

THE House of Assembly Debates (OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 – 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, January 5, 1993

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 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. TATTT, B.A.(Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B. ,(Hons.), (Minister of Health)
Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Q.C., B.A., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation and Leader of the House)
Hon. M. A. KING, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of Foreign Affairs)
Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P., (Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce)
Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, (Minister of Justice and Public Safety)
Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc. (Econ.)
Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Q.C., LL.M.
Hon. C. V. WALKER, J.P., (Minister of Education)
Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, J.P., (Chairman of Committees)
Hon. E. E. GREAVES, G.C.M., B.A., Ed.M., (Minister of Housing, Lands, Community Development and Culture)
Mr. R. L. MORRIS, B.A., Cert. Ed.
Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.), (Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs)
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
Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc. (Econ.)
Mr. J. O. TUDOR
Hon. D. W. BO WEN, (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
Mr. G. W. PAYNE
Mr. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A., LL.B.

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session. MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes for Tuesday, December 15, 1992.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Minutes for the meeting held in this Honourable Chamber on December 15, 1992, which have been circulated, be taken as read and confirmed

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY YOUR HONOUR

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to announce that I am in receipt of the Auditor General's Report, together with the Appropriation and Other Accounts for the year ended March 31, 1992.

PAPERS

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDBFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:-

1. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 9) Order, 1992.
2. The Public Officers Loan and Travelling Allowances (Amendment) Regulations, 1992.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, at this point I am moving that the following Standing Orders Nos. 6,16, 18,20,42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of this sitting.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS ORDER NO. 6 –

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAUT, seconded by Hon. M. A. KING. Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1992-93, NO. 2 HEAD 28 - MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM 5 - POLICE SERVICES - SUBPROGRAMME 02: GENERAL POLICE SERVICES - \$450,000

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution seeks a supplementary sum of \$450 000. Under Object No. 102 - Other Personal Emoluments, there is a sum of \$2 859 226 but all of that has been spent. Cabinet, as one of its measures to combat crime, approved the recruitment of 100 special constables at an estimated cost of approximately \$1.5 million. The Police Force recruited 60 special constables who are now in training. To *pay* them will cost \$450 000 up to the end of March. However, from the Statutory Personal Emoluments we are having a saving of over \$900 000 because we are not up to strength in the Police Force. There are some policemen on sick leave, half pay, study leave and no pay so there is a saving of \$900 000. What we are seeking is to move this \$450 000 from Statutory Personal Emoluments to Other Personal Emoluments so that the money can be spent. It will not cost the Government any additional money. We are not asking to raise money for the payment but to transfer pan of the savings from Statutory Personal Emoluments to Other Personal Emoluments so that these special constables can be paid.

I think I had better indicate that the Police Act, Section 71, provides for the recruitment of special constables under the command of the Commissioner of Police. Although it might appear to some that this is something new in Barbados, there is provision for it. I believe there is good reason for it as well because a number of police officers are now performing duties for which they do not require the length of training which they get, for example, in working as a court orderly. We train a man for 6 months virtually to do security in the Courts, or even to drive Judges, or do guard duty, or to patrol the streets and do other jobs which do not require that length of training.

I would like to say too, however, that this does not mean where a youngster is recruited as a special constable and shows promise, that he cannot be transferred to the regular Police Force. In some ways it is a means of determining whether or not a person is suitable to become a regular policeman. 12.30 p.m.

All the terms and conditions under which a person can become a special constable are set out in Part XII from Sections 71 to 76. For example, the period of service. A special constable:

"shall be engaged (or a period of three years from the date of his enrolment as a special constable:

Provided that -

(a) a special constable may apply for his release during his period of service."

^k He can work up to age 60 as the regular policeman and the Commissioner of Police has disciplinary powers over the special constable.

• I am therefore asking, Mr. Chairman, that this Resolution be passed.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am disappointed in the presentation of the Resolution by the Honourable Minister because I would have thought that, at • the start of a new year, with the state of crime in Barbados at the unprecedented level that it currently is, the Minister would have taken the opportunity to inform Parliament and, by extension, the general public what are the strategies his Government proposes to effect a reduction in the incidence of crime in this country.

I would have thought that insofar as he is seeking to appropriate \$450 000 to incorporate in the policing functions this category of person called Special Constable that he would have explained to us how he envisages that the Special Constable will operate *vis-a-vis* the ordinary policeman and, indeed, the member of the Defence Force who is now on joint patrol duty with the member of the Police Force. In other words, he ought to have told us to what extent he foresees an integration of the Special Constable in the general policing functions so that the public and Members of Parliament could be better appraised of the plans of the Force. I am assuming that the Force and the Government have plans and it may well be a false assumption, having regard to past experience.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to take the opportunity to express a number of views on this whole matter and its bearing on crime. The last figures that I had - the Police Department obviously does not feel that the Shadow Minister of Justice and the Shadow Attorney-General ought to be a recipient of the statistics which they put out. So I have to get mine...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I get them. But I have to get them surreptitiously from within the Police Department. I do not think that is proper for people to be sneaking them to me and sending them by post to me.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: When I was Attorney-General I used to get them officially.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Anyhow, I do not know what happened since. I do not know about the sources.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not disclosing my sources. But I am making a call for these matters to be shared.

The Minister in March this year said he would welcome the Opposition's presence on a kind of task force, a

strategic planning unit to deal with crime. It is not asking too much for me to get the statistics officially.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we get some order, please? Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They are bad behaved, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Nobody is bad behaved in here. Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They are disorderly, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Would you please ask the Minister of Health, Sir, to shut up?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Would the Honourable Member address the Chair?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, may I be heard in silence, as is my right, under the Standing Orders?

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, the last statistics that I had up to September 1991,1 made available to the press, and those figures showed alarming increases, particularly in areas of robbery, street crime and crime against visitors, in terms of robbery an increase of 427%. That is not a comforting statistic. All members of the public, including members of the Police Force, now accept that there is a breakdown in law and order in this country and that the criminal element is rampaging almost in an unrestricted and unchecked way, posing severe dangers to the community and interfering with the peace, quiet, enjoyment and safety of members of the community.

For all of that the Minister of Justice and now Public Safety is not willing, it would appear, to share with the members of the general public information which would let us know to what extent his Ministry is making an attack and waging a war on crime and discuss with Members of Parliament possible strategies to deal with this spiralling incidence of criminality. This is the single most important issue in Barbados. It was the single most important issue in January 1991 when we fought the last General Election. This Party treated it as of such importance that, we made it the lead in our 1991 Manifesto.

I have got the impression that the Government has an attitude that there is nothing they can do to reduce the incidence of crime and they are offering little palliatives, from time to time, such as the recruitment of special constables. For 18 months I kept quiet and refused to disclose to this country the fact that in November and December 1991 there were as few as 48 policemen on duty, any one night, in the whole of Barbados out of a total complement of 1 200 policemen. That was a disgrace. Forty-eight out of 1 200 on duty in the whole of Barbados, November, December 1991. I did not feel in January 1992 that I could any longer camouflage from the public of Barbados what was the true state of police activity in Barbados at night. I had to make the disclosure. For a long time I sat on it because it may have given comfort to the criminal element.

But I want the Minister to let us know today whether that circumstance has improved and if there are now more policemen on duty in Barbados at night than there were in November and December 1991. It is important, Sir, because every 6 months the Commissioner of Police makes a call for more men. The Leader of another Party has suggested that the Force should be given more men. We on this side have been reluctant to concede that there is a need for an increase in the police establishment unless we are satisfied that the present and existing members of the Force are properly deployed to give surveillance to the whole country, and that it has been shown methodically and statistically that there are not enough men from the present establishment properly to police Barbados. 12.40 p.m.

Let us assume that we give the police another 150 men. Can we be guaranteed that that will substantially improve the quality of surveillance, especially at night, in Barbados? If just a year and a half ago you could only have 48 out of 1 200, and we give you another 150, making it 1 350, how many of them are you going to add to the 48? If you say add even another 48, would we be satisfied as a country to have 96 policemen on duty at night in the whole of Barbados out of 1 350?

What I am submitting, Sir, is that the essential problem with the Police Force is one of management and deployment of existing resources. There must be some means of getting more policemen out on duty at night than less than 100 out of 1 200. It is as simple as that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can the Honourable Member conclude in 2 minutes?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will conclude this part in 2 minutes, but you are going to have me like a jack-in-the-box every 15 minutes, because I have a lot to say on this, Sir. So for Round 1 I wish the Minister, now he is making his notes, to let us know if he is satisfied that the island is better policed at night at the moment, if any plans have been developed since December 1991, and also, if there are any plans to enhance the quality of policing, especially at night, in this year, Sir. I will take my seat for Round 1.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, the issue of the maintenance of law and order in this community is one of prime national significance. It is important for the well-being of our people, it is important, too, for the economy of the country. Not only should fellow Barbadians feel that Barbados is a safe and secure home for them, but all those who visit our shores, all of our tourists, should be made to feel at home in our midst.

Sir, it matters not whether the Government has a stabilisation emphasis or a developmental emphasis, the first priority of Government must be to make Barbados a safe and secure place for all those who live within our midst, whether fellow Barbadians, fellow citizens or visitors. To that extent it is disappointing that the Minister, in addressing this important issue, should not have treated Parliament, and through Parliament the people of Barbados, to a fuller statement as to what is the state of affairs with respect to crime in the country and what precisely the Government is doing through its principal organ, the Police Force, in order to combat this crime.

I think we must be careful, Mr. Chairman, not to be too superficial in our analysis of this matter and not to consume ourselves in the discussion about ways of combatting without appreciating that the root cause of this new outbreak of criminality has to do with the state of the economy. You cannot have a quarter of your working population unemployed, with no hope of soon employment, and with the circle of despair in the country widening on an ever increasing basis, and yet have our young people not resorting to robbery and to theft and fraud in its many guises in order to make a living.

