

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 - 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, June 1, 1993

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12:15 p.m.

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 Finance and Economic Affairs and Minister for the Civil Service)

Mr. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B., (Leader of the Opposition)

Hon. B. M. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B. (Hons.), (Minister of Health)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Q.C., B.A., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation and Leader of the House)

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, (Minister of Justice and Public Safety)

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc. (Econ.)

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Q.C., LL.M.

Hon/C. V. WALKER, J.P., (Minister of Education)

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

Hon. W. W. HALL, G.C.M., H.B.M., J.P., (Minister of Tourism and Sports)

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.), (Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs)

Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., MA.

Miss B. A. MILLER

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW

Mr. J. O. TUDOR

Hon. D. W. BOWEN, (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)

Mr. G. W. PAYNE

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, May 25, 1993.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, May 25, 1993, have been circulated. I move that those Minutes be taken as read and be confirmed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations let those Minutes stand confirmed.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 36 which was asked by the Honourable Member for St Peter on February 25, 1992 is ready.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am moving that Standing Orders Nos. 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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that at the last sitting of the House from which I was absent, the Acting Leader of the House gave an undertaking to Honourable Members on the other side that some matter which they would like to have done today will be done. I am now going to propose that this session be devoted to Private Members' Business.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection, then Private Members' Business will now be taken.

ORDER NO. 1: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF LIVE BROADCASTS OF ALL DEBATES OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I would wish to begin Private Members' Business by dealing with Resolution No. 1 which stands in my name. It is a Resolution in the following terms:-

"WHEREAS it is the right of the people of Barbados to receive information particularly on matters of importance to their political, social and economic well being:

AND-WHEREAS communication of debates of this House by live broadcasts on radio and television is an effective way to give meaning, definition and respect to that right:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this House support live broadcasts of all debates of this House on radio and television and that a Standing Committee of this House be set up to implement and monitor the application of this decision."

Mr. Speaker, it is my wish that all Members of this House will give their wholehearted support to this Resolution which seeks to bring this House into the 20th Century. There is no doubt that the technological changes which have occurred in the world now make it easier for people to know, hear, listen and understand what is going on around the world as soon as events occur. This Parliament has only sparingly used those new technologies.

Occasionally we broadcast live on radio and television limited proceedings of this House and of the Parliament of Barbados. Such occasions are limited to the opening of Parliament, the Budget debate, occasionally ministerial statements and very special occasions. I recall in particular the celebration of the 350th Anniversary of this House

proceedings. Yet this House has made, in the refurbishing, elaborate procedures for the televising of this House's sittings. This was started and planned for under the Barbados Labour Party and the plan was executed and completed by this Government.

In this Chamber itself one will find very expensive equipment which -will make it possible, not only to broadcast, but to televise live, or however else this House might decide, the full proceedings of our Parliament. I believe the people of Barbados would wish to hear the speeches of their Members of Parliament and to see their Members as they speak working for the benefit of their constituents. 12.25 p.m.

That is perhaps the first reason that I would wish to give for bringing this resolution before this House, the right of the people to listen to their Parliamentarians, to see them at work, working for them and to be able to pass judgement' on how well or how badly they may perform. The second reason that I should like to give for bringing this resolution is that the broadcasting and the televising of this House's proceedings will promote a greater public understanding of the parliamentary procedure and on the issues that are involved and of the substantive matters that affect public affairs and the people's business.

I need not repeat what has now become almost a truism that Parliament, not only in our country but elsewhere, has begun to seem irrelevant to people. This has been more so of Parliaments such as our own who do not communicate regularly with the people and who have to depend on the print media essentially, limited coverage from the television or radio stations for publicizing the proceedings of the House and also, of course, on Hansard which is not always prompt. In any event it is too much to expect the print media or indeed the limited coverage given by commercial enterprise to carry, in the way that we would expect it to be carried, the proceedings of this House in any meaningful way to have the impact of which I have just spoken and which I expect would result from the regular televising and broadcasting of our proceedings.

The second reason which I will advance, Mr. Speaker, for this resolution is that the people have a fundamental right to receive ideas and information. That is set out clearly in Section 20 of the Constitution of Barbados. I believe that we will be clothing and giving real meaning to the words in that section if we permit the people to see, hear and listen to the proceedings of this House and of Parliament as a whole. I believe that the people need to know what is going on in Parliament and that the broadcasting of our debates will give them insights into the workings of Parliament and will make Parliament more relevant to the average Barbadian.

I also say, as another reason for advancing this resolution, that it is necessary to enhance the power and influence of Parliament in comparison with that of the Executive. I believe that, more and more, the Executive has come to dominate public affairs and that Parliament has been, to a large extent, a loser. Ministers of Government and even their officials have greater opportunity to have their views presented to the public at large than does the average Member of Parliament. And yet, Mr. Speaker, you are wont to remind us that we come in here, not representing a political party, but representing a constituency. And if you are correct and if our constituencies are the primary persons whom we represent then it is on their behalf that I plead that they should hear and listen to what we have to say on their behalf.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I concede that there are those who are fearful of the general broadcast of parliamentary debates. There are those who say that television, in particular, and the radio, to some extent, are more concerned with entertainment and sensation and that therefore it is liable that if the matter is not properly handled that the House can be shown in a light that would make laughing stocks of us all.

There are those who also say that if it is not well organized that there could be an editing of the debates in such a way as to give the wrong impression of what is actually taking place or there could be an editing of the debates in such a way as to make some of us look more favourable in debate than we should have. I understand those fears. But I do not believe that they are fears that should drive us away from making the fundamental decision of allowing the people the right to know what is going on in their Parliaments.

I believe that appropriate procedures can be put in place which will minimize any of the fears of which I have spoken and which will contribute instead, rather than detract from an increased interest in parliamentary proceedings. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply aware of the influence which the call-in programmes have been having on the conduct of public affairs in this country.

I believe that the public, through the call-in programmes has shown their interest and their knowledge of public affairs. Of course there has, at times, been misrepresentation of public persons who are conducting their public affairs in this country through the call-in programmes themselves. Indeed our own procedures at times prevent us from making public to the public, at the right time and at the earliest opportunity, the public's business.

Some of our Standing Orders are archaic. We still persist, for instance, in not allowing the public at large - far less public broadcast - to attend the sittings of our

Committees unless they are specially invited to do so. They cannot, as a matter of course come to the Committees far less know what is going on before our Committees.

