguments remain the same.

Now, let me say clearly, we have been trained in the Trade Union Movement, my leader, the Honourable Leader, the Member for St. Michael Central, that you look at the charges. Everything must turn on the charges. If the charges cannot hold there is no case to answer. If you are charging the Honourable Member for something for which he is not accountable there is no charge to answer. I am going on the evidence of the leading Q.C. I am going on precedent, *stare decisis*. The point is that the same argument you used for Vic Johnson you should have been using here in support of this particular gentleman unless you have another motive. It cannot be that he is on a different side from you and you could not be arguing in 1985 because you are the leader of the party at that time and you are a year away from elections? 1.15 p.m.

This is where this charge must fall down. It is not a fair charge. I have heard no evidence which shows that he collaborated in any way or that he was party to anything, but I have evidence in the Vic Johnson case that you can talk with them as much as possible, the civil servants still have the decision to make. He knows that the Director of Finance always tell them what to do. This is a very, very serious matter. We need to separate evidence and proof from waffling, innuendo, side swiping and all the other things. This is a serious court. This might not be the Supreme Court or a Magistrate's Court, but this is a very serious court This is the most serious court in the land. This is your Parliament, going back from the Witangemot, the Witan of Saxon times. The highest court of the land, your Parliament, has always been your most serious court, coming down from Britain, the tradition that we follow. Your Parliament is not a court to be trifled with, and I am very concerned about what is happening in this country in terms of this court I stand in. Nobody selected me for here, I was elected to this one. I do not know about you others, but nobody got in any back rooms smoking or drinking and selected me and I became a Member of this Parliament, I was elected by the people of Christ Church East Central, not by any 50 vote majority either.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Innuendo, rumour and gossip must not be allowed to destroy the lives of outstanding public servants. I do not care who talks about this, I can talk about race or class at any time I want to, and all those overtones that are there. Mr. Speaker, they can brand me as they like in the newspapers of this country, I have certain principles I stand on and I will die on. I am not afraid.

I did not come in here with much and I am not going out with much either.

In this Parliament there have been innuendoes, all kinds of discussions on all shades of race. The same man prosecuting in the papers is the same man who set up the Honourable Member for the City as the best choice to lead that party. We need to understand these things. I will get to that some more.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Jack Dear and Philip Goddard had you set up to be leader of the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. SPEAKER: No, the Honourable Member will withdraw those names.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: But not with your support, though.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, please, on a point of order. I have never been set up for anything in my life. I am a fighter.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just take out the names though.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I withdraw that Not with your support, though, you do not connive like that As I was saying, Sir, we need to recognise what is happening in this country. There are some people who believe that this is not a real court, you are not a judge, only the Speaker. No big thing. You are only the Speaker. Who do you think you are? There are some people in this country who believe these are only politicians. Who do they think they are? They feel this is only a talk shop, treating this Parliament, this court, with contempt.

In the second court I talked about, Sir, the court of the newspapers, we have already been tried and found guilty, but we are dependent on those same newspapers to carry our points of view out there to the public so that we can be tried in the public court, but by them you have already been tried and found guilty. The Minister has been found guilty by Jack Dear writing editorials.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going to take that kind of comment. I am not taking names in this debate. Take out all the names.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Right, Sir. I withdraw that, Sir. I never said it. The ones who get a chance to write editorials from time to time - Oh, dear me, Sir, and every manjack has a chance - and some manjacks have an often opportunity to do it - Oh, dear me, Sir - writing in the

editorial leader every time he feels like, Sir, to castigate the Speaker - Oh, dear me, Sir - all Members of Parliament

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I want you to understand what I am saying again, Sir. If there is any collusion or collaboration, let me tell you where it is. A certain clique in the Barbados Labour Party, led by - Oh, dear me, Sir - let it be known that they wanted a particular leader of the Barbados Labour Party and they did not want somebody else. That is a fact. They publicly said so many times. The present Leader of the Opposition ended up as second choice. They could not do anything with him. The others who had a good chance, like the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, the Honourable Member for St. George South, had to be put down. The Leader of the Opposition at the time, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, had to be put down too. Is it coincidental that he is being slapped down and the elevation of these two persons that were wanted came to do with this same issue of the St. Joseph Hospital and so on? I say to you, Sir, it is not coincidental. There was a belief that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West was not the kind of person who would do what the Honourable Member for St Peter and the Honourable Member for the City are now doing, and therefore he had to fall and they had to be elevated in order to carry out this prosecution.

Mr. SPEAKER: But you have to be careful of imputing improper motives. I think you should desist from that kind of debate.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Sir, in history I have the Job of piecing together facts. That is part of the analysis and synthesis I have to do. I do not know if it will happen 20 years from now, this is current history and my job as a current historian and a political analyst is to piece together facts and events, and I have to let people know what is going on. Nobody fools me in these matters. I do not have to be in the smoky rooms to know what is going on, I know the products of the smoky rooms when I see the events unfolding. I know the genesis of the root from which they came, Sir. A historian has to be a detective. This is what is happening now, a certain prosecution of this Honourable Minister.

Mr. Speaker, let me say this in closing. This honourable court has to be careful what it does to its own members, especially if there is some idea that any harm done is for the gratification of some other group which cannot get in here legitimately but believe they can stay outside and manipulate. That is the first warning I have. If anything is to happen to any Honourable Member, then natural justice must prevail. The charge must be laid, it must be relevant, it must be apt, all the proof must be brought, it must be quintessentially and pellucidly clear. The proof must be there. I will go by evidence, I will

go by proof. Let it be there. Not by innuendoes or gossip or rumour. I have to be convinced that there is no malice intended against the person. I will start out by the assumption that the person is an honourable person and that the burden of proof, the burden of guilt has to be brought by those who are prosecuting. I have to be convinced, Sir, that those who are prosecuting, themselves are on firm foundations, that they do not have one set of laws for the Medes and another set of laws for the Persians.

I have to be convinced, Sir, and I think there is a huge contempt going on. If this matter was before the law courts, then the newspapers could not be writing about it every day, and from the time this thing was put in this court, from the time the first Resolution was laid in this court the newspapers should have gone silent. There is a huge contempt for the process of Parliament, so that even when a Resolution against a Member has been laid and is being debated, every day the newspapers are talking about it. If this were in the Supreme Court they could not do it. They would be held in contempt. But this is no court. The Members, the Speaker, everybody, we are being tried in the newspapers, Sir, before any evidence is led. It is part of the contempt that is developing, without good grounds, Sir. There are no holier-than-thou people in the Press or anywhere else, this Parliament is Barbados' and is reflective of Barbados.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Well, I know that David is sorry he said so ever since. This is one of the things that some people say and are sorry the day after. 1.25 p.m.

I am concerned about public opinion after this Court has decided. I am not convinced that public opinion will hear all that goes on in this Court because some reporters have a tendency to report only what they want to report and then they carry it to their editors and we already know how the editors stand. So I would challenge the newspapers, the next Court, to carry verbatim every statement carried in here because they have already set up and found everybody in here guilty.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: The prevailing editorials have already carried it and told the public that all of us in here are bad. They would have to go back and find out if the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, the Honourable Member for St. Peter and the Honourable Member of Christ Church South when they said that the Honourable Member of the day for St. Michael West Central had nothing to answer, using the learned words of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that you

couldn't put anything against him because the Minister does not stand in that particular area of responsibility...

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Well, the Public Accounts Committee has scrutinised but has not submitted a complete report. In finishing, Sir, let me read that statement again, let me advert to the words of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South:

"The Honourable Member knows and the public should know that no Minister of Government spends Government money. Anybody who tries to tell them to spend money when they do not have the money voted is wrong. I know the Director of Finance and Planning is always telling them (the public servants) that nobody could make them spend money which has not been voted or make them spend money for the purpose for which it is not voted. So once you have these rules in operation, nothing can happen with the public finances in Barbados."

In other words, he said he was separating the Ministers from the public servants. He made that very clear.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: What this establishes is that he is not the responsible person. The Minister is not the responsible person. So we are scrutinising it now but we have to scrutinise it fairly because we can only try to punish somebody if he is in breach of his responsibilities. I thank you.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask that we revert to Order of Business because there are certain documents to be laid and notice to be given. I also want to state that at the appropriate time when we resume our sitting the ministerial statement will take place.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection, then leave is granted.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS PAPERS

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay:

The National Insurance and Social Security (Collection of Contributions) (Amendment) Regulations, 1993;

The National Insurance and Social Security (Self-employed Persons) (Amendment) Regulations, 1993; and

The Duties, Taxes and Payments, (Exemption) (No. 4) Order, 1993.

NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I give notice of the Income Tax (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 1993.

In moving that this Bill be read the first time, I want to state that it is my intention to invite the House with your leave to deal with this Bill in all its stages at today's sitting.

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I now move, Sir, that this sitting be suspended until 2.45 p.m. today. 1.32 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I believe I did indicate earlier that we would want to have at this time a ministerial statement made. The Minister of Finance wants leave of the House to make this ministerial statement.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

STATEMENT ON THE INTENDED SALE OF THE ARAWAK CEMENT COMPANY LIMITED

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Arawak Cement Company Limited is owned 51 percent by the Government of Barbados and 49 percent by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

2. In 1990 the shareholders set in motion the process of selling their shares in the Company. That process is now reaching its conclusion.

3. In preparing the company for sale the shareholders have had the benefit of a technical, managerial and financial audit report and a valuation report. These reports were prepared under the auspices of the Commonwealth Secretariat by W. S. Atkins, Management Consultants, of the United Kingdom.

4. The Company was advertised for sale in the print media in Barbados and internationally in selected

newspapers and trade journals and 85 copies of a Confidential Offering Memorandum were distributed.

5. The shareholders received priced proposals from the following parties:

Trinidad Cement Limited
Cementos Caribe C.A.; and
Employees of Arawak Cement Company Limited.

6. The shareholders, after several meetings with each of the parties submitting priced proposals, have accepted the negotiated proposal made by Trinidad Cement Limited.

7. Trinidad Cement Limited has agreed to purchase the Company for Bds. \$15 625 000 payable in United States Currency and to assume the Company's short-term liabilities which stood at Bds. \$20.5 million on September 30, 1993. The purchase price is subject to upwards or downwards adjustment following the financial, legal and technical audit of the Company. The value of the sale to the shareholders will be approximately \$36.125 million.

8. The shareholders will retain their respective shares of the long-term debt. In Barbados' case the long-term debt of U.S. \$4 316 362.78 will be amortised by April 10, 1996.

9. Trinidad Cement Limited has given a general commitment to continue and maintain plant operations after the take-over date. It has also given a commitment to restart the kiln within a period of 4 years after the take-over date, subject to economic viability and contingent upon reduction of the unit costs of production through lower fuel costs and efficiency improvement

10. The shareholders and Trinidad Cement Limited have approved the Heads of Agreement and Trinidad Cement Limited is now carrying out financial, technical and legal audits of the company. Efforts are being made to complete the sale transaction by December 31, 1993.

11. The sale of the Company is not expected to result in any major retrenchment of its employees.

Mr. SPEAKER: End of statement. Resumption of Private Members' Business. Does any other member want to make his contribution? If no other member desires so to speak...

Miss B. A. MILLER: Don't you intend to speak?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for the City is now making her final...

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, it would appear that no other Honourable Member from the Government Benches including the Honourable Member for St. Michael West wishes to speak on this and also that no

other Honourable Members from this side and so I would propose...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: The interpretation is that the Minister will have the right of final reply on this debate on behalf of the Government

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order. If I may quote our Standing Order 30(7) which I quoted at the beginning when I first spoke.

"In a debate on any matter of Private Members' Business, the speech of a Member shall not exceed 30 minutes provided (and this is the proviso) that this time limit shall not apply to a Member in moving a motion of "No-Confidence" in the Government and a Minister who speaks in final reply to such a motion, and provided also that the mover of a motion shall, subject to Standing Order No. 29(2), have a right of reply, such reply not exceeding 30 minutes."

Mr: Speaker, Sir, I brought a motion against a Minister, not the Government. We had hours of argument in here on Tuesday on this very point When I got up it was made clear to me that I could only speak for 30 minutes, that I could not have unlimited time because I was not bringing a motion of No-Confidence against the Government.

I am here being guided by the Standing Order. I was limited to 30 minutes in my introduction on the clear understanding that it was not a motion of No-Confidence in the Government I cannot understand by what mechanism now I do not have the right of final reply and the Minister would have the right to reply after me.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: This is the Standing Order that specifically governs Private Members' Business.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going to have any argument on this point I am going to follow the standing practice from previous Resolutions of this sort The person moving the motion will reply and the Minister replying on behalf of the Government will have the last word. That is the end of the ruling.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, this has been a curious debate for a number of reasons. I am really only entering this debate to respond to some of the comments that have been made, not only in the course of the debate in this House, but also in the course of public

commentary on the conduct of Ministers in Barbados as a whole, particularly the daily exercises appearing in the newspapers and one particular scandal sheet in Barbados which glorifies scandal in its editorials, some of which are written by people who have one foot in Glendairy Prison, another hand in a cookie jar and could not even write a cheque which the bank could satisfy tomorrow if they were asked to do so. Yet it is their job to establish for Barbadians the standards of morality which this country should observe.

That is the irony of this exercise because as between the Members of this House I am saying I am not on any Public Accounts Committee and the members of it may have to excuse me and they may determine how they feel about what I have said. Based on what has been said on both sides of this House, I consider the exercise to be a sham and I am entitled to say that as a parliamentarian. It does not conform to the standards, in my view, which a Public Accounts Committee is charged with. It is not the job of a Public Accounts Committee, as happened in this case, to determine that a policy is a wrong policy and then prosecute a Minister for implementing it by raising issues in relation to financial irregularity.

It must always be understood by Barbadians that from the beginning the St. Joseph Hospital issue was a policy decision on which there was a divide between the Government and the Opposition. Secondly, the Public Accounts Committee has a majority of members on it who are Members of the Opposition and they can determine what they are going to enquire into. I want to tell the Honourable Member for St. Peter because he is a very loquacious person now talking about sexual indiscretions of MPs as I see in the newspaper and all kinds of other things about morality... 3.00 p.m.

I am going to say - You and the newspaper? I do not write the column. I see in today's paper that the Westminster model is failing - and these are the kinds of innuendoes that the newspapers are carrying. If it is not true I hope the Honourable Member for St. Peter would deny it because I was upset when I read it.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That the Westminster model is failing. I am not quoting from it, Mr. Speaker. I would not quote from it at all. I would not attempt to quote from page 31A of today's newspaper. But there is a story carried in there where a Member of Parliament says it is suggested that the Westminster model is ailing and attributes part of it to the sexual indiscretions of some of the Island's parliamentarians. Now, we are carrying a joke too far in this country and I agree with what the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central

said. Nobody in here is setting the standards of my morality and furthermore, least of all, some half-baked editorial writer who, as I say, cannot sleep easy when the nights come. I am not going to have it.

I go before the public every 5 years, as does the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, and as will all of you, to make a statement about your morality. The Honourable Member for St. Philip North was pilloried in here and the mover of the Resolution is now searched for by the Police outside of Barbados. I came in this Chamber and a man got up and spoke for 30 minutes and excoriated the Honourable Member for St. Philip North for indiscretions and all kinds of other things to do with the so-called CARSICOT scandal which falls easy from the mouth of the Honourable Member for the City although she forgets everything else. That has been on her mouth since she entered in here. The person who moved the Resolution cannot set foot in Barbados today so we are carrying a joke too far when we feel that witch-hunts undertaken anywhere against parliamentarians...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You see how stupid it is. When he was over there you were sitting down next to him and easing up to him all the time. When the Resolution was put the three blind mice were easing over to make sure that they got their piece in but all of a sudden you do not want anything to do with him. We do not want anything to do with him or he did not want anything to do with us and the party of the most pure washed in the blood of the Lamb citizens of this country, the party to which the Honourable Member for St Peter again overseas attributed the initiative for Integrity Legislation. He forgot you, you know.

I read a newspaper article two days ago in which the Honourable Member for St. Peter credited the National Democratic Party with pushing the issue of Integrity Legislation. That is what the newspaper said. If it is not true get up and say that the writer of it, that nuisance in New York, is causing problems for you and your credibility if none of those things is true. You see this is what these debates are all about, a lot of fancy talk about Public Accounts Committee Report and nobody has denied any of the allegations in the Report We set ourselves up, not on any objective basis, but on the basis of hearsay.

An Honourable Member who is a member of the Committee tells us in this House that a shameful act took place in which two members of the Committee, I do not know who they were and I do not have any interest in knowing who they are because it is not the first time that kind of thing has happened, so I watch my words carefully over here and in respect of what I say. Over there too. Because I hear people quoting Hamlet in here today. They

should be quoting Macbeth and the words they should be saying are "out damn spot, out I say." The inventors of the crime are the people who sometimes can talk with the greatest authority. "Out damn spot" and notice that it is on a hand that the spot appeared and that is where the crime originated. I saw it on somebody's hand.