So we must not leave this debate unless we put the blame for this outbreak of criminality where it belongs. It has to do with the mismanagement of this economy, with the fact that more and more people are unemployed, that more and more properties are on the verge of bankruptcy and are going into bankruptcy, and that even though the Leader of the Government is saying that there is light at the end of the tunnel, we are met with increasing layoffs even as the new year opens up. That is the setting in which this problem must be addressed, and we have to recognise that the root cause of the problem has to do with the worsening of the economy and the fact that so many of our people are out of work and have no hope, under this administration, of returning to work. That point has to be made before we leave this debate.

I want to deal with* a few issues relating to the Police Force itself. In recent times we have been told that the Police Force needs more sophisticated equipment and attempts have been made by successive Governments to improve the level of technology in the Police Force, but the constant cry from the Force itself and from many people who address this issue publicly is that the Police Force needs more numbers. We were told that in the days when the Barbados Labour Party was in office, and indeed we increased the Force by 350. That is a significant increase that represented nearly 35% to 40% at the time, and yet we are told all the time that the answer is more men, much more manpower and that the problem will be solved. I reject that, I do not believe it. I do not believe that if we had 2 000 men in the Police Force we would be any better, because until the Police Force repairs its relationship with the public of Barbados they will never have enough eyes to know what is going on in the country.

I do not want to make any blanket condemnation of them, because they are like the Curate's egg, they are good in parts, like so much else in life. There are men of outstanding integrity in the Royal Barbados Police Force. 12.50 p.m.

There are men of great courtesy and good PR. I know some of them. It has been my privilege to relate to some of them on a working basis for 20 years or more. I know that there is a lot of crudity in their ranks. I

know that there is a lot of brutality in their ranks. Until that is significantly corrected, the general public will not confide in the Police Force and give them the information which they need in order to combat this outbreak of growing criminality in the country.

To a large extent, the problem is within and has to do in part with their poor relationship with the public of Barbados. The point made by the Honourable Member *for* St. Thomas also needs restating. Part of the problem has to do with the inadequate deployment of its manpower and connected to that is a problem of very poor morale in the Force. It is not widely known and I do not think it is a matter that ought to be kept a secret that there was a time last year, for example, when the sick-outs were so high that you had 2 and 3 people manning a station some nights. There were dozens of people sicking out on a continual basis. That information was concealed from the public of Barbados, perhaps for good reason, but it is a state of affairs which we as a Parliament need to know about and talk about. The problem of sick-outs in the Police Force is a major one. I see the Minister of Health looking in my direction and I repeat here what I said long ago, that it is a major problem among the nurses too at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital; but I know he has denied that. I do not know why people in public life think they have to hide the facts. It is perhaps not their fault

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. The Honourable Member mentioned the Minister of Health and says I have denied something. Can the Honourable Member stay away from including the nurses. If he is cursing the police, curse the police.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: There is no question of cursing, Mr. Chairman. We are not involved in cursing in this Parliament. I am surprised that the Member has been allowed to get away with that I was only reminding the Member by the way that it relates to his area of operation too. The problem I was addressing is one of morale. I think that the Minister of Finance who has to be concerned with meeting that bill of more manpower must ask whether he does not think, concerning the same Commissioner of Police who is repeatedly quoted in public as calling for more and more that the problem is partly a problem within his own ranks and must ask him what is he doing to improve the morale of the Police Force, to make sure that people attend their duties with much more frequency and also that this problem of sick-outs and morale is addressed.

I would like the Minister responsible to tell us whether the Defence Force is still supplementing the ranks and the duties of the Police Force, because there was a big debate on the call-in programme many months ago as to whether that should be permitted in the country. My understanding was, and I am happy to be corrected if I am wrong, that the Government was drawing on the resources of the Defence Force to assist the Police Force in patrol duty. If, indeed, that is still happening I would like to know precisely how many members of the Defence Force are involved. Even though we are now seeking to raise \$450 000 to put at the disposal of Government to pay for special constables I would like to know whether these special constables have already been at work. If so, what exactly is the size of the Royal Barbados Police Force including special constables at this time?

Mr. Chairman, there are also other problems which we have to address which relate to our physical environment and make it easy for some of our wayward citizens to commit crimes, particularly crimes of violence against fellow citizens and visitors, such as robbery by day and night on the highway, and looking at the whole country, its physical infrastructure, including the fact that there has been insufficient attention paid to the need to ensure that grass is cut and that the place is properly debushed. In the last year or 2, the debushing to which we have become accustomed in Barbados has not been attended to at all and as a result...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not want you to drift too far into that area.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am making the point that if you have a general campaign of debushing...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am saying that we are dealing in this particular Resolution with provisions for the Police Force.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I appreciate your caution, Mr. Chairman, but the point that I seek to make is one of some relevance. If the environment is cleaner and safer, if there is less bush, there is less opportunity for people to conceal themselves. You may have less crimes of violence, daytime and nighttime robbery against fellow citizens and against visitors.

I can think of areas around Sunset Crest, for example. We have to pay attention to that because here is an area of Barbados where we have over 2 000 beds. That is an area where we have been having a high incidence of violence against visitors and against locals. There is need in that area for proper maintenance of the environment. There is need for continual debushing. I here respond to *sotto voce* comments. It has been a weakness of the Barbados Labour Party Administration and it continues to be a weakness of the Government of the day.

In Sunset Crest you have over 2 000 beds, over 150 Barbadians own houses in and live in Sunset Crest. The place is used by all fellow citizens for banking purposes, for recreation, for all sorts of purposes. The main road that goes to the St. James graveyard runs through Sunset Crest. You cannot ask the owners there to maintain the environment which is used by all Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member should conclude in 1 minute.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Though I would wish to come back and rejoin this debate as a continuum, I think the point has f<> be made that more and more attention needs to be paid to the physical environment to ensure that we do not have a situation where it is safe for people to hide #M pounce on visitors and fellow citizens alike.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I think at this point I would want to respond to some of the comments made by Members of the other side.

I get the impression from Members on the other side that crime is the business of the Police Force alone. It is everybody's business. Secondly, I want to say that there has been a lot of criticism of policemen. The policeman cannot be better than the society from which he comes. I think that we think that there are special people out there in Barbados who are designed to be policemen. If the policemen are bad, according to the other side, the society is bad. We can only select people for the Police Force from Barbadians, unless we import policemen. '

We seem to think that when we run down the Police Force we are achieving a lot. Then in a backhand way we say some are good. When we say some are good, does that mean the majority are bad? I have been around the Police Force all my life. I am a son of a policeman, and have lived in police stations. The policeman is no better or no worse than the lawyer, the doctor, the civil 'servant, the nurse, the teacher or anybody else. If you want to whip a member of the Police Force, do that! But do not come in a general way and try to criticise the whole Police Force and make us believe that... 1.00 p.m.

We have one of the best police forces in the world. When we look at what is happening in police forces, we should be thankful we have a police force like this one in Barbados. But we continue to whip them. We are the leaders. We expect them to be motivated. We expect the morale to be high but when we get an opportunity we lash them.

As far as the numbers go, the policeman today has many more functions to perform than 10 or 20 years ago. One thing we have noticed, and it probably came up when you were in office as well, is that for domestic disputes alone, from which you hardly have any charges because of the nature of the thing, policemen are called out on a nightly basis, not only once or twice, to deal with such disputes to the extent that we had to introduce a course at the Regional Police Training Centre on how to train policemen to deal with domestic disputes.

The Honourable Member spoke about the deployment of policemen. Nobody has mentioned the workload which has increased, as though the workload has decreased or remained at the same and, therefore, there is no more police duty. At a casual glance, you yourselves have said there is more

crime but I am not saying because there is more crime we should have 500 more policemen but, for sure, I think there is need for more policemen. We have more people in the Island. We have private security firms but they are not properly trained either. Even the hotels will tell you when something happens there they call the police although they have private security firms. The workload has increased. I think we must understand that.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph said that crime has increased because of unemployment and despair. Of course, he has never heard about drugs because when I compare the types of crime we are having in Barbados with all other parts of the Western Hemisphere I am seeing the same trend, an increase in drug abuse and an increase in violent crimes, but he has not mentioned that

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Oh, you have not got to everything yet but do not just mention one thing and forget the others. Crime seems to be rapidly on the increase. I have had the good fortune of just attending a meeting of law enforcement agencies in Mississippi and there must have been about 70 police forces from across America there. They have reported the same thing, the rapid increase in crime and what can be done. I do not want you to think that Barbados is isolated in this.

Last week there was a report from the Cayman Islands in which house breakings had gone up 3373% in a month. Today's news is about the Bahamas. I came back from St. Vincent about 2 weeks ago and there and in St. Lucia and in all of these places crime has increased dramatically. I do not want you to think that Barbados is the only place in which, according to the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, there is high unemployment and therefore more crime. We are not isolated in this and the Police Force has to grapple with this.

We have a serious problem of drug addiction. To my mind this is at the root of a lot of the problems. If you look at the nature of the crimes, the snatchings, aggravated robberies and I just asked for some statistics here and in November over October for robberies there has been a reduction of about 25%. I would like to think it is because of the fact that the police are arresting those who commit the offences. I want to thank the police for that and for their presence in the areas. Rather than be critical of the Police Force, I think we should encourage them. They are going into a new era of crime which they are unaccustomed to.

Again, I heard the Honourable Member for St. Thomas talking about the breakdown in law and order. It seems to be coming through that the police are doing nothing. The Police Force is not the only agency in the country dealing with law and order.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I am not going to allow the Minister to misrepresent my speech as he has done that of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You heard it, Sir. You heard what he said. I leave it to you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas said that there is a breakdown in law and order. I said that the Police Force is not the only agency responsible for law and order in this country and that there are other agencies that must complement the Police Force. It could be the parents, the school and even lawyers. It is not only the Police Force.

It is not true to say that at any time there are only 48 policemen on duty at night in Barbados, There are more than 48. I have heard the Honourable Member for St. Thomas say 84 already.