I believe that we have to look at change in a meaningful way in the procedures of the House in how the House communicates with the public *at large and particularly without constituencies at large. I believe that part of that change must encompass the permanent broadcasting by radio and televising of the proceedings of this House. I would go so far, Mr. Speaker, as to suggest live broadcasts and I certainly would want to suggest re-broadcast as well.

We have had a good deal of experience in the Commonwealth to guide us. Members ought to be aware that the New Zealand Parliament was, perhaps, the first Parliament in 1936 to commence broadcasting of its proceedings. They were followed soon after that by Australia at the Federal level, I think it was the 10th July, 1946 with radio broadcasting. It comes as a great surprise that the United Kingdom waited until 1976 before it endorsed some broadcasting of its proceedings on a permanent basis. In 1978 the United Kingdom started televising and radio broadcasting of both Houses of Parliament. But permanent television was not allowed until much later in that Parliament. The United States has been televising the Congressional proceedings live since 1979. In Barbados in the 1960s we started with a limited broadcasting by radio of some of our proceedings. I have witnessed all sorts of things in this House. I was not fortunate to be in the House when one of our past Members actually brought a set of pliers in order to cut the wires, if he were not given the chance to be heard on radio like his other colleagues who were being given a chance. That was the late Mr. Lloyd Smith. 12.35 p.m.

I was not fortunate to be in the House at that time. It was before my time, Sir. I came in the House some years later. But I believe that that Member felt very strongly that he had an equal right, and his constituents had as equal right to hear him on the matters before the House, as it had a right to hear the then Premier and the Leader of the Opposition.

Barbados has had an *ad hoc* system of broadcasting and televising debates and doing this usually, only by agreement between the parties, Sir, for special occasions. I believe that that right should not be seen as a right and privilege of the House, Sir. I believe that the right and privilege should be that of the public at large and that we should be the custodians of those rights and privileges, not for ourselves but for the public and for the constituents whom we represent. Therefore, I am asking that this Resolution be supported so that we can put broadcasting and televising of the debates of this House on a

permanent basis. I emphasise the point that there should be no limitations and at present there should be no difficulties in our way in achieving this since we already have in place most of the technical apparatus necessary for this purpose.

I agree, Mr. Speaker, that we will decide whether we are going to have a special 'channel so as not to interfere with the normal commercial broadcast done by the television station, the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, Barbados Rediffusion Limited or Voice of Barbados Limited. This is not a very expensive procedure. I am told, Sir, it is one of the matters to which we c&n give consideration when we set up the Standing Committee but I am told it is not a very expensive procedure and it would not add much to the budgeted cost of running governmental affairs. I have heard and I probably subscribe to the view which I have heard from one Honourable Member that it might even be possible to get sponsors although I would not like Parliamentary proceedings to be dependent on having to carry commercial advertising at the same time.

Now, Sir, obviously I have asked that a Standing Committee of the House be set up to implement and monitor the application of the decision because I believe that Committee will have some functions to perform, like who should produce the pictures, look at the question of financing of which I have spoken and the appropriate method for coverage, of the best method for ensuring that the whole operation is under effective parliamentary control, and, as I said, that we have a special unit and/or signal on whether or not the whole process be farmed out to an outside contractor.

I believe the Committee as well would advert to the need for political balance, fairness and accuracy in seeing that the proceedings of this Parliament are carried in a proper manner so as not to undermine the status of Parliament itself.

Mr. Speaker, I have never understood why, despite our boast of being one of the freest democratic countries in the world, we have been so hesitant to allow political broadcast to play a larger role in the management of this country's affairs. A country that talks and discusses, even if it disagrees, once it gives vent openly and freely to the various ideas and allows those ideas to contend, has a greater chance of preserving democracy than a country that is made silent and a country that is controlled, and a country in which ideas cannot freely contend.

I believe that any restriction of freedom, unless it is restriction in the interest of the public as a whole and there are some areas in which we have to restrict absolute freedom, but I believe that when it comes to transmitting ideas that there should not be the sort of restrictions we have.

I have always wondered, in my time in Parliament, why it is that the existing stations, particularly the television station, are so hesitant to come to, and to listen to the politician talk. I can hear all sorts of moderators on programmes misrepresenting the position. Certainly I speak for myself of my views. Misrepresenting the position ...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I am asked whether they are false prophets and false reverends. I am not sure there are genuine reverends. But they can misrepresent the position of Parliament, misrepresent the position of Public Accounts Committee of Parliament and we cannot get our position over.

Mr. Speaker, let me give you an example. The Public Accounts Committee of this country ...

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael West were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. Speaker.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member knows the great respect which both he and I have for Father Hatch. He is perhaps a reverend gentleman of great intellectual stature but he is not one of whom I speak. I am not speaking of someone who has passed his exams and a degree, I am speaking of the other person who has assumed* the title of a reverend and who has bought a degree. I have not given the Speaker a name, Sir, so I am not going to call the name, but...

Mr. SPEAKER: That is the very reason why I took that purported point of order because I did not want any names brought into the record so neither hatch nor hatchet will be in the record.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I will speak neither of Mark, John, Luke nor Matthew. But, Sir, I wish to say that

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you speaking about Matthew the Publican?

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Not the real prophet, Sir. I am speaking of the false prophets and those who do not understand the doctrine and those who will misrepresent people in public life and the proceedings that go on in this Parliament.

I was saying, Sir, if I may use the Public Accounts Committee, this Public Accounts Committee which I head has been meeting regularly but instead you will get a consistent misrepresentation of the position on the radio in particular by some of these people. I think that Parliament, in its own interest, has therefore a duty to keep

the public as well and as properly informed as Parliament is able to do. That is one of the reasons why I began by saying, Sir, that a Resolution such as this, if welcomed and carried by the House will achieve the objective of keeping the public properly informed and giving the public regular insight into what is going on in the Parliament. 12.45 p.m.

I also believe, Sir, that televised proceedings in particular can become an integral part of teaching programmes so that the younger Barbadians, the students, whether it is at the primary, secondary or tertiary level will get a clearer understanding of parliamentary affairs, not merely procedurally but of the substantive matters which are discussed and decided on in this House in the interest of the public at large. I think that to that extent it will assist the public in developing a better knowledge and awareness of how the business of Parliament is conducted and how we work for the people and the misrepresentations that occur about us in how we are over-paid, how we do not spend time in here and how we do not prepare ourselves. Those misrepresentations, I hope, will be put on the back burner forever.

