THE
House of Assembly Debates
(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 – 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, March 02, 1993

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met on 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. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B.(Hons.), (Minister of Health)
Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Q.C., B.A., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation and Leader of the House)
Hon. M. A. KING, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of Foreign Affairs)
Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P., (Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce)
Hon. N. K. SIMMONS, (Minister of Justice and Public Safety)
Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc. (Econ.)
Mr. O/S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.)
Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Q.C., LL.M.
Hon. C. V. WALKER, J.P., (Minister of Education)
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. TULL, Q.C., M.A.
Miss B. A. MILLER
Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW
Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc. (Econ.)
Mr. J. O. TUDOR
Mr. D. W. BOWEN, (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
Mr. G. W. PAYNE
Mr. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A., LL.B.

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session. Minutes of Tuesday, February 23, 1993.
Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I am moving that the Minutes of the meeting held in this Honourable Chamber on Tuesday, February 23,1993 which have been circulated be taken as read and confirmed.

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

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

PAPERS

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Estimates 1993-94.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I give notice, Mr. Speaker, of 2 Bills. They are the Employment Levy (Amendment) Bill and the second one is the Appropriation Bill, 1993.
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FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I move that the Employment Levy (Amendment) Bill, 1993 be read a first time.
Hon. B. M. TAUT: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I should have said that I would like to seek leave of the House to proceed with that particular Bill in all of its stages today. On the second Bill, I move that the Appropriation Bill, 1993 be read a first time.

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

The question that this Bill be read a first time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division
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Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, before this matter is voted on, there are some remarks that I would like to deliver myself in relation to this Appropriation Bill. Mr. Speaker, last year when I spoke on the Estimate debate I spoke under protest. I spoke under protest, Sir, because even while the Minister of Finance was speaking some 24 pages of amendments to the Estimates were passed over to the Opposition. I had to construct a second reading speech even while-1 was listening to the Minister of Finance introduce amendments which fundamentally alter the structure of the Estimates.
Mr. Speaker, this year it is proposed that there will be a drastic change in the manner in which the substantial economic debates before this House are addressed. I rise to bring to the attention of this House, Sir...

Mr. SPEAKER: I assume the Honourable Member is speaking under privilege.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Yes, Sir, on a point of privilege. These arrangements that are being made will, in my judgement, affect the functioning of the House and certainly will affect my capacity to speak on the issues on behalf of my constituency. Mr. Speaker, the Government has given notice of a first reading of the Appropriation Bill. During the course of next week, I am going to be expected to contribute to a discussion on the Appropriation Bill without having had access to the Approved Estimates of last year. This means that during the course of the week to come, Sir, I am going to have to examine 2 sets of Estimates in order to be able to debate. I want to make that point very clearly. The Approved Estimates differ so fundamentally from the Draft Estimates that one will have to go back and read the Approved Estimates to be able to compare sensibly what was done last year with what is proposed this year. It will affect my capacity to sensibly and constructively contribute to

the debate.

Mr. Speaker, also the Auditor General's Report for 1992-93 has not been made available to Members of this House. We are not in possession of the Auditor General's Report, Sir. I wish to bring to your attention -that the arrangements surrounding the manner in which the Appropriation Bill is supposed to be addressed this year are such as to seriously compromise our ability to participate in the debate. I fully support the notion that what has been traditionally the Estimates debate and the Budget debate should be one process. They are, in fact, one process. Sensible arrangements must be made to facilitate proper discussion by Members of the House in one process. I am saying to this House that those sensible arrangements have not been made. We do not have the Estimates from last year and we do not have the Auditor General's Report, Economic Report and Central Bank Report. We are in no position to proceed with one process. I am, therefore, asking your protection in this matter. In the absence of proper arrangements and proper documentation, Mr. Speaker, this Opposition will not be in a position to contribute to the debate as proposed.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would just like to say to the Honourable Member in the first instance that the Auditor General's Report has been received by myself and it is a document of this House. It may be another question wKy you do not have it, but it is a document of this House. 12.30 p.m.
The second query in relation to what the Honourable Member has said, I think over the years we have developed the convention of both sides sorting out their problems. The Standing Orders do not permit me to make decisions in certain areas, but I would wish that that kind of approach will continue, and if Honourable Members have any complaints they will use the facilities they normally used to sort them out It is only when Members' rights, in my opinion, have been breached by the absence of a Standing Order, or there is a Standing Order which is not clear, then I arn likely to make a decision on that matter. But I assume the regular channels will be in operation. The Honourable Member need not fear, I believe that will bring it to a very comfortable conclusion for all sides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I have listened very carefully. I wish to refer to the matter of the Appropriation Bill and in order to facilitate the House in doing its business I would wish, for the benefit of. Honourable Members, to indicate that I believe some 2 years ago, certainly last year, I did indicate that it would be desirable for the appropriation exercise as well as the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals to be part of

one and the same process. I think last week I raised the matter with the Leader of the House and I received a communication from the Leader of the House indicating basically that more time would be required to consider the matter. That was yesterday, Sir, and we on this side are prepared and ready, and will be proposing that the Appropriation Bill and the Estimates which come as a Schedule to that Bill would be discussed and determination on that Bill and the Estimates would be made by the House. I am proposing that that debate would take place next week Monday and would go for the following 4 days, as is customary. I further propose, Sir, th^t on the Monday following that the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals would be made.

I think that will resolve the matter. Let us not have differences over issues where we should not have to deal with any issues, but I agree and we will seek, through your good offices, to have a meeting perhaps of the Standing Orders Committee to determine these matters and how they should be structured. I think that would solve the problem.

Thank you.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege. The Committees of this House are not being used as they should be to make the necessary changes in the Standing Orders that are

required. That is part of the problem. We have a lot of time between the 1993 Budget and Estimates and the next year to attend to problems raised by the Honourable Member. There are changes that must be made in the way the House does its business. Since they affect all Members of Parliament it is important that the relevant Committees of Parliament should meet on the matter and agree on procedures that are acceptable to all Members of Parliament. Then the difficulties of which the Honourable Member for St Peter spoke would not be posed for us.
As you know, Sir, I exchanged some correspondence with you, as well as with the Right Honourable Prime Minister, on these matters and it is probably not necessary for me to refer to that correspondence, but I believe that all these difficulties can be solved; then neither side will feel in any way aggrieved or affected if the proper procedures are used, and used in time, and not at short notice and at the last moment.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the following Standing Orders be suspended - 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 - for the remainder of the day's sitting.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is-the instant order of the day.

ORDER NO. 11 - COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair. 12.40 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in committee.

HEAD 36 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution is seeking to supplement a number of subprograms in the Ministry of Health. The amounts required total $9.5 million under the various subprograms and a substantial part of the requirement has to deal with the National Insurance contributions. The National Insurance contributions were calculated on a particular basis when the Estimates were prepared and approved.

They have subsequently proved to be insufficient and on the direction of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and the Department responsible for National Insurance it has been determined that these should be set forth under the various Ministries. Hence, a substantial part of this allowance is to supplement the National Insurance contributions. This is required to meet the employers' contributions.

The 2 factors responsible for the short fall, according to the information, is that the Estimates originally submitted were reduced and this figure was inadvertently cut and also that the National Insurance contributions were increased with effect from October 1991 which would have been after the Appropriations Bill was passed.

I propose, so that there will be no difficulty, to give a broad picture of each Head so that I will then be

able to answer any questions that are raised.

Under New Polyclinics, Structures on Black Rock, there is an amount being asked for. Construction

started in 1989-90 at a contract price of $4.2 million. It was scheduled to be completed by December 15,1992. The decision to cut back on the amounts of money being spent over a period of time meant that the contractor has had to carry some costs through part of 1991 and all of 1992 and the polyclinic is now only going into its finishing stages. This means that the claim by the contractor for costs over and above the sum agreed upon in the contract has to be favourably looked at and is being considered by the Ministry. It can also be seen that over a period of time between 1990 and 1993 there is bound to be an overrun in a situation like that. So the economic situation has had an effect on this particular structure and so it is necessary as we come towards the completion of the project to seek a supplementary vote at this stage. I believe it is only fair that the contractor be given some consideration for costs which he incurred and which were in no way his responsibility. That is a matter that is being discussed between the 2 sides at the moment.

Nutrition Services, subprogram 05, relates primarily to National Insurance contributions. I think I made a general statement about that.

Sanitation Service Authority, subprogram 12: Grant to public institutions. During the financial year, because of delays experienced in the opening of the new landfill the Sanitation Service Authority had to rent heavy equipment to operate at the old landfill. In addition, it had to meet additional costs to complete the new landfill and this led to some over expenditure which it has been unable to meet.

The Sanitation Service Authority gets a block grant from the Government and so this supplement for the Authority is to deal with the additional costs which they have incurrred. There has been an over expenditure on the vote that was agreed to, but in truth the Sanitation Service Authority has been called upon to operate within some very drastic confines. I can say that they have reduced considerably the payment of overtime and the hiring of substitutes but, of course, the collection of refuse still has to go on. I am glad that we have been able to preclude the reduction of staff of the Sanitation Service Authority in spite of everything. It is one of the public agencies that did not suffer a cutback in the number of people employed and the argument is accepted that the cleaning of the environment could not admit of a reduction in the numbers as other agencies were required to reduce their numbers. They were permitted to continue at the same levels. The overtime has been reduced and certain systems have been employed to ensure that the Sanitation Service Authority can function at its regular level.

Under the Queen Elizabeth Hospital there is an amount that has been included of $1.3 million for overtime allowances in respect of medical staff at the Accident and Emergency Department It was necessary to ask for some of the senior staff in the Accident and Emergency Department to do additional sessions, a situation which should improve when some of the residents who are doing the D.M. programme, Doctor of Medicine programme, in Accidents and Emergency Medicine return. They have now returned to the Department so the need *for* the sessions would have been reduced considerably.
An amount is needed to supplement the provision under that item. There is also the problem of national insurance for the Hospital which has a large staff so that vote has to be supplemented as well.
During the fiscal year 1991-92 charges at the Central Purchasing Department amounted to $28 795. These have to be paid and there was an amount of approximately $1 million which is necessary because of the opening of the wards in the new wing in the? Hospital which took the numbers from 531 beds to 592, an increase of 10%. This occurred during the year and, therefore, it is necessary to increase the provision because there was an increase in the use of medical supplies as well as food and other supplies. I repeat, Sir, that the size of the Hospital moved from 531 beds to 592 with the opening of the wards in the new wing. There has been some cost cutting measures at the Hospital. We have moved to improve the management techniques and improve the surveillance. But even so a supplementary provision is still needed of about $1 million to cover supplies. 12.50 p.m.
Under Maintenance of Property we have had to contact overseas firms because of the lack of local technical

services and certain vital pieces of equipment. In this respect the cost of the contract has risen. Therefore we have no alternative but to meet the cost. We speak of some very highly technical equipment which is serviced by overseas technical people. We are asking for $259 000 here. Some of the equipment in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is as old as 25 years and we did not have the benefit of refurbishment and replacement over the last 25 to 30 years. Attempts are being made to do that within the context of our present economic circumstances. But the maintenance cost of those that have not been or cannot be replaced at this time is obviously rising because the equipment is old. It is still working and workable but it is not as efficient as if it could be replaced. So the cost of maintenance will rise because we have to call on the overseas technicians a little more often than we would like.

Under the item of Operating Expenses, the need for a supplementary results mostly to supplement the

Medical Aids Scheme, the cost of sending patients overseas. As at the end of November 66 patients had already been sent overseas and 4 were awaiting transfer. I will give the Committee an updated figure on the number of persons who have actually been sent as of today. I think the Committee needs to be aware...

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: One of the problems we have with the Medical Aids Scheme is almost every Honourable Member in here can attest, is that most of the referrals have been for cases of a life settling nature. There are usually neurological and heart diseases. When a case leaves Barbados it may leave with an estimate of $40 000 but by the time the complications and the cost of hospitalisation in Canada or the United States arise you can find sometimes a fourfold increase.
We had one case, of which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is fully aware, where the estimated cost was unknown but by now it exceeds Can. $250 000. We have one case that is still outside of Barbados where the cost of that case seems as though it will be in excess of half a million dollars. Let me hasten to say that in both instances the insurance company will repay the cost but one of the difficulties we have is that the insurance companies do not normally pay unless the bill is rendered. The Medical Aids Scheme, therefore, has to carry the brunt of the up-front payment and given the system we have, we would then have to supplement the vote even though we are going to recover the cost later on. This is a very difficult issue to understand sometimes for some people who do not understand Government accounting.