The origin of this, persecution of the Honourable Member for St. Michael West regrettably, I do not blame anybody over there, except, as I said, that there are people over there who know that they do not want the St. Joseph Hospital to be completed so that they are arguing *ex post facto* and trying to pull the arguments to suit what policy decision they disagree with.

Let me get back to the point in case the public of Barbados is misled because we are told today: what the people will think? "The people are not interested in the truth." They say they are interested in, "what the people think." Well, I am going to tell Barbadians of how -1 told you already you can write it down. I am not interested in what people think so long as their thinking is influenced by lies, deception, hearsay and editorials written by people which are based on all of those things. If people in a community are informed, have the truth at their disposal, have an Opposition which is committed to fairness and honesty, then they would not have that kind of problem.

Mr. Speaker, what the people of Barbados think right now is based on what they are reading, what people are saying behind the scene, on their junkets all over the world, what they are saying at the annual conferences of their parties, what they are saying at cocktail parties and in the smoke-filled rooms and in the board-rooms of Barbados and where those people believe that every black man who has money in this country stole it You are perpetrating that myth by permitting people to believe that the best way to deal with opponents of yours is to get with others in trying to tear down politicians and make it appear as though we are all thieves and all liars. I said "you" and you can interpret the "you" as you wish.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: It is grossly unparliamentary for the Honourable Member to point over here and say "you" to Honourable Members - the insinuation that we are in a conspiracy with somebody else to tear down Barbados and to tell lies, and deception and to run down black people. Now, Sir, if we are going to play the game that way...

Mr. SPEAKER: Oh no. We are not going to play it that way at all. If the Honourable Member takes exception as a direct statement to him I think in fairness you should withdraw.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Quite right and therefore the "you" I am referring to, Mr. Speaker, is the Barbados Labour Party. That is the "you" I am referring to,

the Barbados Labour Party. All, including those who should be languishing at Glendairy now but are not languishing simply because the Public Accounts Committee did not investigate what they were doing. That is my interpretation of what has been said today that certain people should be in Glendairy Prison but the difference between Prison and their freedom is the fact that the Public Accounts Committee did not do what it was supposed to do. That is what this debate amounts to. That is the only conclusion that I can come to.

The issue, Mr. Speaker, is, as I heard: "What will the people of Barbados think?" So you have a committee which tells members what the conclusion is before the evidence is heard.

Now, as upright as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is in this exercise, and I have no reason to doubt what the Honourable Member for St. Philip South said about him, none whatsoever because usually in things legal he takes the right course.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He is not into illegality. He is my constituent and I know, as I said, his word so I am not quarreling about the legal thing. It is the shenanigans that have been described in here. The public of Barbados wants to know who was drinking the champagne and how you could believe a committee that could be so serious as to be conducting an enquiry and members feel that the distribution of champagne is a pork.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I really have to rise on a point of order. The clear implication from the Honourable Member's speech is that the Public Accounts Committee was sharing out champagne to persons in order to influence what they were either saying or doing before the Committee. 3.10 p.m.

For the nth time, Sir, I want the Record to be straight because I do not know how long I have to live. But I certainly am not going to allow my name to be sullied in public with foolishness. Mr. Speaker, no Public Accounts Committee was entertained by anybody or anybody coming before the Public Accounts Committee was entertained by any Committee of the public Accounts. You have to bear with me, Sir. Only on one occasion within the Parliament, the Clerk of Parliament provided lunch for everybody, as has happened with Select Committees.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I want to say is this, I will not entertain any further discussion in that way.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker on a point of explanation, if you would permit me, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it something to do with the ruling I have just made?

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Arising out of a statement made by the Honourable Member.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, but I have made a ruling.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: It is in the Record, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have made a ruling because we had this from vary early and now I think it is time to finish with that. All Members have had their chance and I think it is time to finish with that All Members have had their chance and I think that is enough. As a matter of fact, it has nothing to do with the Resolution and therefore I brought it to a stop.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I can only base my assessment on the validity of the Public Accounts Committee based on what the Members of the Committee have said formed part of the proceedings whether those that are pan of the Record or were events which occurred otherwise. I am saying to the Honourable Members that the public is entitled to judge the efficacy of a committee in the face of all of this information, a committee which calls people aside and tells them what the conclusion is before the evidence is given.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member has a very fertile imagination. It is absolutely untrue for the Honourable Member to misrepresent to this Committee and I never understood any Honourable Member who spoke as sole representative of that Committee that the Committee came to conclusions before hearing the evidence. That is totally untrue. There is no point repeating it. The Honourable Member should know better.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I have said and will say again. At some point I am going to have to explain to the people of Barbados the role of a Public Accounts Committee. Based on what I have heard - and I say I have no problem with the Honourable Member *far* Christ Church West. He knows what the law is. He did the job he thought he was to do. He let somebody write a Report in their office and I want to know how a parliamentary Report could be written in somebody's office. All of this lends to the question of the efficacy of this Committee. I am saying to you, Mr. Speaker...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member says I let somebody write a Report in their office. The Honourable

Member again is absolutely mistaken. Just let me put it, Sir. A Sub-Committee was appointed to write the Report for consideration, as would be shown in the Minutes of the Committee. Obviously everybody who is on a Sub-Committee wrote parts of the Report. That Report was brought before the full Committee including the public officials and considered line by line.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: But where else should you do it, if Parliament has not got even the basic facilities to provide the Deputy Clerk to send a letter to the Minister in time? Where should you do it? As leader of Parliamentary Business you should enquire why Committees do not function.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It is sloppy, Mr. Speaker. It is joke business that is going on. I would say that if I were a discerning member of the public that one could not expect me to believe the conclusions whether they are factual conclusions or opinions which issue from that Report of the Public Accounts Committee. I am going to set out, although you have said, Mr. Speaker, that certain things cannot be repeated, so I am not going to do it here. But in my future explanations I would explain to the public of Barbados why it is that a Committee for all the reasons which have been adduced by its own Members of both sides that writes a Report like this wherever it was written or constructed or transposed or whatever and puts it out to the public...

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to say to the Honourable Member what I said to the others. I do not mind Members alluding to the Report but to debate the Report itself cannot be in order.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the role of a Public Accounts Committee is what this exercise is all about. Not about understanding the Financial Rules because nobody has been able to point, in relation to any aspect of this debate, to anything that is inconsistent with the understanding of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South of the Financial Rules. My understanding of the Financial Rules or any previous Minister of Finance's understanding of the Financial Rules - that does not include the Honourable Member for St. Peter yet because I hear a lot of foolishness out there in public. But in due course maybe he would have the opportunity to know all of that - but all present and former Ministers of Finance understand what the Rules say. The debate is not about the Financial Rules. As I have said, I consider this to be a political exercise, an exercise to give fodder to the editorial

writers and the political commentators to excoriate this Government and its Members.

I am saying to you that the role of the Public Accounts Committee is not to substitute its view on policy decisions of a Government. If the Honourable Member for St. Peter does not want the St. Joseph Hospital, find other means to stop it. This is not the methodology that is consistent with the Westminster Model.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: What Public Accounts Committee? Could a Public Accounts Committee stop a project? Do you understand what the role of a Public Accounts Committee is? You have arrogated to yourself powers that you do not have. That is the point

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious the Honourable Member is speaking without even reading the Report of the Committee. There is no way that the Member should misrepresent that the Committee had suggested that the St. Joseph Hospital project be stopped. It is not true. How is the Honourable Member going to get up and make such a suggestion and think his speech be taken seriously. At least speak to something. Nowhere in this Report, Mr. Speaker, Sir,...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I have already discarded that. The legalisms were right, everything else about the Report is wrong, in my view. The point I am making is this. I want to satisfy him. He wants to be sure that nobody can impugn his integrity about the legality of what he did. I know him well enough to know that that assurance would keep him quiet now in his seat for the rest of the debate.

Let me move on to the policy issue. I am repeating, Mr. Speaker, that the Barbados *Labour* Party does not want the St. Joseph Hospital. That has never been in doubt. What foolishness are we hearing today about because the Report did not say so, it does not mean that...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You would never get up in this Chamber and say that you support the St. Joseph Hospital. 3.20 p.m.

The Honourable Member for the City began her speech by talking about the travesty of the St Joseph Hospital from the beginning and those Sisters of the Sorrowful Mothers who obviously made such a great mistake in thinking that they could challenge the Queen Elizabeth Hospital which bears the footprints of her father. There is nothing wrong with that but I want you to understand the philosophical position that that represents

for her. And then the Labour Party moves from there to an election in which the St Joseph Hospital was an issue and therefore everything that has happened from there is to ensure that the hospital is not opened, that if it is ever opened it is full of scandal...

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of order. The only persons keeping the hospital from opening are the DLP Government. I said in my opening statement that there was no clear policy on that institution down at Ashton Hall and that is still the case. Nobody can say today, including the present Minister of Health, what the function and role of the hospital will be. So I do not know what policy you are talking about

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I only have this to say. I have absolutely no faith in the ability of the Honourable Member for the City to implement any health policy. They gave her the most ambitious part of their manifesto - the National Health Service - to implement in 1976 and she made a total mess of it and to 1986, was not implemented.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But that is not the National Health Service. I said the National Health Service so do not mix yourself up.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not broadening this debate to include anything else. That is enough on that.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The point is, Mr. Speaker, a conclusion was reached by the Barbados Labour Party a long time ago and every effort is being made to frustrate the policy objectives of the Democratic Labour Party in providing for the people of the North as well as other citizens of this country, opportunities for health care. But that has always been our story in the Democratic Labour Party so instead of that you could have the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and the Honourable Member for the City ... Listen to this, it would be a shocking thing if a private contractor was building a Government project and at the same time working at the Minister's home. I do not think she meant building a house for you. She did not mean building a house for the Honourable Member for St. Michael West so it may not be on all fours with other stories that we know. It may not be on all fours with other stories that we could tell this House and since, Mr. Speaker, you have ruled, I assume, that retrospective resolutions can be brought against Ministers and since the Honourable Member for Christ Church South listed this as a major concern of his, he felt this was really at the heart of this matter that this possibility even existed that when the contractor was carrying out work at St. Joseph he was carrying out work at the Minister's home.

I want all of you to understand. This is the story of Macbeth as I have said already. You cannot make that allegation as easy as you think you can make it because we know better on this side. I think it is only through prudence and decency that we do not believe that your personal business should be dragged through the streets of Barbados and you should not be carrying other people's personal business ...

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of order, aspersions are being cast. I would prefer if the Honourable Member would speak clearly so that I could answer him. Before I came into this House I had not one but 2 properties. I now have one wood and wall house at the side of the road in Prospect, St. James where I live on a chattel spot. Every single building that I have been responsible for when I was Minister of Health and when I was Minister of Education went to the Tenders Committee. That cannot be said of the St. Joseph Hospital. And any house that I ever owned I designed and built. So you can try with that

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that people's personal business has any right being elevated in any debate. The Honourable Member began on a certain path in this debate, left an innuendo hanging and Mr. Speaker, I am saying to you that there is no lily white accuser over there. That is no lily white accuser and she knows what I mean by that. All this fancy thing about tenders committee, the allegation was that a contractor was working at St. Joseph Hospital and building at the same time at the home of the Minister. I am saying to you, you had better check the facts. Anyway I do not like to talk about builders. You may have a better ability to know how builders build people's homes and build polyclinics too, particularly between 1976 and... You would know about that and the rest of Barbados knows. That is why those allegations coming from you do not make sense. Nobody doubted that you were honest but you have now given the impression to the public, Mr. Speaker, that the Honourable Member for St Michael West is dishonest When I put the facts together, Mr. Speaker ... Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I am going to leave it there.

Mr. Speaker, that is what this debate is all about. It is nothing about the integrity of the Honourable Member for St. Michael West. The latter part of the speech of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South is correct The Honourable Member for St. Michael West has made a major contribution to this country, one of the longest serving Health Ministers, served on major committees of PAHO, has contributed at every level in the political development of this country, Mr. Speaker, and they see it fit at this time to carry out a political exercise buttressed by a flimsy Public Accounts Committee report, a committee that was misguided in every respect. A misguided committee, wrote a flimsy report. That is my view and I will put that view to the public because I am fortified about

it based on all I have heard about the conduct of the Members, particularly the conduct of the Members of the Committee and the way in which the deliberations should be carried out.

So who is going to determine this public morality for us? Imagine the Honourable Member for the City acting as if she is the spokesperson for the public of Barbados, that suddenly she is imbued with all the virtues that the so-called public as she knows them, from where I do not know, hold close to their breast and clasp dear to their heart. She comes in here to set up standards of morality which I am saying that she, cannot herself meet. She sets those standards up, Members here put the position to her and indicate to her that the same allegation that she is making about the Honourable Member for St. Michael West which she suddenly seems to think has some kind of magical powers to them are to be the basis on which he is to be hounded out of public life.

This has been going on for nearly two years and I was going on to say, Mr. Speaker, I know what the role of the Public Accounts Committee is and lest anybody in here feels that anybody over here is frightened, because there are a lot of threats on the front page of newspapers about "we going for Central Purchasing next and we going for Parliament next". The Honourable Member for St. Peter issuing threats at some 2 by 4 branch meeting at the 'O'Level Institute threatening everybody that he is investigating. Well come and investigate. It is not a big issue. I want to let the editorialist know too that it is not a big issue. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West exercised his judgement on whether he should appear before that Committee for it to write a report like that If that is the standard of the reports that the Public Accounts Committee is going to write I would not be going anywhere around it either. You want me, go to the Court or do as you did him. Bring another no-confidence motion if that is how you feel about it. What you are saying is that we, as Ministers, are to be accounting officers. That is what you are essentially saying. That we must take responsibility for things that are the responsibility of public officers, that aspect of the Financial Rules which do not relate to the function of Ministers must be carried out by Ministers and all kinds of talk about morality and standards in public life and that people all around saying that we "does tief". That is what the Honourable Member for the City said. I am telling you I have not ever heard that said about me ...because you like to listen to what they say about me, you see. But you will reach my levels of integrity one of these days, but you are not even near there... 3.30 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The Honourable Member for St. Peter. I heard what he said. You are not even near

my level, but you do not set my standards for me. I want to let the Honourable Member for the City understand that I have never heard it said about me that I am a thief, so when you say "all o' we", identify the thieves. Unless you said "we" and you were talking about all of them over there, I do not know, but identify the people, because I do not like those statements. Even if the public feels so about some people, I know they could not feel so about me and I know they could not feel so about the Honourable Member for St Michael West. So if they feel so about somebody else in here, identify the thieves, carry out your witch-hunt wherever you wish to carry it *out*..

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I said your witch-hunt, I am not referring to the source of the witch-hunt

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. To suggest that there is a witch-hunt is to suggest that the Honourable Member for St Michael West is a witch. This is not parliamentary.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I believe she has taken enough in this debate, but I want to make that point right away. I do not get upset, Mr. Speaker. We have had a lot in the past two months - allegations against this Government of impropriety, talk about sugar and all kinds of companies. I do not wish to go into them, you told me to stick to the thing and I am going to stick to it. All kinds of comments about slush funds, month after month, is the objective of the Barbados Labour Party. Again, sensible people in this country writing all kinds of so-called informed opinion.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member's time is up.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wish to conclude in the one sentence, which I know you will permit me, I have absolutely no doubt about the integrity of the Honourable Member for St Michael West and I will be giving my full support, unequivocal support, to a denial of those allegations which are made in the Resolution against the Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my line of departure in this debate will be to bring to the House's attention that the Chairman of the Board of the Hospital informed the Committee that on 5th April, 1991 he received a letter from the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health in response to a request that he had made to the Ministry of Health for a written guarantee that he, the Chairman of the Board of the St Joseph Hospital, would not be held personally liable for any payments

made by the St. Joseph Hospital Board for any of the renovation works carried out on behalf of that Board at that institution. This is an act without precedent in the history of this country; a Chairman of a Board writing a Ministry seeking a guarantee from the Ministry that he was not to be held in any respect personally liable for any of the payments made in relation to renovation works carried out on behalf of the institution for which he had a responsibility in law. That, Sir, is my line of departure in this debate and I will come back to it.

This House was just regaled, Mr. Speaker, by a sad speech from the Member for St. John, which did not surprise me. We are here dealing with a matter concerning the use of public funds, and in some respects having to do with the expenditure of \$16 million of public funds. But we know that the Member for St. John does not lose sleep over \$71 million, whether it can be accounted for or not, and we are not therefore to be surprised if the Member who would not lose sleep over \$71 million will not lose sleep over 16. A lot was said by the Honourable Member which betrayed the strategy of the Democratic Labour Party in this debate, that if you cannot deal with the facts, if you cannot deal with the substance, either invent froth, create insinuations, cast aspersions and things of that character. All of the contributions of the Honourable Members on the other side have not been to deal with the few simple facts raised in this debate. There is a case here to be answered, but their response has only been to cast aspersions.