Sir, I said that I strongly believe that the character of the House will be enhanced. I speak from the experience of the limited occasions on which we have allowed the House's proceedings to be televised. I think you, Mr. Speaker, will say that Members have conducted themselves on those occasions almost without exception with the great decorum and that the standard of the debate has generally been extremely high where the public at large has had the benefit of knowledge which normally the public would not have access to, despite the fact that we publish Hansard. The fact is that it is easier now for people to watch and to listen in order to know what is going on in the world than it is for them to read. It is a great pity because I believe that people should still read.

Sir, I consider that what I have said has made a strong case for broadcasting and televising on a permanent basis of this House's proceedings. I rest my case again, Sir, on the main and principal point that the public has a right to know what is going on in this House. We have been too hesitant to face this problem. Occasionally, when we try to attempt the problem, one side or the other has seen an advantage or disadvantage to itself rather than looking at the overall advantage to the public at large. If it becomes a matter of course, then I think the so-called advantages and disadvantages on a partisan basis would have disappeared and we will begin to see the advantage to the governmental system as a whole by having these proceedings broadcast and televised.

Likewise, Sir, although I am speaking on a motion about carrying the proceedings of the House, I think that I should not allow the opportunity to pass without saying that

we must also again look at the type of broadcast, procedures and rules that we have put in place for election time. It makes no sense to me to believe that Members on either side of the House can at election time go on television and speak. Some of our open meetings are even televised at that time. But outside of election time, we seemed to have put somehow a stopper on our mouths. Why? What are we afraid of as politicians? We must have no fear of the people, Sir. While we must be conscious of security and other measures, I believe that our proceedings should be as open as possible. We should be encouraging the public to come and hear us and to have a gallery full. Those who cannot come to hear us, and there are several thousands for various reasons, we should be encouraging them to listen to us through the new technological apparatus that is available in the world. I believe, Sir, that we are in duty bound as we go into the 21st century to recognise that this House has not used the technological, information, and communications developments to its best advantage. If we are to make this House relevant to the 21st century, we have to take these decisions. We are late. I believe that Barbados should have been a pacesetter in this regard. We made tentative steps but we have never followed through those steps to their logical conclusion. I trust that this Resolution will give us the opportunity to correct our mistakes and to move forward in ensuring that we stand on the side of freedom and that this Parliament which has had such a long and distinguished history will find that its history is even more secure with us.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to lend my most enthusiastic support to this Resolution. But I want to cast my net wider, I want to recommend to the Government that the time has long passed in Barbados for a public broadcasting televised service. I am asking for a dedicated channel for public broadcasting which would broadcast not only parliamentary debates. It is time that the public understood that we, and when I say "we" I mean we on this side, the Barbados Labour Party, have already spent hundreds of thousands of the public's money preparing this Parliamentary Chamber for televised debates. These cameras that we see installed on the walls are not there for decoration or just for once or twice a year usage. They are grossly under-utilised and they are there so that in this age of information, in this time of informatics, that parliamentary debates would be at the flick of a switch at the disposal of the Barbadian public. What is it that we are afraid for our electors to see and hear? Is it that we are afraid of the people whose interest we represent and the people that we say we speak on their behalf? They are entitled to know. I agree with the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that it is time for this Parliament to become more relevant and to reassume its role as a leader in public opinion.

This public broadcasting service of which I speak, Mr. Speaker, this dedicated channel, is there. It would not cost a great deal of money. It is there. You can just dedicate another channel. I do not care what number it is to the public broadcasting service. It will broadcast parliamentary debates. We know that this happens usually one day a week. It will force us to be more businesslike in the way that we timetable debates. It will force us to be more businesslike in the way that we dispose of matters which are on the Order Paper. Some of them have been on the Order Paper for over two years. It would force us to be far more businesslike in this respect. 12.55 p.m.

But this public broadcasting system, in my humble opinion, Mr. Speaker, would put at the disposal of the Barbadian public documentaries on all sectors of our economy. Cultural expositions. This is where the Barbadian culture would have its best manifestation. It would also, in my view, Mr. Speaker, allow several non-governmental organisations to bring information and education on health matters, education matters, environmental matters, early childhood education, economic matters, agricultural matters. This would become the university of the screen in a manner of speaking. This is how people would learn about new techniques and new mechanisms in agriculture, and in economics for the business person, small business people in particular. This is how women who elect, as they are entitled to do, to be housewives would have so many household hints to do with economies in the household, to do with better diets in the household.

Heritage television would have a field day on public service television. Early childhood education would be an important thing. We should not have in 1993 to be depending still on Sesame Street, we could put our own on the screen. Preparation for Common Entrance, preparation for CXC, even at the tertiary level and post secondary level this would be the vehicle by which we would educate our people. The Barbados Community College would be glad of a half day every week or a whole day if they had it at their disposal. They would be glad to have some hours of public service television at their disposal. The Polytechnic, where the courses are so much more hands on, you can show a young man or a young woman doing what has to be done to the motor car engine, doing what has to be done to the computer or on the computer by, with* and at the computer.

All of this is what television is about, and in this way we can lead as we used to do. In this way we can show that we have an appreciation of the usefulness of this new technology. As the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said, we are behind hand in this. There was a time when Barbados was a leader in this respect. Now we are a

country given to fantasy. You may not believe it, Mr. Speaker, but please accept my word when I tell you that I still find time, among everything else that I do, to work with ordinary grass roots youth and other non-governmental organisations, and only last Saturday attended a seminar sponsored by the Barbados Family Planning Association at Dover Convention Centre, and I was pleased to see many young people and many teachers in the audience there.

A young teacher got up and testified to something that I have spoken to in this Honourable Chamber and have been laughed at from the other side. She could testify that there are families in Barbados today where three children are part of the family and the parents can only afford to send one child to school. Invariably they will choose the boy child, whether he is the eldest child or not. Invariably they will choose the child that will go to Harrison College or Queen's College, whether that child is the eldest child or not. That is what is happening in Barbados today. But people who went to that seminar spoke and teachers, primary school and secondary school teachers, spoke to the fact that we are now into the realm of fantasy in this country; that young people are behaving themselves as they see young people behave on the soap operas on television; that they are far and fast removing themselves from the reality of life in Barbados today. If they see on television abroad, or they hear on the news on television abroad, that young people will shoot and knife other young people for the sake of a pair of brand name or designer sneakers, do we wonder that they will do it in Barbados and that it is happening in Barbados?