But, put bluntly, the money has to be paid by the Government up-front if the life is to be saved even though the insurance companies will reimburse the Government. When the insurance company reimburses the Government then the amount paid has to go into the Consolidated Fund. We are seeking to have a revolving fund that would make it unnecessary for the vote to be supplemented in the way I am now seeking to supplement it but in the meantime there is no alternative but to seek a supplement. Repayments to the Scheme have been in excess of $200 000 but outstanding insurance payments are $766 126. These are due but may not all be received before the end of this financial year. As I said earlier, there is one for $200 000 and there is another one for nearly $500 000. There are a number of others that are due.

In fact, it is very interesting that one of the insurances we are to receive the delay has been occasioned because in Canada the hospital - sometimes we talk about inefficiency in the developing countries - was unable to supply the particulars for the insurance company and we had to produce a *pro rata* invoice reconstructed here in Barbados based on our payments to allow the insurance company and its legal advisors to have evidence of the expenditure. That took us quite a considerable time because the Canadian hospital simply could not supply. That is a very interesting development.

As I was coming in I heard somebody on the radio talking about the Auditor General's Report on the call-in programme run by the distinguished gentleman from St. James. He was saying that Ministers of both Governments over the years should do something about the Auditor-General's Report He said that all down through the years Ministers on both sides have not been doing what they should do because the Auditor General said that some cash books are not being kept in the way they should be kept and some other things. I do not know which Minister has any business keeping cash books in any Government. Some of the moderators in these call-in programmes really need going to school. If the Auditor-General says they are not keeping cash books properly that is a matter for the Permanent Secretaries but it is all abroad that Ministers are doing these things. Anyhow, we are seeking a supplementary of $2.7 million for the Medical Aids Scheme.

The Psychiatric Hospital needs $59 000 in supplement to deal with their National Insurance contributions. The Children's Development Centre needs $1 041, again National Insurance. The St Andrew's Children Centre theirs is also National Insurance. There are a few that also require a few dollars for utilities. I do not think there is any great deal of difficulty with that. The Drug Service is National Insurance. It also needs a supplement for supplies. The sum for the Drug Service voted was $14.2 million, a reduction of $565 000 from the year before. 1.00 p.m.
In addition over half a million dollars of the previous year has been carried over under the special benefit service so that the reductions have resulted in a shortfall. And to meet the needs of the department to the end of March 1993 a supplementary provision is required. We require for the special benefit service $1.6 million. For the procurement of drugs $239 000, giving us a total of $1.9 million for the Drug Service.

I think that it is well accepted that the Barbados Drug Service runs an efficient shop and indeed we are constantly being called upon by other agencies in the rest of the Caribbean and beyond to send our people to advise them on how we may help them to bring their system in line with what we have in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, it is usually easier in these matters to allow the Honourable Members on the other side and on

this side as well to ask any questions which they may have. So with those explanations I beg to move that Head 36 stand part.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: I beg to second that. Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Bridgetown.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, what we had here this morning from the Honourable Minister of Health is really a song of woe. It portrays gross mismanagement in this most important of Ministries. Yes mismanagement. This Ministry has a large chunk of the national budget. We have just finally received the approved Estimates for 1992/93 and under the Ministry of Health it shows us that estimates of the amount required in the year ending March 31, 1993, meaning the end of this month, from the non statutory expenditure of the Ministry of Health in relation to health and ancillary services is $104 532 000. $104.5 million for non-statutory expenditure. And 3 weeks before the end of the Financial Year the Minister comes in here asking in one case for $551 in other case $871 but then in other cases for sums as large as $753 000 and $1.9 million in another case.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, $1.9 million is the largest. This is it. Honourable Members are making the point, the money is spent already. I am also interested in knowing about what is likely to be carried forward, because this is another practice of long standing. Oh I know it well but it does not mean that you should be perpetuating it particularly at this time.

Asides.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: It is very easy for the Minister to blame the Permanent Secretary and to blame the civil servants but in the end the buck must stop at him. So he comes in here now for in excess of $10 million, 3 weeks before the end of the financial year. What I find most upsetting of all about this supplementary request is this; that a great deal of this $10 + million is in respect of statutory expenditure - National Insurance. The Minister is saying here that the Government, the largest employer in this country, is also the largest defaulter in'terms of national insurance contributions. And that is not only in respect of the Ministry of Health. None of them in that front bench is without blame. Government is the largest defaulter. It is no wonder that people out there are having difficulty getting their benefits back - sickness benefits, maternity benefits, death benefits.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member ...

Miss B. A. MILLER: How much is your default?

Hon. C. V. WALKER: To the best of my knowledge I am in no default to the National Insurance, Sir.

Miss B. A. MILLER: You mean yourself personally. I am not interested in you personally. That is no point at all. I am not cursing anybody, Mr. Chairman, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute, if the Honourable Member would just give way, the comment relating to none of them on the front bench is without blame, obviously ...

Miss B. A. MILLER: It goes for National Insurance default in respect of their various Ministries. Even those who have no work in the Ministries, like the Ministry of Housing. None is without fault And this is not a matter for laughing because ordinary people feel the hurt of this. There are people out there who come to all of us on this side and I believe some of them go to them on that side too, day in and day out. They applied months ago, in some cases years ago, for benefits under the National Insurance and they cannot get their sickness benefit, they cannot get their maternity benefit, even the little death benefit they cannot get Sir, it is really hard. *Asides.*

Miss B. A. MILLER: The Honourable Minister of Health is saying he has not got his maternity benefit yet?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Health is not addressing the Chamber.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Sir, the Honourable Member knows that the only way I can have maternity benefit is if...
I did not say that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Which benefit did you say?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I said death benefit I would only have got maternity benefit if the Honourable Member had got me pregnant

Miss B. A. MILLER: I let that pass.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are going to have to let it pass because ....

Miss B. A. MILLER: He should withdraw it, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no. You made a reference to the Honourable Minister of Health who was not on his feet or addressing the Chamber and that is the point I have been making about asides. Having responded to that I will have to ask you to withdraw that comment.

Miss B. A. MILLER: All right, Sir, that was to try to distract me. The point I am making, Sir, is that it is very hard and when I go to the extent, as I am sure other Members do, to explain to people that one of the reasons why they cannot get benefits is because the Government defaults dreadfully in respect of payment of contributions. Other people get sued, other people get dragged before the courts - the private sector and you are not hearing much about that lately - not so the Government. And it is disgraceful. I have not added it up but before the debate is finished I would be grateful if somebody would add up all of the money here in respect of National Insurance contributions and these are statutory expenditures. It is not good. It is disgraceful.

Now, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to address some of the sub-programs. I see in the addendum that supplies and materials to be supplemented in the sum of $5 000 is being asked to purchase materials for extraordinary expenditure incurred during the cholera awareness campaign of this financial year. I have seen what I can only describe as Government Information Service fillers on the national television, I or 2 announcements in the newspaper, pronouncements coming from the Pan American Health Organisation and such other agencies about the threat of . cholera. Cholera is a very real threat in this hemisphere, Sir. PAHO has made it clear that before the end of this century cholera would have arrived at epidemic status in the Western Hemisphere. Barbados is a part of a sub-region within the Western Hemisphere. We have cholera on our door step. All of those countries in Latin America and South America which have a Caribbean shore are at cholera epidemic stages at this time. We are told that it is a matter of time. 1.10 p.m.

I want to know more specifically from the Honourable Minister what is the $5 000 meant to pay for. I also want to know about what other measures are being taken to inform Barbadians about this dire threat. Cholera kills. I want to know what sanitary measures, Mr. Chairman, are being taken. I would like to think but I know that it is a vain hope that all dry pits in Barbados would have been eliminated by the Government at this time. But we know that it is an old time thing with the Democratic Labour Party. Yes, they had dry pits in their time. There is something against installing water borne systems. We came in 1976 and we had to stop the building of dry pits up at Clapham as ordered by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is totally untrue. It is a complete fabrication that the Honourable Member for St. Michael
North ordered any such thing, Sir.
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Miss B. A. MILLER: The Ministry which the Honourable Member for St. Michael North had the distinction of holding at the time, some think the. misdistinction, .was in the process of digging dry pits at Clapham. A Ministerial direction had to be given by myself in late 1976 to stop it

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, there was no Ministerial direction given by this Minister.

Miss B. A. MILLER: It was by this Minister at the time. Thank you. What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that I would have hoped that by 1993 there would not be a dry pit left in Barbados. There is an Environmental Sanitation Unit in the Ministry of Health and I want the Honourable Minister to tell what is the situation with remaining dry pits in this country. If you want an open invitation to cholera in Barbados, you want to leave dry pits unattended.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to know from the Honourable Minister of Health, again in respect to this Cholera • Awareness Programme, what standards of cleanliness and sanitation is obtained at public baths and public toilet facilities. I know that they are filthy, particularly the ones in the City of

Bridgetown. The ones at Waterloo Alley and King William Street are particularly in a bad state. That is another open invitation to cholera, Sir. At those you have people who are visiting from outside making use of the facilities. I want to know what the Sanitation Service Authority and any other environmental sanitation authority within the Ministry of Health is doing about this. I am deeply concerned about it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to know further what the Ministry has done in respect of upgrading and tightening inspections of public eating places and vendors of food in public places in this country. Again, this is all pan and parcel of this Cholera Awareness Programme. What I see on the television or what I see in the newspapers cannot be enough to properly educate Barbadians to the very real and imminent threat that cholera poses to our country. Our water system constructed the way it is has to be protected at all cost. Our style of living in Barbados and many other variables, Mr. Chairman, need immediate attention and particularly the immediate attention of the Ministry of Health. I believe that at this time the Minister of Health has a duty to reassure us and reassure Barbadians that everything is being done to avoid an outbreak of cholera in our island.

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This skimpy Addendum tells us nothing. I also want to speak, Sir, about the polyclinic at Black Rock. I have spoken of it before and I speak of it again. There is no parking facility at the polyclinic. There is not even a lay-by to accommodate the buses which will obviously be stopping at what already is being described as the polyclinic bus stop. It is a shocking thing. Everywhere else that the Barbados Labour Party built a polyclinic there is a lay-by to accommodate the frequent stoppages for people who attend the polyclinic.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The member has 2 minutes to conclude.
Miss B. A. MILLER: It is a scandal. I will speak again. Mr. Chairman, it is a scandal that we have overlooked the basic needs of ordinary Barbadians who have to take a bus because there is no other means of transport for them. It just shows a level of disinterest that i3 urbelievable. Mr. Chairman, it is not only the lack of parking that is worrying me. The Minister was very quick to admit that there was a cost and time overrun in respect of the construction of this polyclinic. We did not hear anything about penalties. We heard him making a case for giving consideration to cost overruns in respect to some contractor. I want to know if there was a contract and, if there was a penalty clause in it with respect to these overruns, what is the situation? Do not get up now. You wait until your turn comes to get up and tell me about that.
I also-want to know, Mr. Chairman, about the installation of furniture and equipment at that polyclinic. I want to know when the polyclinic is actually going to be open to the public because I have seen in the past with this Government a building put up and you hear that it either neglected and/or forgot to order equipment and furniture. It will sit empty for another year while the wrong furniture comes and has to be sent back until the right furniture comes. I thank you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister in introducing this sub-head said there was no cut-back in the Sanitation Authority and the staff apparently remain the same. I want to let the Minister know that it is not sufficient to talk in terms of no cut-back of staff in any Department especially the Sanitation Department. All is not well with that Department and I want to make this abundantly clear. Something has got to be done. Let us face it. I am not satisfied with what is going on in respect of the heaps of garbage around Barbados. I am not satisfied with that. It is all right when you call the Chief of Sanitation. He is responding. I am satisfied with his response. But I am saying that I am aware that you need staff and vehicles to do the job and the Minister has to address this situation. There are areas that we cannot afford to short change the public of Barbados and health is one. You do not compromise in this matter.
Sir, I would think that one of the problems with Sanitation in respect of garbage is proper deployment of the staff. I would think so. I am not satisfied with the Minister from time to time making the statement that garbage has been collected at this time and the other time. But I want him to go to the Pine at Midway Lane where I was on Sunday morning and for weeks people have been complaining of an overflowing septic

tank. Let us not laugh about this. This is no laughing matter with me and you had better take me seriously too.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am not laughing. 1.20 p.m.
You have the solid waste overflowing from alongside Mrs. Layne's house in Midway Lane, coming across Midway Lane and going down between 2 blocks of 8 houses each, 16 persons, and water is there. YouTiave to skip to get over it and people are bobbing and weaving in this nastiness, where raw filth is across the road and you are telling me that we are here talking about health and we must not address these problems? You are talking about dengue fever.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. I do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member, but the Honourable Member is discussing filth on the streets and he must know that it is no responsibility of the Sanitation Service Authority to pick up faeces. If you wish to discuss that the Ministry of Health must do something about it, that is one thing, but do not lay it at the Sanitation Service Authority. It is in the Act. They have no responsibility for picking up faeces.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am not talking about the Sanitation Service Authority picking up faeces. The Minister had better keep quiet on this issue. You do not travel about to know what is going on, I know the direction in which you are going.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I wish the Honourable Member would address the Chair.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am talking about something serious and I am highlighting it. It is there. Yesterday I had to call the Manager of the National Housing Corporation and ask him to send someone up there to see the condition. I am concerned. The Ministry of Health is responsible for that. Do you not have health inspectors? I am raising the matter on the Floor of this House today so that the Minister and the Ministry of Health would know that they are duty bound to go into Midway Lane and put an end to what is going on there. The lives of the people in the Pine are at stake.