One aspersion that has been cast by the Member for St. John that has to be dealt with is the nonsense that the report of the Committee is flimsy, because the Committee went into waters for which it had no mandate. Anybody who reads the Public Accounts Committee's interim report will see no reference whatsoever to any matter concerning the policy in relation to the St Joseph Hospital. At no stage during the proceedings of the Committee - and he will usually flee from the Chamber, as is his usual practice — was there any discussion as to whether the Government was right or wrong in purchasing the Hospital or putting it to the use to which the Hospital is being put. That is now being drawn into this debate to discredit the Committee on grounds that cannot be sustained.

Since the question of policy has been drawn into this debate, I want to say this on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party. It was not the Barbados Labour Party's policy to buy the hospital for \$15 million, because we did not know what the hospital was worth. It was not the policy of the Barbados Labour Party to buy a hospital without knowing to what use we were going to put it. It would not have been our policy to buy a hospital for \$6 million which was valued for only \$3 million. It would not have been our policy to spend \$26 million on a hospital in circumstances where the renovation works were valued at \$3 million and

some of those renovation works have not yet been carried out. But none of these things was considered by the Committee, although we are now told that the Committee's report is not to be accepted because the Committee went into the question of policy.

We have also been sadly drawn into a situation where the report of the Committee is to be discredited by allegations made about things that happened during the proceedings of the Committee, by a member of the Committee himself. I think I have a responsibility to say for the records that the notion or the issue of champagne having been part of the Committee's proceedings is false and wicked. It is a wicked lie, but it is to be used on the platforms. 3.40 p.m.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: I am rising on a point of order. I indicated that after the meeting of the Public Accounts Committee the Chairman of the Board of the St. Joseph Hospital having been interrogated for 2½ hours was invited into the room downstairs in the Leader of the Opposition's office along with other members of the Committee to have a drink of champagne. That is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: The only reason I am allowing the Honourable Member for St. Peter to speak on this particular issue is that his name was mentioned in connection with it and an allegation was made; but no other Member can come in with that.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: My name was drawn into it and I know that this will be on the platform and I wish to state for the record that the facts are that we did not invite the Chairman of the Board into our offices. He asked the Member for St. Michael South East for a drop home because he did not have a car and on that day it was the birthday of the Member for St. Michael South East and his colleagues had some sandwiches and a drink for him. That is all that was involved.

We are now to have the committee report discredited by the notion that it has been drowned in champagne. It is the most disagreeable insinuation and aspersion that I have ever heard put in Parliament. It is sick. At least the Chairman of the Board had a reason for being there. We asked him to be there but I cannot remember - and I am not going to say anymore than this - the circumstances that caused the Member for St. Michael East to be in that room, Sir, and I will in due course on the platform talk about it.

Now, Sir, I want to move on to the substance raised by this debate that led the Chairman of the Board to request a guarantee from the Ministry of Health that he would not in any respect be held liable for any payments made as a result of the renovation of the St. Joseph Hospital. It is beyond any reasonable doubt on a careful reading of the Financial Rules that the Rules anticipate that Ministers of the Crown will have a decision making role at times to play in financial administration. The rule says that by spelling out the checks and balances that must exist when that decision is being made. I refer you, Sir, to section 8(1)(2)(3) of the Financial Rules, 1971:

"If an accounting officer disagrees with a Minister on a matter of importance affecting the financial administration of the department within the Minister's portfolio, it is the duty of the accounting officer to present his objection promptly to the Minister."

So the whole question of financial administration is one in which the Minister can be involved and there can be differences of opinion between himself and the accounting officer. That is recognised implicitly there, Sir.

"8(2) He shall place on record his disagreement..."

and it goes on to say, Sir,

"8(3) If the Minister adheres to his decision..."

So implicitly, Sir, the Rules recognise his decision concerning matters affecting the financial administration of the department in which he is involved. If the Minister adheres to his decision then it says:

"...he shall communicate that decision in writing to the accounting officer who shall accept the decision and carry it into effect."

The Rules accept, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that a Minister can have a role to play in the financial administration of the department that where there is a disagreement between himself and his staff the final decision is his but there must be certain things that must be done by the accounting officer who reports to him. That is in these Rules. And what this debate is about, Mr. Speaker, is a simple set of facts having to do with these Rules.

The first fact beyond dispute that has been put to the Committee has been that in exercise of his right to be part of the decision making process of the Ministry of Health, the Minister of Health was part of a meeting at which decisions were made, involving no conflict between himself and the staff, to allow the carrying out of works in a manner that was contrary to the provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

This is the third time. The Honourable Member is communicating somebody said something. I categorically stated in this House and I say to you I have never sat at a meeting at which we decided any such thing and I think it is improper for the Honourable Member to continue referring to that I have denied it I have nothing to do with what he believes. It is what is happening to me in this House. I have denied it twice already.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: This is precisely what this debate is about. They did not accuse the Minister of being at the meeting, Sir. It is not they which made the accusation. It is his Permanent Secretary.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, I have stated also that I have seen nothing which says that I was there. The Honourable Members have not given in the verbatim report and I do not trust what they wrote. I do not mind how many people say it is true you can come in here and say it is so and so because it is in the Report Mr. Speaker, I object to that.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I speak in this House as a Member of this House and am responsible for what I say and I know that if I tell this House a lie that I am responsible for that. As a member of the Public Accounts Committee I was given copies of the verbatim report of that Committee which were not prepared by the Member for St. Thomas in his office but by the staff of Parliament and I would like to pass this to the Prime Minister of this country. It is not written by me. This is part of the verbatim report of the Public Accounts Committee, not prepared by the Barbados Labour Party.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. I have stated that I have never sat at any meeting at which it was decided...

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: That's what I am saying.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am saying that the evidence given to the Committee on 2 separate occasions by 2 separate officials of the Ministry of Health was that the Minister of Health in his capacity of Minister of Health was involved in the meetings at which the decision was taken to allow the carrying out of works at the St Joseph Hospital contrary to law.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I object to that and I ask that it be removed from the records because it indicates that I have said it.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr/Speaker, the Honourable Member is saying and leaving in the record that I sat at a meeting. I do not care who told him. I never sat any such meeting. I will not accept that, Sir. I object to it.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: If this was not brought to a Committee of Parliament by 2 senior serious public officers perhaps there would be no issue here today. It is not the only issue but it is one of the issues that the evidence was given to the Committee by 2 key public officers, members of his staff who were invited to give evidence before the Committee. Only 2 were invited and both said independently of each other that the Minister was involved in the meetings at which the decision was taken at different times.

I am also charging that the breach of the Rules provided the financial context within which a form of financial rape thereafter took place at the St. Joseph Hospital. Works that were estimated to cost \$3 million without being fully undertaken ended up costing more than \$11 million in circumstances where the other aspects of the Rules pertaining to the award of contract were not properly carried out

My colleague from St Thomas has drawn reference to the fact that the agreement that should have been put in place to govern the carrying out of works from as far back as 1989 was not put in place until 1992. What we have here, Sir, is a situation in which there is a fundamental breach to begin with and then all of the other arrangements contributed to what I can only describe to this House as a form of financial rape. So no contracts were properly drawn. People issued cost-plus arrangements that in my view were extraordinary. We need to hear the Minister of Health on this occasion properly justify how a man could volunteer for 16% of cost and the Ministry says take 20%. You add on top of that - this is the material aspect of the case being brought by the Opposition - that you break the rules and then you allow financial rape. The man is prepared to work for 16% but you say, take 20%.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Give him extra time, Sir. The point is that it is important that the record of Parliament is not distorted. Earlier today the Honourable Member *for* St. Philip North explained the difference between 16% and 4%. Now the Honourable Member is again putting into the record that they said they would do it for 16% and they did it for 20%. It was a different year from what I understand.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The evidence given to the Committee was evidence of a character that people were asking for a cut, 16% of cost and ended up getting 20%. We want to know why in the context of stringent financial

situations this kind of financial bedlam and rape was allowed at the Hospital. 3.55 p.m.

Remember, Mr. Speaker, we have a Chairman of a Board who asked the Ministry for a guarantee that he would be in no respect held accountable for any of the payments pertaining to the whole set of financial dealings. It is extraordinary. It cannot be ignored by this House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in our judgment, therefore, this is a matter that behoves the House to take seriously. We are speaking in terms of a project which by the estimates of professional people, if fully carried out should have cost about \$4 million but has not been fully carried out. It has cost the taxpayers at least \$11 million, and the cost may still be rising. The contractual arrangements surrounding the carrying out of works and the award of contracts do not comply with the rules. The evidence of the civil servants who were part of the whole arrangement put the Minister at the centre of the decision-making process. Now he can dispute it when he gets up to speak by saying that he was not there. But I am telling this House that the evidence set out by the Permanent Secretary and the Chief Project Officer said that the Minister was at the centre of the decision-making process and it has to be answered. Now, if the Minister's simple response is that he was not there then so be it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I state for the record I was not at the centre of any decision-making in that regard. I was not at any meeting at which this decision was made.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the other issue concerned the role of the Minister in the recruitment. Now, it is beyond dispute that the Permanent Secretary wrote the Hospital requesting that \$17 000 be expended for the Minister to undertake a recruitment drive. If it was not the intention of the Minister to undertake a recruitment drive, and if, in fact, he did not undertake a recruitment drive, it would seem to me therefore that money was sought and received for an exercise under false pretenses. If he did undertake a recruitment drive, we are saying on this side that the specific provisions of the St. Joseph Hospital Act sets out such a clear line as to who can act on behalf of the Hospital, that there could be no conception that would allow the Minister to act as an agent on behalf of the Hospital. So he either received money under false pretenses or he did receive it for the purpose of carrying out a recruitment drive. Whether he received it under false pretenses or otherwise, we are saying that it also represents a substantial breach and has to be answered for. It is a serious matter.

The verbatim reports are now available for Members and they should read them because I delivered myself of

an opinion then as to what conclusion I would have to draw because if you tell me that the Minister was not recruiting people then the money would have to be used to finance a paid holiday. I said as much before the Committee but it is a matter that has to be answered.

I also want to say as well that this House would be remiss in its responsibilities if we were not to look at the totality of the behaviour surrounding the conduct of that project. We had a situation where a Permanent Secretary could tell a committee that even though the rules of the Financial Administration and Audit Act required him to be accountable to the House of Assembly for the propriety of the expenditure of votes under his Ministry, that he was not at all concerned with the question of propriety.

Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat that. One of the key issues that we had to deal with at the level of the Committee which was the question of propriety observed - and a Permanent Secretary could tell this Committee that although the rules required him to be concerned with propriety, that the question of propriety was not part of his dispensation, and a Chief Project Officer could tell a committee that if he had to do it again he would do it in the same way even after the breach was brought to his attention. When you look, Sir, it is as though a view was put out that, where this whole matter of the St. Joseph Hospital was concerned, because it was a matter of public priority, anything could be done anyhow by anybody. Nobody is accountable. The Minister was not accountable to anybody. The Permanent Secretary was not accountable to anybody. The Chief Project Officer was not accountable to anybody. Anything could happen and the taxpayers of this country, at the end of the day will have to pay almost three times the amount to repair a Hospital over and above what independent professionals say that Hospital should cost. That, in a nutshell, is most of what this debate is all about.

Sir, there is a case for Government to answer and not to laugh at; because the rules were broken. Year by year the Ministry of Health was requesting amounts to be spent at the St. Joseph Hospital that were in excess of the amounts for which contracts had properly to be drawn and tenders complied with. There seems to be no judgment nor was any effort made to ensure that the rules were followed.

In the final analysis it becomes the responsibility of Parliament to be the guardian of the public purse. This is what this debate is about. Is the House of Assembly of Barbados truly the guardian of the public purse? How will this House behave in circumstances where a committee of this House has brought to the attention of this House that the rules prescribed by this House in relation to how money voted by this House is spent? How will this House react when breaches are brought to its attention?

Now, Sir, if there were breaches in the past, people who had the responsibility to make sure they come to the House should have brought them here. We feel that the worst and most false argument to advance, as the public feels in this matter, is that the action we are considering now is to be justified only because it can be shown that many people in the past have done it. Can we now put people in Barbados in the position generally of believing that if somebody out in the rest of society stole and got away with it that people who steal now must get away with it too? 4.05 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The clauses in the Resolution did not state that

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I was drawing an analogy.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has to be very careful because the Resolution is directed towards the former Minister. It points to him and therefore you could not make that statement

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am not going to mince my words about the effects of the work of the Public Accounts Committee. I would have been glad to see the Minutes of the Public Accounts Committee and the verbatim report of the Public Accounts Committee brought to this House. There has not been any obstruction on the part of this Opposition that has caused them not to be here. But the Government would want the public and this House to believe that there is some deficiency that defeats the purpose of this argument because those documents are not here. I want also to say to this House as well, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that it is my view that the manner in which the invitation was eventually put to the Minister of Health.

Mr. SPEAKER: Time.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I have at least 15 minutes more, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is the end of your time. Conclude quickly.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I wanted to finish in a few minutes. The point I am about to make is that the trivia that is being brought into this debate, to try to camouflage the key issues, simple issues and basic issues that this House must deal with, Sir, are part of a general approach to try to discredit the work of the Committee in order to shield the Minister.

I would very much like if my time were available to read 2 letters that I have had to write to the Clerk of Parliament concerning the activation of the Public Accounts Committee...

Mr. SPEAKER: Your time has expired.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR:...and the non response...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member must recognize that we are on a time schedules. I give over time.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: The point I am making, Mr. Speaker, is that the issues are simple. The facts are clear. Is this House going to be the guardian of the public purse? What is going to be its response in circumstances where clear breach of the Financial Administration and Audit Act is brought to this House's attention.

I see this debate as admitting of no other issues of substance. I therefore, Sir, with all the evidence before us can well understand the circumstances that would have had to prompt the Chairman of the Board of the Hospital to write a letter to the Ministry asking that at least he may be absolved from having to carry any personal liability in relation to the way in which those funds were spent.

I am obliged to you.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDDFORD: Mr. Speaker, I have been very silent so far during this debate. I have not heckled anybody. I have listened to all of the speeches and I hope that the same courtesy will be extended to me.

This debate has sent me back to a play of Shakespeare, I believe it was Julius Caesar and I recall the words. I am quoting:

"Between the acting of a dreadful thing and the first motion, all the interim is like a phantasm or a hideous dream."

I will come back to the interim shortly when I make a few references about the Interim Report.

But I would like to say, Sir, that in my view, this is a debate that has not done this House of Assembly any honour. I believe that there are issues to be discussed. I do not believe it is a simple matter as the Honourable Member for St Peter has erroneously said, it is a very important issue. There are complexities in it which we have to consider. As Leader of this Government and as one who had responsibility for the administration of the Financial Administration and Audit Act and the Financial Supplies Rules thereunder, I have to take a stand relating to the probity of the public finances and to the actions of Ministers and public officials in relation to the carrying out of their duties. Anything I may say within that context must be viewed within the light of the responsibilities which only I as Prime Minister can carry in these matters.

Let me say that this is a very difficult speech for me to make because of the inherent complexities in the situation. It is a motion that is critical of a former Minister of Health, one of my senior Ministers now, he is a Member of this House of Assembly and he has been a significant actor on the political scene in Barbados ever since he entered it in the 1970s.

Sir, these kinds of motions become all the more difficult because we are dealing with the behavior and the conduct of a Member whom we all know very well. I believe the mover of this Resolution herself has a kind of love hate relationship. I am not sure which aspect of that particular relationship is exhibiting itself at this particular stage. None of that, however, should prevent us from examining and examining in a clear and dispassionate way the reasons and the argumentation being advanced by the Opposition in bringing this particular Resolution. I think we have to understand this.

The Leader of the Opposition indicated, according to a report in one of the newspapers, Sir, at a meeting held or reportedly held in the constituency of St. Michael West some time around August 1993 that under his leadership of his Party the Public Accounts Committee will be going after the DLP in every instance where there is a case to be heard. I am quoting it exactly. I am not leaving off any part that under his leadership of his party the Public Accounts Committee would be going after the DLP in every instance where there is a case to be heard. I am quoting it exactly. I am not leaving off any part. But there was a very clear intention by this new leadership of the Barbados Labour Party to go after the DLP. The Member for Christ Church West, even though this Public Accounts Committee has been a major concern and issue of his would not have put it that way, nor would have senior heads on the left wing or right wing, I am not sure where to put them, Sir, but those wiser heads on that side, the Member for St. George South and the Member for St. Joseph. They view it now as the first effort or outing of this new leadership of the Barbados Labour Party to come with a major onslaught on the Democratic Labour Party. They believe they have an issue and they are pursuing it with all the political vigour at their disposal. Let us understand it, Sir. That is the political background against which this issue and the Resolution have been brought 4.15 p.m.

I want to make it clear at the start that I do not and will not condone any breaches of the Financial Administration and Audit Act or any of the rules made thereunder and that is true of all of the Members over here. We do not condone that. I want to make it absolutely clear. This Government does not, and certainly myself as Prime Minister, does not and will not condone any breaches of the Financial Administration and Audit Act.