Asides.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am grateful to the Honourable Minister, Sir. I think on the television programme we did say it was 84. Did I say 48, Sir? The 4 and 8 were transposed. Kindly have the record corrected to read 84 and not 48. It is 84.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: The Honourable Member for St. Joseph asked about the joint patrols. The joint patrols are not now in operation. They were phased out by the end of October. They have been successful in that some of the drug busts were as a result of joint patrols. The presence of security services, I think, deterred people from committing crime, if we look at it from that point of view. The question of the size of the Police Force: it is now 1 250 plus 60 special constables. I indicated that Part XII of the Police Act would give all the information on how the special constables are supposed to operate. They are police officers and they operate as police officers with the same powers. The question of Sunset Crest. I want to come to this because I have had some representation from Sunset Crest owners. The problem with Sunset Crest is how it really started. I think the Honourable Member for St. Joseph knows that Sunset Crest really started as a private development. Once you start on a bad footing it is difficult to get on the correct footing. They had their own lighting and roads. When they realised they could no longer pay the lighting they asked Government then to pay the lighting. Now they realise they cannot repair the roads they want Government to do it. The point I am making is they started as a private development from which they wanted to exclude certain people. Now they are finding it difficult to maintain the roads and the lighting, they want Government to come in when it is going to be highly expensive to do all the remedial work. I have had discussions with them. Government, I understand, has turned back on half of the lights to assist them. If you drive through Sunset Crest at night you will find the houses have few or no security lights themselves. This is a problem. They have visitor accommodation there. The security at the accommodation is very poor. I do not want to identify any particular area or hotel. 1.10 p.m.

But I have had discussions with the hoteliers because, as you know, I am from the area and I grew up in the area. I know the area very well. I can advise them, but they have got to help themselves. They cannot on the one hand expect to have a private development and when it suits them say: "Okay, it is a public development and Government must help." That is the problem with Sunset Crest. Until they understand what they have to do... I can remember an occasion on which we wanted to detour a bus through Sunset Crest, because something was happening on Highway 1 and they said, "No. No way." They said, "This is a private development." It happened 3 or 4 years ago. Today they are asking that Government repair the roads, put in lights for them and provide security for them. Sunset Crest is the one area that attracts more police presence than any other area in Barbados, especially by night.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member should conclude in 2 minutes. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, once again the Minister's intervention has been remarkable for its emptiness. Now, Sir, the Minister has told us that there is a need for more policemen. He has confessed that we are trying to ask the Minister: since you recognize there is a need for more policemen, tell us by how many you intend to increase the establishment so that we will have ample coverage for Barbados. He has not condescended to tell us what he thinks is an ideal, optimum number for the establishment of the Royal Barbados Police Force. That is the issue, Sir.

The NDP is saying they want more policemen. We have said that we increased the Force from 850 to 1 200 by the time we demitted office in 1986. The Commissioner of Police says he needs more men. The Minister has not told us what his studies, if any, have revealed would be an optimum number for the establishment of the Police Force. I would wish when he intervenes again, in response to matters raised on this side, for him to tell us so that we can establish some basis for looking at this matter on an informed statistical basis.

He said, secondly, that the principal reason for the increase in criminal activity is the proliferation of drugs. He did not put it in that language. He put it in less elegant language and I was paraphrasing it, I

thought fairly, because he said that a lot of certain types of crime are drug related. He said that that was the root of the problem. I made a note, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Part of it. If the drug problem is so serious in Barbados that it conduces to a proliferation of crime, then it seems to me that the Minister is indicting his own Government. Today it is not about whipping the Police Force as the Minister seemed to be attributing to the Honourable Member for St. Joseph. He was not whipping the Police. Today we have to whip the Government as the organization with the overall responsibility for policing. In their Manifesto of 1986 this is what they said:...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am bothering with it, Sir. Page 21 of the Manifesto: "A Democratic Labour Party Government will, with the help of all citizens who care for this country and its young people, wipe this loathsome scourge from the lives of all Barbadians. That is our solemn pledge." It is still the pledge and it has...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: - Page 21 - ...got worse. It is an admission of the failure of the policies of the Government for the Minister to come in here and confess that, 6 years after the publication of this Manifesto, drugs still remain a principal cause of criminality in Barbados. It is an admission of failure when the Government had to involve the Defence Force in joint operations with a view to the reduction of crime. It was saying to the public of Barbados: "we have a Police Force that is not capable or competent enough to deal with the crime situation in Barbados on its own, we have to import help." So you import the Defence Force in joint patrols. That decision to operate joint patrols must be seen as an admission of the failure of the policies of the Government and the Police Force adequately to control crime in Barbados. Now they have abandoned the Defence Force. You are going to bring 60 special constables to top up the numbers of people who are providing policing functions in Barbados.

What we want to hear, Sir, is how the Minister envisages that these 60 special constables will function. They have increased the Police Force, in 6 years, by 50.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not going to respond to that now, Sir. They are now bringing an additional 60 special constables. For example, will the special constables be used to assist in policing functions on the beaches? Will the special constables be used to do what the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has advised us earlier today, static duties, guard duties? Will they be used instead of policemen at the airport putting parking tickets on people's cars? Will they be used up there to control the movement of traffic? Will they be used in the bus stands, the bus terminals to keep order in the bus terminals? How will they be deployed? That is what we want to know. I think we are entitled to the information because we are being asked to vote \$450 000 to pay these people to the end of March this year.

When I addressed the Constables Association last summer at Ellerslie School I found among the constables a willingness to be involved in protecting the society, a genuine desire to help, but I found that they thought there was a lack of appreciation of their work. They certainly felt that the Police Force did not take kindly to them and did not want them involved - these are the Island Constables. 1.20 p.m. The police did not want them involved and used to brush them aside, but I am glad that the Minister has responded in this fashion to make a start by integrating some of the Island Constables in policing duties. As I said, we want to know how they are going to be integrated, because we have taken a lot of steps over the

years. We have relieved the Police Force of a number of duties, immigration, licensing, all of that, and this Government within the last couple of years, when the Attorney General had the responsibility, started the process of civilization of the Force. We have been doing a lot of that I feel that both parties have tried to meet the concerns of the Police Force, but I note that the Minister has carefully eschewed giving a response - if for security purposes I understand -but he has not given me any comfort as to how better policed Barbados was at night in 1992, compared with November and December 1991.

Mr. Chairman, I am not going to offer any explanation for the increase in crime. I cannot. It would be unscientific to attribute any one explanation to all the crime there is in Barbados, but it is clear from empirical evidence, from talking to young people about their problems and so on, certainly in my constituency, that what the Honourable Member for St Joseph said has some real validity, that the high level of unemployment is a factor -and I do not want to misquote him - that is predisposing people to criminality in Barbados. I am not saying it is the only cause. Drugs may be a cause, lack of parental control may be a cause, all these may come together and produce a criminal at the end of the day, but the sense of hopelessness, frustration and despair that inheres in a large proportion of today's youth is driving them to criminality, Sir, and the need for money as well.

I will give you 2 instances that happened over the weekend. In my little area at Neils, since last week Tuesday there was a prowler in that area. On the weekend he went to one of the neighbours, he reached into a lady's handbag in a bedroom, took the handbag out and ran I would have thought very nearly 400 yards, from a dark area. The Honourable Member for St Joseph talked about hiding in bushes, but today's criminals do not hide in bushes, they attack at any time in broad daylight. They robbed the Wildey gas station at 5 o'clock on a Saturday afternoon. He left that neighbour's house, ran across to another house where there were security lights playing on the lawn, he opened the handbag... well, this is a reconstruction, because the handbag was found on the lawn of the neighbour with an ID card strewn on the lawn, and all that was taken from the handbag was \$85 the lady had in the handbag. He left there and came to my house and he stole the maid's slippers and the gardener's shirt and pants and then left his mark. He took 2 shaddocks that were not ripe, ate them and scattered the peel all over my lawn.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That was n& monkey.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Those who took my lawn mower and safe got 10 years apiece.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph made a very important point and I want the Minister of Finance to pay attention, to listen, to hear. It impacts on the Ministry of Finance.

As a Government, as a country, we are promoting Barbados as a tourist destination. It serves our economic interest to have more and more tourists coming to Barbados, but surely we are not going to achieve the level of visitors that would significantly impact positively on the economy unless we do 2 things, Sir.

One, control crime. We cannot eradicate crime, no country can. Barbados is not singular. I agree with the Minister that all countries have shown a relentless upsurge, a relentless spiral in levels of crime, so all we can do is to try and control it to manageable proportions, to render the country safe for those who live in it and those who visit it from time to time.

Secondly, you cannot tell tourists to come to Barbados and then offer them an untidy environment which not only assists the criminal to some extent, say, out in Hackleton's Cliff and other country areas. It has another feature, for all over the country districts, my constituency* St. George, St. Joseph, St. Andrew, we are now seeing an overgrowth of bush that makes the environment less than attractive, certainly unaesthetic and thoroughly untidy, and that in itself will defeat the positive desire that we have for people to visit Barbados.

The problem has been that since we are in an IMF programme the Government has been forced to cut back on those workers in NCC and MTW who would, in the ordinary course of things, have kept those districts.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We have to find some mechanism for ensuring, if tourism is our goal, if we are to

succeed in making tourism profitable, that we must not only reduce crime, Sir, but also convince the IMF or whoever is doing the dictation to Government, that we will be spitting in our faces if we do not have some ease that allows us to employ the persons who will keep this environment clean and tidy and make it attractive for people to come, for otherwise we are wasting time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And time has expired.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have sympathy with the Government. They are in a box of bricks of their own making.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDDFORD: Mr. Chairman, I think the second address by the Member for St. Thomas has brought back a little balance to the debate after his first intervention. He asked me to listen very carefully. I listened very carefully not only to his address but also to the addresses of other Honourable Members who have spoken.

This Resolution before us is indeed an indication of the intention, pledge and commitment of the Government to seek to deal with what is admittedly a social problem of dimensions which we would not wish to exist in our country. Crime exists in all countries. It is a problem which all countries are being faced with because there is an escalation of criminal activity, of disrespect for law and order and the social norms which should govern the society. The most we can do is to seek to control and deal with those who break the law. Secondly, we have to take steps to ensure that broad measures and programmes are put in place to change attitudes and ideas as far as social behaviour and particularly deviant behaviour are concerned. This is what this Resolution is about. 1.30 p.m.