I want to go a little further to show how ridiculous this whole thing about health is. I am not concerning myself with the shortage of doctors now, I will talk about that later on. You have an old people's home in Pinelands, Golden Rock, and no more than about 15 to 20 metres away you have a heap of garbage piled up, with rats running all through it and affecting the old people in that home. Those are the things I want to highlight. Let us understand what we are talking about I want the Minister to direct that a truck or something go there and remove the garbage that has piled up. I pay taxes and the people in the Pine deserve better.

While I am on that, I want him to understand too that next door to the Rent Collectors' office in the Pine there is very smelly garbage. I am representing people. Must I not come in here and raise these concerns? They are valid concerns. I want the Minister of Health to send out the inspectors, and if there are no inspectors to make sure that these things are controlled and reported, then come in here and ask for them. There should not be any cutback as far as health is concerned.

I have visited other areas in Barbados, even in the Minister's constituency, and I have seen similar situations existing. It is a disgrace. Must I be satisfied to hear the Minister say there is no cutback, as though there is something good about that? It is embarrassing! I do not care what IMF or what kind of economic situation we are in, I want to see proper health care delivery in this country. When this Chamber is asked for any funds and a case is properly put by the Government, this Opposition will have little difficulty in supporting that Resolution.

I just want to let the Minister understand this. I am not satisfied that enough is being done by the Sanitation Authority and the Ministry. The Minister said last year he would not be satisfied with any cutback in his Ministry. Well, he must be satisfied to deliver the services to the country. Get up and make noise for money and I am on your side on this occasion.

What I do not like is a very untenable situation, where you have what appears to be a dispute between the

Minister and the authorities at the Hospital. The Press has been reporting it and it does not augur well when you have contradictory statements being made. The Minister may very well be right, the Director may very well be right, but it does not augur well for this country.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am saying the Director. "More staff soon." Do not tell me what I see, I read.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member said that there is a dispute between the Director and the Minister.
Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two Honourable Members are on their feet.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: No, I did not say that I am saying the conflicting statements do not augur well. If there is one Department in which one would hope to see some sort of compromise, it would be this one, and it seems now that there is a little war breaking out between the Minister and the Ministry proper. While I am on my feet, let me say this. I do not know and the Minister did not say, but I hope that the money the doctors are asking for, overtime, is in this vote. There is some money due to them.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am only asking, I do not know. Sometimes in these provisions there is something tucked away in there. The Addendum does not show it Let me tell you what I know. Some of the doctors are waiting to get a piece of change as overtime pay and I am making a case for them because I know they are not going to make it I am making noise for the doctors to make sure that the Minister gets the money to pay them. They too have families to feed. They cannot come out and talk because they talk about the ethics, but I do ftave any pretty ethics as a politician in here, I can talk, because I want justice to be done. Pay the doctors whatever the amount of money you have for them, do not short change them, because they will not be able to deliver the health care. They have to make sacrifices, they are called out at all kinds of awkward hours and the Minister introduced this today and has not said when the doctors are going to get their money. The inspectors hold up everybody all about the place and you are short changing doctors, coming in here talking about contractor costs overrun. The doctors have costs overrun too. In some cases both husband and wife are doctors and are already suffering the 8%. Are you going to kill them? They have bills to pay.

I want the Minister and the Government to address these very important issues, because they affect the delivery of health care and bring into contention the whole health system, which does not augur well. I am not going to speak much longer on this because in the other part of the Resolution I will deal with transport and the Minister. He and I will have it today on that.

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Getting back to health, why I have to raise these things is because I realise that some Ministers do not answer questions, so every Tuesday when I come in here they are going to have it with me. I am not filing any more Parliamentary Questions in here, they are going to answer in here and I am going to harass them politically in here.

There are some old age pensioners too, Mr. Chairman, that I have some concern about

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is that under Head 36?

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Yes, Sir, health care *for* the old age pensioners. Some of them have to travel to the polyclinics. They have withdrawn the buses from St. Michael North East and put these old age pensioners at a disadvantage. Some of them are not old age pensioners only, they are disabled, incapacitated people. You have put them further in very straitened circumstances by taking away the buses and at the same time not providing services where they could be delivered at the houses. I am asking the Government to consider that, because the $3.00 -$1.50 down and $1.50 up from a polyclinic - is causing

some hardship on them. 1.30 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is precisely why I asked if it had to do with Head 36.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Yes. It has to do with the polyclinics. Some of those pensioners in St. Michael South East have been complaining to me that they cannot afford to go to the polyclinics.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That does not refer to the Ministry of Health. You said you would deal with it under the section of the Resolution.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You will have one minute to conclude.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: That takes me a little further to the parish of St. John where I was born and where I have relatives and family and a lot of friends. I must say there was a polyclinic started in St. John', but I do not hear anybody say anything about it in here. The Minister does not mention it. It is in bush. It is where the old St. John's Almshouse was, opposite the Dispensary.

I want the Minister to tell me what is the position with that. It is overgrown with bush and causing a lot of mosquitoes for the people who live around the Glebe. I want to know when they are going to put funds in the Estimates, whether some of this money is to restart that polyclinic so the people of St John can have the services. It is not fair to the representative for St. John.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I want the Minister to answer the questions as they relate to this polyclinic in St. John.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Let me respond, Sir, at this point. First of all, let me say that the St. John Polyclinic was a victim of the economic situation so it has to wait until we have enough money to resume building. That is holding strain until we get money.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now we are having some interruptions that are undesirable.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On cholera, Sir. The Honourable Member for the City spent a little time on cholera and wanted to know what we have done. I think I should tell her that the Ministry of Health has fallen, like all the other Ministries in the region, within a general programme of coordination to prevent cholera. It is expected that cholera will get to the English-speaking Caribbean. It is already in Guyana and some cases'were seen in Trinidad. There are a number of procedures which have been put in place as part of the preparation sessions on cholera which were held in all the polyclinics for all staff members.
A cholera simulation exercise to test the readiness of our polyclinic services in the Accident and Emergency Department of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was conducted in April, 1992. It involved Warrens Polyclinic and the surrounding community and the Accident and Emergency Department of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Ambulance Service and was useful in highlighting our response mechanisms.

We have sought to spruce those up.

We have a plan of action which has been put together by a Committee comprising representatives from all of the relevant agencies in the country and it includes constant monitoring of drinking water and the water quality, improved chlorination and testing for residual chlorine levels at source and distribution points. There are weekly reports which come in and which the Minister sees and they indicate that the levels are within the acceptable World Health Organization levels.

" On the education of the population, there has been a series of seminars for wayside vendors in which we sought to let all the wayside vendors become aware of the

possibility of cholera. We have sent some of our doctors to Mexico so that they could actually get a first-hand look at real cholera cases because many of the doctors practising now would never have seen a cholera case. We sent them under the aegis of PAHO to Mexico where they were able to observe actual cholera cases.

We have heightened the surveillance at the Airport and the Seaport. We also have prepared a series of handouts including a cholera card which we give to every single visitor who comes into Barbados asking them to fill out information if they have come from a place where cholera has occurred.
Generally speaking, therefore, there has been a heightened surveillance throughout the country and the information...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, we put this information out If it has not been published there is not much we can do. We are trying to see if we can interest the newspapers in publishing this information, but you know how it goes these days.

The Public Health Inspectors and the Health visitors, that is, the public health nurses who visit in the area every day, are continuing an education programme house to house.
The Honourable Member asked also about the upgrading of public inspection and her concern about the public baths is well taken. The public baths have and are supposed to have an attendant at all times. The manner in which the public baths are used is sometimes less than what is desirable. It constitutes a tremendous difficulty keeping the public baths at the required level. We are constantly admonishing the Sanitation Service Authority to redouble its efforts to ensure that the public baths have the required level of sanitation.

The Honourable Member is recommending installation of water-borne systems and that matter will be addressed in full detail on another occasion.

The Polyclinic at Black Rock. The question of a lay-by does not arise for the simple reason that the spot where the bus stops is an improvement over what was there before. There is a pavement which is going to be at the point where the passenger dismounts from the bus but there is no place for a lay-by. It is on the barest piece of land that a polyclinic could have been put.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Members no doubt will be able to point out where on Black Rock they would have put the Polyclinic.

Asides.
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Mr. CHAIRMAN: Could we have some order. I am not going to allow cross-the-table conversations.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The vast majority of people who use the Polyclinic at Black Rock do not catch any bus to go there. The catchment area does not extend to any area that has any bus so the concept of a bus is nonsense, but I am not going to argue today. At a point when it is necessary and desirable I will give full details. The Honourable Member does not know anything about the catchment area. The catchment area for the Black Rock Polyclinic does not require bus travel. 1.40 p.m.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I designated the catchment area. The catchment

area does not mean anything in Barbados. People come from as far as Paynes Bay to go to the Polyclinic there and he knows that too. He passes the back-up in the road every morning.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member carried the people into the Psychiatric Hospital in a makeshift place. If the Honourable Member had done her job properly there would be no need for us to build a polyclinic now. The Honourable Member carried the people into a slut shop in the Psychiatric Hospital and now asking me why we came out of the Psychiatric Hospital. We have come out of the Psychiatric Hospital so we can give the workers and the people who go there an opportunity to go into a place that is worthwhile. When the rationalisation project is completed and we come to build a new Psychiatric Hospital it will have to be built where the Psychiatric Hospital is so that is the reason why we have moved out. I do not want to spend time on that.

On the question of the installation of furniture, the Estimates which the Honourable Member had today will show that a sum of $523 936....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I think that is a low remark. The Honourable Member would not normally say that in a situation where it can be heard. I am not going to repeat what she said. It is not true. Suffice it to say it is not true and not fair to the gentleman. The sum of $523 936 had been included in the coming Estimates for furniture for the Black Rock Polyclinic. The Polyclinic has not been handed

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over and the people who are in the Polyclinic at Black Rock now are simply going to transfer to the new Polyclinic. Where did you get this idea from because we have built a new polyclinic we have to refurbish it from top to bottom? There is a polyclinic that is functioning now. It has nurses and doctors. It has furniture and equipment which will be transferred to the present Polyclinic and the $520 000 would be for additional furniture which is required because this Polyclinic is bigger.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: I do not know. It was promised in December. It was promised in January.
Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member knows that I do not build polyclinics. I cannot tell her when it is going to be completed. It will be opened when it is handed to me.
The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East wanted to know about the heaps of garbage. I wish him to know I share his concern. Every time there is a heap of garbage anywhere in Barbados my heart bleed and that the Honourable Member in 1993 can, in fact, describe the situation he just described is a source of embarrassment to me. In 1993 where we can have sewage in the open is not something I am going to defend as a Minister. I take the responsibility as Minister. I hope we do not have more of those.

We had a number of difficulties arising from the methodological approach that had been done with housing. Some of the sewage capacity in some of the housing estates in the country has far exceeded any anticipation, so that if there is a problem I would expect the Environmental Engineering Division of the Ministry of Health will be called as a matter of urgency.

The Sanitation Service Authority has no responsibility for the problem as described by the Honourable Member although the Ministry of Health has responsibility. Therefore, I give the Honourable Member the assurance and there are officials hearing him, but I will give the direction which he asked for.
I want him to know that the same problem happens in garbage in Lewis Gap in my constituency and also in Peterkin where people who do not live in Peterkin drive from wherever they are and leave

garbage in Peterkin. They have been doing it for years. When there is a big pile of garbage in Peterkin then somebody goes and gets a photograph and puts it in "The Advocate" because it is my constituency. But wherever there is garbage there must be a cause for concern for every Honourable Member. To the extent that cholera and leptospirosis can be spread by rats going into garbage we all must be concerned.