So what we have to examine is the basis and the foundations for the charges and the allegations which are being made about the Member for St Michael West And the best place to find them, Sir, or to get an understanding of them, an insight into them, is to be found in the speeches of the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown who introduced it and the Member for Christ Church South who seconded it

When we examine the vain thrust of their arguments in bringing this matter before the House, I think we will find that the charges, accusations, allegations and innuendos are brought, not so much to deal with the issues involved but to cause embarrassment and to destroy the career of the one of us who has made and is making a significant contribution to political and public life in this country.

Let us therefore examine the charges that have been made. The Member for the City in introducing this matter spent most of her time, more than half of her time, in irrelevancies as far as the Resolution is concerned, talking about the history...

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I submit that if the Honourable Member for the City was irrelevant Your Honour would have had a duty to rule her irrelevant and he did not so rule. So the Honourable Member is misleading the House.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Not irrelevancies in relation to the Standing Orders of the House that I am talking about, it is irrelevancies in relation, she was not breaching any Standing Orders of the House, but in terms of an effective and an efficacious presentation of the case, I am saying that her speech was dealing in a lot of irrelevancies, recounting the history of the St. Joseph Hospital which was all very well known to us. But there was a purpose behind that. I am trying to put the best construction on it and I believe that...

Sir, what were the charges made by the mover of the Resolution? Her main thrust that it was a folly for the St. Joseph Hospital to have been established in the first place and the purpose of that was to justify the refusal and the recalcitrance of the Barbados Labour Party Government when there was a clear need for assistance to be given to that Hospital in order to keep it going and to transform it into a significant health institution. What came through clearly, Sir, was that her party and her Government were diametrically opposed to the St. Joseph Hospital from the start and when it was in greatest need of support they gave it no support. Her position was that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was established to serve Barbados down to the year 2010. That she has brought a Resolution that is critical of the former Minister of Health at this stage has more to do with her views that there is no need for a second health

institution of that nature in Barbados and particularly in St. Peter in the North or anywhere else, was the conclusion drawn from that presentation. But that matter has been dealt with, Sir. What we have now is a number of other charges being tacked on to that

Sir, there was another charge levelled at the former Minister of Health, that he was in breach of the provisions of the Financial Administration and Audit Act in relation to works carried out at the St Joseph Hospital because there were no tenders invited and contracts awarded. As I understand it, Sir, we have heard a lot about the Financial Administration and Audit Act, what it says and those kinds of issues. That Act and the Supply Rules made under it relate to an accounting officer or an officer authorised by that accounting officer for the purpose of entering into contract on behalf of the Government for services, the undertaking of works or for obtaining supplies. 4.25 p.m.

That is what it is about, the role of the Accounting Officer or any other officer authorised by him in that regard. It is the Accounting Officer in a Ministry who is responsible for entering into such contracts. The Minister is not the Accounting Officer, and certainly a case has not been established that he was pretending to be the Accounting Officer. I have not heard it established that he was pretending to be the Accounting Officer. Indeed, he has strenuously denied acting in any such role of purporting to act in any such role. But we have our accusations and allegations. I am unaware of his acting as any Accounting Officer or that he was authorised to be such.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: If that is the case, bring the evidence and produce it. If he misdirected his Permanent Secretary in terms of policy - and I admit there is a grey area, let us not obfuscate the issue or try to be befuddled by it, between policy and administrative implementation of policy, and you cannot have that kind of clear cut division. A Minister for the implementation of his policy must keep an eye on how that policy is to be implemented. Let us understand that clearly. If not, his policy might be frustrated, it might not be implemented, or it might be implemented in a way that will frustrate the ends of the policy or that may be unduly expansive, extravagant or wasteful, so you have to keep that eye on it. The Minister was being a good Minister, because if the administration goes wrong he will be blamed.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: No case against the Minister in this particular regard has so far been made out.

Sir, the second charge made by the Honourable Member for the City in introducing the Resolution was that the Minister, while in the United Kingdom on business, allegedly took it upon himself to interview or recruit - I believe the word used was "recruit" - persons who might be interested in being employed as nurses in the health services in Barbados, or in the St Joseph Hospital in particular. Now, if we want to play around with the word "recruit" and to use it in a specific sense to mean identifying persons and offering positions or posts with salaries and terms of conditions of service attached, we can do that, but I am saying that to the best of my knowledge that was never the role that was played by the Minister. He was interested in a general way, as any Minister should be, in seeing that the trained resources of the country serving other countries abroad...

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order. I do not like to interrupt the Honourable Prime Minister, but it was made so plain, and I did not say it, that the Minister spent 10 days - you do not do things generally like that in 10 days and to be remunerated for it - on a recruitment drive. That is what the Chairman of the Board said and wrote, not me.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am dealing with the allegation that was made, and it was that he was up there recruiting persons. For that particular allegation to hold, you would have to establish what you mean by recruiting. In what sense are you using the word "recruiting"?

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. To assist the House I can answer the Honourable Prime Minister. Recruiting means that people get hired, and the report said that some of these people the Minister recruited were hired. That is what it means.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am talking about the word "recruiting". I would have to seek further and better particulars on that matter.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, I will move on from that particular point. I will merely repeat that I do not believe, and I am not persuaded, that there was any recruitment in the sense in which the term is used administratively.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Prime Minister is, I think unwittingly, misleading himself and the House. The gravamen of the case from this side, and certainly in speeches from this side, including mine, was that there were two improprieties, and the Prime Minister is not focussing. The first was that the Hospital Act allows the functions of recruitment to be delegated to certain persons, who are the Chairman, the

Administrator and a Committee of the Board. The Minister asks his own Board to give him \$17 000 to go and recruit overseas. That is the case from this side and we are saying that the Board could not, under Section 5 of the Act, authorise the Minister to act on the Board's behalf.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He asked for the \$17 000, they replied to say "we will be delighted" - read the report, that is in the letter - and they sent the cheque.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am saying I am not persuaded. The accusation that I am hearing is that he visited England to carry out a number of engagements and is being castigated for addressing and speaking to health personnel. This is what was said: "he was there addressing nurses and talking to them." You see, you ask us to come to the specific points that are being made and when we get to them and we put our own viewpoint there is then severe opposition to the points. You do not want us to deal with the specific issues. Those were the charges and that was said. If there is more to it than that let us let this House have it. Let us hear what it is. 4.35 p.m.

The third charge. I will pass on. I only have half an hour. I cannot even call it a charge. It is a kind of innuendo and I am dealing with the speech of the principal spokesman on this matter, the Honourable Member for the City. She said it would be shocking if while works were going on at a Government institution the same contractor at the same time could be carrying on work at the residence of the Minister whose Ministry is a client Ministry. That is what she said and left it there.

I admit that it might indeed be shocking. The question is did it happen. Merely to say that this might be shocking, the question is did it happen. We have not been given any dates or times. No dates or times to substantiate that conjecture. That is all it is. Conjecture. Either by the mover or the seconder of the Resolution. That particular charge or allegation could only be put in the nature of a slur or an innuendo or a smear. It is left there hanging. To people hearing it, it would be shocking and the Member for the City in her best mode was there leading people to believe that there was anything substantial coming in support of what she was saying but all she was saying is it would be shocking or would be shocking.

So, Sir, I pass on to the next point. The fact is that there is a great divide as the Member for St John indicated between the Opposition and the Government on this issue. They were opposed to the St. Joseph Hospital from the start. We on this side are saying that it is part of our policy to establish that hospital and to get it going as an integral part of our health institution.

Sir I said at the start and in the remaining 3 minutes that I have...

Mr. SPEAKER: Not 3.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You were very generous to the Leader of the Opposition, Sir. Let me make a few references to the Public Accounts Committee. I am not debating that matter. I do not believe that this House would wish to take any decision in terms of calling upon a Member to resign or any such drastic censure against a Member on the basis of an interim report. Interim means indeterminate. It is not final. It is inconclusive and there could be a change of view one way or the other and for this House seriously to ask for this very serious action against a Member I think would be a travesty of the canons of justice, national or otherwise. I firmly believe so. Indeed I had intended to ask with the permission of the House to have some special time set aside to debate the interim report, not only to debate it but obviously the Committee needs instruction and you would send them some instructions to go and finish their report first because we cannot take any action on any interim report including to hang, draw and quarter one of my Ministers who has done such a tremendous job in this country.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Sir, we cannot operate on this basis. Therefore the foundations for this Resolution have not been established. No main charge or accusation has been established nor evidence has been drawn and therefore this House should not act on the basis of what has been said so far by Members of the Opposition and we will therefore be voting against this Resolution.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would wish at the very outset to congratulate you and those other persons who managed to get the debate off the ground last Tuesday. I myself have the view that if we were not able to get this debate started, and indeed concluded, we would have been doing a great disservice to the people of this country. And therefore those people who exercised the patience, and put in the hard work that obviously was necessary to get the debate going, ought to be congratulated for their public spiritedness.

I wish to say that, in my view, the Public Accounts Committee acted in a manner which clearly demonstrates that it saw its role as the protector of the citizenry of Barbados. In that regard we ought to be able, notwithstanding the political stance from which we address this matter, to be in a position to recognise the significant value which an institution of this sort does for the maintenance of democracy in our system of government.

If one were to examine that and to follow it through, one would have to accept that, in the circumstances, the

Opposition must not be seen as acting improperly in introducing a Motion of No-Confidence. Perhaps in our system in developing countries we have moved so much to the extent of having such clearly delineated positions between political sides, that we do not always recognise that the role of a Motion of No-Confidence is not necessarily to be perceived as an exercise which will bring about the downfall of, a Minister or the downfall of a Government, but rather that it is an exercise by which the public is able to recognise and follow debate on a subject which is perceived by the Opposition, or which ought to be perceived by the Opposition as a subject which has the interest of the citizenry at heart.

In my view, the motion before this Honourable House springs from the report of the Public Accounts Committee and although, Mr. Speaker, you have said that you do not wish to have the Report debated, I think that you must allow for a certain degree of liberal reference to that particular document from time to time. I have been able to read it and I have 2 concerns not only because I read it but because of what was quoted. One concern has to do with the public debate which there has been and the second concern has to do with the Minister's right to be heard.

As I gather, the public debates sprang from the unauthorised issue of a copy of the Report. I think that the Committee acted very properly and disassociated itself from the incident of the issue of that Report. Therefore although we are left to wonder at the genesis of the issue, the Committee has been very clear and the letter coming from the Clerk of the House made it clear that the Clerk and the Committee were not associated with it.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee having done so, we are left in a position where we have to recognise the degree to which this issue to the Press has become a matter of some concern to us. I know of situations, and I believe that those who are attorneys at law know of many cases, where trials have had to be relocated because the level of public debate before the trial has been of such a nature that it has prejudiced any objective jury-conclusions which might be arrived at.

This is not a jury trial but, as the Honourable Member for the City has said, it is a disciplinary committee made up of peers looking at a matter concerning an Honourable Member. In that circumstance, we would still have to recognise that a comparable situation obtains. There has been an extraordinarily great amount of debate on this matter. In fact there are some people who have taken themselves up as being better able to moralise on these issues than others and they have spoken in such terms as to suggest that anybody who does not come to the same conclusion as those who have written in the Press ought to be eliminated, since the fury of these persons will

be brought to bear in such a way as either to do mayhem to us or otherwise to remove the possibility of our continuing to serve in this Honourable House.

We are all honest and honourable Members and I am sure that, notwithstanding the fact that this debate is sensitive in nature, there is a very clear understanding of the honesty and the role which we have always played and which we will continue to play. In those circumstances the vote which will be taken eventually will reflect Honourable Members' judgment on this issue. It is very important for us to make the point through you to the Press that we hold fast to all of those old traditions and rights and privileges which you demanded of Her Excellency the Governor-General on our behalf. We will never allow ourselves to be intimidated by anybody who writes in the Press either *for* or against this issue.

The second aspect of this matter of the public debate which has come to my attention has to do with many cases which I have heard. I gave an example on the one hand of cases heard, of relocation in criminal situations but I think I should also speak to cases of workers who are charged at the workplace and who, when there is such ventilation of the allegations against them in such a manner as to compromise the disciplinary agents' judgment of the case, have had to have a review of their cases on the basis of that public ventilation. 4.50 p.m.

What I am saying in essence, Sir, is that those people who have taken to writing consistently and sometimes injudiciously, have done a very grave injustice to the system of democracy as we understand it. I wonder whether it has not gone beyond that, and it would have to be within your discretion, and if they have not interfered with the functioning of this institution in the manner of their writing.

In my opinion, a Minister of the Crown is a worker appointed by the Prime Minister but employed by the citizenry of his or her country. In that regard I believe that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West is a worker, a worker under enquiry. I am not suggesting that the enquiry started with him but, because it started on a particular institution he became part of the enquiry, and in such a situation became part of the enquiry. It is my view that he is entitled to the benefits of due process.

My colleague, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central earlier today spoke regarding the laws of natural justice. What he was referring to here is the right that any person, where there is an allegation under the systems before us, either in law or in industrial relations, of knowing the charges, of being able to speak to the charges and of being able to answer in such circumstances. The way that this enquiry is set up does not provide for the

possibility for that kind of arrangement. I do not want to suggest that we should change the system; but I do want to make a comment in that regard a little later.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that the Public Accounts Committee is very much in order to express the concerns that it did, particularly those in its summary review on page 3. Although I will not read them, with your permission I will refer to some of them. In that summary review on page 3, paragraph 13, the Committee, looking at the Public Service and the way it functions was concerned that in the public administration there was a certain lack of prudence and lack of efficiency. For example, "The Committee discovered a general failure on the part of some departments to request written quotations, or to invite tenders and enter into contracts when incurring expenditure for the supply of goods or the undertaking of works or services exceeding the specified limits.*¹ Fair and reasonable area of concern for the Public Accounts Committee. "The failure" - and I have skipped some - "to produce for audit examination vouchers and other documents in support of expenditure," and more of the same.

I think that in examining those issues the Public Accounts Committee was, in fact, doing what was fair and reasonable. In the detailed summary in the pages that succeed page 3, the Committee has made certain observations which are of some concern to me and I believe of some concern to the public of Barbados as a whole. I think it is only proper and fair that if there are problems in the way that the Public Service is run, that those problems should be addressed and that we should (as a people responsible as we are in our various areas for the leadership of this country) we should be prepared always to seek to improve the manner of governance of Barbados.

The matter as to whether the Minister is responsible or the Minister is not responsible but the Ministry is, would have been one in which we could, in my view, better be able to have an answer today if, given the kinds of concerns which the Committee was able to throw up in the pages between page 3 and page 28, the Committee was able to say to us that the Minister was invited, that the Minister did or did not attend, or that having attended certain things happened.

My concern in that regard, Mr. Speaker, is addressed in paragraphs 139 through 142, and if you would permit I would like to read part of that area. The Report says at paragraph 139 that:

"During the course of our investigations, certain evidence was adduced which seemed to reflect adversely on the Minister of Health. It was the decision of the Committee that the Minister should

be invited to respond or make comments on or otherwise explain his position in respect to that evidence." That is very proper in my estimation.

Paragraph 140 says that:

"Consequently the Secretary of the Committee was directed on Monday, June 7 to issue an invitation (not a summons) to Mr. Taitt to attend the sitting of the Committee on Friday, June 11, 1993. We have been advised that on Tuesday June 8, 1993, the Secretary telephoned Minister Taitt and told him of the Committee's decision indicating at the same time that a written invitation would follow."

The fact is that the written invitation was not sent until Thursday June 10, for the reason, as we were told, that there was no member of the staff of Parliament available to type the letter of invitation. Then the Committee expresses its views on this matter at paragraph 142.

"In fact, when the Chairman was apprised of the state of affairs on June 10, he immediately allowed the facilities of his private office to be used in order to have the letter typed. This Committee is quite disgusted that petty bureaucratic bungling in the management of the staff of Parliament should have caused embarrassment to the Committee and the Minister. It is our hope that this is the first and last occasion of such incompetence."

The Committee has not stated here that they alone had been embarrassed but they have been clear to say, in my view, that they believe that there had been embarrassment to the Minister. I have no problem with that one way or the other. My question to the former Chairman and to you, Sir, is if there was an invitation which the Committee thought should go to the Minister, why if that invitation was frustrated for one reason or another was there not a subsequent invitation to the Minister?

Now, I understand that words were being thrown left, right and centre through the Press, off the Press, and everywhere else at this time. But in my line of business, my discipline teaches me that if we are concerned with not merely doing justice but ensuring that justice is seen to be done, then whatever anybody says in so many words, we have to ensure that we conduct ourselves in a manner that is beyond the possibility of misunderstanding or abuse. My view is that if the letter had not been sent in good time, there is no good reason why another letter could not have been sent at a time suitable to all the parties could have been found and that invitation would then have either been honoured by having the Minister attend, or the Minister would not have come, and when the Committee would have met, it would have recorded that the letter was sent at

thus and thus time, that either there had been no reply in writing, or that the Minister had otherwise communicated that he was not coming and the Committee could have proceeded with its position thus letting us know whether there is a position we are acting on today where we endeavoured to ensure that there was the benefit of due process. But we cannot in this Report at the second last paragraph of 142, say that there has been embarrassment to the Committee and to the Minister because an invitation that was to go out in writing did not go and at the same time take the position that the Minister was given the opportunity to answer. 5.00 p.m.