It is not about running down the country, running down the Police Force nor running down the Government. What as a people we have to be concerned about is that we put in place those measures that will help to deal with the problem, not seeking to apportion blame, not seeking to squeeze some kind of political capital out of a social problem.

Amidst all in this situation, Barbados remains one of the safest destinations for persons to visit. What we are seeking to provide by this Resolution are additional resources for the law enforcing agencies to deal with the situation. As a Government we can put the resources, human and physical, at the disposal of the expert agencies. I really will not question the numbers given by the Member for St. Thomas. I think he corrected himself when he said not 48, but 84. I wonder if the number were 60 what he would have said. He would just invert the number and get 06 or something like that.

The question of the deployment of resources available is a major matter of concern. I know that it is a matter of concern to the Police Force itself. They are the experts to determine how people should be deployed and when they should be deployed but if the numbers that the Member is giving are correct then it would be a matter of concern as to why out of that total you can only have that number allocated in the night. We cannot run away from it. We have to face it.

I have pointed out already that since 1988 we have provided over 102 vehicles to the Royal Barbados Police Force. What we have to ensure is that these physical resources as well as the human resources are deployed and utilised in the most efficient and effective manner. There is no point just saying this is a problem and we have to do something about it. Let us be constructive. The criminologists are not agreed that there is one causation for crime. There is a variety of factors. High crime has also been associated with high levels of employment. Sometimes when we speak we seem to want to blame everybody except those who commit criminal acts.

I do not believe that poverty is any reason why one must break the law. I do not believe so and I will not hesitate to say so. I believe that we must develop a code of behaviour which will ensure that, whatever our particular economic or social circumstances, we behave in a manner that is consonant with the best forms of social conduct.

For those who go around blaming poverty or blaming unemployment, I think it would be better if they seek to encourage persons to live within the framework of the law. I am satisfied that if the Member *for* St. Thomas were not as wealthy as he is, he would not commit..

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I wish the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister would state what is his criterion for the judgment of wealth. I always say I am poor, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I think the time at my disposal will not permit me to go into all the forms of wealth that the Honourable Member has been able to amass during his lifetime. I will just mention in passing a substantial edifice in one of the richest districts in Barbados, at Neils in St. Michael. He is a substantial owner of race horses.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is too early in the year, Sir, for the Prime Minister to mislead the House. I have my land tax bills and receipts here. The edifice has only an improved value of \$300 000. It is not as much as his. There is only 1 race horse.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would just like to remind Honourable Members that an interruption on a point of order does not stretch that far. It is briefly to state the Standing Order that has been breached. 1.40 p.m.

Rt. Hon. L. E. S ANDIFORD: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the situation is that no Government, and certainly not the Government of Barbados, has access to unlimited funds to deal with this or other problems. We have to operate within the framework of available resources. Were we as rich as Croesus, perhaps we could provide all the vehicles requested, all the men requested and all of the facilities that are requested. But, Sir, we would only do so if there were a sword of Damocles hanging over our heads.

We have to be realistic. Resources are limited and we have to provide those fundamental requirements of a modern society which remain the provision of law and order and the protection of the lives and property of our citizens and our visitors. That is what this Resolution is all about. If we do not have the resources to provide additional men in the numbers required, we have to utilise available resources. That is why from time to time, at the request of the Royal Barbados Police Force, we may deploy the forces of the Defence Force under the appropriate legal instruments. That is not operating in this case.

There are no joint patrols. As the Minister of Justice and Public Safety indicated, that has come to an end. What happens is that the Defence Force continues its training exercise and may train in various areas as part of their own regular operation and training procedures, but there is no deployment of the Defence Force at this time. We will not hesitate within the framework of our laws to utilise all resources available, including the Defence Force, if it means protection of the lives and property of individuals and a heightened sense of social comfort in this country.

I would hope we would not seek to run down our country or give the impression that we are running down our country. It is quite easy to talk in dual terms and not exactly say that but that might be the effect. I hope we never reach that stage in here, Sir. I am not accusing any Honourable Members of speaking that way. What I am saying is we must seek to avoid it and, as we approach this particular problem, we consider that this is a statement of intention to have a strong regime of law and order in this country and to ensure that it remains one of the safest destinations for visitors to come to and in which our own people can achieve their goals and objectives in life.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, any measure brought before this Honourable Chamber to deal with any matters or solution to the crime situation in Barbados would have my full support I am very worried as we enter 1993 that a lot of things which have gone on in the past tend to continue to rear their ugly heads. I have heard repeated calls for more policemen, computers for the police and other things to deal with the escalation of crime.

I have listened quite attentively to the Honourable Prime Minister and he repeated what I feel is a step in the right direction, but there are some omissions. He pointed to measures and said that this was but one of the measures put in place to tackle crime, but although this is but one measure, providing additional constables to assist the Royal Barbados Police Force, I feel there are other important measures to be taken at the same time as we seek to strengthen the hands of the law in dealing with the crime situation.

I want Members of this Honourable Chamber to understand that I am not part of an Opposition that is prepared to run down this country or criticise the Police Force unfairly and unjustly, but I am not afraid to say that any criticism coming from this side, or from me surely, must be seen as constructive criticism. That is what the Royal Barbados Police Force or any organisation would have to understand. When the Opposition highlights certain criticisms of the Force the intention is to let the Police Force know we are hearing things and we intend to draw them to their attention so that the powers that be can take corrective

measures. There is nothing wrong with that. We have the interest of this country at heart. We in Opposition are worried. We need to discuss the problem. It affects both Government and Opposition, everybody in this country. When we mention things like the environment, debushing, unemployment and jobs, we do this against the background that all of these things must be taken into consideration if we are going to deal with crime.

Mr. Chairman, it is no sense talking about strengthening the arm of the law to deal with crime now and at the same time not devising measures to prevent crime. I want to hear what measures are being taken. Government should have a programme to deal with these people who have been committing crimes. It bothers me when I see daily reports from the Courts on young people under the age of 25. Most of the crime reported is done by persons within the age group between 18 and 25. I would want to see someone look into the situation, report on it and find out what is causing people within that age group to commit crimes. If you have to start with the educational system let us deal with it at that level, but something is wrong. I do not care what anybody tells me*. Nobody can convince me that having more people to enforce the law is going to reduce crime because you have other people out there sowing the seeds of crime and I want to get to the root of that and nip it in the bud.

I am calling on the Government to consider a training programme and to try to find out what relevant programmes are necessary to assist the youth so they could find jobs themselves. This Opposition is not asking the Government to find jobs. We understand the situation, but we want to make sure that programmes are put in place so that the young people desist from the use of drugs and committing violent and heinous crimes. That is what I am concerned about. It is a pity we have to come here at the first meeting in 1993 to deal with crime. It is a concern of all of us and that is why we have to get involved in this. 1.50 p.m.

This is not a matter for the lawyers or people who are versed in the legal profession. We have to understand it concerns every person in Barbados. Everybody must understand this. Some people speak on crime as though it is reserved for certain people. I have to be very worried about it. I have to be worried about my children, my grandchildren and the state of Barbados generally. That is why I say no debate on crime is going without my intervention because I am hearing a lot and seeing a lot. I am saying that the Government must consider, despite what the Government thinks, that if you are going to admit that joblessness has been one of the main factors contributing to crime then you have to devise a programme to tackle that. If you are saying there is something wrong with the religious aspect or the spiritual aspect in Barbados - we are hearing the churches - then let us address that. Do not let us say: leave it to the parents, to the Church, the politicians. It is time we stop talking and take this question of crime seriously. Everybody is throwing the blame at somebody else. When you go in the Church the priest throws it at the politicians. When you go somewhere else they throw it at the parents and say the parents are bad. They look at the children and say they are wild, they are on drugs, but nobody is taking time to get in there and try to understand from the people who are involved why things are happening.

Let me say this to you. We can come in here and pass laws. Pass all the laws and see if they are going to reduce the crime. They cannot. You are going to apprehend 1 or 2 persons. Let me just say something which has bothered me over the past couple of weeks. Only yesterday /Evening, when I got the Order Paper about this matter, something came to mind. I have been hearing reports from time to time, even in here I have seen reports documented. There has been an escalation or a decrease in crime.

Let me tell you something. I have never seen by how many persons crime was reduced. That is what I want to find out. That is very important, Mr. Chairman. You can smile about it, because I know that I have read papers where one person has committed 10 and 20 crimes and when the police apprehend that fellow they say they have solved 20 crimes, but there may be a lot of people out there who are committing crimes but cannot be apprehended and the most vicious. You reduce crime, you see the numbers down. That is just documentation but at the same time you have not reduced the number of criminal people out there in society. We have to look at that. Have we ever studied where the root is? There is a hive, a nest of criminals in Barbados. There has to be a nest, otherwise it cannot be spreading like that. Therefore I should like to know that the police are breaking into these nests and reporting so that we would be able to scatter them or deal with those persons. We have to understand that. You can deploy a million policemen and if you have people out there operating with

sophistication you are not going to deal with crime because you now have to think in terms of the sophistication, the sort of methods that people are using to commit crime and you have to arm the police with that sort of training. I have heard the Minister for Public Safety say this. You would increase the Police Force. I have heard the Commissioner of Police saying that he does not have enough manpower.