The Sanitation Service Authority tries its best but we had a problem. I think the Committee needs to know what the problem was because we were changing the schedule and expanding the areas where those persons who collect might have to collect. There was some resistance to the change. We got Mr. Arthur Archer, I am not calling his name disparagingly, who is the expert in this field. We got him to do a study for the Sanitation Service Authority on collections. He made a recommendation of new collection catchment areas and after consultation and discussion with the unions, an attempt was being made to spread the catchment for each truck a little wider than it was. That caused some resistance and one of the results of that resistance could be seen in the streets.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That matter is being dealt with. Even as we speak we have a Barbadian woman who works in the Borough of Hackney in London. Her responsibility is supervising and advising that Borough on solid waste collection. Even as we speak she has started a 3-week project under the aegis of PAHO to examine in great detail the collection of garbage in Barbados. Within 3 weeks we should have a report from her to give us some insight on what is happening on a day-to-day basis in the collection of garbage.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member knows some of the difficulties one faces. That is a hurdle. The Honourable Member is saying from her seat that there are some attempts at sabotage..

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Which she cannot do.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am going to respond to the other things as we go along,* Mr.Chairman.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am not going to be long, Sir. I am a student of public accounting, public expenditure and supervision. I would really like to hear from the Minister whether he is satisfied with the level of supervision in his own Ministry whereby the expenditure forecast could be so wrong. I want to give the House some examples.

• In respect of structures due to Polyclinics there is approximately a 45% difference between what is approved and. what is required. That is a major difference, a

45% variation between your estimates and what you really need. That is a tremendous overrun. As a member of the Public Accounts Committee has pointed out what is remarkable is that if it is going to be expended in accordance with the law between March 8 and March 31, surely such a phenomenal amount of building could not take place in such a short period of time. We must get to the guts of this kind of matter because as we have said over here repeatedly, a large part of our financial problems in this country is due to the natural indiscipline of the Democratic Labour Party whenever it is in office, its fiscal irresponsibility. This has been a characteristic of that administration whenever it has the misfortune to be the Government in this country.

Again* Sir, Operating Expenses - another item. An amount of $1.854 million was quoted and now

they are asking for 100%.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is the Medical Aid Scheme.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I took the trouble, Sir, of explaining why the Medical Aid Scheme would have that particular problem. I took the trouble to go into great detail to explain that the amount voted can never be correct because one does not know what cases are going to come up. We had 2 cases that came to $700 000. Who would have known that the little boy would be run over by a bus or that the woman would have an accident that would cost US$500 000 to fix? , 1.50 p.m.
Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, that is a simplistic explanation which we are not going to take. The truth of the matter is, Sir, that a lot of this expenditure relates to the fact that this cost has already been incurred and because of the practice of trying to fool the public of Barbados that you are keeping within the bounds of the restrictions imposed upon you by your masters that you are only now coming to the House to cover known expenditure that has already taken place.
There is a new theory in public accounting, Sir, that if the voucher does not reach the Treasury it cannot be counted. So therefore you keep them in the Ministries and you are fooling the public and trying to fool the IMF that your expenditure is within the limits when in truth and in fact everybody knows that vote is busted. It is a kind of immoral, illegal accounting that is going on in the Ministry and the Ministry of Health is a principal offender and I make that charge here today that the Ministry of Health in Barbados keeps vouchers within individual departments and
does not send them for payment to the Treasury because if they are not sent down there they cannot be counted.

The Honourable Member for St John used to say that one of the things that he learnt...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The former Member for St. John, not this one. The one in here now does not have any experience of this nature. The basic point is, Sir, he used to say that one. of the things that you had in relation to the public service commission was that if you did not get your name in the hat to go up to the Commission you could not get picked so that is the position here. If the voucher which relates to your expenditure does not go to the Accountant General you cannot get paid so you can hide expenditure. The vouchers can be hidden.

That happens with supplies. This is a very serious thing because the reputation of the Ministry of Health is at its lowest ebb. That is a fact There are doctors who have not been paid for years for their services. They have not got their travel. They have not got their house rents paid. There are consultants who have not been paid. And this Minister of Health, Sir, comes in here and the Minister gets up and says, unforeseen expenditure ... But one of the reasons why we put in health levy and we kept it outside of the consolidated fund was because we knew that if you put that health levy in the Consolidated Fund you would find yourself in the position in which taxpayers would have paid for health but the money was used for some other Ministry and that is what has happened. The inevitable consequence of putting the health levy in the Consolidated Fund means that it is being preempted by other areas of Government. That was a bad policy decision - putting the health levy in the Consolidated Fund because it is not being spent for the purposes.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St JOHN: Most of this $10 million relates to the Honourable Member's Ministry. We are saying that the Honourable Member's Ministry is a large part of the problem that we have here - the problem of fiscal indiscipline. And that is what we have to point out Do not tell me this is a second

reading speech. It is a speech that goes to the meat of the problems that we have.
Now there are other things. I am not going to come back on the $1 million for rental of equipment. That is a matter that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, no doubt, will deal with. But the point is, what kind of financial irresponsibility you can have in a country in which a Ministry rents equipment for $1 million. That $1 million could buy all kinds of equipment. SI million for rental of equipment for a land fill. $1 million we are talking about.

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Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not know whom he is renting it from. It does not matter to me whom he is renting it from. I say it is irresponsible on the part of the decision makers and in our system the Honourable Member for St. Michael West must take responsibility. $1 million for rental. You could buy a DC7 Bulldozer with all the blades, with a truck to carry away everything for that kind of money. Fiscal irresponsibility and that is something the Honourable Member must tell us about. That is so unusual.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not care whom he is renting it from. I am not going to say what is being said. I say that is irresponsibility and I say that as a student of public expenditure, public finance and public accountability. I am seriously concerned that there is not a departmental enquiry ordered by the Minister as a sort of palliative to the public that he is not tolerant of such situations in his Ministry. It is a terrible thing, Sir. But his failure to take action would make you believe that he is'in complicity, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member will withdraw that, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will both Honourable Members take their seat? The Honourable Member, I know, is aware of the fact that he cannot accuse the Minister of complicity.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: With respect, Sir, I had better rephrase what I said, Sir. I am saying, Sir, that I am accusing the Honourable Minister, by his failure to take action, in the form of a departmental enquiry, he can be legitimately accused of being in complicity with the fiscal irresponsibility that is represented by the expenditure of $1 million for rental of equipment. That is a terrible thing. I can certainly say that, Sir. That is quite legitimate. That is what the Conventions demand.

The last area, Sir, supplies and material. Everybody knows that at the hospital people who supply...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Which doctors? Not'only the junior doctors. I want to know about the consultants. Do not push me on this. If you tell me that the doctors were paid I am going to ask you about specific specialties and I am going to ask you about the bill so just tell me that you have the money here for them. That would be sufficient for me to know.

Now, supplies and materials. This is another serious thing. Everybody knows that there are people who supply goods to the hospital and they are walking all about Barbados harassing Members of Parliament on both sides, asking us to see what we can do to make sure that they get their money.

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

Hon. H. B. St JOHN: Yes, Sir, I am going to state the last point. The arrears that are due to suppliers is such that some people are being placed in the position in which their overdraft with the Bank has had to be extended. They are being subjected to all kinds of threats from their bank managers. That is the position, Sir. 2.00 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think that some of the matters raised by the Honourable Member must be dealt with. First of all...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, not after lunch. The same people are here. The Honourable Member raised the question of the rental of equipment and, if left by itself, it will seem as though some heinous act occurred. A landfill was being developed. The digging down of the hill to make the landfill requires a specialised bit of equipment which the Sanitation Service Authority did not have, does not have and is unlikely to have. They rented the equipment from a contractor and, in fact, the cost of creating the landfill was partly paid for by PAHO. The result was that Sanitation Service Authority that gets a block vote and does not have to delineate its expenditure has asked for the additional cost of creating the new landfill at St. Thomas. That new landfill included use of equipment from the contractor who dug down the mountain. It is not a million dollars. The Sanitation Service Authority gets a block vote. So do not talk about the Minister's complicity. I never rented anything yet

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The second thing is that the Honourable Member suggested that there are doctors who have not been paid for years. There is a single doctor who had a temporary contract and he was not paid because of administrative error. The temporary contract had not been approved because of inadvertence. As a result, he could not be paid because the Honourable Members on that side who have been Minister know that if the post has not been approved, the Accountant cannot pay unless there is an approval from the other Ministry. It takes 6 months. There is no doctor at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital who has not been paid up to the last pay day. Any travel that is outstanding has to do with the Treasury not being able or not having sent down...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Let me finish, man! The Honourable Members over there know how the funding is done. You have to get a draw-down from the Treasury. The Ministry of Health cannot pay a single cent until the Treasury has given the money for payment. The Honourable Members know that The Honourable Member is only grand-standing about payment. No, I am not talking about the equipment I am talking about the doctors not being paid. All pfthe junior doctors who had the problem with their overtime have been paid *on* the schedule that has been agreed upon between the hospital and the doctors. That is my understanding and information. My information is that all the people have been paid.
Rents have been paid up to date. The only overtime that is outstanding is the overtime for January. That money is in this supplementary. Traveling was last paid for the month of December 1992 and fixed travel has been paid up to the month of February 1993. Now we hear all of this talk from the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who as Minister of Finance would have done all of the things that he is now describing. As Minister of Finance, the Honourable Member over there would have precluded any payments from being made for anything at anytime until he was satisfied that the funding was secured by way of receipts. The Honourable Member who is sitting next to him would have acquiesced in the same approach whether it was doctors, dancers or dunces to be paid. I am not going to stand here and look as though I have been in complicity of not paying anybody. I do not pay people. Ministers do not pay people. This is the function of the .whole system and the Honourable Members over there know that.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: As the Honourable Members know over there, those who were Ministers, you get a note telling you how much money was taken out. To describe it as getting paid might be a misrepresentation. But the fact is that this state of affairs confirms that persons who were to be paid have been paid and there is no dissention in the Hospital because of people not being paid. The doctor who was

not paid is an honourable man who understood the difficulty and, while he may have mentioned it to one of the Honourable Members over there in passing, there is no cause for alarm to the point where they will be able to jump up and dance because doctors are not being paid. It was a single doctor and the Hospital has admitted that it was an administrative error. The distinguished doctor, having retired, had gone on to a different system and a clerical officer had not picked up that it was necessary to make another submission. Now they are giving the impression about fiscal irresponsibility and other massive statements.

Sir, if there is one kind of intellectual double-dealing that is not acceptable, it is when a person who knows better and who knows the facts allows himself or herself to deliver a statement which could be misrepresented and misunderstood by those who do not know the facts. When I was discussing the Medical Aid Scheme, I made the point that by definition one is likely to "bust the vote" as he put it When someone has a brain tumor, you do riot spend any time checking to see what the niceties are. Every single Honourable Member on that side, except possibly one or two, will never get a brain tumor - in order to have a brain . tumor, you have to have a brain. Some of the Honourable Members on that side will never get a brain tumor, Sir.

Seriously, Sir, I am going to take the responsibility for the busting of the Medical Aid Scheme vote. The Minister has to approve {he sending of a person overseas. Therefore, although I might have been aware that the supplementary had not been approved, I am not going to play God with anybody's life I will say to the Committee with an apology that on more tnan one occasion during this present year I have given approval for persons to go overseas even though I was aware that the niceties required in the strictest application of the *l#y* could not be fulfilled. The choice was between sending or? the person for the emergency operation and paying attention *o the niceties of the law, in the full knowledge that failure to send the person off would result in death. In that circaostance, I chose the other.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Well, I try not to play God to decide who is going to die. No, the Minister approves it. The system works this way. There is a committee at the Hospital which comprises two consultants and the Hospital's Director. They send to the Minister and the Minister approves every single one. In that respect, do not blame the public officers. The Minister takes the responsibility.