I do not believe that I, as a Member of this Honourable Chamber and a professional dealing with workers and their interests could accept that any individual who should be given the right of due process, but who was denied due process can then be found guilty of any charge. In those circumstances although I am very concerned about the issues within the pages of this Report, I cannot not support the Resolution.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: I rise, Sir, to make my contribution in the debate and I will not be very long. As stated by most Honourable Members who spoke before me we are in fact dealing with an extremely serious matter, a matter in respect of the public accountability of public officers and in particular, Cabinet Ministers. Any matter dealing with how taxpayers' money is spent or for some squandered is of grave seriousness to us all. I will make one confession, Sir, having read the Interim Report, I nevertheless came to this Honourable House with an open mind waiting patiently to hear the prosecution, because that is what it is or was, of the Queen's Loyal Opposition. I came with an open mind waiting to hear. But what I have heard so far has not satisfied me in the least that there is a case to answer by the Honourable Minister. It has been but one long disappointment. There is not much more I can say about that in the sense that the Members of the Opposition in trying to establish or make out a case against the Honourable Minister have not only contradicted themselves but sought, I believe, a charge which they obviously tried to level at this side, to confuse the issue and most people who would want to be confused by them. It is a very simple thing, Mr. Speaker. Throughout the Interim Report we have recourse to the Financial Administration and Audit Act Throughout the Interim Report again there is much reference to section 8 of those Rules. Section 8 reads in the very first line:

"If an accounting officer disagrees with a Minister on a matter of importance"¹¹ ...

It seems to me that that is in itself suggesting that the Minister is spearheading something. To disagree

with something means that something has to exist So the Minister is either spearheading something, is in the forefront of something or is the principal catalyst in something.

I have not heard any evidence produced by the Members of the Opposition that the Minister spearheaded, was the principal catalyst in or was the prime mover in the awarding of any contract at the St Joseph Hospital.

Aside.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: There is no evidence at all. How then is the charge grounded? Mr. Speaker, I know they will come with that. But the Minister has denied and Mr. Speaker you have already ruled on that The Minister has denied the allegation as mentioned in section 64 of the Interim Report. I do not think we can go any further on that, the denial is there. And until such time as the Members of the Loyal Opposition can establish otherwise then that is where that matter should rest It cannot go any further, the Minister is not in the forefront, that is clear. The Honourable Member admits that from his seat. Then it goes through certain things which must be done if the Minister is not there. None of these things have been established by the Opposition.

"(1) If an accounting officer disagrees with the Minister on a matter of importance affecting the financial administration of the department within the Minister's portfolio it is the duty of the accounting officer to represent his objection properly to the Minister."

Where is the evidence of the production of any such document to the Minister or to the Committee?

"2. He shall place on record his disagreement with any decision or proposed course of action."

I have not seen any documentation to that effect either. I have not seen it It does not exist.

"3. He shall place on record his disagreement with any decision or proposed course of action which he finds difficult to defend as prudent administration or which he regards as inconsistent with his obligation to see that the administration of such department is carried out with due regard to the avoidance of extravagance and he shall set out the reasons for his disagreement"

Where is the documentation or for that matter where - I am not even talking about the verbatim Report - is it documented in the Interim Report which is before the .House of these things being done. They refer to these Rules, Mr. Speaker, in the Report. They refer to these

Rules at paragraph 114 but conveniently omitted Clause 3, 8(3):

"If the Minister adheres to his decision he shall communicate that decision in writing to the Accounting Officer who shall accept the decision and carry it into effect."

Where is the evidence? Where is the letter from the Minister that he was the principal catalyst in the awarding of a contract that was objected to by the principal accounting officer and then he overrode the principal accounting officer by a letter? I said I came here with an open mind waiting to hear and see evidence being produced. I have not seen it I cannot be satisfied in my mind even from that angle, Mr. Speaker, that there is a charge for the Honourable Minister to answer. Where is it?

Aside.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I am not hearing a single aside. I think that that should put the issue of the contracts to rest There is absolutely no evidence against the Minister in that regard. I said I would not be long because I really believe in the economy of language most of the time.

As far as the other aspect is concerned, the recruitment, I think that that has been adequately dealt with. To be frank with you, I believe, Sir, that the language used in the communication was unfortunate and misleading. The writers of the letters are worthy of some censure.

Aside.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I do not know Mr. Yarde. I have never met Mr. Yarde. I know Mr. Nurse. I have never met the other people. I do not know them. It is not my intention to quarrel and curse with anybody. I am looking at the facts as brought before this Honourable House and the charges as brought by the Opposition in this Resolution.

The Minister has publicly stated that he at no time admitted to any dereliction of his ministerial duty. You have already ruled on that and that is where the matter should end. I am not a member of the Committee. But I must make some comments before I sit. I think it is extremely unfortunate that at this juncture in our history politicians can set about to cast the sort of negative aspersions, the absurd innuendos and the cheap shots, let me put it that way, at other politicians. 5.10 p.m.

It is not forgivable as was said by the Honourable Prime Minister for the Honourable Member who spearheaded this Prosecution Resolution in this

Honourable Chamber to have got up and mentioned and thrown it out to the public that construction was going on at the Honourable Minister's house by the same person who was doing work for the Hospital at the same time. Now there can be nothing more ridiculous and absurd than that as far as I am concerned. Knowing full well that it would leave in here at the same time and be out in the domain of the public without being able to substantiate it. There can be no greater cruelty of man to man or woman to man. There can be none. Mr. Speaker, those things should never happen. I am not particularly interested, to be frank with you, Sir, with all the transgressions which were had in the past, That is the past It was wrong then and if there are transgressions now, they are wrong now. Whoever is to be called to account for them ought to account for them. But we have to be extremely careful when we set about to deliberately, wilfully and purposefully and with malice destroy and damage people. I think that is wrong. If the Honourable Member is worth her salt she would get up in public and apologise to the Honourable Minister for making that statement or levelling that accusation. It was also supported by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South but he was laughing when he said it

Hon. H. B. St JOHN: Sir, I have been brought into this. I was not laughing. I said it was a very serious thing and I repeated it because when the circumstances were said by the mover of the Resolution there was no denial. The Honourable Minister got up and denied it after I made my statement that it was a serious charge. I never touched it since.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, I am extremely grateful for the admission by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that he was, it amounts to being misled by the Honourable Member for the City and that he is extremely sorry for having gone down the road behind her. I am very happy about that.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I never said anything about being sorry.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: Sir, we are dealing with a serious matter. We admit that. As I said, if there were breaches of the rules, the persons responsible for those breaches should be censored. The Honourable Member for St Philip North gave, Mr. Speaker, a builder's analysis of the work at the hospital. One of the questions I kept asking in my mind, repeatedly, was whether or not the St Joseph Hospital was value for money? I could not do the analysis. It is not my field of expertise. I am satisfied with the analysis of the Honourable Member for St. Philip North that what exists at the St Joseph Hospital is value for money. I am satisfied about that

I am also satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that the time may well be here when we must look seriously at a general

revamping and regrading of most of these rules. And as a student of Public Finance and the Public Service, I am also in agreement with the Prime Minister that there exists a grey area as to where the functions of Ministers, the functions of top level civil servants merge. I also agree with that, but it does not negate persons who fall short of their responsibilities. I think that is very important At the end of the day, no matter what jokes are made across the great divide I think we are all, the Honourable Members of the Opposition as well as the Members of Government, quite serious about the spending of taxpayers money in this country and I take issue with a statement made by one Honourable Member of the other side, I do not remember who it is, that when times are good anything can happen and when there are times like now we have to dot our Ts" and cross our "TV. That is a statement for which that person should be jailed. Some Honourable Member on that side made that statement, Mr. Speaker.

Asides.

His Honour T. C. ESTWICK: I withdraw that statement But the point is still very serious that there can never be in the proper administration of finances in a country, whether it be excessively rich or excessively poor, and it is even more important in a Third World and developing country like Barbados that at all times there be prudent management of its finances. Such a statement should never be made that once money is floating around you do with it what you will. Once things get tight then you seek to lock up people wrongfully at times. Those statements should never be made. I am convinced that if the Late Honourable Prime Minister Tom Adams, was alive, the Honourable Member could not possibly have made that statement. I do not think any Prime Minister would be satisfied in having any Member of his Cabinet or back bench make such a statement It is a statement of profound folly.

One last point, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member for St. Peter made the statement that the strategy of the Democratic Labour Party in coming into this debate was to confuse, to derail and that no one wanted to debate this issue. There is nothing further from the truth. If the Democratic Labour Party had a strategy I was not aware of it I came here with an open mind, waiting for the prosecution to finish to get up to say what I had to say. I am not aware that any strategy existed and I am quite confident that each Member of this Government spoke according to the dictates of his conscience, in truth and in honesty. I have no difficulty about that I certainly would not be part of any plot to create confusion in the country.

I am convinced and fortified having heard the debate coming from the other side that the Honourable Minister, now of Foreign Affairs, then Health, has no case to answer. They have established nothing against him. I think the rumours, the innuendoes, the cheap shots, were

all unfortunate and should not have been given. Mr. Speaker, I have no alternative before I sit to completely reject each and every paragraph or clause of this Resolution. Thank you, Sir.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Mr. Speaker, it has been placed upon the burning altar of my heart to take you with me by means of this contribution into what I can only describe as a sad occasion. I would just like to say that I have no problem with the existence of a Public Accounts Committee. Indeed I have no problem if they have work to do that they do that work. I am not going to get involved in that, Sir.

I just wish to say, Sir, that I am not a prude but I will tell you this, Sir, I have been to the circus and I have seen all the clowns and I want to say to you, Sir, that the behaviour that I saw exhibited in this Honourable Chamber last Tuesday until you intervened, was one that I would not wish to associate myself with. I think that when all is said and done, and you have these votes of confidence in Ministers and the Government, I really do believe that you have to be very careful that in the final analysis politics will not lose. I say this because we must stop fooling the people out there. One of the Members of the Opposition said that they did not think that it was the Report that mattered, that what was in the public domain is what mattered. How true, Sir. Well what is in the public domain is that politicians fool them, because they are all friends in here, family, godfathers to each other's children and things like that, business partners sometimes. 5.20 p.m.

The public, unaware no doubt of this, take a stance, a line, that in effect in some countries has led to even murders at election time. People think so strongly about that. I think that when we are in here and we attempt to get on the way I have seen of late, I think that this is a sad thing.

One of the Members of the Opposition said that Parliament is on trial. That is true. Another Honourable Member said that the hearing should be in public. Whatever, Sir, I have no problem with the fact that you want to have it in public, but I would go further and I would say that Parliament is not only on trial, it is in crisis. It is in crisis because of the way some parliamentarians in delivering themselves, and in talking about other Members of Parliament, give people the wrong impression.

I really believe that the old adage "politics is a dirty game" is not true. I believe that it is an honourable thing to do, to represent your people in your constituency particularly, and also to represent all Barbadians. I think that is what all politicians should try to do. My decision to enter politics was influenced by the belief that politics reflect the kind of people who are involved in it. Therefore for many years, not only in this Honourable Chamber, but

certainly in the other place, I have been very proud and happy to think I could join that special band of men and women who have been given the unique opportunity to represent their constituents and Barbadians as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, I do believe that we have to draw the line somewhere. Some of the comments I have heard in this Honourable Chamber really boggle my mind.

Certain remarks made by the Hon. W. W. HALL were ordered expunged from the record by Mr. SPEAKER.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, they seem to give the impression that I was telling untruths. I was only giving an example of the many things that I heard, and I know you ruled many of them out of order, but still the spoken word was there, and I do believe that there is hardly any place in Parliament for that sort of thing. I recognise that Parliament and the political platform, is not a Sunday school, I understand that, Sir. I know the thrust of political arguments. Nobody is soft or anything like that, but I am saying that the public at large is taking note of what is happening, and therefore we must be more careful in the way we do things.

If there is a Motion of No-Confidence, so let it be. Bring the facts, debate them and get on with the business. In my time I have known of 2 Motions of No-Confidence. One was against my then political opponent, the Opposition brought this vote of No-Confidence and the Government defeated it Sir, I somehow feel that time is a great healer, and I was even told today that it was appropriate at the time. I heard words to that effect. What I would like to know now, Sir, is if 8 years down the road, today the 17th December 1993, is it still appropriate? If it is not, well, then, I would want to think that someone would say at some time, that they might have been misled. Perhaps they mean that whatever they did was justified. Those are also the things that you wish to know in Parliament.

Now, the second was only a few years ago when there was a vote of No-Confidence against the then Minister of Agriculture. Sir, I have an old diary and you would be surprised to hear the things that they said. I am not really reading them, but I think it is sad when one is said to be the worst Minister since ministerial government and regarded as incompetent and an obstructionist to good administration. These were the things that were said. I am not pointing fingers, but I know that it is a curious paradox that the leader of that onslaught - because the present Opposition was not the main opposition party... It is funny that all those accusations... I got up and said that I did not think that the person speaking could say those things about the Honourable Minister, because I did not think he qualified. Now you only have to read the papers nowadays, to see who is still in good standing with the people of Barbados and who is not.

I am saying, Sir, that sometimes you ask for one thing and you end up getting something else. I think we must be very careful when casting aspersions on the integrity of people, who in the opinion of the people of Barbados have done a good job, continue to do one, and unless there is ample proof that they are guilty of some misdemeanour, I think we have to be very careful with the type of questions we tend to ask.

Now, Sir, it has been spoken of before, when I think the Prime Minister alluded to the fact that the Honourable Member had said that the Minister's house was being repaired. I tend to recall this because lots of what has been said in this debate has been said over the Estimates in the last 5 or 6 years. We were talking about Black Rock Polyclinic and the Honourable Member said a house was being built near there. Now it is not a house being built near there, but it is renovations to the Minister's house. So let us be clear on what we are saying, and let us be very sure that the accusation can be verified I am a little bit concerned when we have that sort of thing happening.

I also wish to say too, that I heard things like God visiting Joy Edwards. Let me say something in this House. Let me say something in this House.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: God will visit everyone of us in his own time. What doesn't catch you hasn't passed you, according to the old people. It was said, and I think it is wrong. I know that in the heat of the argument especially with all this cross talk, one is apt to say things that you might not particularly mean, but I think it is in the records of this House and I believe that that is wrong.

I said that we are in crisis, Sir, but there are crises and crises. All over the world we are seeing countries in crisis and if anyone in this country has not experienced a crisis, he only has to just keep living. It will come to you sometime, Sir. I will say this, I promise you that like all other countries throughout the world we in Barbados must get on in an exemplary way in Parliament, because we have things inflicted on us, for instance, AIDS is on our doorstep, cancer is on our porch, yes, in our driveway you have unemployment, and broken homes are all around us. These are things that are happening in this country and in other countries, and we cannot compound the issue by coming in here whatever the challenge maybe, and giving the constituents all over Barbados the impression that we do not care and it is one big game in here.

I know, Sir, that it is all right to talk sharp and it is sometimes painful to be at the sharp end of some members' vituperative tongue, but I say this to you, when you are also expected to be "pally-pally" and friends, that confuses constituents. It confuses people in Barbados. I thought I

would say that, Sir. Having said that, I wish to say also that I do not believe that we should every year every time we get the chance come to this Honourable Chamber and talk about things that we have been talking about for 20 years. We hear about CAREFESTA, West Terrace, The Arawak Cement Plant, the Trident, the BDF planes, the Central Bank, the NAB, CARSICOT, Sherbourne, all of that.

Sir, I feel sometimes we should treat them like a bad debt. We should be able to write them off and let us start with what is currently happening. If we have to come in here and talk about the work of the Public Accounts Committee, let us do that I have no problem with that, but we seem to go hither, thither, and yon, and at the end of it, it seems to me that the only losers are politicians on both sides, and that does not seem to me to make sense.

Sir, I wish to say a few more things. As a Minister, it seems to me, and all other Members on that side who have been Ministers know this is true. Every day as a Minister you have to make choices and decisions. Those decisions can be as a result of your own knowledge, because of advice given to you by public officers, or experts coming into your Ministry. I know that people make mistakes. The only people who do not make mistakes are those who do nothing. When good men do nothing unrighteousness prevails. That is a fact and I am saying to you, Sir, that we need to understand that when we attack people for doing what is considered in Barbados the worst things, you have to be very sure that you are right in castigating those people.