Whether or not there is the manpower, I am going to say this. It is the quality of manpower that you have rather than the amount of manpower. I do not want this argument and this foolishness that you want to increase the numbers. Let me hear that you deploy them properly. I want to know that you have got the right sort of technology at your disposal. I would encourage the Government. If the sort of computer the police have been requesting would assist them in detecting and reducing crime then I feel it would be money well spent. Go ahead and spend it, but do not sit down and tell me that you are going to shortchange the police on these things and expect them to deal with crime. Everybody knows that criminals are more sophisticated. I am going to say this. I would go for better training of the Police Force and all involved in law. I am going to recommend that Do not shortchange the Police on training. We are not dealing with some other form that you can reduce. We are dealing with a serious situation in Barbados, All of our livelihood, the future of Barbados, is on the line. Spend the money in that direction. Nobody at all in Barbados can oppose a Government that is dealing with that but, as I said, the money must be well spent. Do not be afraid to tell the public why it is being done because, if you spend the money you stand a chance of picking up the money through increased tourism. You do not shortchange on that. It is like shortchanging on advertisement and expecting to have the same sort of business or increased business. This is serious. We have to understand what we are doing. I do not want to criticize the policemen. I know there is a limit to asking them to get into all different areas. Everything that starts has to involve the police. Laws come in here to be changed and the police have got to be involved. You put a workload on them. They are human beings. Let us understand there is a limit. You have to carry out a study now to see how much is the impact on the policemen themselves and when they sick out, whether the sick out is as a result of the sort of impact of the work on the lives they have. These are things we have to understand. You hear that people snatch a bag and go before the court and you want to know why they are snatching. I might be tempted to think it is unemployment, but I know I agree with the Minister that it does not mean that because you are poor you have to be a criminal. That is -one thing I agree with him on.

I am saying this. I know that, at the same time, you have to put programmes in place because it is now more necessary than at any other time. I am going to say this, there is pressure at school too, pressure at the Community College and at the University. People are seeing it there. The young people who were not criminal minded have gone into crime. We have to deal with it. We are seeing it in the institutions. Having security guards will not be all, as I said. You have to train them.

The constables you are going to employ are not enough. I am saying Government is operating within a certain budget, but we have to understand it if we are going to deal with it seriously. I am going to ask the Minister responsible to go and consult with the Commissioner of Police and other authorities and find out what the minimum is because, as I said, there is some difference here as to how many policemen, how many law enforcers are necessary. I want to hear his comments on that. If there is anything then you would be able to supplement.

I am saying that we have to understand that this crime situation is not auguring well for Barbados. Sometimes people criticise the newspapers because they highlight crimes. After all, they do happen. You cannot hide things that are happening. We have to change our educational system and our approach to these matters.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Stop placing the blame on people.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I will continue next time.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that this sitting be suspended until 3:00 p.m. today.

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

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

RESUMPTION

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

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply is resumed. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a short intervention on this measure. Listening to the speeches from the other side I have formed the opinion that the Opposition does not believe that there should be an increase in the number of persons in the Police Force. One speaker, in modifying his position, dealt with the topic of the deployment of the existing members of the Force and, by inference, I got the impression that what he was saying was that if the present complement is better deployed, then he might be persuaded to agree with an increase in the Force.

It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that the Government, on the other hand, has decided and agreed that there is a necessity for an increase in the "Force". I am of the view as well that there is need for an increase in the Force. I believe that the level of criminal activity in this country demands that there is an increase of the Force, I agree also that the powers that be in the Royal Barbados Police Force will have to look at better deployment of these members. I think, though, that the fundamental question I need to address this afternoon, and that all of us need to address when we read this Addendum, is that since the Government obviously has determined that there should be an increase in the Force, the point which has to be looked at is the reason why the Government has gone the road of special constables as opposed to an increase in the establishment of the Force.

I do not know of any special conditions or special powers of the special constables. I believe that although it might be better economics, let me put it that way, to go the route of the special constables - because obviously you can accommodate more special constables for the amount of funds available than you can accommodate police constables, since the police constables are being paid at a special rate, whereas these special constables are being paid at Scale Z.38-20, I think. I wish to know - because I believe this matter would have had to engage the attention of Cabinet - what led the Government to decide on special constables as opposed to an increase in the Police Force itself.

As I said, Mr. Chairman, it appears to me that the available funds, including the Supplementary we have come for, would accommodate 60 special constables. I do not know how many police constables that amount of money would have accommodated, but one has to determine whether it was better to go with 60 special constables as opposed to 40 policemen. I think that has to be explained to us. The reason why I am asking this question is that I know for a fact that the decision is causing a bit of concern in the Police Force itself, because the Commissioner has been asking for a long time, and

many other people in the Police Force have been saying for a long time, that they are stretched out with the available manpower and that they need additional men.

There is also the criticism that when the special constables make an arrest they still have to report to the police, who then have to take the information and go and investigate. I am only saying what I have been told by the people who are themselves involved. I am not calling any names. The special constables have only been trained for 6 weeks, whereas a police constable is trained for 5 months, so there must be situations where the special constables will find themselves at a disadvantage and therefore the police will have to come in and take up the slack. I am wondering if, in a situation like this, we do not have to be very careful that we are not being penny wise and pound foolish. I am just putting out that suggestion.

My further question, Mr. Chairman, is this. I would like to know how long it is envisaged that you will need these special constables, because if the special constables are going to be needed for any length of time I personally would go for an increase in the Police Force, although that will mean you will have to use a lesser number of policemen than you would of special constables.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to know as well what advantages there are in using special constables as opposed to police constables. The decision, as I said, is not going down well in the Force itself, and what I am saying I know is true. I believe the Government needs to explain to this House, and maybe to the Police Force itself, what led to the decision to utilise special constables as opposed to policemen, having come to the conclusion that there was a need for extra manpower.

Mr. Chairman, I am not going to get into the argument about whether crime in this country is caused by unemployment or not. As I have said on many occasions, I am a practical person and I know that at any time persons find themselves without work, food and other basic necessities, there is a temptation to go into crime. I am not going to say that is the reason why there is this criminal activity in Barbados.

I should like to make one point, Mr. Chairman. My personal view is that we are never going to tackle this problem of criminal activity properly unless employment is found for those people who are unemployed. Do you see the angle I am coming from? I am not saying that the unemployment has caused it, but I do not believe you are going to get rid of it unless employment is found *for* some of that large number of persons who are unemployed.

I also want to touch briefly on the attitude of certain bleeding hearts in this community. If you increase the Police Force by another 1 000 people and the law is not carried out, then you are only spinning a top in mud. Let me state my views very clearly. I believe that if the law says that such and such is a penalty for such and such, it should be carried out I have always stood by that view. I also believe that in times like these, when criminal activity is at a level to which we are not accustomed, drastic times require drastic remedies. I recall in October or November last year reading in the *Time Magazine* about what was happening in Peru and it sounded like a carbon copy of what is happening in Barbados. Fujimori took certain measures in Peru. He recognised that the situation was drastic and that it needed drastic remedies. He increased the penalties for certain crimes, he increased the police powers. You see, Mr. Chairman, I stand by my conviction and, I said, there are a lot of bleeding hearts. I believe this is what is causing a lot of the criminal activity* in this country. Fujimori also decided that certain civil liberties should be suspended for the time being. Now, I am not recommending that... 3.15 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: I did not see the part about Parliament being dismissed but that came about as well.

The point I am trying to make, Mr. Chairman, is this. I personally believe that drastic situations require drastic remedies. I believe it is the different viewpoints going out from people in authority. Let us be frank. It is the different viewpoints going out from us in here, where some people are saying, "Well, I do not believe you can do this". Others are saying "Yes, you should do it". Someone says "You cannot do this". The criminal minded are getting conflicting signals. How do we solve the problem? If the situation, as we believe, has reached a level in Barbados we are not accustomed to,

therefore, the situation demands that certain things are done and certain penalties are increased, I believe we have to go that way.

I am of the view, Mr. Chairman, that there are not only bleeding hearts inside this Honourable Chamber but there are bleeding hearts outside. I believe if the penalty for committing wilful murder is hanging, those persons who have done it and exhausted all the avenues set out by law should be hanged. I have no doubt about that. That is what the law says. I do not believe that by hanging any person you are trying to stop someone else from committing murder. I believe the law says hanging is the penalty and by hanging the person, that is the penalty for committing wilful murder. Those persons who believe and come out and say that hanging is not going to stop people from committing murder, is not the point. Hanging was not put there to stop people from committing murder. My reading of the situation is that it was put on the statute book as a penalty for committing murder. That is my view.

I believe the Government, as I said when I started, will have to explain to us why it did take the decision to go with special constables as opposed to increasing the Police Force *per se*, as was recommended by the Commissioner of Police and other senior policemen. I think it will go a long way to, at least, soothe the discontent I know is simmering in certain sections of the Police Force.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I just thought I would respond to some of the comments made by the Honourable Members for St. Michael South East and St. Philip South. I think the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East in his contribution wanted to know what could be done to prevent people from committing crime, or those who have been convicted from committing it again, and the area of prevention. I think I should mention that those who find themselves in prison are less educated, without skills and who have been rejected by society. One of the functions of the prison system is to rehabilitate people. For a long time now the Prison authorities in Barbados have embarked upon educational studies in the hope of training people so that when they leave prison they can either be self-employed or at least be gainfully employed. It has been seen that when people take advantage of the opportunities for educating themselves in prison they might not go back in. The education system follows the same pattern of academic and skills training. What we have now is something called "Values Education Programme", to try to help them understand right from wrong etc. That is one area.

I would like to indicate too that we have a consultant who joined the Ministry on December 1 to look at juvenile justice. She will be there for 6 months initially. Funds are being provided by the National Children's Home of England. She is looking at how youngsters get involved in crime and how to handle them, etc. I was speaking to her this morning myself and she is on the road, to put it that way, trying to find out what is happening.

Tomorrow I believe the Crime and Harassment Committee should be meeting the youngsters from about 6 neighbourhoods. The areas in which we have the Committee of the Police Force are Haynesville, New Orleans, Deacons Farm, Gall Hill, the Pine and Eden

Lodge, again trying to find out why young people are becoming involved in the offences which they commit.

What I might say as well, looking at what has happened with the Barbados Youth Service is that a lot of youngsters are in need of discipline. The Youth Service has been able to recruit youngsters from those same areas mentioned who have been having the same problems. After a year we have seen a dramatic change in them. Whether or not we go that way, or how we go, might help to solve some of the problems. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South asked about the rationale for the special constables. It has been recognised for a long time that a lot of the duties performed by policemen could be performed by other people having similar authority, for example, driving Judges - I think I mentioned it - court orderlies, even working at football games, fairs and things that just need the presence of somebody in authority. There is not that need to have somebody so well trained as a police officer.