On the question of estimating the Medical Aid Scheme, you will look in the new Estimates and see that a figure has been placed there for the Medical Aid Scheme. As I said at the beginning, one does not know what kind of illness is going to befall whom. One cannot do an average because one does not know what is coming. That is why we have bought the angiographic suite. That is why we have sent a doctor and other personnel to North America for training, so that much of the vascular surgery to be done in Barbados will be done here, much of the investigation of heart disease will be able to be done here and in due course, within the next 9 months or so, much of the cardiac surgery will be done here. All of that will help to save some of the money which we now expend on medical aid. 2.10 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: I fool you not All of that is in train and some of the problems which the Honourable Member has just identified would disappear once we get those systems going.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Horn P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that the sitting be suspended until 3.15 p.m. today.
Hon. B. M. TATTT: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question was put and resolved in the Affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly. 2.12 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Sometime today, Sir, we did the First Reading of the Employment Levy (Amendment) Bill. When I -gave notice of the Bill I said that it was a matter of urgency which we would like to deal with today in all its stages. I have spoken to the Leader of the Opposition but he has not given me a commitment. I want to make that quite clear. There is no commitment on his part, I merely mentioned to him what we would want done today and I told him what it was all about. I am just repeating for the House at large to hear that at some point today, not now, we want to deal with that particular matter. It is important.

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

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1992-93, NO. 6 (RESUMED)

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Supply is resumed.
Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I wish to make some comments in relation to the landfill. The note to this Resolution says: "Delays experienced in opening the new landfill and the necessity to rent heavy earth-moving equipment to operate the old landfill at Mangrove Pond have resulted in overruns necessitating a supplementary requirement of $1 000 000."
That is only part of the story. Two years before the new landfill was opened Government was in a position to know that the old landfill would have required continuous use of heavy equipment to level it and ensure that there was as little opportunity for internal combustion, as has in fact turned out to be the case. Government rented equipment from Rayside Construction Company.
Let me make it clear, Sir. I am not attacking the contractor, because they could have rented from anybody, but what I am criticising is that Government knew well in advance....

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He wants me to identify the real culprits. The Sanitation Service Authority or the Ministry of Health ought to have known from the first time in 1991, when the old landfill blew up and smouldered *for* almost 10 days, that at that time they would have required proper heavy equipment to do the job that was necessary on the landfill. It was then that Government first rented equipment from Rayside. Last year - I do not have my diary for last year in the House. I think it was March last year that the landfill caught afire and they made all kinds of talk about somebody lighting it and it was done by a trespasser, but then, I went up to the site, not the Minister. He refused to go. Not one of the Board of the Sanitation Service Authority went to the site. 3.20 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. The Honourable Member knows that when the fire occurred I was out of the country. It is not fair. The Minister could not go to the site because he was out of the country.
.Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: So the Minister never came back to the Island after the fire? The Minister was not aware of all the fuss and the front page spread that it got?

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am dealing with last year March when it blew up. This Minister came in here on an occasion and said words to the effect that it was the work of a trespasser. On that occasion, they went

and hired heavy equipment from Rayside Construction which has been in continuous use ever since up to now on the old landfill and on the new landfill. Rayside's equip-

ment has worked on a daily basis on the old landfill and on the new landfill. I have no quarrel with the fact that the firm is making a dollar. My quarrel is that if you can spend $1 million to pay a contractor the year before, would it not have been enough time to have done the planning so that the Sanitation Service Authority would have had their own equipment?

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just let me remind Honourable Members that responding to asides will have the debate lopsided because asides are not recorded.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I should know better than to be sidetracked by the effusion of the Minister responsible for garbage. The Minister has to take blows on this one. I believe the Minister authorised the rental of this equipment

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, just for the record. The Minister does not authorise the rental of anything at the Sanitation Service Authority. I did not authorise the rental of anything at any time from anybody anywhere.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, they opened a new landfill. I think that is the 1st or 2nd occasion that the Minister ever went into the area. In October, it was clear that that site does not adequately deal with the amount of refuse that has to be disposed of in Barbados. What has happened since its official opening only confirms that .within the Ministry of Health there are persons who are incapable of properly planning activities such as running a landfill.

I went up to the landfill site about 5 months ago in the area of the new one. People from Bennetts and Arch Hall believed they were being offended by smells from that site. We looked around and there was no problem with the new landfill except that the people in the Sanitation Service Authority planned and designed a landfill to take 208 tonnes of refuse a day and now it is taking 500 tonnes a day. I do not tell lies in here. You know that everything I say in here is gospel.

The result is that in very short order the new landfill is going to be completely saturated and Government will have to look for an alternative site or an alternative method of sewage disposal. In the meantime, I am concerned thatthe weekend before the last there were again foul smells j coming from the landfill and this time the new landfill. It 1 has transpired that although there was a large quantity ofI covering material at the site of the new landfill yet it was mot spread out for days. The result was that it gave off these malodorous smells which were affecting the people in Bennetts and Arch Hall. I do not know why they would not spread it out.

I am tired saying to the Press, when they call and ask me about the dump, and to the people of Arch Hall and Bennetts that the fundamental problem with th£ dump at St. Thomas is one of management. There was a time when the Minister sent up people from the Environmental Health Unit to meet with all of the residents in a church hall. This . was about $3V_2$ years ago. We came to certain understandings in respect of the old landfill. One of the understandings was that the Ministry or the Sanitation Service Authority would have constant security present on the way to the landfill, up the hill and at the actual site. That worked beautifully for about 6 months. There was no problem. Then it stopped.

I do not know how it stopped. It is for the Minister and the people in his Department to find out who stopped it A good system for some reason or the other was stopped and as soon as it stopped you had the problems of illegal dumping, intermittent smells and fire. If you are going to run the landfill, spend some money to ensure that you have regular security to police the place. You have a million here. You threw away over $20 million in Sherbourne. Government is to find the money. Put in a proper security system.

I am asking also that we have the Sanitation Service Authority start to look at the need for equipment to excavate, to level, to push and to compact. Of those, the most important would be the compacting equipment and the spreader. This is where this $1 million has gone because Rayside Construction has the equipment. Just as you have found the money to pay an independent contractor my submission is that you can find the money for the Sanitation Service Authority. 3.30 p.m.

Sir, I want also to address the question of a sprinkling system. Last year this time before the old dump caught fire, I warned in this House that as soon as we got a long hot dry spell the old dump would ignite. I have asked the Ministry several times to put in some kind of sprinkling system.
Sir, I want the Technical Officer in the Ministry to approach some of these matters in a different way from the way he approached the contractual matters involving the St. Joseph Hospital. He knows what I mean. I would be grateful if the Minister in future would let us know what plans he has for the installation of a sprinkling system or some watering system that can react speedily as soon as the first signs appear that the old landfill is going to blow up. I

believe every year for the next so many we are going to have this problem. I think we need to anticipate it and put in systems to deal with it.

Finally, Sir, I am disappointed that officers in the Sanitation Service Authority have gone abroad since the opening of the new landfill and undergone courses in the management and operation of landfills. I give the Minister credit for it Put that in the record. He begged for it. But listen to this now. They have come back to Barbados and the people in the Sanitation Service Authority have not even asked them once to report on what they learnt, saw or experienced overseas. I will give the Minister credit too for that omission. That cannot be good enough. You open a new landfill. You send people abroad to be trained to run it. They come back and you do not ask them how they got on, what they were doing over there or what they learnt.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. D. A. C, SIMMONS: That is true. Do not ask them because I would say who told me.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a point of order, Sir. I am not going to take IS minutes. I am just going to respond to that particular question. The persons who went to Florida *for* training on the management of landfills have, in fact, reported. Their reports have been sent from the Sanitation Service Authority to the Ministry. I have, in fact, seen the reports. It is a requirement of PAHO that if you go on a PAHO fellowship you must file a report and, in fact, these gentlemen have filed one.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAJTT: The Honourable Member obviously has information which I do not have but I can only say to him that the reports were written. I would like to commend the people who went on the studies because they did excellent reports and are performing well.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I would not want to finish like that. My point was not that the gentlemen have not reported. The men have come back and reported but nobody in the Sanitation Service Authority or the Ministry have sat down with them to discuss if what they saw and experienced overseas could be applied to Barbados.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, in his original presentation the Honourable Minister of Health made the point that there was a lack of local technical expertise. This goes now to the servicing of equipment and such like at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in particular, but at all other hospitals and, in fact, it is true of all institutions which fall within the portfolio of the Ministry of Health. I want to ask the Minister the question why because to my certain knowledge on a regular basis you always try to keep in the pipeline at least one pa-son training abroad in this business of servicing some of these highly technical pieces of machinery and equipment. I have been there, Sir, and I know that it is a much sought after discipline. In fact, before they

even get out of the training institutions, institutions abroad both in the public and private sector, are looking to snap them up.

I remember on one occasion having to say they will have to pay off the Government bond and buy back. But it is hard because what happens in the end is that the Barbados taxpayer ends up training people for other markets and markets which can properly afford to train their own. Even so, with all that highly delicate and sophisticated equipment at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the Minister really has a greater responsibility to explain to us why there is not sufficient local technical expertise to keep the equipment in running condition.

I also want to know if the old time business of crisis intervention is still the order of the day in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I want to know if preventive management is still only a hope and a dream. Some people think it is a myth. Preventative maintenance - that is the story of it all. But it only operates on the basis of crisis intervention. You wait until it breaks down and then you try to fix it Then you discover it is going to take you 10 months to get a part to come. By the time it comes the original piece of equipment is rusted out or somebody is not there who knows how to fix it and it just goes on and on like this, a tremendous wastage. That is why I want to go back in this intervention to the original point I made earlier today. It has to do with mismanagement This Ministry gets a mammoth vote. It is unbelievable even in these stringent times that they cannot manage their business well enough to keep basic equipment in proper repair.
While I am on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital too, Sir, I am deeply offended about something that has happened quite recently. It has to do with the collapse of a new building. Now, I want to know if this falls within the competence of the Project Design and Implementation Unit whose job, among other things, is to monitor and supervise construction.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Do not look out there at anybody. Deal with me now. This is you all the time. You do not work anywhere at all.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member continue her address to the chair?

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, I am addressing the chair. Four walls of so-called alleged new buildings in the

New Wing at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital collapsed. The original contractor had to come back in and do extensive remedial work there. We are only lucky that nobody was injured. I want to have a full statement from the Minister on this. What did it cost? Why did it happen? To whom does the cost of the remedial work fall? Is he now going to get up and make a case for a contractor? This is poor, negligent workmanship and it is riot sufficient for the Minister to say he does not work at the Project Design and Implementation Unit. That is their job to do it. It is a shocking thing to happen. If it had happened anywhere in the private sector 10 photographers would have been there from the Press and you would have heard everything that was wrong with the private sector. If it had happened under the Barbados Labour Party you would have heard that the Government should fall.

I am not talking about an old building or any lathe and plaster building that is 150 years old. I am talking about a new building built within the last 5 years. It really is turning out to be a 10-year plan because that is a project the Barbados Labour Party left in 1986 that has taken them 7 years to execute and no sooner have they executed it than the walls started to fall down. This is not Jericho. I want to know about this Bajan Jericho, if that is what it is, and for it to happen in a place like the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Suppose persons had been injured. This is not a place given to earthquakes. This is not a natural disaster. This is a national disaster and I want to hear the Minister on it. That should be the subject of a public enquiry as well. I want to know if this has happened within the retention period. We want to know what it is costing. I want to hear the Minister at some length on what preventive maintenance programme is in place. Very few new buildings are being built by this Government and

what few new buildings are being built are falling down before you can even get into them. Shocking disclosure when that happens. 3.40 p.m.

Now, the Minister also made reference under 210 to medical supplies. He said that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital moved from 531 beds to 592 beds and therefore, naturally, the demand for supplies and materials would increase. What I do not understand, Mr. Chairman, and what the Minister really has to explain to us is how, within the course of one financial year he and his Ministry have not anticipated nor budgeted for this increase. This increase did not fall like manna from heaven. This increase was being planned for 7 years. How is it that you are going to run in here now, 3 weeks before the end of the Financial Year and say that you need money for supplies and material because there has been an increase in the bed compliment at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital? How could you fail to know it? Why didn't you budget for it? Why didn't you anticipate this expenditure? It is poor management again, poor planning. You have to explain this to us.

Now, the Minister also made reference to medical supplies. I too want to know what medical supplies he is referring to. There are complaints in the public domain, Mr. Chairman, Sir, not only concerning the shocking lack of medical supplies at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital but for non-medical commodities as well - basics like toilet paper and linen. We want to hear him on that
This is a massive vote. I hope the Minister does not think that by bringing this eleventh hour supplementary and having a fairly extensive debate on Health that when the Estimates come next week he will not get rinsed out again.