I am saying that the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs has been a friend of mine for 45 years. When I first heard the charge against him, it was that he had taken \$18 000 for recruitment but I could not believe that I summoned him and said, "What is this I hear about you? What \$18 000?" Today, some Members of the Opposition were not even sure whether it was \$17 000 or £17 000. They did not know if it was \$17 000 or £17 000. I would have thought that if I were accusing somebody of stealing some money or doing something to that effect, I would know exactly how much it is. 5.35 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: How you mean it did not matter. Seventeen thousand pounds is \$51 000. I feel that is a sad thing. What happened is this. The charge was that the Minister had taken that money for recruitment or fees. What is more, it is a sad thing to say too that he was interviewing people in a bedroom. I do not like that It sounds good. It sounds perky.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: A suite is an extra room and then a bedroom. If a Minister has work to do and he thinks that he has to interview people, I would think he would need a suite. I have no problem with that. The only reason why people do not think that the Honourable Minister would want a suite, is because he was just born there in Fairfield Road. You do not think he could have a suite too? I do not understand that. It is the work that one has to do. You have a suite if you have work to do.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: I do not want anyone trying to correct me. I do not even mind them heckling me. I know that I am speaking from a position where I am very sure that righteousness exalteth a nation, and if we as politicians get in here and get on with this foolishness of this big lot of criticising, and making sure that the people out there all feel that we are a bunch of erodes, it does not make sense. Why is it that none of our families or none of our children seek to follow us into politics? You cannot fool them. They see the lie that you are living. They do not want to get into this. I know of no politician now whose son or daughter wants to come into politics nowadays, and I ask the question why? I am putting it down to the fact that these children from birth see how it is.

Now, Sir, I say that when we do this, politicians will be digging their own graves and if you doubt me, check it out. The Prime Minister said that he is going to quote Shakespeare. I am not going to quote Shakespeare, Keats, Longfellow nor Deegoo from St. Lawrence Gap. I am not going to quote them. I am going to quote the Holy Bible. Let me tell you why, because the Bible has 66 books, 1,189 chapters, 31 000 verses and 734 000 words. I can find enough in there to quote about anything and that is why I am going to pray for everyone of the Members, including you, Sir.

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: I am serious. You can shout hallelujah, but let me tell you what is hallelujah, Solomon.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I hope you take note of how he is behaving, he who was just castigating us.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Sir, what I really wanted to say is that we have to be very careful because if we look at it very carefully, we can dig our own graves politically as far as the people are concerned. If you doubt me check Isaiah 22 verses 16 and 17: "Oh you mighty men, hewing out of the rock your own graves." I am serious when I am talking about this.

I want to say that this Minister is a great Minister. He was one of the brightest and best civil servants. He is a

formidable political foe. I am saying that hardly any Member from the front bench out there will dare run against him unless they want to run the risk of losing badly. I am saying that we must be very careful, because if it can be proven in here that this very erudite, ebullient and very experienced Minister, is doubted by the people of Barbados, believe you me, they will doubt all of us. I say so because whatever you may say, there are politicians on both sides of the fence that people love, that people admire, that people look to as role models. We need to be very careful what we are doing. We have to look at the high quality of representation by this Honourable Minister. We will have to be very sure in our minds what the Public Accounts Committee is saying about him represents the facts.

Now, Sir, I would be the first, if I felt that the Minister or anybody, even the Prime Minister, and he is the head of my party, if I thought that he did not understand righteousness exalteth a nation, I would have to talk to him, if he would talk to me on that. If I heard that the Honourable Minister has gone astray I would talk to him, but when I spoke to him on these charges I was left with no other opinion in my mind, but that he is an upright and decent politician, and I do not think that the charges stick. That is what I have said.

I wish to say one last thing, Sir. We in Barbados are looked upon by people throughout the Caribbean and further afield, as very astute and very good leaders of people. I am saying that when we castigate our leader, or when we think that by throwing these aspersions at a senior Member of this Cabinet, that you feel you will destroy him politically and hence destroy the Government, I think it is okay if you are right, but if you are not right that is something we have to deal with.

Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to really go on any further. There is so much that everyone wants to say, because the Leader of the Opposition is quoted in today's paper as saying that...

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: It is against the rules? I am glad he has said it. He has said words to the effect that he has no time for people in high places whom he believes would be out of Parliament if the laws permit it. If that is the way he feels, that is okay with me. I am saying that in the United States of America we have seen on CNN where very high-ranking people, even the President, will be put in front of the Senate, and will be asked very embarrassing questions. I am not saying that is what we need to have in Barbados but, surely, we should have nothing to hide. If that is the position so let it be. If you have to have integrity legislation and it would give the people of Barbados a good idea of how politicians live and what is happening, well

let it be. Let us decide what we want to do. But there is hardly any point in us not doing anything in terms of changing the laws but every day, every month and every year all there is, is one big war in here.

This is the Christmas season. Last Tuesday we had our Christmas lunch. I just wish to say to you, Sir, I was reading a book the other day and there were battle lines drawn, and soldiers on each side. It was Christmas and they had this truce. On one side, one set of soldiers started singing carols. Do you know the others came and sang carols with them in the spirit of Christmas? 5.45 p.m.

AH we are doing in here is making sure that the line between us will get further and further apart and that people who say that politicians are no good, that politicians are smart, that the smart one takes the spoils, that is the sort of thing that we are giving people the opportunity to say.

The Minister is not the type that anyone can describe as a treacherous man. He is not the type of man that will connive against people and get money for himself. I am saying to you that I feel that having said to me that he was never at a meeting when these things were alleged to have been said about him, I can only conclude that he was not there. I know he is an honest man. If I told you, Mr. Speaker, that I was not at a meeting, believe you me that that will be the truth. I will never tell you that I was there if I was not there.

I feel, very sincerely, that we need to look at ourselves in this Parliament, we need to continue to be role models, we need to speak vigourously, we need to be attacking. The Government is there to set the agenda and the Opposition is there to oppose. I have no problem with the Opposition opposing vigourously. I have no problem with them exposing anything that they feel is detrimental to the livelihood of the people of Barbados and enhancement of that livelihood.

But I do believe, I honestly do believe that this, seems to be a golden opportunity to take a good Minister, one who is talked about in glowing terms throughout the world. He is just back from London, Sir, and his performance in the GATT discussions was something that everybody in London was talking about

Aside.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Well yes. In the UN, wherever he goes. You might not like his style. Sometimes I have to hit him across the knuckles if I do not think that he is right, as he can do with me. But when all is said and done ...And we are talking about righteousness. If we are talking

about people who are in leadership positions, who are good role models, we have to be very careful what negative vibes we send out there to the kids. I am saying to you that negative energy pulls you down, and positive energy builds you up.

This is not a political speech for DLP and BLR Lam speaking from my heart because I want you to understand that the people out there are not taking this lightly. They feel that it is a funny game on top. The lower echelons of society feel that you only talk to them every 5 years. I am appealing to the Members of this Parliament to take heed, and do not say the things which give the people of Barbados, especially our kids, the opportunity to say that politicians are no good and that politics is a dirty game.

I close, Sir, by saying that it is all right to talk about laws. There are ceremonial laws, civil laws and there are moral laws. I want to deal with moral laws. I want to make sure that everyone can stand the test of time as the Honourable Opposition Leader said. Because we had situations where politicians in London, because of their lifestyles, have had to resign. The whole Government fell in the Profumo affair. The Leader of the...I do not remember the name of the party. Mr. Thorpe is wfy I am talking about now, of the liberals. He had to resign, lifestyle again. I am saying, Sir, that because we do not have that keen scrutiny in Barbados, it does not give us a licence to behave in a manner that I think the people of Barbados and particularly our children do not approve of.

I am no sanctimonious person. I am not in any way thinking I am holier than thou, Sir. But I cannot help but say what has not impressed me in this debate. The foolishness on stilts that I have seen, not what went on, but what could have gone on, because if you have members in a debate as serious as this...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member's time has now expired.

Hon. W. W. HALL: Could I just finish, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: Quickly.

Hon. W. W. HALL: I am saying that if at the end of a debate you can hardly remember what are the pertinent points - and I mean the Gallery - of the debate because of all the banter that is going on, I think we have lost a golden opportunity to put to the public for the final time exactly what are the true facts of this case.

Sir, I can only say, with all humility, that I cannot support a vote of No-Confidence either in the Government or against the Honourable Minister.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWATTE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to this debate and in doing so, I must observe that while as I read this Resolution the parameters to me seem very narrow. But the impact of the job that was attempted, in my view, can be as devastating as anything that we can think of. When I recognise also, Mr. Speaker, that this Resolution seems to have its genesis in the Report of the Public Accounts Committee, I am a little more concerned. I am concerned because a lot has been said about the veracity of the Report as related to the evidence that is led in the Public Accounts Committee. Sitting here in my seat, I have had a look at the verbatim Report of the Public Accounts Committee and in a number of instances, Mr. Speaker, I am not satisfied that what is produced as a Report closely relate to what I read in the verbatim Report.

Aside.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWATTE: Do not ask me to identify anything. Mr. Speaker, I am making the point that the fact that the verbatim Report nor the Minutes are available to us in this very important debate tells me that there must have been some motive other than bringing to bear what would seem by the reports which were laid by the Auditor General as being the criteria for the meeting of the Public Accounts Committee. If the mover of this Resolution could come to this Chamber with charges of this-sort of the Minister of Health based on considerations by the Public Accounts Committee that were not informed by a Report of the St Joseph Hospital Board by factual assessment, in my view, of what went on in the same Public Accounts Committee and only to what I have read. I am of the view that there is some reason other than what had been wished from the other side to say that they just want to regularize.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Honourable Member has really gone too far. He is imputing the worst possible motives to the 7 Members of the Public Accounts Committee. He has said that we wrote things without evidence, that he has not seen the evidence in detail and he has said...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He just said it.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He said that the Committee was informed by considerations other than what was in the evidence. He is saying we are acting for ulterior purposes.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the Honourable Member should avoid that type of style and probably put it in a different way.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWATTE: Mr. Speaker, I am making the point that if I am given a copy of the Interim Report of the Public Accounts Committee I ought to be able from my position to understand what has gone on. And it is through that, Sir, that I was able... And I can say it, one of the Members of the Public Accounts Committee who has a copy of the verbatim report, I sat here in my seat and did a perusal of that report and I am saying there are aspects of it that do not accord with the Report as it has been presented. Now, you can draw what conclusions you want to draw about that, Mr. Speaker, but I am saying that it is no proper base for me to look at this Resolution as coming out of actions that were done which are being investigated and which we want to have the Minister's name cleared and things like that which we heard from the other side. 5.55 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the then Honourable Minister of Health to whom this Resolution refers has been convicted before he was tried. I am making that point because when I - and I do not want to have to read through all of this, because it has been done very often today - look at this then to find the final resolve that the House has no confidence in the Honourable Member for St. Michael West as a Minister and a Member of the Cabinet and calls upon him to resign from the Cabinet forthwith, I am saying that is the very strongest censor that as Members of Parliament we can try to inflict on one of our colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, this very Public Accounts Committee Report in section 12 refers to the period *under* which the review was supposed to be carried out. The dates involve a 20-year period 1972 to 1992. Yet, Mr. Speaker, this Committee that is involved in trying to get the concerns of the Auditor General brought under our focus and for remedy, only determines that it is important for them to deal with most current and therefore they are dealing with a period between 1986 and 1992.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir, the Honourable Member must be fair. The Auditor General agreed with the Committee that in the light of what had gone on prior to 1986 when the Committee never functioned properly under Mr. Barrow that we should start from 1986. That was on the suggestion of the Auditor himself. It is not the Committee that decided that arbitrarily.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I am not satisfied as is evidenced when you read the verbatim reports that any person who is not a Member of this Honourable Chamber can dictate to the Members of this Honourable Chamber in a Committee of Parliament. I am not satisfied that you can tell me, Sir, that he has the authority or the right to dictate what aspect of the period or what time period we are supposed to look at. Do not give me that.

I believe, Sir, that when he would have chosen 1986 to 1992 and then in his contribution to the debate mentioned the idea of overall responsibility I am saying that the Honourable Member should understand that Ministers are Ministers and if you are going to castigate Ministers today for something we understand that the accounting officers have a distinct role by the Financial Rules to be the caretakers, the custodians, the guardians of financial matters of the departments over which they preside. Moreover matters that fall on members of the public service who work in the Ministry that those officers preside over they have a responsibility to make sure that everything is well and good and they know, by the same rule, when things are not all well and good what they should do.

If I take all these things, Mr. Speaker, into consideration I have to ask what are the reasons for which a Resolution of this nature should come to this Parliament to censor a Minister of Government when it is clear in all of the circumstances that the Minister *per se* had no responsibility in that regard except that he is the person charged with the responsibility of the Ministry but there are persons who have a responsibility for carrying out certain functions in that Ministry. In that respect he had a responsibility. But if the Auditor General's Report relates to the public officers then it cannot by extension relate to the Minister.

I think we do ourselves a great disservice as Members of Parliament when we are throwing out to those persons who should have some measure of confidence in the way we do things, who should have some measure of trust in our honesty. We have to be very careful if because of some reasoning that we may have towards catching for power that we do not send them the wrong signals.

I believe, Sir, that much of the problems we have in our country today with people losing their sense of balance, in my view, in relation to law and order, has to do with some of the signals that are sent by people who call themselves leaders. If we in Parliament, if the leaders in the Church, if the leaders in the organisations that people look to for guidance cannot lead in the way that people can learn some of the better aspects of living then something is wrong with us. If we cannot carry out that responsibility, then I think we had better get out of the game. We had better get out of the line because there are so many people out there, Mr. Speaker, whose future depend on the capacity to read what we as leaders send to them. And unless and until we let them understand that we are serious about their business, unless and until we let them understand that we are not just doing things because we are looking for an opportunity to, like I say, catch for power, because this in my view is the genesis of the actions that I see. I take up a newspaper, I recognise that everything is

loaded against the administration and from the time I heard the little innuendos, not last year or this year, earlier than last year, Mr. Speaker, sitting here and listening is one thing I do. I listen very carefully and I think I understand what I hear.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central spoke of an innuendo in relation to something that was said about the Black Rock Polyclinic. I remember that very clearly because the question that arose in my mind, did you see a house being actually built on the compound on which the people are working? The idea that was sent then was that when work stopped on the hospital, work on the house also stopped. I do not know. I have never seen the house. I have seen the Polyclinic. There are these little things that send out bad signals and people have an idea of other people based on these things because if so and so said it they should know. That can only be so because we set ourselves up as leaders and people expect us to be honest and truthful in the things that we say. 6.05 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I only want to say that there is no reason for me to spend any more time on this matter, primarily because a lot has been said over the two days and I do not think it is worthy of me to extend the debate any more, but just to send a word of caution to those people who do not understand that history may put us in a position where we may have to reflect on the things we say and do today because of what develops tomorrow, next week, next month or next year.

I heard something about the charge of recruiting. I have to say this, Sir, I am not a Minister but I have been to London on two occasions and on each occasion the Barbados High Commission found it necessary to ask me to speak to some Barbadians in London about the developments in Barbados since they were away, and to speak to them in terms of what they could do to help to improve the lot of our people back home. If the Honourable Minister, who travels, who has lived overseas long enough to recognise how Barbadians away from Barbados feel about being informed about things Barbadian, and in that context he has to speak to them about the needs of Barbados... I have sat in this Chamber and heard the Minister of Health being castigated for the shortage of nurses at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and I am asking if in that context the Minister can be seen to be "recruiting", then it is in the interest of Barbados that persons are encouraged, if they can find it within their capacity to come back home, to do so and give of the training and expertise they have gained.

I can only say, Mr. Speaker, that I cannot support this Resolution and I hope that nothing of this sort happens again in my parliamentary life.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I really do not intend to speak very long in this debate, but I could not have allowed the debate to take place without taking the opportunity to intervene and to say at the very outset that I am very glad that this debate has taken place, because as Honourable Members on this side have indicated, there have been many rumours and innuendoes circulating in respect of this matter. An opportunity was therefore needed to bring the evidence out, and indeed for us to be able to look in detail at the charges, or supposed charges, which were laid against the former Minister of Health.

I want to refer to the contribution of the Honourable Member *for* the City who moved this Resolution on Tuesday. There are really two points, as far as I can gather, from the contribution which the Honourable Member made. One was, and I will come back to it, that as far as she was concerned the Democratic Labour Party erred in agreeing to purchase the St. Joseph Hospital; and (2), she certainly left the impression in my mind, and I dare say in the public's mind, that the former Minister of Health, now Minister of Foreign Affairs, was engaged in construction at his house at the same time that construction was going on at the St Joseph Hospital, and that it was being done by the same construction people working at the St. Joseph Hospital. That is the impression which was left on me in listening to the contribution of the Honourable Member.

I am saying, Sir, that this charge is a very serious one and the public of Barbados has had to listen to all sorts of rumours and innuendoes on this. I have seen a letter which is purported to have been written by some construction person who claimed that the Honourable Member did work on his house...

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: You have it over there and you can use it

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. If the Honourable Member, and he knows the Rules, is going to quote from a letter or make that kind of reference to it, he knows he has to be prepared to lay it on the Table of the House, and I would invite Your Honour to rule on it, because I want to see it too.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I have not quoted from the letter. If I could refer to a newspaper report, I suppose to could refer to any document. I am not quoting directly from the document, I am saying that there is a letter circulating which purports to say that an addition to the Honourable Member's house was constructed to the tune of \$115 000 by the same contractor, allegedly, who was constructing the St. Joseph Hospital. These are things which are very damaging to people and I think we have to be very careful with following up rumours and elevating

rumours and innuendoes to a position of fact and then proceeding on that basis to prosecute some person without any clear evidence. I think one has to be very careful with this.