What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that the reality is that we desperately do need a public service television service in Barbados to counterbalance the negative influences coming from abroad, particularly purveyed by the soap operas, particularly purveyed by a number of popular programmes which have a large component of violence and disrespect for humanity, and particularly for human life. Something has got to be wrong when that is the unrelieved diet that we see fit to serve our young people in the name of the almighty dollar. We are told that these are the programmes that are popular, these are the programmes that the sponsors want to sponsor. »

But if I can come back for a minute, Sir, to the parliamentary debate and the importance of having them televised in Barbados, I am not so much concerned with the right to know. That is a right that we virtually take for granted. Hansard is printed. But it is understanding the influence of radio and television, and particularly the television.

This new technology. We have, in my submission, Mr. Speaker, as a Parliament to be in tune with development in this country and get back to that place where we used to lead in that connection. Parliament

has to become more relevant. It has to order its affairs, Sir, so that they are more attractive to the man and the woman on the street. I am concerned that when people begin to lose respect for the persons in here - and I have to disagree with anybody who says that politicians are not now held in the lowest public respect. We are lower than pond water in some circles, and the next step is a disrespect for the institution of Parliament, and the next step from that, Mr. Speaker, is anarchy. They will want to come in here and no longer remove the Mace, they will want to remove Your Honour from that seat. That is how they will show disrespect for the institution of Parliament and that is how the whole system will break down. That is one of the reasons why the system has to become more relevant to the needs, the demands and the desires of people in this country.

That is why they have more than a right, but it is an obligation on our part, to show them how we behave and conduct ourselves and carry on ourselves in here allegedly on their behalf. That is their entitlement, and by the same token it therefore is our obligation to do this.

I cannot speak in more definite terms than I have attempted to do in here today. I would hope that parliamentary debates would be of a calibre which would encourage people again in this country - and I use the word "again" underlined - to emulate and to respect not only parliamentarians but the institution of Parliament and the place that this institution has in the socio-economic life of Barbados. This is supposed to be the highest committee of the land, Sir, and it is a terrible indictment on us that people really do not care what goes on in here any more, do not respect what goes on in here any more.

That brings me to the point that I have made before and will make constantly until I live to see it come to pass. Parliamentary committees must begin to work. There are people who believe, as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has said, that we come in here on a Tuesday for the lunch. Some of us come in here with our parliamentary papers with the seal still on them. Some of us come in here without even a brief case in our hand, we come in here unprepared. We do not know from moment to moment what we are going to debate, we have to depend on the Leader of the House to tell us ten minutes before Parliament begins what we are likely to debate today. 1.05 p.m.

We cannot prepare ourselves for the debate. I have been prepared for this Resolution simply because the Resolution has been on the Order Paper for months and I have wanted to speak on it. Something is wrong if that is the way in which we do our business. If the private sector carried out its business like that we would not have a private sector in Barbados today. What example do we set?

We have a Library Committee which does not meet and as a result we do not even have a library that is visible to the naked eye. I know that we have volumes but the time has long passed for it. We have a Management Commission which does not meet often enough. I will say again and again something is wrong in Barbados when we do not have Standing Committees that speak to the main productive and social sectors of our economy. Something is wrong when there is no Standing Committee in this Parliament on Tourism, on Agriculture, on Manufacturing, on Health, on Education. That is why this job should be now a full-time job.

I am for co-opting private sector people on to these committees to help us do what we have to do. All the wisdom does not reside in our heads and in our bosoms. If we are going to be giving more than lip service to the whole concept and the theory of interdependence and to the inter-relationship between the public and the private sector we are going to have to begin to do and to act so that people will understand that we are putting our mouths where our ideas are.

I do not see why there should not be a Standing Committee in this House on Tourism and I do not see why members of the private sector should not be co-opted to sit on that Committee and why the deliberations of that Committee, as the Honourable leader of the Opposition said, and I agree should not be open to the public. I cannot think of any good reason why. I can think of a million reasons why we should and none why we should not.

We are being weighed in the balance as parliamentarians and found wanting. This Resolution speaks to a matter which lies exclusively within our power and within our domain to deliver. I believe passionately that we have come to a place where it is our obligation. I do not think we can dilly dally with it anymore. I have to thank the Leader of the Opposition for bringing this Resolution and putting it before the Barbadian public. It would be remiss of us if we did not treat this as a major debate.

We complain in here all the time that the Press does not give us a fair deal. We complain that it sends its most junior reporters and sometimes it does not bother to send reporters at all. We complain that there is no column such as the column I used to see when I was a child. Parliamentary reporters were respected in those days when Mitchie Hewitt and Joe Broomes reported you or were going to report you. As a parliamentarian, you trembled in your trousers and the public looked forward to that parliamentary debate. There is no parliamentary column properly reported in the newspaper today and that is a reflection on us, not a reflection on the Press. We like to blame the Press because it is easier to blame somebody else but that depends on us.

I am saying that if we improve the way in which we did business the Press by extension would improve the way in which it reported the business that we did. It would welcome it. I am not one for criticising the Press where criticism is not due. The fault in parliamentary debating lies with us not with it. If we debate on a "poor rakey" basis they have a right to report us, on a "poor rakey" basis and to send the most "poor rakey" people to report us. If we treat debates with the respect that they deserve and if we prepare ourselves and debate at a level that Barbadians are happy to hear us debate at... We misjudge the public every time. We misjudge John Public every time. We underestimate John Public every time.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: In the BLP time you could not find sitting room in the gallery. It is in the DLP time that you cannot find anybody in the gallery. I am counting 2 people here and one might be a security guard. Mr. Speaker cannot see what is in the gallery but I can see. I have to be his eyes and ears.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am not drawing it to your attention, Sir. I have to be your eyes and ears in this matter. I have to do it because your colleagues do not look after your interest in here, Sir, neither at the constituency or in at any other level.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to say that I believe that the work we do in this Parliament every Tuesday and the work that we should be doing on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday in parliamentary committees should be open to a public audience. The technology is here and the capability is here for us to make this open to the public and again I would hope that this exposure would bring the Barbados Parliament back into that high repute that it enjoyed in former years, not only at home here in Barbados but abroad.

Let us not be under any doubt, Sir, in the OECS even though they have many more channels available to them because they have more enlightened governments in that respect when it comes to the age of information, they would be interested in seeing what is televised in Barbados especially when we deal with issues and subjects which touch on the wider Caribbean interests. You have an audience out there waiting, (not only in Barbados) willing and anxious and enthusiastic to hear parliamentary debates.