I come now to the South Coast Sewerage project. We spoke earlier about cholera, Sir. Much has been said by other Honourable Members on this side like the Honourable Member for St Thomas and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East in particular, about this whole question of sanitation. The South Coast Sewerage project is now like Sherbourne. These are turning into 15 and 20-year plans. This is like 10 to 12 years.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will not be told to move on to something. I do not think the Minister is aware of the enormous ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have not made any intervention and therefore I do not think anybody else could tell you that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No, no, not quite. You are not urging me to move on to anything else. What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, Sir, is that it is clear that the Minister is not seized of the urgency of the need for the South Coast sewerage. This point has been made. I can look back in Hansard now going back into the early eighties where these points have been made. The South Coast has the heaviest density of hotel plant in this country. They are all using small package plants which are all defective. The private sector companies who deal in the removal and the disposal of this kind of waste are all working overtime pumping all through the night, not only on the South Coast but on the West Coast as well.

There are beaches on the South Coast where it is positively unsafe to bathe because when the plants break down naturally they dump the raw effluent right into the ocean at night and the tourists get up and jump in it tomorrow morning. We are only lucky that there has not been an outbreak of one kind or another. It is a fact. I can tell you. Mr. Arthur Archer can tell you what the chloroform level is at Hastings Beach any day. These things are measurable, there is scientific measurement. I am saying that the urgency for the South Coast Sewerage

project to come to completion is great. Perhaps the only thing that is saving us is a negative thing, that we are having such a poor tourist season that at the height of the peak time, February into the beginning of March, where you would be expecting at least an 80 per cent occupancy in Barbados, you are lucky if you can get 50 or 40 in some hotels on the South Coast today.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Do not tell me it is not true. I know whereof I speak. All hotels are not the same. Why do you think they are offering summer rates? Do you think they are full?
Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is entirely possible that if we had had a proper tourist season that maybe the need for this South Coast Sewerage Project might have made itself felt in a very negative way that would not have helped us. I want simply to urge upon the Minister to use, as they say, his good offices, to do whatever there is in his power to do to hurry this project to completion before one epidemic *or* another breaks out
I must not let the opportunity pass to make the point that the need is as great on the West Coast as it is on the South Coast. The need is perhaps greater on the West Coast because not only the threat to human life and human habitation but the damage that the dumping of raw sewerage is d9ing to the reefs and the inshore marine life on the West Coast. These are important considerations. This Government is giving a lot of lip service to the environment but nothing more. This is the same Government that put the red pencil through the Ministry of Environment. When they came into office in 1986 they found the Ministry of the Environment It disappeared very quickly.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: It got burnt down? They are making a joke of it

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Miss B. A. MILLER: But it is as urgent for the West Coast as it is for the South Coast that we put proper sewerage systems in place. Thank you, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I think I need to respond to some of the things that have been raised. I think that I want to deal with this very fallacious statement by the Honourable Member who just sat down about walls crumbling at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and falling down. That is absolutely, totally, completely untrue. There are no walls falling down at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.
I want to make sure that that does not go forth as any valid statement. Nothing has fallen down, not even London Bridge.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member had her opportunity during her intervention. I will not have that kind of...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the Honourable Member wants responses she has to sit and get them, Mr. Chairman, or I will not give her any.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Not you. You do not speak *for* anybody. The Honourable Member was the Minister who gave the contract to the contractors or her Government and the contractors used inferior materials.
3.50 p.m.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. I left the Ministry of Health in 1981. It had nothing to do with my term of office and the Minister well knows that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The contract was issued for the building of the particular walls during the Barbados

Labour Party's time. The walls that she is referring to have to do. with the $40 million programme which we have at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member will give way for a moment. I am not going to accept this kind of cross-conversation. It is not doing the debate any good and certainly will confuse the person who is taking the record. I do not want to invoke the Rule on this.
Hon. B. M. TAITT: The contract *for* the construction *jof* the new wing at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was awarded during the tenure of,the Barbados Labour Party's Government. The materials used seem and appear to be contrary to the materials that were specified in the contract. After the completion of the work...
Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. The Minister must not make those allegations unless he tells us which officer from his Department had responsibility for supervising the execution of the contract. It is the same one who supervised the St. Joseph Hospital.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member knows that that is improper because he cannot ask me to do something that is improper. He knows that it is

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improper for me to name any public officer in this Committee. The Honourable Member knows that and, in asking me to do that, he is deliberately with vengeance and malicious intent..

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That cannot be allowed.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Sir, you must forgive me but when a distinguished QC knows that he cannot ask a Minister to perform an illegality...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Moreover, I have ruled that that is not a point of order.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: I am not naming any names, Sir. The point is that Kier International was given the contract and the consultants were the friends of the Barbados Labour Party. I beg your pardon, Sir. I beg your pardon. I do not know but whoever the consultants were. Were they not your friends? They were your friends.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I have some order please?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sandiford is my friend. Sandiford is a poor...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Standing Order 33 (1) has not been suspended and if I have I will invoke the penalty that relates to any contravention of that Standing Order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He is the first architect that came out of the slums. He came from Waterhall. He is my friend. I have no quarrel with that. He is the first Barbadian architect to come from Waterhall and to go on a scholarship to become an architect. He is my friend. I do not know anybody from Kier International from over and away. I do not know them at all. I am dealing with the hospital but I have to deal also with the innuendoes. I am good at that. What happened is that they used inferior materials and when the product was completed during my time...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for St. Joseph has to get up and speak like a man and stop

getting mealy-mouthed and calling people's names from his seat. *If* he is a man, he should get up and call the names that he wants to call. It is not fair. He is not normally mealy-mouthed, Sir.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is not fair, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. It is not part of the record because nothing that has been said apart from what the Honourable Member for St. Michael West is saying will be recorded. However, I am not going to allow the quality of debate to degenerate in the way it is going. I will invoke the penalties which are absolutely necessary.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Leader of the Opposition would never have behaved like that, Sir. I will say that for him, Sir, and the Member *for* Christ Church South. He says whatever he has to say on his feet.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member address the Chair.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: What has happened, Sir, is that within a relatively short time of our opening the new wing because of the inferior quality of the materials used in the construction of the walls both in the Neo-natal Unit and the Operating Theatres and other places, the constant banging of the trollies on the walls have left a series of dents and the indentations are deemed to be unacceptable for nosocomial control. That is to say the germs which would go into the dents create a hazard for the Operating Theatres. Therefore, it was agreed after consultation that the walls would have to be replastered. That is all that has happened. The replastering of the walls has been done out of the retention monies that had been kept according to the contract That is all.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, whatever defects they have, we will have to live with them. I did not design them and I will say that we will have to live with the design defects whatever they are. If the Honourable Member for the City knows there are design defects, let me be the first to tell her that the design was approved by the Barbados Labour Party. I do not believe that those are matters we should be discussing. What are the design defects? The Honourable Member does not know anything about the design of anything to be talking about the design in the Hospital.
Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. It was the Minister who explained to us that trollies knocked against the walls. If you replaster the walls, the trollies are still going to knock against the walls. It would mean to replaster every year. You are into recurring expenditure. This is the same point that I am making about mismanagement and lack of vision.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: She does not understand because the trollies have been knocking against the walls from time immemorial. They will be knocking against a stronger wall with a different material that will be resistent to

whatever it *is* that is knocking. That is why you will not have the problem. If the Honourable Member understood these matters, she would not raise the question.

Sir, because we have taken the trouble to bring an officer who will be able to train the people who use trollies and others, now called a Staff Development Officer, we are going to teach the people that banging the trollies against the walls is dangerous and cost money.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Yes, we are going to teach them. The Honourable Member says that pejoratively.

Yes, we are going to teach people how to use trollies. That is precisely what is wrong in the Hospital and other public places. We have to teach them how to use trollies, how to clean and a whole number of other things. Yes, because there are ways in which you clean, especially in a hospital and that is pan of the problem. We are going to teach where it is necessary. We are not going to continue in the old ways causing a whole lot of unnecessary cost

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for the City also raised questions about the lack of medical supplies. It has not been drawn to my attention that there is any lack of medical supplies. The amount of money that we need will have to be increased because we have increased the number of Units that have been opened.

The Honourable Member raised a question about the planning for the opening of new institutions. As the Honourable Members who have been Ministers know, we do not include monies in the Estimates until the institution is open. Mr. Chairman, I will have to say however that there are no design defects. In fact, the international consultants have commended the design and the design standards are above some of the hospitals found in North America. I am not going to spend any more time on that.
The Honourable Member *for* the City also raised a question as to why there are no technicians in Barbados who are able to service the sophisticated equipment in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The answer is well known to everybody in this Honourable Chamber. The equipment which we are using at the Queen Elizabeth 'Hospital, to which I refer, is equipment that forms part of a contract, part of a service. Therefore, servicing of the equipment is part of the contract and the persons who service the contract have to come from Puerto Rico or Martinique in some cases. If in fact a local person would service the equipment, then the contract for service would automatically come to an end. That is the reason why we have to bring the people from elsewhere. 4.00 p.m.

On the question of preventive maintenance, there was a PAHO study as part of the overall project for the development of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. That PAHO project dealt with the human resource development aspects of the project, which included a consultant on the engineering and the consultant examined and left a schedule for preventive maintenance at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We have been able to acquire the services of an additional engineer at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and as soon as the present engineer puts the current engineer to full use at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, I have reason to believe that the preventive maintenance programme which has been set....

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, put him in full use. That is to let the new engineer get the opportunity to exercise his skills and his ability. At the moment it is taking a little time for that to happen, and I am saying that as soon as that is dealt with perhaps the preventive maintenance programme will come on stream, but I think there is something that needs to be said. It is no point anyone raising questions about the expending of monies in circumstances - not when it has been properly done, but I am talking about spending more money - the Honourable Member for St. Thomas suggested that we should get some money and do some things. That is a very easy statement to make, but all who are involved at the moment know that money is the most difficult commodity to acquire, especially in the public sector:

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

Asides.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The confidence is free, the money is the problem. Anybody can have confidence.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is fully seized of most of the issues relating to the old landfill and the new landfill. I am going to agree with him that it was a question of management of the landfills. We have taken the trouble, as he himself knows, to take the new managers of the landfill and send them abroad for training. The complaint he had at first was that they have not been consulted since they have returned. I take the point, and more and better consultation will have to occur. He has a closer working relationship with the landfill than I have at the moment, because it is in his constituency and, presumably, he spends a lot of time at the landfill. I do not know myself all the intricacies which he would know about the landfill.

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Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I do pass by the landfill from time to time and I see some large rats from down Black Rock up there sometimes.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: And, Sir, we have been trying to eliminate the rats from Black Rock and we have been successful. It is the other rats we have problems with, but we are working on them. We are going to give them rat bait, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is fully seized of the efforts which we are making with the landfill. In terms of the non-coverage over the last 2 weekends, I can think of no reason why it was not done. We agreed with the residents of Arch Hall and the surrounding areas and under severe criticism we have ceased the reception of refuse at the landfill on Sundays. This has had an effect among some persons who choose to come and deposit some of their refuse in can roads. I feel that all Honourable Members of this Committee and the whole country should condemn those persons who feel that they can go with impunity and deposit their solid waste in can roads around Barbados. The security the Honourable Member is speaking about is a matter which I give him the assurance I will revisit I was under the impression that the arrangement which he spoke about was in place. He himself said it was working. We will revisit it and we will make sure that the security system works, because we are going to prosecute all those who fail to use the landfill in the proper way.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to ask the Minister one or two short questions. He need not get as agitated by the questions I will raise as he has by those raised by the Honourable Member for Bridgetown.

The first relates to asbestos. It is common knowledge that at least 2 major studies have been done in relation to the danger of asbestos to the users of buildings in Barbados, many in the housing estates of Barbados and also at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital itself, where we understand that the incidence of asbestos toxin is high, and also in the Treasury Building as we have heard in recent times. I also want to mention Bulkeley Factory, which falls squarely in my constituency.