I am leaving that there, because I know that my friend and colleague will deal with that matter at the appropriate time, because I happen to know that the letter was responded to and nothing has come of it in terms of a response from the person. In truth and in fact it was a fictitious letter which was put into circulation just prior to the introduction of this Resolution into Parliament. We as politicians have to be very careful of how we attempt to denigrate people and destroy people's characters in the eyes of the public of Barbados. It is a very serious situation we are in, and here it is Honourable Members have made reference to the kind of message which we as parliamentarians send out to the country. There are people who, for one reason or another, either they do not try their hands at getting into Parliament, a number of them are frustrated politicians, some have been in and will never regained seats in Parliament, some have tried and have never been successful, but who feel that they have a right to control what goes on in here. Also, because they have access to the newspapers of this country, they feel they can destroy people's characters, as they have been doing in a number of editorials in this country on this particular matter and on other matters. I am saying that this kind of attitude, this kind of approach, is wrong and we should not as parliamentarians encourage that kind of behaviour or development in our political system. 6.15 p.m.

Now, the Honourable Member, as I said, gave in her introduction an outline of the history of the St. Joseph Hospital. If you were to follow very carefully the presentation of the Honourable Member for the City, one thing would emerge. Certainly this is the impression which was left with me. The St Joseph Hospital was started, she said, by the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother in 1969. I think that was the date which was given. She indicated that from the very outset it was doomed to failure.

Now, set against that what was coming through very clearly to me, and this seems to have been the problem with the Barbados Labour Party ever since an attempt was made to establish a second hospital in Barbados. The question which we have to ask ourselves as citizens of this country is whether we think there is need for a second hospital of a general nature in Barbados. I say yes, without any fear of contradiction or without any shame because it is nothing to be ashamed of.

I believe that we need a hospital of a general nature and that Hospital at the time when it was acquired by the Government was located, and is still located in the north of the country. It is true that I have been involved

in attempting to put this matter on the agenda in terms of my role in sensitising the present Government in this particular direction. You would recall, Sir, that in 1985 when the Hospital closed its doors, I spearheaded an attempt to try to get the then Government to keep it open and become involved in its maintenance and the Honourable Member's party took a very strong position against that. I recall the kind of attitude which was displayed against the Hospital at the time and this has persisted.

Indeed, Sir, what is very clear to me is that the Barbados Labour Party, having conceptualised and having begun construction of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, seem to be of the view that there must be no other hospital in Barbados which would, in their view, detract from something which they have put together. This is my interpretation of the attitude which they have always constantly displayed towards the St. Joseph Hospital. I am glad to have been associated with the movement, to convince the Government about the necessity to have the St. Joseph Hospital re-opened.

I am satisfied that when the St Joseph Hospital gets into full gear and is functional, it will add considerably to the stock of medical and health care which we have in Barbados and which will be available to all of us. Indeed, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has played a very important role in ensuring that the Hospital has gotten to the point where it has and he has certainly been working very hard in this particular direction.

Now, what is really the major charge which has been launched against the Honourable Member? It has to do, I am told, with the suggestion that the Honourable Member went on a mission and received money for "recruitment" of nurses for the St Joseph Hospital. At the time that the rumour started to circulate, it was being said that he received fees for interviewing people to come to the St. Joseph Hospital. That is the rumour that was being circulated. Like the Honourable Member for St Michael West Central, I became very concerned and I asked my friend what was all this thing about your receiving fees for interviewing people. He asked me what is all this thing about. I said to him "I understand you received fees for interviewing people in London for the St. Joseph Hospital". It was then that I discovered what the whole situation was.

Sir, if you were to examine the Report which has been laid, you would see that the Public Accounts Committee looked at this matter, and at paragraph 110 this is what they had to say:

"It is therefore impossible to gauge whether the Minister interviewed persons for posts at the Hospital or whether the recruitment drive merely took the form of two weeks of pep talks in three English cities."

After examining all of the evidence which had been put before them whether it was the letter that was written by the Permanent Secretary to the Chairman of the St. Joseph Hospital Board, whether it was comments made by the Auditor General or any person concerned, they examined all of this and they concluded at paragraph 110 that it was therefore impossible to gauge whether the Minister interviewed persons for posts at the St Joseph Hospital or whether the recruitment drive merely took the form of two weeks of pep talks in three English cities. Yet, Sir, we are having a resolution in here where the main focus is on this particular activity.

I will go a little further. If you look a little further in this Report, what you will find? Summary of Irregularities. After having indicated that it is impossible to gauge when you look at the Summary of Irregularities the Report repeated the same allegations which were made and they highlighted them. Most of the allegations which were made at 124 (vii) were merely to do with this whole question of recruitment, interviewing and that kind of thing after saying that it was impossible to gauge.

To his credit, the Honourable Member for St Michael South Central when the Report summarised what they said were the charges, indiscretions and the irregularities of the Minister, it was at that point that the Honourable Member for St Michael South Central, and here it is at 124(i):

"It is noted that the Honourable David Bowen, M.P. has expressed his reservation that he is not fully convinced that the Minister's actions can properly be classified as recruitment in the strictest industrial relations use of that term. No evidence was adduced to show that the Minister made any firm offer to any person who subsequently accepted that offer and undertook employment at the Hospital. In the circumstances Mr. Bowen reserves his approval of paragraph 124 which is a summary brought of the irregularities of this Report and his reservations are recorded in the Minutes of the Proceedings of this Committee."

Obviously, Sir, the Honourable Member reserved his position on the entire Report. I do not know that he had to necessarily at the end of every paragraph reserve his position. Because if you read the Report, what is the Report about? General Introduction. It starts out with Standing Order 59 (1) of the House of Assembly. Can you reserve a position on that? That is a fact Number 2 the Committee has had a chequered history. Is that something you can reserve a position on? Paragraph number 3, between 1986 and the dissolution of Parliament in December 1990 the Committee met occasionally but certain meetings were aborted because of lack of a quorum. Is that anything to reserve a position on? That is a fact 6.25 p.m.

But the essential part of the Report where they sought to condemn the Honourable Member in light of the evidence which they had where they said that it was impossible to gauge and then they came back subsequently and set out these so-called irregularities, it was at that point that he reserved his position. That is a very clear point and I think it was unfair to the Honourable Member to try to castigate him in the way in which they did when he intervened in the debate and indicated that he expresses reservation. Those Honourable Members would want the public to believe that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central did not know what he was doing, when the report clearly sets out his position at 124 (1).

Obviously the whole question which seems to have caused some of the problems which might have given the Opposition something to hang onto was the letter about recruitment and it would seem as if an unfortunate phrase was used in that particular letter. But the point is...

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I really do not understand the position which has been taken by Honourable Members. I believe and I think that all Honourable Members believe that we have been operating under this Financial Administration and Audit Rules for a very long time and in a situation where I think we all agree where the maximum amount of money which can be spent without reference to the tendering process is \$25 000 is long outdated.

In 1971 or 1972 when the Rules were made \$25 000 was considered to be quite a tidy sum of money. But today I think one understands very clearly that it is a very small amount of money for any kind of service which is required to be done from time to time. Obviously we need to review those Rules and we need to update them and to modernize them in such a way that those grey areas which the Prime Minister made reference to would become very clear and also we need to increase considerably that maximum amount of money for which a tender is not required. Otherwise if we were to continue to follow very strictly the whole question of engaging services in Barbados we will continue to have very slow delivery on Government services because the process takes long particularly when it involves small sums of money. I believe in the tendering process but obviously there is need for an improvement and some modernization of arrangements. I am sure that coming out of this debate one would hope to see some changes made in that particular area.

I think that we in this Parliament have got to realize that - and I do not think that anyone in here whether it is on this side or on the other side would willingly and knowingly condone wrongdoing. I honestly believe that, Sir. All of us would want to see things done in a proper

manner. I think that is the sincere wish of everybody on all sides of the divide here. But in expressing this wish it is important that we do not use the occasion, as I said at the beginning - to destroy people and to convey the wrong impression to the public.

A number of unfortunate things have been said and I would like to think that at the end of all of this that Parliament will be the better for it. We have to be very careful of being manoeuvred and manipulated by people who have other axes to grind. We have to be careful as Parliamentarians not to be repeating rumours, allegations and innuendos which are thrown at us. All of us have been, I daresay, the subject of that kind of bad mouthing. All of us, in this Parliament, without exception. We have to be very careful about taking those kinds of statements and those kinds of positions adopted by a number of people and elevated to the level of truth.

I would hope therefore - that is why I said at the beginning that I am glad that this debate has taken place - that at the end of the debate we would all be the better for it. Certainly I cannot support this Resolution particularly when we look at the facts, when the major charge has been in respect of this alleged recruitment by the Minister when the Committee itself at paragraph 110 indicated that it was impossible to determine this and then, subsequently, they came back and they set out a list of this supposed irregularities which still dealt with that particular area. I am left to wonder what really the Committee was trying to establish, what really was the objective of the Committee in this particular regard.

I would hope that having said all of this I would want to see the work proceed on the Hospital apace, that we can get the Hospital finished and functioning fully because I believe it has a role to play, as we said in our whole medical system, both from the point of view of providing services to people who need those kinds of services and would be a fillip I am sure to the development of Barbados and will cater to the needs of everybody and more particularly the people of the northern parishes. I make no apologies to anybody about that because I really believe that that is very important. I know that the Barbados Labour Party really are not very keen on that

I know that the representative for St. Peter is in a very awkward position on this particular matter. I have some sympathy for his position. But the fact of the matter is that the Hospital will be functioning and will be making a difference and I hope that he will be able when he goes to his constituency he will be able to continue his opposition to the presence of the St. Joseph Hospital in the area in which it is located and the kind of services which it will be delivering to the people of Barbados and particularly the people of the north.

Sir, I cannot support this Resolution because the evidence which is before us does not allow me to support the Resolution. I should like to suggest to the Honourable Member before we put the Resolution to the vote having heard all of the evidence now coming out and the defence which has been put down to withdraw this Resolution.

Thank you.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I like others join this debate because I consider it a very important one. A principle that has not often been debated in Parliament is being debated now for the first time for a very long time.

We have a situation where all Members of the House who have spoken so far, both sides, have admitted that there were breaches of the Financial Administration and Audit Act, in the whole process of tendering and financing of the St. Joseph Hospital project I listened both from inside and outside and I have not heard one single Member who has not admitted that there were improprieties and infelicities in the way in which this project's financing was conducted. I was bitterly disappointed when the Right Honourable Prime Minister finished because it is a question of leadership that is required in this important area of public life. One would have expected that the Prime Minister more than anyone else would have put this matter in the proper perspective and dealt responsibly maturely and evenly in a matter that is causing a great deal of concern and disquiet in our community. 6.35 p.m.

Although even the Prime Minister himself implicitly admitted that there were breaches and even though he protested that he was concerned as a Head of Government that things be done the right way, that there be no breaches of the Financial Rules and the Supply Rules, nevertheless at the end of his contribution he had not charted any new direction as to how we would approach these matters for the future.

There is no doubt at all, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that the line of authority between Permanent Secretaries who are accounting officers and Ministers is a thin one and it takes maturity and good judgement for a Minister of Government to know exactly to what point he goes and at what point he stops. Now, some of us speak with experience as Ministers. I, Sir, was a Minister for 10 years and I do not recall having any difficulties with respect to any of the accounting officers who worked with me and there must have been about 5 of them. I had no difficulty with them in the way in which they dealt with the financial administration of the department. And it is not, Sir, because I had any greater knowledge of the law or the rules than anybody else. But I believe that one has to deal with these matters with a decision level of maturity.

We have a situation, Sir, where the rules are breached. We have a remarkable situation in a country that says it has a parliamentary system that is modeled on that of Westminster. What I have heard coming from the mouths of practically every Member of the other side as he spoke is that, yes there were breaches but we find no fault with this man, no difficulty at all with the Minister. We have not seen the Minister breach any of the rules, and either directly or by implication it is submitted that the civil servants were at fault I find this extremely difficult to understand, and I am not going to accept it I do not believe that it is the role in our system for Ministers of Government to put themselves in a position that is separate and distinct from that of the officers who work directly under them.

When I heard the Honourable Member for St Philip South earlier today in the first three quarters of his speech it struck me that he was putting in an encapsulated form the traditions of the Westminster System where Ministers have to bear responsibility for what happens in the department. It does not mean that the Minister is himself necessarily personally culpable but he is responsible for what happens in his department. It is a remarkable tradition throughout the Commonwealth and in the system in which we operate to show that when there are major infelicities in a department that the Minister should not remove himself from responsibility in that area.

This is «a bad development because what is likely to happen, Sir, is that the already low morale of public officers will be worsened by the fact that this new development has happened where they no longer can rely on the shield of support by their Minister, that Ministers will break for themselves and throw the public officers to the wolves. This is a bad development I am making a general submission. We must not break for ourselves. You heard the debate, Mr. Speaker, Sir. You heard people say they build roads and they build schools and they build harbours and they build everything. They do all these great things. These are the Members of Parliament, the politicians, who do all these great things. They build, they do this, they do that and they are great. They hold talks, they bring home money, they do all kinds of things. The public officers, when they are handing out all these bouquets, are never included, but when something goes wrong it is sad to see Ministers jump out of the way and say, "off of me, Sir, deal with the public servants they are the ones who mess up things." I am shocked to hear that kind of development take place in this particular debate, as we are having the debate at a time when there is a demand for greater accountability by the public for the actions of politicians, not only in relation to financing but everything.

We are in a period now, Sir, when the Honourable Member for St. John when he cannot sleep at night would get up in the middle of the night and turn on CNN. So

for 24 hours a day you can turn on the television in your house in Barbados and see what is happening throughout the world. And CNN is American oriented and therefore we are all exposed to the rigorous scrutiny of public conduct that we see in the United States of America. Barbadians are becoming far more conscious and politicians are no longer any sacred cows. If they do it and they say that is it, they are up there and we are down here so we have to put up with it. The *people* are enquiring more and they are demanding more. They are demanding greater accountability in every area of public life.

They are demanding greater accountability in respect of the expenditure of the taxes. And this is the appropriate time for them to do so because things are hard. I heard, I think it is the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, I imagine facetiously, say that someone on this side had said that if things are good you do not mind. I do not think that happens, Sir, I did not hear it. It has nothing to do with whether things are good or not good, because public propriety must be maintained whether things are good or bad. But the point I am making, Sir, is that the public will react more positively, more directly, in time of difficulty than they do when all seems to be well.

I am troubled, Sir, by the approach of the Minister of Finance to this debate. The Minister of Finance got up and brought a great deal of levity into the debate and pretended at some points that there was righteous indignation, but at no point, as Minister of Finance, at no time... The Minister of Finance for 15 times since I have been speaking, Sir, mentioned Carifesta. And the thing about Carifesta, Sir, is that he got the first pay cheque in his life out of Carifesta. How he got it, Sir, I do not know up to this day. But the Minister of Finance dealt with this debate in an atmosphere of levity when he is charged with responsibility as Minister of Finance to make sure that the public funds are properly expended and properly accounted for. He, second to the Prime Minister, is the person on that side we would have expected to make a contribution in this debate that would be mature, would be balanced and would give the people in Barbados the feeling that the Government has considered this a serious matter and will do something about it. 6.45 p.m.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have the debate being put in - the context of the prosecution and the defence and all kinds of foolishness. I do not know why they should import into this debate that concept. The Public Accounts Committee, which was subjected to a great deal of abuse - and I use the word advisedly - in this debate is a committee of Parliament, a committee that is made up of Members of both sides of the House of Assembly. I regret to hear Members of the Public Accounts Committee who sit on the Government side talk about "them" and "us" in relation to the Committee. It is one Committee, Sir, and when we hear

talk about the Committee that is made up of four people on the Opposition side and three on the Government side, as if to suggest it is in their hands and they can do as they like, that is to misunderstand the purpose for which the Public Accounts Committee was set up in the first place.

The Public Accounts Committee obviously was set up to monitor and be a watchdog of the expenditure by the Government. When we talk about principles of natural justice, which was thrown around by at least two Honourable Members, one has to understand that a man cannot be the judge in his own cause. This is a principle of natural justice and therefore there must of necessity be a committee that is substantially made up on the Opposition, because the money is being expended by Government and you cannot expect Government itself to be its own watchdog. That is the reason for the Public Accounts Committee.