As a matter of fact, what I am finding in the Police Force is this, that the youngster who come? into the Police Force and who has a lot of certificates, finds it difficult even to patrol the streets. He believes that he should be involved in detecting or investigating sophisticated crime or the more difficult things. He does not want to report somebody for not having a bicycle light, or somebody for parking in the wrong place.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: There are things like patrolling the beaches and things like that. You do not need a person who is that well trained. The other advantage I mentioned of this programme is that when people go

through the special constables scheme they could easily be drafted into the Police Force as regulars because you can see over a period of time if a fellow is suitable. They have the same powers as a police officer. Really and truly they are police officers but a special branch of the Police Force.

It was the Commissioner of Police who asked for special constables. What he is looking at as well is a permanent cadre of special constables and a voluntary type of special constable. For example, there are times when people might not be working and who will come on for special occasions like Kadooment, which I think is our biggest festival here, for which we need more people. If you have extra people who are special constables but not involved permanently, in the same way in England or Canada where they have auxiliary policemen, auxiliary firemen, who are called out as and when required, they will be assigned to various duties. As I understand it, there will be 2 types of special constables, those who will be full time and those who will be called upon as and when required. Incidentally, the idea that they have to go to a policeman to report if they arrest somebody is not true. 3.25 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: We call them island constables but they are parish constables. The idea that they have to report to somebody else is no more so than the policeman who, when a case is reported to him for murder, calls in the special squad, or for a forgery and he calls in the fraud squad. They do that no more than the average police do, so I do not want anybody to think that because a person is a special constable every time he makes a case he has to look for another policeman to say "I am making a case, come over here and investigate"¹¹. They are trained to the level at which they are expected to operate. From my talking with the members of the Police Association I never got the impression that they objected to them, and we have discussed this at length. It is the Commissioner of Police who asked for them and I can understand his reasoning for asking for them. We have given him 60 and they, hopefully, will help to patrol the beaches and the streets in Bridgetown.

Thank you.

Mr. L. R. TOLL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, every time there is a debate on law and order or policing a number of hardy perennials keep coming up. One of the things everybody is agreed on, and therefore it requires very little debate in that area, is that the proliferation of crime in Barbados causes great problems to all Barbadians, regardless of their political allegiance. It does not matter whether people live in the well built up areas or the working class areas, whether there is a problem on the streets of Bridgetown or in the villages of the countryside, everybody is concerned about the amount of crime that is being committed in Barbados.

You get the feeling, Sir, that the more things change the more they remain the same. We have had a debate on crime in 1984 on a Resolution brought by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central, who was at that time shadowing the Ministry of Legal Affairs, and it is instructive to take a look at that particular debate. I am not going to waste time on the details, but I do know that the Government has now come around to Christian thinking in relation to these matters relating to crime, law and order and general policing of this country.

We have a Resolution today, Sir, dealing with the increase in personnel to assist the Police Force, and the Honourable Member for St. Philip South asked some very pertinent questions. The Minister of Justice and Public Safety in seeking to reply has really not given a sufficiently comprehensive answer as to satisfy all of us.

First of all, Sir, it is important to mention that the security personnel, civil security, has been increased quite significantly over the years. There were 883 policemen back in 1984 or somewhere around there, the numbers were increased to 1 200 before the Barbados Labour Party left the Government. There are also an additional 100 odd officers who were removed from the Immigration Department and from driving licences, clerical work and so on in the Police Department, and the numbers therefore in terms of real increase were something in excess of 450 bodies. In addition to that, Sir, in 1984, I think it was, the Private Investigators and Security Guards Act was passed and this clothed in legality a number of the people who before that did not have the full right to carry out many of the duties that are required by policemen in Barbados. A large corps of private security officers have developed in this country

who supplement and complement the work that is being done by the members of the Police Force in Barbados.

In addition to that, Sir, during the period 1982, 1983, 1984, around there, the Government also passed legislation giving authority to beach wardens and park wardens to carry out a lot of policing, both on the beaches and in the parks of Barbados. So in real numbers there has been the minimum of a doubling of security and policing personnel in Barbados during that period.

The question arises as to why more men. The Commissioner of Police is like Oliver Twist, always asking for more. This is not new. The Commissioner has seen the need for more men in Barbados, more officers in Barbados. For a number of years...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Why am I being heckled all the time by the Honourable Member for St Michael West?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. I am merely drawing to Your Honour's attention that he keeps talking about men, men, men and the Force comprises both men and women. I was not heckling him, Sir. I apologise.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The question arises, Sir, why more men. I know the Commissioner asks for more men all the time. I understand men to embrace women, so I do not need to get into that Why more men? A question was raised, I believe by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, today as to what is the rationale for the increase. I am asking this question of the Minister of Justice and Public Safety. What is the rationale that has been set out for the increase of men? The Honourable Member for St. Thomas asked a question related to that. What is the optimum number of policemen required for Barbados? None of these questions has been answered and it may be that if the Government gives another 100 or 200 or 300 police officers to the establishment, shortly after that there may be a call for more men again.

I am not at this stage, Mr. Chairman, being critical of anybody for asking, but certainly if we are to have debates that make sense - and a lot of us in here deal with these matters almost on a day-to-day basis - then we need to get some answers. I am not asking any answers from the Commissioner of Police or the Police Force, I am asking the questions of the Minister of Justice. I want to know what rationale has been set out for this kind of increase.

I want to deal also with another matter which I believe is very important in the overall context of these things. It is the question of training. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East has also made allusion to this. There is no doubt at all, and I am not going to join all these modern day pseudo social scientists who have all the answers to all the social problems in Barbados, I am not in that position, all I know is that there is an increase in crime and people may venture all sorts of reasons why there is, whether it is unemployment or the foreign media. I hear all sorts of things. I do not consider myself sufficiently competent to make an informed statement as to why there is a great deal of disillusionment or disorder or break down in discipline or increase in crime in Barbados. We all accept that there is, and it is the duty of the Government to provide the resources both in terms of men, as they are trying to do here today, and also other resources that come through training to deal with a new situation that has come on us fairly rapidly and is threatening the integrity of Barbados as a nation and as a people.

As the Honourable Minister said earlier in one of his contributions, it is only a microcosm of the society and that the police in Barbados can be no better than the people from among whom they spring. I do not agree with that, I believe that police must be very carefully selected from among the best this community has to offer. To say that they can be no better than the community from which they spring is to reduce the Police Force to the lowest common denominator in our society. I do not accept that. 3.35 p.m.

First of all, with respect to selection, Mr. Chairman, there has been a policy followed for many years in selection which is so random as to make us wonder whether this is being done by an organised Government. In this regard I am not talking about any DLP Government, I am talking about Government, because that started before them. In fact, it started before their first term in office. You became a

policeman, to a very large extent, by connections. If you had a relative who was a policeman, you would get into the Force. That kind of thing happens and I believe it needs to be changed. Not that if you are the son or the nephew of a policeman you should not go into the Police Force, but that there should be a predetermined set of criteria...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Minister of Justice says that is in it, as if he thinks I come from Botswana. I come from Barbados and I know what is going on here. There must be a predetermined set of criteria for us to know who is going to go into the Police Force and not what is your personal connection. I understand at one stage there used to do certain psychological tests. That was an innovation of more recent times and it is useful. Every time you make a criticism they say you criticise the Police Force, but if they say Tull criticised the Police Force, Tull criticised the Police Force, but the point is, Sir...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member knows the rules, Sir. There is nobody in here called Tull.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Who said it was anybody in here? Something seems to be wrong with the selection, because there are too many police officers who are turning out to be not the best people to be in the jobs. If that is a criticism, I now make the criticism. The Police Force, by any objective standards, is a good police force. They have a lot of able, hard working, dedicated policemen who I know, and any of us who knows them will say that, but there are also a lot of them that do no credit at all to the Police Force. It suggests to me, Mr. Chairman, that there is something wrong in the way people are being selected. The second thing is the question of training. Police have to deal with a different set of problems than they dealt with 20, 30, 40, 60 years ago and there must be a *pari passu* development of management, training and so on of the Police Force to keep up with the kind of problems which are confronting Barbados as a society today. I am not satisfied, whatever the Minister may say, because I have a schedule of the training, that the level of the training, the incidence of training and the specialised nature of training required for the management of a modern police force is being pursued with the kind of conscientiousness that is necessary at this stage. True, there is training, but there is nothing new in that. Back in 1983, when I had responsibility for the Police Force, half the Police Force was trained. One out of every 2 members of the Police Force had some sort of training during that year, so that is nothing new. I am not talking about training for the sake of training, or speaking just in terms of numbers. It is necessary for there to be a clear analysis of what we want to do with the Police Force, the areas where personnel need to be specially trained and to pursue it with a little bit more vigour than we have been doing in the past. Having said that, Sir, I want to deal with certain aspects...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In 2 minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: In 2 minutes? I have just started. Since I have only 2 minutes I will not go into a new area, I had better spend a few more minutes on this area of training.

We have had police officers trained with Scotland Yard, the FBI, in the Virgin Islands, in Canada, all over the place, and there is a lot and better local training at the Regional Police Training Centre in Barbados. When I speak of training to meet the new social realities of Barbados, one has, for instance, to spread training beyond merely aspects of policing, although that is important and I want to spend some more time on that when I speak again, but there needs to be more intense training of police officers to deal with people.

If there is one area where I believe a large number of police officers are somewhat not up to mark, it is in that area. From time to time some of us have to get in touch with police stations. If you telephone, or if you turn up in person, the attitude and the way in which you are treated by an occasional police officer, accompanied by the silence of those who perhaps do not behave the same way, suggests to me that we really have to do a lot more in training in human relations.

Sir, I have a lot more to say with relation to this matter, but as my time is up I will come back later in the debate.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I have just a few comments to make on this matter and they are by way of responding to a number of issues which have been raised and expressing my own viewpoint on a number

of them.