I urge upon the Government that it should act with some urgency. The technical capability is there. Get in a channel tomorrow morning if you want. Those people who still want to watch Channel 8 may do so, those who watch Channel 14 and 26 may do so. But do not deny what the

Honorable Prime Minister likes to call the citizenry of the Eastern Caribbean the opportunity for parliamentary debate.

Remember, Sir, I am speaking now in terms of a public broadcasting channel which will be more than parliamentary debates. There is a great need to bring a certain balance out there and in this regard the Government must take a lead and I invite it so to do. Thank you.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, at this point in time I am moving that further consideration of this matter be deferred.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Yes, Sir, I have been given the assurance we will get back to it.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Sir, I move that Government Business be taken.

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

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

ORDER NO. 8 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE LEASE OF LAND TO THE BARBADOS CITI- ZENS BAND RADIO ASSOCIATION

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, this is a Resolution in connection with a lease of 1568.9 square metres of land at Constitution Road, St. Michael to the Barbados Citizens Band Radio Association. The Government proposes to lease this parcel of land to the aforementioned organisation and it would be necessary to give some background to the work of this organisation and the reason why we consider leasing this area of land with the building thereon to this group, bearing in mind that the building which is situated on the land was in a rather dilapidated state. 1.15 p.m.

The Barbados Citizens Band Radio Association has been in existence since 1976 and is presently located in Strathclyde, St. Michael. The Association provides several community services free of charge. These include, fire watch, exercises during crop season, assisting in the location of drifting fishing boats with CB sets, participation in CERO work, provision of communications coverage in a variety of national and sporting events such as the 1 OK Marathon, the Texaco and IDC Games, Inter-School Sports, several sporting activities and they assist in passing traffic reports to the Police.

This Association has been in communication with the Ministry for a number of years in an effort to locate a property where they could use as their headquarters and station. They considered their present location was not central enough and, indeed, created some difficulties for them. In pursuing this request, we looked at areas where we could possibly accommodate them. It therefore was agreed that we should offer this parcel of land which accommodates a derelict building which formerly housed the St. John Ambulance Brigade. It was originally the home of the Manager of the Train Station and is sited on the grounds of the old Barbados Railway Station. •

The Barbados Citizens Band Radio Association has indicated that it will take financial responsibility for carrying out the extensive repairs on the derelict building in order to make it habitable. They have indicated that this will cost them approximately \$50 000. Having given consideration to this request, the Government indicated a willingness to lease the land to the group. It was felt that in view of the voluntary services provided by the Association and the cost which the Association would incur in refurbishing the building, to charge an additional nominal rental fee of \$400 per annum.

I should point out that the Commissioner of Land Tax had assessed the open market rental value to be \$400 per annum as of October 1991 so we are seeking, therefore, parliamentary approval to allow the Barbados Citizens Band Radio Association to be leased this property. The lease will be for a period of 10 years. The rental will be at the rate of \$400 per annum and will be subject to review in the fifth year. The lessee will be responsible for putting and keeping the building in a state of good repair and responsible for the payment of all utilities and land taxes where applicable.

I should point out, Mr. Speaker, in light of the urgency of the matter we had indicated to the Association that they could go ahead with the repairs of the building, which I gather they have started to do because it is an urgent matter and they wanted to get ahead with the refurbishment before the onset of the hurricane season.

With those remarks, Sir, I beg to move that this Resolution to lease the area of land identified in the Resolution to the Barbados Citizens Radio Band Association do now pass.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to second this Resolution on two main counts. First of all it will see the removal of a derelict and unsightly building from a site in Barbados in the City of Bridgetown owned by the Government. It will be to the good of the country if we can, in fact, have that particular building removed. That the institution will, in fact, use their skills and resources to

restore the building and turn the place into something worthwhile would have been sufficient grounds.

The second basis on which I am pleased to second this Resolution is that it gives me an opportunity to be of service to a corporate constituent which is one of the most useful non-governmental organisations in Barbados. The Citizens Band Radio Association, or as it is called the Amateur Radio Band, has proved over a substantially long period of time to be useful to Barbados and useful to Barbadians across this country for a very long period of time.

It is true that they have been established in their present form (pardon the expression), since 1976. But everyone who is familiar with the use of amateur radio would know that the members that constitute the Citizens Radio Band Association have been playing an important role in all kinds of public events and in all ways connected especially with hurricane information over a long period of time.

Mr. Speaker, anyone who has visited their current headquarters in Strathclyde cannot help but be impressed with the organisation itself. First of all it is a truly cosmopolitan organisation. It is one of the few places where you can go into what can be called a club atmosphere and literally find someone representing the entire strata of Barbadian society. It is a truly interesting organisation in that there are people from all walks of life, people from all religions, from every constituency, all classes and creeds bound together by a common interest. The common thread that goes through the organisation is an interest in citizen band radio. They really do fantastic work.

Sir, if you think of road racing, for example, when there is a round-the-island bicycle ride, the Sports organisation is unable to provide all of the resources that would ensure that the race is properly organised. This organisation provides the link-up, as a matter of fact, on occasions when the Police cannot have the requisite kind of link-up. This organisation is able also to provide information on missing animals, missing children and missing persons. 1.25 p.m.

I will say this, Mr. Speaker. I am not quite clear whether this is the priority. I know there are other institutions that need to be developed and I would want to know how you are going to relate them to this new parliamentary body. The reservation was expressed some time ago as to what kind of clout this Assembly of Caribbean Parliamentarians would have. I suppose we can ask ourselves too. Go in Europe and ask what kind of clout the European Parliament has. We have to look and see whether our situation is similar to that in

Europe and whether the arrangement we are looking at, as expressed in this Resolution, is the right one.

As I said, we must not think that there is anything to gain. There are some things I have learned, Mr. Speaker. You are a Bee today and a Dem tomorrow, a Dem yesterday and a Bee today, and I want to cross that divide because I know when we must do things. I think we must understand this. If the Opposition has its reservations it does not mean that the Opposition is against Caribbean unity because the Barbados Labour Party as an Opposition is on record as supporting any moves towards Caribbean unity so I do not think I have to stand up and defend that. Everybody knows that is part of history. What is relevant is that we find ways and means and that we understand our position.