As I said, Sir, 2 major studies have been done by the Ministry of Health in the last 2 or 3 years, but a problem continues and we have not been favoured with an update on what the Ministry of Health has been doing to reduce the high incidence of asbestos toxin, if you call it that, in Barbados.
The other question relates generally to the derelict state of a number of buildings, and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is one of them. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is beginning to look like a Third World hospital. For 30 years we have prided ourselves in the fact that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was a high class institution with the kind of environment that made sick people get better. I know that the Minister is always very anxious to jump to the defence of Departments under his portfolio, quite often without realising that that is not always a good thing, but the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is

beginning to look very derelict I have been there in recent times and I am a little surprised at some of the things I have been witnessing. I do not know when is the last time the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has been painted inside, but the walls are extremely dirty. I only mention that as one of the things, but I see the Minister in recent days has been boasting about what is happening at the St Joseph Hospital. All of a sudden all of Barbados must rejoice and be glad because a baby was delivered at the St. Joseph Hospital. Babies are being delivered on buses and all about the place. To say that the St. Joseph Hospital after $25 million and a 7-year gestation period has now delivered a baby and the Minister can boast about that, should tell us how bad things are with the Ministry of Health and the Minister. He deserves a medal for that 4.10 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I am a little worried about the increasing number of sick Government buildings. We are not really making sport about these things. I am dead serious because they are increasing. We have heard about the St. Leonard Schools for a long time and we have heard about the great cleansing but we have not had an update on the situation where over 2 000 young people are exposed to whatever is this unknown terror that lurks over the school. I believe the Minister should tell us something about it We have been hearing on and off of the Treasury Building, but in more recent times we hear the Magistrate Courts are shut down. No business can be done in the Criminal Magistrates Courts in town because of some problem that is causing respiratory problems with the people who work there. Perhaps the Minister can tell us something about that. You have to tell us something. Do not shrug your shoulders. The difference between the St. Leonard's school or the Treasury Building *or* the Courts is this. You can close the schools for a few weeks and make other arrangements or you can send home the people from the Treasury Building and do not pay a few vouchers - that would help the Government anyway because it really has no money to pay. That is not as serious a situation as in the Courts where at the moment the amount of traffic moving through those Courts for offences of every conceivable kind makes it very important that the Government do something to keep the Courts open. The cells in the Police Station are overcrowded. Glendairy is overcrowded and the slowing down of

the process in die Courts is lending a special insult to the injury that we are already suffering as a result of the high incidence of crime in this country.

One of the other points that I want to raise and want to get an answer, if the Minister will vouchsafe a reply, relates to the question of the imported Guatemalan sugar. Over the last weekend or so we saw that one of the noisier agitators in Barbados sent some sugar to one of the labs to be tested for contaminants to determine the quality of the sugar. We have had word that contaminants were s6 found in the sample that was tendered to the lab. One may wonder where the contaminant came from that went into the sugar. I am not getting into that. I am not in the process of getting into any fight between the members of that side and their cousins. That is a family dispute. That is a matter between them. If it happens that some contaminant was put in the wrong way into the sample, that is a matter for the household of the Democratic Labour Party. It has nothing to do with us.
To be more serious, Sir. One of the most current issues and one that concerns practically every household in Barbados is the question of sugar. Government owes us a responsibility and owes this country a duty of explaining whether the tests that were carried out by the lab proved negative. That is something to cause Barbadians households to be more than unduly concerned abaut the sugar they are using. The Government is tight-lipped. Everybody knows that the Minister of Health is a very voluble man. The Minister of Health is a man who is never at a loss for words. The Minister of Health is a man who is making the statement on incomes policy for Government which do not fall under his portfolio. We have not been hearing the Minister on the published reports of this analysis of this sugar sample and we want to hear something about it, particularly in view of the fact that I sat heie today and heard the Honourable Minister of Health talk about the spread of cholera in Latin America and the sugar we are importing is coming *from* Latin America. That heightens our concern about the quality of the sugar we arc using. So we would be glad if the Minister would tell us something about that

There is also the talk about the dumps. I have never quite understood if there has been a final resolutipn of the problem with the dump in Workmans. The Government has been taking one step forward and one backwards. It has been giving a lot of deadlines and dates and promises in relation to the pulverisation plant and the dump at Workmans in St. George. I have complained on occasion that I have had a lot of reports of rats in that area, in Workmans and Fairview, and the people arc very concerned about it. The rats they see arc pretty large. I am not talking about human rats, the Black Rock rats and those kinds of rats.

It is common knowledge that when the crop season comes along and you cut the canes that hordes of rats move out of the canefields and look for other places to sojourn. The problem is going to get worse not better at this particular period, particularly when one adds the fact that the Sanitation Service Authority is doing less than a perfect job in the collection of garbage.

We have a real problem there. We have too many things to be concerned with in relation to the health profile of Barbados than to have the additional problem of leptospirosis becoming greater than it is. These arc some of the things we want to hear about We arc not going to spend a lot of time until next week dealing with all the multitude of minor problems that exist in every area of the health services in this country.

These specific areas I have identified arc mentioned only because individual persons arc twinging them to my attention almost on a daily basis. I think the Minister would do us a great favour to comment on them.

One final word about the dumps. I am always amused when I hear we arc in a position in Barbados where the Government and others arc talking about the guarding of the dumps in Barbados. It is usually put in the context of preventing people from making illegal dumping but those of us with our ears to the ground will realise that there is another side to it. We have reached a stage where we are like Bangladesh and Mexico City where people, and I am not trying to be dramatic, but it is a fact, arc now raiding the dumps to see if they can find scraps of food like half of a rotten potato here and there, and that kind of thing. It is not only a problem of guarding the dumps to prevent people from engaging in illegal dumping... 4.20 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: One minute to conclude.

Mr. L. R. TOLL: ...but it is also to protect Barbadians from scrounging in dumps in Barbados to get small bits and pieces of uncooked food. I understand they arc raiding Chefette bins, Kentucky bins and in all these places because of the situation in which we find ourselves in this country. Things arc bad. When they reach that stage we can have additional problems that arc a direct cause of our lack of care in making sure that these kinds of unfortunate practices do not continue.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Mr. Chairman, I have to respond to the Honourable Member. He raised some very serious questions which require some responses. There was a study done by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health of the United States and we have made the report of that study available. Perhaps we should have sent one to the Leader of the Opposition. I now indicate that I will have a copy made and sent to the Leader of the Opposition and Honourable Members on that side. That study which was on asbestos was at 4 sites in Barbados, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Buckeley Factory, the Treasury Building and the St. Leonard's Girls' School.

In a sentence the concentration of asbestos fibres in the atmosphere were at levels not harmful to health. Now, we have sent a copy of that study to each newspaper in Barbados. We sent it to each radio station and frankly, one would have hoped that study would have been serialised in the

newspaper to give a wider dissemination of the information. We have seen some summaries in the newspaper which have been less than adequate because the persons who attempted to summarise them did not always, from the edited versions which appeared, understand the documents. I think it would have been useful if the document could have been serialised in the paper but I will give the Honourable Members a copy.

So far as the Magistrates' Courts are concerned, the Ministry has been called in to investigate and the Senior Medical Officer of Health for the North and the Chief Environmental Engineering Assistant are carrying out investigations which I hope to get a report on very shortly.

On the Guatemala sugar, I am glad that the Honourable Member raised some questions about the methodology used by what he described as one of the noisier agitators in Barbados. I am very concerned when a person of a certain level in the community behaves in a •manner which is questionable on an issue of such vital importance to the health of the community.
The Chief Medical Officer put out a statement which in its entirety refuted claims which had sought to be given about the quality of the Guatemalan sugar. All shipments of sugar off-loaded and one in every SO bags are sent to the Government Laboratory for analysing and the Public Health Labs to rule out bacteria and chemical contaminants. An analysis of the shipments in December showed no bacterial or chemical contamination.

In the statement which the Chief Medical Officer put out just last week, the total result was outlined. One can only say that so far as the Guatemalan sugar is concerned, all of the Governmental agencies including the Barbados National Standards Institution, that are supposed to report on the quality of the imported sugar reported none of the claims which one saw coming from the Lab. One cannot say that the Lab that tested that particular sample gave a false result. They tested what was sent to them. Therefore, if you pick up some sugar from anywhere, if you throw some sugar on the ground and rake it up, if you urinate in the sugar, if you do any of these things and send it to a lab, the lab will report on the sample that is sent to them.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: I could never suggest that. The thousands of tonnes that have been dumped would be the cumulative amounts that were found unfit for human consumption by the Public Health in each shipment and then sent to a place to be stored so that when the time came for dumping the cost of dumping would not be high. In other words, the sugar, as is done for every food item that comes into the Port, is inspected by the Public Health Inspectorate and what is not found fit for human consumption is condemned.

May I say that there was a raging statement by some people who laid claim to being experts about the recycling of the sugar that was found to be unfit I have never heard such arrant nonsense. When food is condemned the Public Health Inspectors have a routine method by which they ensure that it is not used by anyone. They pour oil and other contaminants on it They mark it for dumping. I find it difficult to understand how intelligent people in this country could have put out that 3 or 4 persons say that we could have recycled the sugar and then offer that us as a serious consideration. Anybody in Barbados by whatever name called who suggested that we should take sugar condemned by the Public Health Authority and recycle it for use by people as food cannot have the best interest of this country at heart They are miscreants, mischievous and misdirected and I have no time for that sort of foolishness.

Mr. Chairman, my friend raised the question about the Pulverisation Plant. The landfill was closed officially some time last year. I do not remember the exact date. The landfill that is next door to the Pulverisation Plant is no more. All we need to do with that now is to cap it The people in Workmans can rest assured that *under* no circumstances will any refuse be dumped on that landfill anymore.

The Pulverisation Plant itself will continue to be used, and should have been in use, to permit a rriastication, if you will, of the refuse from the South that would have reduced the volume going on to the new landfill. Unfortunately, 2 hammers that were supposed to be imported for use in that Pulverisation Plant have taken a long time to come and so we have not been able to utilise it
On the question of people raiding dumps, this is a psychological problem which exists all over the world. In fact, I recall when I was in Opposition I raised a tremendous amount of public outcry because there were photographs of persons raiding dumps when the Barbados Labour Party was in Government.
I recognise that is a well tested technique for Opposition parties but in fact there are persons who raid dumps. In order to prevent that, the new landfill has been enclosed. We have taken the trouble with assistance from PAHO to put a 6 ft or 8 ft. fence around the landfill. This is precisely to keep out those persons who may be considered landfill or dump raiders.

I think I have answered all the questions raised except for the derelict state of the buildings. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, in fact, had an uplift and there,has been refurbishing of the wards over the last few years. As to whether it has been painted outside, a part of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was painted late last year and the other part outside is to be painted. The cost for painting is included in the new Estimates. I promise the Honourable Member that he will, in fact, see an uplifted and painted Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

On the sick Government buildings, we are awaiting a report on the St. Leonard's Girls' School from the Centre for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia. For some unknown reason that repent which was scheduled to arrive here in the middle of January has not yet arrived. We have written som£ fairly strong letters to PAHO because if that had been a case where a laboratory in Barbados had delayed a report that long we would have been deemed to be under-developed and incompetent 4.30p.m.
The- Center for Disease Control has promised, according to the PAHO coordinator, to send a faxed copy two days ago. It has not yet arrived. We still await it We will continue to press for that.

So far as the St. Leonard's Schools generally are concerned persons seem to have settled down and a number of things which were called for to be corrected have been corrected and generally speaking there seems to be a certain comfort. The sick building syndrome however is alive and well - if you will pardon the expression - in the rest of Barbados and the Government buildings are no exception. It is a problem which comes from the last 30 or 40 years. Many buildings were not in fact maintained at the levels that were necessary. It is impossible for 2 maids allocated to a building, whether it is a school building or another Government building, it is very difficult for the ordinary cleaning by maids to be sufficient ufiless you are going to have an industrial cleaning of these areas from time to time. I cannot gainsay that fact but both Governments have had difficulty with finding the kind of finance that is desirable and necessary for that kind of quality cleaning.

My own recommendation is that we should have an agency within the Governmental sector that would have the necessary equipment to do the high quality cleaning that is necessary and/or consider putting out all cleaning to the private sector on contract with an understanding that they will have to keep the buildings commercially clean. But until then we are going to have to recognise that we do have a number of properties owned by the Government that cannot meet the standards that are necessary.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before the Honourable Member proceeds let me make the point,that discussion on this matter concludes at 4.4S p.m. and saving any subsequent necessity for the Government side to respond we will be closing at the close of your speech.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, over many years in this Parliament I have imposed a restraint on myself whereby I rarely, if at all, ever speak on health matters.
I remember last year, perhaps just about this time, I did however, intervene in the course of a Resolution for supplementary on Health and I made certain criticisms with respect to the Queen

Elizabeth Hospital and they were all stoutly refuted and denied by the then Minister of Health, who is still the Minister of Health. Subsequent events proved that I was absolutely accurate in the criticisms I made and I would like, Sir, to return to those criticisms today, not because I am interested in repeating myself but because in many respects the situation has worsened and because too the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is for many of us Barbadians the most important and the most prominent part of the health service. It is to the hospital that we look when we or our loved ones are sick and there is scarcely a single person in this Chamber who at any time cannot claim to have either a relative or a friend or someone close to them who is in the hospital.
In the last 3 years I spent a lot of time in the hospital because I have responsibility for quite a few old people, many of them in their eighties and as they get to the evening of their days many of them have had to spend long periods in the hospital. So I sometimes visit the hospital as many as 3 or 4 times a week and speak to the staff at all times and speak of the things which I am going to mention, mostly of my own knowledge.
Now, the first point I want to raise has got to do with many wards in the hospital. In a recent check as many as 8 one night happened to have only one nurse. I am going very slowly because if the Minister wants to deny these things, he must listen very carefully.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: On duty. And we have had a long-standing problem of absenteeism resulting from poor morale at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Sometimes in a given period upwards of SO to 60 people can be absent for all sorts of reasons but it puts an enormous stress on the management of the wards and the servicing of the patients.