I believe it was the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, perhaps, who called on the Minister of Justice to indicate how many policemen can provide proper and adequate security for the country and raised the question on the optimum number of policemen which would be adequate for that purpose. I believe if we began to look at this issue precisely in terms of numbers we are going to run into all sorts of problems. Determining the optimum level is always going to be problematic. I have a particular point of view that you can have a massive number of policemen available and still the size of the Force cannot necessarily impact on reducing crime. 3.45 p.m.

Let us look for instance at what happens throughout the country. The police make the point from time to time that when they pursue criminals in one area and perhaps flood one area with police officers with a view to reducing crime in that area, then the criminals move somewhere else. There is a lot of praedial larceny in the country and drugs in various areas of the country. Can anybody tell me what would be the optimum number of policemen to deal with the problems of praedial larceny throughout the length and breadth of Barbados? How will you deal with that? It is no point just picking a number out of a hat and saying that is the right number. You cannot deal with that issue scientifically.

My viewpoint is that irrespective of how many policemen you have in this country you are not going to be able effectively from a purely police point of view to deal with problems like praedial larceny because you will be covering the length and breadth of Barbados and you cannot have policemen to police every single plantation and every single area which grows vegetables in this country.

Similarly in relation to other types of crime, the breakings-in into houses, the robberies and so forth, we are not going to be able to saturate every district effectively with police officers with a view to minimising crime. Looking at the issue from the perspective of pure numbers is not going to be a satisfactory way of desding with the issue.

What is necessary is to ensure that the Police Force is adequately mobile to move from area to area. In the old days, we knew what a good policeman on a motorcycle could do. Old Cyrus of fame had a reputation of being in several places at the same time. People used to think he was a phantom. There was an officer who was very mobile and could move quickly! It seems to me that some emphasis would have to be placed on this issue of the ability of the police officers to move quickly from place to place and to create fear in the minds of criminals. I have always made this point - that the best way of ensuring a reduction and minimising of crime is to create in the minds of criminals the fear and the assurance that they will be detected and that they will be punished.

If criminals can walk around and feel that they can get away with what they are doing then there is no incentive to abide by law and order irrespective of how many policemen you have. If criminals feel that they are going to get away with it, they will always make the effort and take the chance in getting away. What has to be done »is that in the mind of the criminal he must be assured and concerned that he would be caught and punished.

The whole attitude of the police officers to their work, the whole psyche of the policeman in the approach to his work is going to be important in creating this attitude of mind in the criminal. If the criminal feels that the policeman is not particularly concerned about catching him or if the criminal feels that the policeman is a discontented member of the community and is not really interested in pursuing and catching him then the criminal is not going to be particularly concerned about being afraid of being caught and punished. The attitude of the policeman apart from everything else has to be an important facto* in considering this whole aspect of how to deal with the problem of crime and to convince the criminal that crime does not pay.

The Honourable Member for St Philip South spoke about bleeding hearts who would not carry out the laws as they stand. There are different viewpoints on that matter. I am one who believes that punishment should be firm, that when people are caught and found guilty they should be punished. Let us not get into the hanging debates at this time. People who break into houses, who steal and snatch are not liable to hanging. Hanging is only limited to murder. The majority of crime taking place in the society does not attract the kind of punishment which the Honourable Member for St Philip South refers to. The majority of crime that is taking place and which is a serious cause of concern to so many people, local and tourists alike is not the type of crime that attracts the death penalty.

When you analyse the comments of a lot of the analysts on these issues they will tell you, and this is an attitude of mine, in major metropolitan countries that whenever there is an escalation of crime in any country and in any society the natural tendency -I am not saying this pejoratively, but from the point of

view of identifying approaches to issues - of those directly responsible for law and order and in the forefront of administration of law and order is to say that we do not have enough policemen, our police forces are not equipped well enough, punishments are not severe and the laws do not provide the structure for us to adequately deal with the problems of crime.

Writers all over the world have identified these as areas which are the natural reaction of the law enforcement agencies to problems of escalation of crime. When we look at it in proper perspective those are the responses which we hear need to be addressed here as well and when the voices which make those comments and make them often enough and are articulate then the ambience in the society is created where you say in essence that there must be more policemen and the laws must be changed and punishments must be more severe.

Inevitably the society is impelled in that direction and we are no different from any other society in the world. Britain's response in a number of areas was to enact the Police and Criminal Evidence Act which provided severely increased powers for the police in dealing with the issues of stopping of vehicles and searching. Our responses here have reacted in some ways, limited though they may be to those kinds of pressures. We have set about reforming the criminal law but not for that reason alone. The criminal law has been very archaic and in fact needed to be reformed. We did in fact set about a systematic reform of the criminal law providing for increased punishments. In the area of drugs, for instance, where drugs began to be a

serious problem in this country serious legislation was passed: The Proceedings of Crime Act providing (or forfeitures of the assets of convicted drug offenders; a new Drugs Prevention and Control Act was passed providing for very draconian penalties in a number of areas.

I mention those only to indicate that the call for more draconian legislation and the passage of more draconian legislation has not dealt with and cannot abate the problem of drugs in this country and yet the legislation is on the Statute Book. Other considerations have to be put in place. I have not said that to indicate that the legislation was not necessary. I do not want to be misunderstood on this. The Proceeds of Crime Act was necessary. 3.55 p.m.

The reform of the Drugs legislation was necessary. I support fully the provision of the special constables for the Police Force. I would even support more regular policemen once the funds are available because that does create in the mind of society some comfort that something is happening and will play some part in dealing with the problem of escalating crime. Certainly the fact that more special constables are being provided is part of the response to the persistent calls for more policemen. That aspect of the argument would be to that extent abated and one would be able to get on with the business of policing without having to call persistently and often for more men. I am sure this will not completely eliminate the calls for more people but it goes somewhere in creating what I think is a necessary indication to the public and to the Force that some response is being made.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: One minute.

Hon. M. A. KING: That is a convenient place at which to stop, Mr. Chairman. I want in another comment to address some aspects of the joint patrols and the role of the Defence Force and the whole problem with the maintenance of law and order.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I intervene in this debate to once again restate very clearly the position of the Opposition and the Barbados Labour Party on law enforcement. There are two Members in the debate so far who have used the opportunity in some respects to misrepresent the statements made on this side, particularly the opening statement made by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, on the attitude of some of the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force.

It was only a few months ago in my own constituency and indeed, a few weeks ago in this House, that I spoke very clearly and positively on the role which the Opposition and the support which the Opposition will give to any positive measures for ensuring that law and order is fully kept in this society. I went further and repeated and offer which the Opposition made 2 years ago almost to sit on a National Task Force to deal with the issue of crime.

The Honourable Member for St James South, the Honourable Minister of Justice and Public Safety, took us up on the offer. When this problem was building up we called very early on the side of the Opposition for a national approach on this issue. It is amazing how shortsighted the Government is and how short of memory sometimes the public is on matters of this nature. The Opposition has been

loud and clear for several years now on the need to ensure that the Police Force is adequately manned, deployed and equipped to deal with problems which we saw escalating.

Mr. Chairman, I must recall for the Government's benefit that in 1984/85 several members on the Government side did not take a supporting role in relation to the Labour Party Government dealing with the escalating problems that were coming from a crime wave all over the world. I recall in particular when we tried to deal with the issue of beach harassment, the issue was side-stepped and many members of the then Opposition, the now Government, used the occasion for suggesting that we only wanted to deal with this problem because of racial considerations.

I am very pleased in a way to see the Government, now that they have responsibility, is taking a completely different attitude on issues such as these. But the Labour Party has never changed from enforcing the law in this country, from strengthening the criminal laws, or from providing additional resources for law and order. All of us on this side who were in Parliament at the time - 3 of us happened to have had responsibility for law and order, the Honourable Members for St George South, St. Thomas and myself - gave very strong support in Cabinet, Parliament and in public to upholding law and order and supporting the Police Force.

As a matter of fact, the point has already been made that the substantial increase in manpower occurred during our term in office both in additional manpower and in reducing the workload of the police in some respects and helping us then to reduce the hours from 86 hours per week, or more than that, I am told. But we reduced it considerably down to 40 hours a week during our term of office. Sometimes when I hear talk hosts and other people talking about being soft on crime, including some Members of Parliament, I am amazed how shortsighted the Barbadian public is, and how shortsighted some people in public life happen to be on matters such as these.

In short, Sir, the suggestion by the Honourable Member for St. James South that any implied criticism was being made on the Force as a whole has been rebutted. But

I want to restate it. In any organisation there are bad and good apples. But you have to deal with the bad apples and you should not hide them. Certainly it does the Force no good if we pretend there are no internal problems within the Force. Those internal problems have manifested themselves in many ways. Sometimes it has manifested itself in some members of the Force going overboard and affecting fundamental rights. When it occurs we must tell them they are wrong. At other times it is manifested, if I may say so, in some members of the Force misunderstanding their primary duty. I have not always been satisfied that people who are on sick-out have been playing the game according to the rules. But we must say so. We have never hesitated in saying so.

We do support very strongly the Police Force when they carry out their duties according to the Laws of Barbados and in accordance with the best principles of policing. The Police Force can remain satisfied that when the Labour Party becomes the Government of this country again they will get the continuing strong support from our side they deserve both in their conditions of work, their recruitment, their training and in the carrying out of their duties.

Having said that, I do not think we should be mistaken in also giving the Government criticism when it deserves criticism. There are clear cases now where the Government has to be criticised for the manner in which it has dealt with some of the law and order problems in the society. I am not going to get into the several causes that have been attributed to crime. But it is a fact when unemployment is high one normally sees in a society an increase in criminality. That is so. 4.05 p.m.

I am going to deal with that too. We are in a terrible position in this country where one in every 4 working people are now out of work. Some people are tempted to misuse this position in order to commit crime, and I think the Prime Minister - he told me he had to go off, Sir, on some other duty - is very mistaken if he is going to use the analogy of poverty to say because you are poor you commit crime and when you are employed you should not commit crime. What I am suggesting, Sir, is that because we are in this drastic position of unemployment, we are having some people who are using the situation for ends that I do not, personally, and the Opposition does not support.