Time and time again reports have revealed that the Caribbean bargaining power is limited because we have come with a united front. We are marketing tourism now together. We have seen the disaster in trying to promote country by country tourism. We have seen it even recently in the Banana Agreement in Europe and what they are saying is that the countries of the Caribbean should get together on this very issue. The reports say that the reason why they were successful in that negotiation is because for the first time the Caribbean countries involved have gotten together.

We must go to Europe on sugar with a united front. We have gone across the economic borders and we are sensing some merit in that, and a political one. I know that there are lots of reservations, not within this Parliament only, but even on the other side they will have reservations. It is not an easy Resolution to support. I do not think that the Prime Minister, all due respect to him, will feel in any way that someone is throwing cold water on a resolution in which he played some major part in forming. I would commend him for trying to put something to the Heads of Governments because we need to start somewhere. But, as I said, we must sit down and find ways and means of dealing with the problems that are likely to arise.

The Opposition has some reservation about the cost. You know why? At this time Barbados is going through an economic crisis. I do not think that anyone could be annoyed with someone expressing concern over the fact that any arrangement would mean an additional cost to the taxpayers of Barbados. That is a justifiable reason. We have to be concerned. What is the cost? I do not know the cost. How am I going to fully support a Resolution when I do not know what is the cost and whether the countries that are supposed to meet the cost will, in fact, honour their obligation. When those facts are known then I would be in a better position to make my own judgment.

There is another question. Where is the headquarters going to be? Where are you going to meet? I have not

heard. Are you going to meet in Trinidad, Guyana, Jamaica or Barbados?

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I was not here. If you are going to meet in Barbados, I have seen this. It is all right to say that but we know that jealousy is one of those things. They always say that the headquarters is always in Barbados and this has been one of the problems why most of these regional institutions do not get off the ground because I know people were critical of the CARICOM arrangement because the headquarters was in Guyana. I know some of them criticised when the headquarters was in Trinidad and they criticised it when it was in Barbados. Those are areas I am asking the Honourable Prime Minister to look at and to be satisfied that this hurdle is now being dealt with so that we can have a plain sailing approach to it. It is all right to say the headquarters is here. What does that mean that because the headquarters is here in Barbados that people are going to feel happy coming here? We have to look and see whether people who are a part of it will have transportation. I suppose that might be one of the considerations why they would have the headquarters here. Even that we have seen evoked some sort of criticism and jealousy, hence it led to the destruction of the West Indies Federation. That is why I am calling on the Government to look at this arrangement and make more information available on this matter. It is not a matter of just supporting it when we do not know the steps.

I do not know the cost. I do not know what sort of a secretariat you are going to have or the composition of it. All of these are things I would want to know. I do not want to say "yes" and then we now start to work out the mechanics of it. All of this should be done. I feel the time has come when we should look seriously at finding some sort of political arrangement.

I would hope, Sir, that if my queries are met that I will be able to say I fully support an initiative of this sort. As I said, we must realise that it is not a Resolution which can be supported fully just by bringing it in here. There are other reservations and I think that all and sundry, from both sides, should be given an opportunity to express their individual views. That will augur well for the establishment of any arrangement, political or otherwise, which we deserve in the Caribbean region.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, not for the first time I have heard a speech from the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East which has much in it to be congratulated because in the face of some difficulty he has been able to articulate a position that is not unreasonable. On that occasion I appreciated what he said and on this occasion I can say it again. The Honourable

Member is showing a maturity in this House which I think is in keeping with the growth and development of parliamentarians.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very interesting Resolution which has come before the House. It has been debated over a period of time and in a sense that tends to derogate from the intensity of the debate because one has to remember what other persons said 2 or 3 weeks ago. In that sense there is some disadvantage to be responding to points that may have been made some time ago. A person who is hearing one for the first time might wonder if, one is, in fact, concentrating on the debate as it is being articulated today. 1.20 p.m.

The people who run it are dedicated. There is a Mr. Chandler who I have reason to feel has spent a substantial part of his own resources on the development of this organization. In fact the expenditure in the organization, in the interest of the country, is usually at the hands of the individuals. This is not a rich man's club. It is not a gun club. It is not a sports car club. It is none of these. It is a simple, straightforward hobby. Many of the members construct the equipment themselves from discarded bits and pieces. There are a few who have the more sophisticated radio communicators and it is very interesting to try to learn the lingo.

During my own exercise once every 5 years I use some walkie talkie equipment which is not always registered, Sir. Because if it is for one day, I do not think that anybody bothers to register. But I am qualified to use it. Just in case there are any Honourable Members who might wonder, I am qualified to use equipment of a certain kind.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I was going to finish but it seems that I may have to give some reference to my qualifications in this field.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am being told that they are not serious so I will not proceed to give them chapter and verse on my capabilities. They can refer to the Honourable Member, the Minister of Agriculture who will be able to tell them, with impunity, of the quality of the hams, Sir.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He is an Engineer. The Operators do not have any truck with the Engineers.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon. He said he was an Operator before he was an Engineer so he is qualified.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, one can speak at length but I think the main point has been made that this is a good use of the property and I share the view that a nominal rent would be the least the Government could do to indicate its thanks, on behalf of the people, for the work which this organization does.

I am extremely happy to be able to second this resolution, Sir.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Sir, I am pleased to support this resolution. I would have been pleased even to second it.

I have an interest in what happens at Constitution Road, not only because it is a part of my constituency but because it is part of a plan for Bridgetown that the Barbados Labour Party put on the books and the files a long time ago and which is taking too long to come to fruition.

I would want the Minister of Housing to take note of the fact that there are some 9 houses, there may be 7 now at a place called Riverside which were due for relocation a long time ago. They are now boxed in by an extended minibus stand which has now gone into the old hockey field at Queen's College. They used to be subject to flooding at time of heavy rain when the Constitution flooded its banks. They are wedged in now between a number of commercial entities because Constitution Road has gone commercial, almost exclusively so. These are the only people who now live on Constitution Road.

At the time when the Central Bank was being built and the Directors thereof looked down their noses at Church Village next door and at Riverside, it was to have been part of that process for those people to have been relocated to more suitable accommodation and that what is now Church Village would have been a natural extension to the Central Bank. The Central Bank, if I may say so, Sir, still does not have a good attitude to the people in Church Village. I am doing my best to try to improve that attitude. But I am pleased to see that the Government has taken this. But I would want the Government also to do more than lip service and I would urge upon the Minister of Housing that he looks again at this question of the relocation especially for those people who live at Riverside Drive.