We have, Mr. Speaker, the unhappy spectacle in here in which a major committee of Parliament is being trivialised by Members on the other side in the course of this debate, and to what end? If they want to put in a defence to the Resolution, there are a lot of defences that I see available. They did not consult me. Two of the worst possible defences have been put forward by Members of the Government. The first one is that the Public Accounts Committee should not be taken seriously, it is a political committee made up of people on the Opposition side who are out to get people on the Government side. That is one of the worst ones you can think of. That in particular is something we have to look at, because if we are going to consider the integrity of Committees of Parliament, we have to be careful that we do not, in a case like this, throw out the baby with the bath water. If the Public Accounts Committee is to be ridiculed and trivialised and thrown down the drain because there is a little bit of pressure at the moment, then it is going to put in jeopardy all committees of Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, we have also in this debate something that needs to be looked at very carefully. I agree with one Honourable Member on the other side who launched a broadside on certain people who write in the newspapers. I think they are worthy of attack because they have their own selfish interest to protect and they do it and do not care about anybody else. I feel strongly, like the Member on the other side who said that, but it does not mean that the organs of information in this country should not be available for the free and open discussion of public issues. It is a hallmark of democracy that there be a free flow of information, and the newspapers have an important role to carry out particularly in matters of this nature. We cannot have a thriving, prosperous democracy unless people in this country can know what is going on and that they know what is going on in a manner that is fair and even.

The Minister to whom this Resolution is directed, in my view, made a fundamental error that any of the lawyers on the other side could have told him, that just like he was advised not to appear before the Public Accounts Committee he should not seek to put in a defence before a case is put against him. I believe that it is the Minister's style, he shows a certain exuberance. That is characteristic of him, so in his exuberance the Minister really talked a lot that perhaps he should not have talked, but that is a matter for him, I cannot advise him. I am hearing from Members of the Government that the whole issue has gone into public debate long before we have had a chance to discuss it in here. It is in large measure due to the fact that the Minister did not hold his peace until the right time. It does the Minister and this Parliament a serious disservice for Members of any side, any Member of Parliament, to argue, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central has argued, that the more things change the more they remain the same, that there were some infelicities in the past, people did things in the past they should not have done, who are you to take a position one time...

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. In my address today I never made that statement Nothing I said could be interpreted in the way the Honourable Member for St. George South did a short while ago. I never made that statement. All I said was that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, then the Prime Minister, read statements in terms of how the duties of Accounting Officers in the Ministries are carried out and that the Minister was not the person who was accountable, and that if he said it then he should say it now. I never said it was a right thing or a wrong thing, or that things never change. I never said that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. L. R. TOLL: Mr. Speaker, I read into the fine language of the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central essentially what I am saying, and I am not resiling one whit from the position I have taken. I understood the Honourable Member to be saying these things happened in the past, you took one position, how come you want to take another position today? That is how I understood it and, Mr. Speaker, I understand English better than most people on that side.

Mr. Speaker, in relation to the Financial Rules and whether the Minister signed letters and all the kinds of things I hear, it is important to bear something in mind. In Barbados we have successfully impressed on people in this community that Ministers have tremendous power. That is a widespread perception in Barbados, that Ministers can do almost anything. Those of us who are engaged in this business know the severe limitations that there are on what a Minister can do and what he cannot do, but it is a public perception anyway and it is a perception by a large section of the Public Service. For an argument to be advanced that the Minister did not put in writing a directive to an

Accounting Officer to do so and so, therefore there is no reason to look for any culpability, to me is a specious argument.

The Ministers of Government, and I speak with authority having been one, have tremendous authority by virtue of their office and the people who work with them, and it takes an exceptionally self-assured and confident Accounting Officer to stand up continually to a Minister and tell him "I am not doing that because the rules do not allow me to." It takes a very strong, confident and self-assured Accounting Officer to do that. It is very easy to make comments that they should do their work, but they work under enormous pressure. This brings me back to the initial point that I made. It is not fair then, in those circumstances, for anybody to advance an argument in circumstances such as these that it is civil servants who do these things, not the Minister. Ministers have over... 6.55 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TOLL: I am doing the arguing. You have not said anything yet and I do not think you have anything to say so let me talk.

You have this situation, Sir. That is the troublesome part. There are at least six Honourable Members on the other side who, in the course of their contributions to this debate, have laid the blame fairly and squarely either explicitly or implicitly on the shoulders of the public officers. The rule says so and so. Here is what the Act says. "It is the accounting officer. He carries the blame." I do not care who said it. I think it is unfair to the public officers to be going down that line.

I have, Mr. Speaker, to ask a number of questions without passing any judgment at this stage because I do not have all the information. I have heard during the course of the debate the Honourable Member for St. Michael West deny on 4 or 5 occasions that he was present at any meeting with officers of his Ministry when the decision was taken in relation to the awarding of the contract. Now, I am not getting into that He has denied it But I want to know if the Government has taken, or contemplated taking any action in relation to these very serious charges that have been made in relation to the public officers. Who among the public officers can sit down on their own without a political input that is from the Minister, and make important decisions like giving contracts to individuals for large sums of money without tender? Which public officers have done this completely on their own without any influence or input from the political directorate? Has this been investigated and does the Government, having investigated it, propose to do anything about it because that is one of the most frightening things that we have heard so far.

We are hearing, in effect, that according to the rules, the Minister cannot do it although he is elected representative of the people. I want to know if we are going to pass over so easily if what is said is true that civil servants can sit down in departments and spend millions of dollars of the taxpayers' money without going through the processes of checks and balances that is required by our system of public financing in this country.

I want to know also, Sir, when public officers take these steps to award contracts on their own and to spend the money as they like, do supervising Ministers ever call them to account? Let us assume that the public officers on their own went ahead and said "I am spending \$6 million, \$10 million or \$20 million of the taxpayers' money and I am going to give these contracts to whoever I like, because that is what is coming through from Members on the other side." What is the role of the supervising Minister? Does the supervising Minister, when these things happen, call in, ask: questions, enquire, rap knuckles, heads roll and whatever? We have not heard any of that

It continues to trouble me, Sir, that the charges are being bandied back and forth and we have not been able, in the course of this debate, to tie the Government down to setting out a definitive statement on what transpired at the St. Joseph Hospital in relation to the contracts because the Government has the information. It has the files and everything and it has a responsibility to tell this Parliament and the people of Barbados exactly what transpired. The Government is not in the position of an accused in the law court who has a constitutional right to remain silent, so that if somebody brings a charge against an individual in the Courts he can keep quiet and say "prove it" A government does not work that way. If charges are made, not only by Members of the Opposition in Parliament who have a duty to speak on behalf of the people who elected them to Parliament but even if the people at large, on the streets, on the call-in programmes, make charges against the Government or any Government Department, it is incumbent on a Government in our system and particularly in these times, to provide the truth to the public, not sit back and say...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Well, the Deputy Prime Minister talks about frivolous charges but he will do well not to stir me up before I talk about other things in relation to the Deputy Prime Minister that could not be considered frivolous by any stretch of the imagination so it is best to leave me alone.

The Government has a responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to answer these serious charges, not to stand over there and say that we have not proved a case. Answer what? There have been no answers given to things that have been said.

I am asking the Minister of Foreign Affairs against whom this Resolution is directed to make a note of these questions being raised and answer them because there is a great deal of disquiet in this country over a lot of what is happening.

I want to know, Sir, and can the Government advise us what position it has taken as a result of this Report which has been laid in the House and has been in the hands of Parliament for the last few months about these rather serious charges? What steps have they taken, not in the Ministry of Health, but in all Government Departments to ferret out what is going wrong and to put them right? Instead of the Minister of Finance who has the responsibility for these financial matters constantly barking at me about CARIFESTA, he has an obsession with that.

The Public Accounts Committee is not a new committee of Parliament. It is not a committee that is made up any differently now from how it has been made up for many years. The former Right Honourable Member for St. John, Mr. Errol Barrow, was the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. I say this only in answer to a point raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central because he asked earlier in the debate, why did this Public Accounts Committee start from 1986 investigating instead of starting before that? The reason is that before 1986 there was a Public Accounts Committee headed by the late Mr. Errol Barrow, who was the Leader of the Opposition, who investigated a number of matters relating to the administration of the then Barbados Labour Party and nothing has ever come before this Parliament to suggest, even with CARIFESTA which he carefully went into...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: But you were a new boy. You were not in it in the pre-1986 period. You were wet behind the ears then and you are still wet behind the ears. You would not know anything about it.

Before 1986, Sir, the Public Accounts Committee met and investigated the activities, the actions and the spending policies of the Barbados Labour Party Administration and has never come before Parliament with a report that was negative about anything that the Barbados Labour Party has done. This is only in answer to the point raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central.

Mr. Speaker, I really had not intended to get into the debate but so many things have provoked my intervention not least of which is a statement made since Tuesday of this week by the Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. He said that in the early 1980s that there were a number of contracts for building of schools. I think he mentioned thirty something...

Mr. SPEAKER: I have been informed that the time has expired.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I will finish with this point, Sir. He said that a number of works began before the contracts were signed and it was pointed out that the contracts were in the Attorney General's Chambers for vetting. But there is an important quintessential difference between a contract that is not signed when the works begin and a contract when there was no tender. I do not know how he confused the two because there are two completely different things. To give out a contract without a tender is quintessential different from...

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is not in his seat The Public Accounts Committee Interim Report makes the two issues two separate charges. He was responding to the issue of a contract not having been signed before the works began. He acknowledged there were two separate issues. They are not one and the same. Tendering is one and the other one is a charge in the document which you can find.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, you say my time is up so I will wind up by finally making the point that if this day is to be seen as having served any purpose, it must be seen as a catalyst that would bring about an improvement in the way in which we in this country spend the people's money and the way in which we improve the accountability of public officers and Ministers of Government in the way in which those funds are spent.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, it is clear to me that this debate is going to go on for quite some time yet. I reluctantly will have to move that further consideration of this matter be postponed.

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

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I had indicated earlier today that there is a Bill, a very short one paragraph Bill relating to an amendment to the Income Tax Act to facilitate the Governor-General. As I am advised, I do not anticipate any debate on this particular matter and with your indulgence I ask that this matter be called.

ORDER NO. 8 - THE INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL, 1993

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, this is a Bill to amend the Income Tax Act to give effect to the

decision by the Government that the pension payable to the Governor-General should be exempted from the payment of Income Tax. 7.10 p.m.

The decision by the Government that the pension payable to a Governor-General should be exempt from the Payment of income tax. The emoluments of a Governor-General are under section 9 (1) of the Income Tax Act exempt from income tax. When the law was changed to impose taxation on pensions it was not, at that time, noted that the Governor-General's pension should be exempt from the payment of income tax.

This is a very short Bill with 3 sections which would give effect to that decision and should take effect from the 1st day of May, 1993. With those few words I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON seconded by Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON and Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, we have been sitting for a very long time. I had anticipated that this would have been the last sitting before the recess. I am adjourning this House. I am not suspending it any more. This is not the last meeting.

Mr. Speaker, clearly the way things have unfolded today, it is clear that we would not be able to complete that particular matter in reasonable time. I am therefore moving that this House be adjourned until Tuesday, the 21st day of December, 1993 at 12.00 o'clock noon.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, speaking on the motion for the adjournment and specifically on the issue of the Public Accounts Committee - I am not going to detain you very long - I note, Sir, that my name has been removed as a Member of the Public Accounts Committee. I suppose the argument being advanced that as Chairman I was *ex officio* Chairman of the Committee. If that is correct then I was *ex officio* as Leader of the Opposition a member of the Management Commission of this House and my name still remains as a member of that Committee.

It seems to me that in instances of this nature, before a member's name is removed in the manner in which it is removed obviously the matter should be discussed or brought to the House at the next sitting of the House so that the Committee could be properly constituted or a decision taken on the matter. It is not right that the Committee's work as a result is being held up because of the fact that the question of membership does not seem to have been settled satisfactorily.

I raise the matter. It does not matter whether the House wants me on its Committees or not. The point is, however, that it is important if Committees are to work and there are not many of them working. This one at least works, whether it works to the satisfaction of pa-sons or not. It does seem to me that it cannot be consistent for me to remain a member of the Management Commission where I was *ex officio* being Leader of the Opposition and be taken off where I was *ex officio* Chairman of the other one, in those circumstances. I would ask that the matter be dealt with.

I have raised it on the adjournment but I believe it is a matter of privilege, my privilege as a member. I believe that early answers should be given and, in any event that the House should deal with the matter or bring the Committee up to scratch.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I do not know if this really deserves any debate. The member's name was removed because he himself removed it. It was not removed by any Clerk. He is *ex officio* Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. He is *ex officio* a member of the Management Commission of Parliament. It is not that the Clerk removed his name but by his own act of resignation. If you are no longer Leader of the Opposition, you *arzfunctus*.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: There may be a vacancy. That is a different matter altogether. I am not too sure that there is a vacancy. But the point is he cannot blame the Clerk for removing his name. He himself by his own act removed it.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, sometimes I wonder whether the Honourable Member argues logically at all. I have got up and said, quite clearly, that if the reason for removing the name was because I was *ex officio* its Chairman then the same logic should apply to the Management Commission. Why do the Order Papers of this House show me as remaining as a member of one and not of the other? The other matter I raise is why is the question of filling the vacancies on the Commission attended to properly?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Sir, I do not know if there is a vacancy on the Management Commission. If the Member for St. Peter were a member of the Management Commission then there would be a vacancy. But if he were not a member of the Management Commission then there is no vacancy, because he would have filled the position held by the former Leader of the Opposition. That takes care of that. I agree with the Honourable Member from the point of view that there should be consistency. What I am saying is that he by his own act of resignation took his name off both of those bodies, that is, the Public Accounts Committee and the Management Commission of Parliament. 7.20 p.m.

Now, Sir, it is very possible and I believe, Sir, that there is a vacancy on the Public Accounts Committee. I also believe, Sir, that that is a matter that should be brought to the attention of Parliament and let Parliament deal with it in the normal way in which it deals with appointment of Members to Committees. As simple as that.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I am getting confused by what I think is double think. Let us think out this thing logically. At the first meeting of Parliament after an election, on the day of the Throne Speech, Members are nominated to the various committees but not the Chairmanship, that is the point. Members are nominated to various committees. We nominated the Member for Christ Church West, the Member for St. Peter. You nominated so and so to a Committee. The Chairmanship is dealt with after so that in his own right the Member for Christ Church West still remains a member of the committee. All he did was to resign his position as Chairman of the Committee but he was nominated on February 6. Sir, therefore I am saying that the Leader of the Opposition at the time becomes Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. That is right but he is a member of the Public Accounts Committee because on the first day of Parliament we voted him on.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: *Ex officio* member? No. We voted him on. If you go back to the Minutes you would see that he was voted on, not *ex officio* but in his own right as the Member for Christ Church West.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, the easier thing would be to look at what the Rule says.

"Rule 59: Committee of Public Accounts.

1. There shall be a Committee of Public Accounts, for the examination of accounts showing the appropriation of the sums granted by Parliament to meet the public expenditure, and of such other accounts laid before Parliament as the Committee may think fit, to consist of not more than seven Members, who shall be nominated at the commencement of every Session, and of whom four shall be a quorum.

2. The Leader of the Opposition shall be Chairman of the Committee of Public Accounts."

So there is no question, the Member for Christ Church West from the moment he becomes the Leader of the Opposition he is not nominated on to any Committee. He is not elected. He is leader by virtue of his office. So that the Honourable Member for St. Peter was not elected. He became a Member by virtue of his office and from the time he stops being Leader of the Opposition he...

Mr. SPEAKER: All I wanted to say was that if there is a problem I do not think we need to prolong it this way. I think it can easily be sorted out and I will communicate to the Honourable Member.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If there is a doubt, Sir, I move that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West continue as a Member of the Public Accounts, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not at this stage.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Why cannot I move that, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: If you take my point, I am sure by the next meeting we will be able to sort it out easily.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Speaking on the motion of the adjournment of the House, Sir, this is a matter that I have brought to the Clerk of Parliament from as far back as October 8, this year. I drew to his attention, Sir, that I would wish the Committee of Public Accounts to be able to function at the earliest opportunity. I enquired about the status of the Member for Christ Church West and I said, Sir, then that in the event that Mr. Forde's demittal of office as Leader of the Opposition means that he can no longer be a member of the committee except by a motion approved by the House, I would wish to be put in such a position that the relevant motion can be brought. Sir, that was the 8th October. There was no acknowledgement or reply to this letter and as a result we are not in a position

to have a functioning Public Accounts Committee. I think this matter, Sir, has to be resolved and I am raising it in here this evening, Sir, in the hope that you can use your good offices to ensure that a motion for the appointment of a Member in the person of that Member for Christ Church West can be brought to the House as soon as possible.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Just for the sake, Sir, of information of Honourable Members. Just to prove Sir, that there was no question of election of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West..

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Of course. If that was wrong he would have been appointed.

"APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the law indicates that the Leader of the Opposition must be Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee and I am proposing, Sir, from this side, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, these are Members to constitute this Committee along with other Members from the other side."

Then arises the Leader of the Opposition.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I am just reading.

"Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to propose the Honourable Member for St. Peter, the Honourable Member for St Thomas and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East the other opposition Members on that Committee.

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: I assure the Honourable Member by next Tuesday we will be able to deal with the matter. I do * not see the need for us to really solve something that is going to be solved in 2 minutes.

The question that the sitting be adjourned until Tuesday December 27, 1993 at 12.00 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 7.30 p.m.

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