The Government will have to deal, and deal urgently, because it is the most pressing problem in this country, with the whole issue of getting people back to work, to create a condition and feeling in the country, an atmosphere that Barbados is going positively forward and not going backward.

Now, Sir, the Minister has come here and opened his statement by telling us that this year they are really not spending any more money. They are not. Let us face it. The Minister said the reason why he is not going to cost the Government any additional money in this financial year, because all he is doing is using \$900 000 that is being saved on statutory personal emoluments and shifting it to special constables. We could examine that statement, because once again I believe that that shows a fundamental weakness in the Government, and, I must say *for* the Minister in this case, in the Minister's own Ministry. How can the Minister explain to me that he is saving money because the number of policemen is not up to complement? He has a complement of 1 250 and he is not spending fully on that complement, so that what I am saying...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: That is how I interpret the Minister's statement. He must correct it

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. What I said was that the number of police officers who are on half pay, study, sick leave, suspension, when you multiply it, I think that down to about 20 at most. Then you have policemen going out on courses and you have to send them home sometimes. I think from the last course we had to send home 3 for various reasons. It is not that it is 50 less than we should have, but because of sick leave. There are policemen out there waiting 2 and 3 years on the Service Commission and the Commissioner of Police is asking that something be done about it

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Whatever the reasons, Sir, some of which are legitimate, I am saying there are other reasons why the Minister does not have his complement of policemen in place. I am asking him to tell us of the 1 250 permanent posts how many are filled, how many are unfilled and how many people on an average he is having on duty at any time. I am going to raise the matter in a practical manner, Sir, because I represent a constituency that depends very heavily on tourism.

Between the Garrison and Rendezvous and up to part of St. Lawrence on the seaside, which I represented, is basically a tourist area. I have had my constituency executive meet with me on the issue. In the area between the Garrison and Worthing View we have on an average, certainly it was so last year, about 2 crimes against visitors during the day on the street being committed. Not all are reported. The Honourable Member says no, Sir. That is what my constituents have reported. You go and see the harassment that takes place. The Honourable Member is saying it is not true, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute to conclude.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am sorry it is only one minute, Sir, but the position is that I must therefore be very concerned about the distribution of the Police Force in the areas of Hastings and Worthing View in particular, and the mobility being given to the Force.

I can speak from personal knowledge. I have gone through St. Lawrence on a couple of occasions to see the distribution of policemen, and I have talked to a policeman on the beat on the St. Lawrence road. Very often there is no backup nearby, and the Minister must realise that, that in those areas you must deploy more people on the beat so that their presence is felt and there must be adequate equipment so that people can respond properly. The Minister must know the problems we have had in areas like at Coconut Court. When you call you are not always getting a quick response. I am going to speak from knowledge. It is in my area and I walk around.

The Minister has tried to answer some of those problems.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am going to give the Honourable Member 2 more minutes to conclude, because that would be the final intervention.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Minister must also know that it is therefore necessary to have adequate equipment being given to the Police Force. The Prime Minister makes the point that from 1988 to now they have provided 102 or so vehicles. That is no big thing, Sir - that is 4 years at roughly 25 additional vehicles a year - with the type of challenge that is being given to the Police Force, when the Prime Minister knows that in this House prior to the last election I pointed out to him that he had only one vehicle at District "C" to serve St. Philip and St. John, and that when he went there a night the vehicle was broken down, they never answered the problem. This was on a Resolution that came in in the last Parliament to get some money from the Crown Agents to deal with the problem, so the Government has been delinquent in

answering the problems of equipment which was necessary to deal with some of the escalating issues that have arisen.

Lastly, Sir, since you said I have just a limited time, I want to reply on this question of drugs. The Government is hoisted on its own petard. This Government, when it was in Opposition in 1984-85, gave the impression that drugs were increasing in Barbados because people in the Barbados Labour Party had something to do with it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: All right, Sir. Just let me finish my sentence on this.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have already had extra time.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Government now is admitting that drugs have increased under them more than under us, and we are not going to be so uncharitable as they were to suggest that the causes for the increase in drug addiction and abuse are because they are dealing with it. The Government itself must respect the law, and if it stops breaking the Central Bank Act and all the laws, then you will find that the people will respect the laws too.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Mr. Chairman, Sir.,

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I can only accommodate, for the duration of this Resolution, one other intervention.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: I have not spoken yet. Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I just want to make my point clear. The debate must stop at 4.30.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: That is all right, Mr. Chairman. I just want to say, in answer to the Member *for* Christ Church West about the complement of the Police Force, we are 31 short and they are going up to training school on Monday. We will be up to scratch from Monday. Part of the problem, I believe, with the deployment of policemen in the Force was the fact that they went to 40 hours. It seems to me as though the Government of the day was not prepared for it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT rose.

Asides.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He spoke twice already, and in any case the Chairman catches the eye of the better looking person.

Mr. Chairman, this is an important debate. Whenever the question of crime is debated in our Chamber, it is an important debate, because crime is one of the fundamental issues that affect the individual in a society and in truth, Mr. Chairman, there really is no reason for Gbvemment, if it is not going to include as one of its priorities the protection of the citizen... Therefore, when the citizen perceives that crime is on the increase, the citizen becomes agitated and the whole society itself is threatened, so it is important that this Chamber should debate crime. 4.15 p.m.

It is also interesting the positions which respective Members of Parliament take on the crime issue, depending on where they sit, in the discussion at the particular time. When one is sitting in the Opposition, one tends to have a clearer and sharper view of the issues as perceived in relation to the Government. I think, therefore, that we on this side of the House in the Government cannot fail to recognise the views put forward by those on the other side. I say that in all seriousness because I think today - and my colleagues will not hold it against me if I say it - that apart from the very good points made by many 'Honourable Members, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East in his presentation made a number of points

which caused Members on both sides of the House to listen with rapt attention. This issue, therefore, is not something that can just be discussed and discarded, it is an ongoing issue which concerns every single person who lives in the society.

Now, Sir, if one is concerned about crime and one has the opportunity to observe what is happening elsewhere, one will note that the issues seem to take the same frame no matter where the discussion is occurring. If one is discussing Los Angeles, New York or London, there is still the question of those who are responsible for law and order at the implementation stage, that is to say the police especially, are always saying "we need more resources". You can listen to the Police Commissioner of Los Angeles when he was saying they do not have enough resources. You listen to the row between the Commissioner of Police in New York and Mayor Dinkins where they are quarrelling about whether the police have enough resources, and the society is saying you cannot see a policeman anywhere. In London I remember when Mrs. Thatcher was Prime Minister there was this raging debate about whether the Army should be allowed to participate in the preservation of law and order, debates which we are familiar with.

In that connection, Mr. Chairman, recently when the Americans put an advisory on Barbados, one of the issues which passed almost unnoticed is that there are 126 countries in the world which have advisories according to the United States. That was never recognised by anybody. It seemed as though Barbados had somehow been plucked and put into a special category. There are 165 countries in the world, but of those 126 had been given advisories by the United States. When Barbados got an advisory the newspapers in Barbados, the people in Barbados, the call-in programmes in Barbados did not focus on the fact that Barbados had finally reached the 126th country with an advisory, rather it seemed as though we had achieved some unique position, but an advisory by the United States only meant that the United States authorities had decided in their wisdom that they would advise their people about certain aspects of activity in Barbados, and the advisory was not entirely completely without its own political motivation.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You know I cannot translate that. You know what I mean, the Honourable Member was Minister of Foreign Affairs, so he understands exactly what I mean. That is not the debate, Sir, that will come at another time.

The point I am making, Sir, is that we have to be extremely careful that we do not shoot ourselves in the foot when we discuss our own crime situation. I recently heard on a call-in programme one of the distinguished call-in moderators - there is nothing moderate about that moderator - in which I heard an evangelist ignoring completely much of what has been debated in this Chamber today, in which he was saying that the problem with the police is that there are many policemen doing civil duties which ought to be done by civilians, *et cetera*. Mr. Chairman, in this debate today we heard that put to the sword. We heard that in fact, beginning with the Barbados Labour Party administration there has been a systematic civilianisation, we have been putting civilians to do a number of those works that can be done by civilians, but yet today, in 1993, we have the people of the country being misled, believing that we have a lot of big foot, ugly policemen doing duties that ought to be done by civilians, when that is simply not true.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member please observe the Standing Orders?

Eon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg you, Sir, do not admonish the Honourable Member. When the Honourable Member sees a good looking, young policeman and she says he is a good looking, young policeman, we have to take her word on this. If she sees him putting stickers on cars, I think that the Commissioner of Police should take account of the fact that the Member for the City feels that they can be better deployed. The fact is that there are no policemen at the airport putting stickers on any cars. They have people up there who deal with illegal parking who are not policemen. That is part of the propaganda machinery.

Asides.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Do not interrupt her, Sir. There may have been one or two, but that would be to give a wrong impression about what the Police Force does. The fact is that many of the policemen in this country are doing the kind of work they are entitled to do.

I wanted to address the issue of those police officers - there are not many women who do it - who have been reporting sick, who have been sick for a year, 2 years and that sort of thing. One of the problems which it was indicating was the absence of a Board. The Chief Medical Officer has now arranged for medical boards to be held for all of them, and it is my information that swift action has been taken, because I believe it is unfair for anyone to be sick in the Force for a year or a year and a half without any kind of determination. I believe it is unfair for any person in a disciplined force where persons depend upon one another in a team effort to be away for a year. 4.25 p.m.

There was another issue which had come up in relation to that. I wish to confirm that the Chief Medical Officer had instructions to interpret the medical board because there was some interpretation that a medical board had to be done by public officers who are medical officers. We included private practitioners so that they could do medical boards.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The time has expired for debate.

*The question that Head 28 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee of Supply and Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
On separate motions of Hon. N. K. SIMMONS seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.*

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am going to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, January 12, 1993 at 12 o'clock noon.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 4.30 p.m.

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