That whole area has been subject to flooding and to poor foundation. Diocesan House is a glaring example. Where the CBers are being given now to have their headquarters now is really a bluff which used to be an old railway signal station. I do not think that that

would be subject to flooding and I am pleased that the Government has seen fit to do this. I too want to say that in the opinion of this side of the House the CBers have offered and continue to offer an invaluable service to Barbados in the way that only a non-governmental organization can do. And if the Government is seeing fit to make its contribution to CBecs by providing in kind, since it is not in a position to provide in cash, then we laud it. But that should not be the end of it. I hope the CBerc would now make that into a nice looking, environmentally friendly location for their operation.

But the plan that the Barbados Labour Party had for the Constitution River and what would happen on both sides of it went way back up to the Globe Roundabout. All of the beautification that you saw the NCC put in along the bank of the Constitution River where sometimes cows are to be seen and even the trees that were put in there, that was all part and parcel of the urban renewal for that pan of Bridgetown. I am crying out in a loud voice to the Minister of Housing, please let it continue. If necessary, make available more land that is the Government's land to non-governmental organizations and particularly those such as the CBers who are well-established and have shown that they have a certain capability, they have an efficiency which the Government cannot bring to operations.

This leads me to another point which I want to make to the Minister of Housing. I saw a letter in one of the local newspapers last week, I think it was, Sir, a Government officer, a civil servant was making the point that the Government, through its Ministry of Housing, does not have sufficient staff and resources to deal with Government buildings many of which are derelict, fallen into a state of disrepair. The Labour Party had a plan for that too. Give them to non-governmental organizations who desperately need accommodation and they will keep them in a state of repair. The time has come, Sir, that we think of privatisation not only in terms of the productive sectors. There are social services which many non-governmental organizations provide. The Government can help in kind by making premises available to them.

The National Trust is there. A lot of the money that is wasted keeping a watchman who does not even watch on Government buildings could be made available to the National Trust and these buildings could be 'put to productive use rather than fall into disrepair. The Ministry of Housing can convert many of them into housing units. Every housing estate in Barbados does not have to have 100 units or 200 units. A block of flats, a block of apartments. All of this is there in the file. The Barbados Labour Party left all of this in the file. All of this was in the planning to be done. Get on with the job! It does not have to cost a lot of money. I am pleased to see the Minister of Housing is writing as I speak.

Mr. Speaker, *Sit*, this is really a plea from the humble representative of the City of Bridgetown for the Minister of Housing to continue the urban renewal particularly in the environs of Constitution Road and to look again at this whole question in the way in which public buildings can be restored, can be conserved without costing the Ministry or the Government a cent.

In the most recent Estimates debates, Sir, I spoke to this question of the Government cutting the subvention to many non-governmental organizations. That was a retrograde step. The Government can compensate in respect now of money cuts by giving in kind. If it cannot give in kind in one way, it can give in kind in another way. I can think of so many organizations living in squeezed up premises who would be glad of a Government building with room for landscaping, with room for parking and these organizations would be willing to undertake the upkeep of the building. That is the only price that they would have to pay and they would be willing to pay as part of the service that they offer to Barbadians. It is a service that non-goveifimental organizations are offering to all of us just like the CBers. The CBers set a good example .which is to be lauded and I would want to take this opportunity to offer them the congratulations of this side of the House and the gratitude of this side of the House for the service that they offer to Barbadians.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, if I may just respond by way of a short reply to some of the comments made by the Honourable Member for the City. Indeed, Sir we are pleased to see that, at least, here is something which the Government is doing that could draw some measure of commendation from the Opposition. 1.35 p.m.

I have to admit, Sir, that I am not aware of the River Drive situation and it is drawn now to my attention now about the 9 houses. Based on the visual impression I get of that particular area, I think it is clear that there is a strong case for relocation and I will certainly indicate to the officers in my Ministry, in collaboration with the National Housing Corporation, that some immediate steps be taken to look at that situation and to see, within of course the financial constraints that we are faced with, to try to get something done on this matter as soon as possible.

It should be pointed out that the Government of Barbados certainly remains committed to urban renewal but as you are aware, this is a matter which has serious financial implications. It has environmental implications, it has sociological implications and it is going to take time.

This whole question of urban renewal is a matter which was discussed and which has been talked about and commented on and I believe, included in development plans in Barbados from going back into the sixties so it is not a question of one Member saying that the Barbados Labour Party had it in their plans and another Member saying that the Democratic Labour Party had it in the plans before that.

In the same way that the Honourable Member could ask why the Democratic Labour Party did not do it, I could also equally ask why the Barbados Labour Party had it in their plans and did nothing about it. The fact of the matter is ...

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. We did a great deal about it when the Barbados Labour Party was the Government but there is more still to be done. All I am asking the Government is, do not put it on the back burner, get on with it

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: The fact of the matter is that there is a lot of work which Let me concede that the Barbados Labour Party did something. They just touched the tip of what is the iceberg. They did a minimal amount but the fact of the matter is that it is something which they recognised because it has very serious financial implications. It is a wide ranging thing and we would like to be able to ensure that this is done but it has to fit into the whole developmental process.

I assure the Honourable Member that urban renewal still continues to be a matter of concern for us and we would do whatever we can within the limits of our financial resources in that particular area.

Now, the Honourable Member made reference to the fact that there are non-Governmental organisations in Barbados that would be glad for some Government buildings to house their operations. And I want to say a number of things. This administration has been making an effort, wherever possible where buildings exist, that the Government does not have any use for, to make these buildings available to non-Governmental and also Governmental organisations.

I should point out that quite recently the National Assistance Board has been allocated the Hindsbury School for the purpose of developing a programme to bring vagrants who inhabit the streets of Bridgetown into a centre where they will be catered for and where they will be looked after in a humane way rather than lying on the streets on evenings and at night.

It is this kind of approach which we are having and it is part of our whole programme for bringing a humane touch in this area. So that the Hindsbury School which has

been handed over to the Government because the developments that are taking place now will be used for that particular purpose.

We have requests for a number of non-Governmental organisations for land or for buildings and wheresoever we have these buildings we will make it possible. There is a lot of feeling that we have a lot of buildings around which are not being used. In Bay Street, for example, the old Exchange Building and that block of buildings there, they are going to be knocked down. As a matter of fact I was indicating to the Minister of Health, just a couple of minutes ago, that I have signed the order to demolish those buildings and I am surprised that it really has not yet been implemented. It is part of the Government's programme for renewing that part of Bridgetown. These buildings are going to be taken down - Industry Hall, the Exchange Building, and the other building which I think is occupied by a shoemaker shop. It is for part of a road widening project which we have there. It is not that we have those buildings which can be refurbished and can be occupied. It is part of our policy.

In Speightstown we have the old Health Centre and we have agreed that the Post Office in St. Peter will be removed from its present location to the refurbished and upgraded building, Arlington. The Library facilities will then be expanded to include what would have been the old Post Office. Hopefully when Arlington is refurbished, not only will provision be made for the Post Office to be accommodated there but other Governmental agencies if there were other agencies which needed to be re-housed in a building which, when refurbished would be commodious and certainly will have the kind of atmosphere which is conducive to good productivity and good work.

I want to make the point, Sir, that when these buildings are left like that you find there is always a tendency for people to go into them and to vandalise them. I recognise that this has happened to a number of buildings and we are trying our best to ensure that we are able to do whatever is useful to the buildings which we have.

The Honourable Member made reference to the question of staffing and resources in the Ministry of Housing and Lands. I should point out that we have a property management section in the Ministry which looks after Government properties. Like everything else there is no department or section in the Government which would not, from time to time, indicate that one of the ways in which they could be more productive is for the provision of more staff. That is the cry all over the place. But where does it all end? A Government has to make the decision about the way in which it will allocate its resources and we recognise that that is a very important department of the Government.

We have increased the staff, we have advertised for additional people but of course people in that section, which is a specialised area, must have certain disciplines. In the last set of advertisements which went out we only had one person, who in the opinion of the persons making the selection, who qualified. But I know that there is a search on for additional people to staff that particular area. It is not that you can put a body in there and that is the end of it. It is much more than that. I think the Honourable Member ought to be aware of that. We are concerned about it because we recognise that Government has to be managed in an effective manner and we have to be able to ensure that when our services are required that the services are delivered. 1.45 p.m.

Now I would not want the Honourable Member to leave the impression in this House that the Government is not cognizant of the fact that in housing we can do other than build large housing developments and we could move to smaller developments. Indeed, I believe that this is better for the community. So that this is already what we have already indicated that we will be moving into when money becomes available. I think that would be mainly the matter that I would want to indicate.

Sir, it has been drawn to my attention that I should quote somewhat liberally from the Barbados Development Programme which is a document of this House from 1962-65 on the whole question of the Constitution River and the area surrounding there. At page 22 this is what it says:

"THE CANALISATION OF CONSTITUTION RIVER

The Constitution River which is partly an inlet of the sea and partly a natural drainage area for flood water from areas as far as St. Thomas and St. George will be canalised and its tributaries drained to provide better control and conservation of the flood water. - (As far as I am aware, that was done.)

It is proposed to strengthen and raise the embankment on both sides of the river from Tweedside to Victoria Bridge, thus creating a channel approximately 80 feet wide by 10 feet deep to accommodate the flow of flood water. - (I think that was done.)

The river bottom from Tweedside to Victoria Bridge will be paved to provide a large capacity concrete drain and create a dry river. The level of the inverts will be raised and all the urban drains which empty into the Constitution River will be reconstructed and diverted to the sea where possible.

The offices under Halls Road, Tweedside culvert, the Constitution River Bridge and the Victoria Bridge will be considerably enlarged involving the construction of new bridges.

Drainage of the tributaries to arrest the flow of rainwater into the sea will involve excavating a series of deep trenches at strategic places across the floors of several hinterland ravines and the sinking of suck wells."

Sir, all of these are matters which have been taken on board and to a large extent have been done. But I take the Honourable Member's point about the housing around that particular area. As I have indicated, I have given the assurance that I will certainly look into that particular matter because I think that it is a matter which needs addressing.

Sir, I cannot speak to the Central Bank's officials looking down their noses at the people in Church Village. But I am aware that the Barbados Labour Party did say that as part of the old Central Bank Development complex that persons would be resited from that particular area so that whole area would be used for the Central Bank and the area around there. Again, I am not too sure what happened with that plan because I was under the impression that when the Central Bank was being constructed that that was going to be taking place.

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Sir, I heard a *sotto voce* remark. I am not too sure how true it is, but with the Frank Collymore Hall being an afterthought, it took up the money which was required for that particular portion. I really do not know whether it is true or not. The fact of the matter is, Sir, that we will have to look at that and we will see what we can do in terms of that.

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

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

MESSAGES FROM HER EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Mr. SPEAKER: During the course of this morning's items for today, I did not accept the Message from the Governor-General because it was not available at the time. But with the permission of the House, I will do so at this point. If there is no objection, I will read the following Message No. 2:

"HER EXCELLENCY, The GOVERNOR-GENERAL
TO THE HONOURABLE
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Her Excellency, The Governor-General has the honour to inform the Honourable House of Assembly that she will be absent from office during the period June 02 to July 31, 1993. During the period of her absence from office, she will travel between Trinidad & Tobago and the United States of America on private business and Canada for medical attention.

Under provisions of Section 29(1)(b) of the Constitution, the Chief Justice, the Honourable Sir Denys Williams, G.C.M. will perform the functions of the office of Governor-General during the period of her absence."

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, it is about that time when I normally would suspend for lunch. Sir, there is business which we are not going to do today. At this point, I move the adjournment of the House until Tuesday, June 15, 1993 at 12 o'clock noon.

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

The question that the sitting be now adjourned until Tuesday, June 15, 1993 at 12 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the sitting accordingly. 1.55 p.m.

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MICHAEL.....3605

Hon. E. E. Greaves, 3605, 3609, 3610, 3611;
Hon. B. M. Taitt, 3606, 3607, 3608; Mr. DeL.
O. Bradshaw, 3607; Miss B. A. Miller, 3608.

**MESSAGE FROM HER EXCELLENCY
THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL**

Mr. SPEAKER 3611

Receipt of Message No. 2/1993 informing the
House that Her Excellency the Governor-
General, Dame Nita Barrow, GCMG, DA
would be absent from office during the period
June 2 to July 31, 1993 and that the Honourable
Sir Denys Williams, GCM, would perform the
functions of the office during the period.

ADJOURNMENT 3612

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

FORDE, Mr. H. deB. (Christ Church West)
GREAVES, Hon. E. E. (St. Lucy) GREAVES, Hon.
P. M. (St. Michael North) MILLER, Miss B. A.
(City of Bridgetown) TAITT, Hon. B. M. (St
Michael West) THOMPSON, Hon. D. J. H. (St.
John)