Now to that, Sir, is connected the problem of a shortage of orderlies - male attendants - on the wards. And many nurses in recent times - and I am directly involved in some of these cases in dealing with the Attorney General and some of them may get as far as the courts - have been injured by patients.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I do not think you know all of your facts. I cannot call people's names in here neither will I talk about things that are before my desk in a professional capacity but the Minister must be careful about his sources.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: On a point of order. The Honourable Member has made the statement that many nurses are injured on duty. Now, Sir, if the Honourable Member is talking about ordinary everyday injury that everybody gets that is one thing, but the implication is that as a result of there being a shortage of staff persons are being injured. If the Honourable Member would be very careful I would like to hear specifically what he is referring to, Sir.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: If the Honourable Minister would be a little patient I would speak with great clarity so that he can fully appreciate the nature of the points I am making. I am saying that the wards are understaffed and it has to do with the quality of patient care that results. I am saying further that there is an insufficient number of orderlies on the wards to protect nurses in circumstances in which patients may be suffering from mental disorder of one sort or another.
I go further.

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

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I cannot let it go in the record. A single nurse has been injured in the last few years in the circumstances he is talking about.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just let me say though that I have given the commitment that if it is necessary for the Government side to respond I will allow that response.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: That has implications ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In that case then it means the Honourable Member will conclude at 4.45.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: That has implications, not only for the security of the wards but it also has implications for the load that some of the nurses on the ward have got to bear. Often they need male assistance to help them as they lift and as they do other things that males should rightly be doing. Now, let me move to another point, Sir, which is of great concern and that is that the Accident and Emergency Department has not lived up to its expectation and it is not functioning adequately. It is a problem and I have spent about 4 to 5 hours there about 3 months ago on a Saturday with an elderly cousin only to find that there is no privacy as you report to the nurse behind the wall the nature of the problem. That is heard by everyone.

The second thing is that there are a lot of people there who are non-emergency cases and there are a lot of people there who are just liming, as it were, and the wait was particularly long. I observed too that a lot of young doctors were responsible for care inside and that often they have to be referring to senior persons who were not on duty. On the whole the suggestion was that the expectation which we had for the Accident and Emergency Department was not being lived up to.
There is a particular problem of late and the Minister is not personally responsible. Gangs have on occasions gone into the hospital and they have damaged people who were there awaiting attention. It is not only a fact but I am personally involved in these cases so at least I speak personally of these matters. They have thrown around chairs and other things and persons have been damaged, one or two seriously.

Now that brings me back to the point of adequate security at the hospital generally.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now time has expired. I must put the question.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Not only in the wards but in the waiting area. I will use the opportunity of the Estimates to deal with a lot more of the problems concerning the hospital.

The question that Head 36 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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HEAD 42- MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS, COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION

Head 42 was called and passed. 4.40 p.m.

On the motion of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. E. E. GREAVES, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to Mr. SPEAKER the passing of one Resolution in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. P. M. GREAVES, seconded by Hon. E. E. GREAVES, the Resolution was read a first and second time and ,»as agreed to.

ORDER NO. 8 - A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
LAND REGISTRATION (SUSPENSION)
ORDER, 1993

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, you will recall that sometime in 1990 this Honourable Chamber approved the suspension of Sections 14 and IS of the Land Registration Act, Cap. 229 for a period of two years as to enable the Land Registration Department to catch up with the work in Land Registration. Those 2 years have expired .and the work still has not been completed. I think that I have to give the Honourable Members the background of all of this and to indicate that demarcations could not be done given the fact that .the systematic titles also had to be demarcated by the Chief Surveyor of the Lands and Surveys Department During the period between 1988 and 1990, the following sporadic and voluntary titles were registered:

Christ Church	1598
St. Andrew	28
St. George	195
St. James	564
St. John	121
St. Joseph	74
St. Peter	300
St. Philip	779
St. Thomas	362
St. Michael	1 496 168
St. Lucy	5685

From the foregoing registrations, demarcations were effected as follows: All the developments in Kingsland, Christ Church although all of the lots were not registered. The developments include Kingsland Gardens, Kingsland Crest, Kingsland Park, Kingsland Heights and Kingsland Terrace North. Because of the recent development in this particular area, I think the chances of encroachments were less and indeed this? proved to be so. This is why the Department was able to complete that particular area. The same goes for Gemswick Gardens in St. Philip where 40 lots were done. The Hilton property for 2 lots was done and the vesting of this will be done in a subsequent Resolution. Sion Hill has one lot completed and Fort George Heights, St. Michael has 51 lots. Because of the recency of that 'particular development, it was also relatively easy to do.

The Chief Surveyor in the Lands and Surveys Department has indicated that his department has been unable to solve all of the problems associated with the demarcation of sporadic titles because this exercise requires in his words "more staff and technological machinery". I am told there is always a problem in getting the required number of surveyors because there is so much work which has to be done. It is estimated that if we suspend the Order for a further period, in this particular instance in 3 years, there will be about 5 000 more sporadic and voluntary titles to be demarcated. It is anticipated that a suspension of a 3-year period would hopefully give them the time which they require to complete this work.

It is against that background, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Resolution relating to the Land Registration (Suspension) Order, 1993 do now pass.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it seems that the Government cannot get anything to work. This question of the registration of titles is an old problem. When the Barbados Labour Party was the Government between 1976 and 1986, we got CIDA to come in and give some technical assistance and to do a cadastral survey of Barbados and that survey has been available to the Government of Barbados for many years, and certainly for the whole time the Democratic Labour Party Government has been there. Very little has been happening in relation to these registrations of titles. The Minister of Housing comes with an old file from which he reads out a lot of what had transpired before, and we are getting the same tired'and lame excuses that we heard from his predecessor in office when they came and asked for a 2-year extension 2 years ago. 4.50 p.m.

Approximately 90% of all the titles we have heard read out by the Minister today relate to new

developments. It is very easy to have this kind of work done in relation to new developments, but if we continue at the pace at which we 'are going, certainly the rest of Barbados will spend more than a generation before we can make any mark at all on the problem in hand.

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The Minister is asking for 3 years this time in relation to 5 000 titles. He asked for 2 years before. He asks for 3 years this time now for another 5 000, so they are doing this in a kind of gradualist way that does not suggest that we are going to have the problem resolved once and for all for a long time into the next century. The Minister of Housing has very little to do. The Prune Minister has made sure that the Minister of Housing has a part-time job. There is no money to spend on housing. There is no money being spent in public housing in Barbados and we would have expected that the Minister would be using all this spare time on his hands to come up with a programme to get the people who have to do this work do it

Do not tell us there are no surveyors, that is what we heard already. There is a falling off in the need for the services of surveyors in Barbados, because of the Government's programme. The Barbados Labour Party will tell the Minister exactly how many land surveyors have been turned out by the Community College in the last 7 years and it is common knowledge that there is high competition among land surveyors in Barbados for work. To tell us that the Chief Surveyor again, after the 2-year respite he has had, comes now and says give me more time, 3 years this time, is to take the business in hand in a less than serious fashion.

The Minister will have to do a little better than that, Sir. I would like to have heard the Minister, instead of telling us what has been done in respect of the individual parishes, set out for us with some more specificity what are the plans for the various parts of Barbados, not only developments, so that certain people can plan what they propose to do. I have heard the Registrar of Titles, who is given a great deal of work to do in areas that perhaps are not directly related to his responsibility - there is a matter currently engaging the law courts in which the Registrar of Titles was pulled off his job literally *for* a few weeks to do work that should have been paid for by private people involving searches. The Minister is looking as if he does not know what is going on, and I suspect he does not. He does not know what is going on in that Department I do not blame him on this particular occasion.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: He does not work there. Every Minister of Government now is washing his hands, like Pilate, of all these things. The Minister of Health does not know anything about his Ministry, the Minister of Housing now is saying he does not work there.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: No, I did not say he said it, I am trying to put words in his mouth, Sir, but they do not know anything about these things. This is one of the more important new initiatives taken to redress a cumbersome system that existed for land registration in Barbados that has caused a lot of poor people who have their land transferred to or from to pay exorbitant fees to professionals - lawyers, land surveyors and everybody -and this system was made not only to make things tidier, but also to make it easy for people to transfer land in this country. It is an important initiative and one that should not be allowed to drag.

I would hope that the Minister would take this second time around in asking for a suspension order to light some fire under his Department and to impress on the Minister of Finance or the Minister for Establishments, whoever is responsible for these things, to give the Department the manpower to get the work done.

I understand that the answer to everything inside the Government nowadays is money, but this project can generate its own income. This is one of the few areas in Government where more activity can create more money for the Government to pay for the additional work that is required to bring it to a conclusion. I know that these things usually have a way of falling on deaf ears, but I have from the body language, because we cannot deal with the actual words spoken in asides, but the body language of the Honourable Minister suggests to me that on this occasion far greater seriousness will be given to this matter than has been occasioned in the past.
Thank you, Sir.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, before the Honourable Minister replies, I would like to follow up on something the Honourable Member *for* St George South spoke on. Today we are dealing with the suspension of the law in so far as it relates to sporadic registration. I think for clarity one should explain what we are really dealing with. Sporadic registration relates to areas which are not the subject of compulsory registration. There was always, as far as my memory goes, profound disagreement as to the role that the surveyors would play in the implementation of the changeover to a system of land registration in Barbados. 5.00 p.m.

In our time, as a result of this disagreement, we thought it best that we would *apply for* technical assistance from a country which had had a land registration system in existence in order to ensure in our breaking of new ground any difficulties which we had would be made easier to be solved by the fact we would have a cadastral survey of the whole island prior to the bringing into force of the Law. I am shocked, Sir, that only this week I received a memorandum - all lawyers in Barbados have received a memorandum - from the Registrar of Titles in which he is saying that even in the areas where there is compulsory registration that they are not yet, despite all of his efforts, in a position to have attached to the certificate of titles the requisite surveying documents. We have a real serious problem. We have a crisis in the system. So you have now a situation that not only in the areas which are not compulsory you are asking to extend that, but even in the areas where the only title you should have is a title which is on the register they are telling you that your certificate of title is incomplete because you do not have the accompanying survey document identifying the area of the land.

All of us who placed a lot of faith and who fought hard, both in the legal profession and in the other profession, to ensure that Barbados had a modern up-to-date system of land registration which would facilitate, as the Honourable Member *for* St. George said, the easy transfer and dealings with land, we are now in a position where the opponents can look at you in the face and tell you quite truthfully, "You see what we told you? It is not going to work because there is a feeling that they do not want to change what is in existence."

Many years ago, I did a lot of work in the British Virgin Islands when they converted their system from one in which there was a background not even of a proper Deeds Registry, with no surveying,' a meets and bounds area, in which the description of the land was by reference to a rock, a gully, a gut or something like that. They converted the whole of the country into a land registration system. There they used the cadastral map as the basis of the identification. When you applied for registration you had your own surveyor who provided you with a plot and he had to demarcate it in relation to the cadastral map.

I understand in Barbados our problem is that... Everything is centralised. You have to have a map which has been registered in the Government Surveyor's Office but also for the certificate of title there is something else that has to be done by the Government's surveyors office. I know that if anybody is buying land now and the plan is under 20 years old that they have to get a new plan and it has to be fitted into the grid system. It costs about $800.

I want to know why is it that we have reached the position where we have this tremendous surveying

bottleneck? It is a very serious problem. As the Honourable Member for St. George South pointed out, every day you get letters from surveyors. They do not advertise, but they tell you how they have opened a practice and can now be found at such a place. They let it be known that they have offices. Can there not be an agreement to get it done?

I will finish on one other point Let us not think that we have more than 100 000 titles in Barbados. I do not believe that we hav6 more than 100 000 titles. It is between 60 000 and 100 000. It is probably 80 000.1 would have thought that with modern methods of surveying that you would pace yourself, that you could think of a 15-year plan to get all the land in Barbados on the registry. You either have to make up your mind that you will do it by virtue of a geographic area and work on ail the titles in that area or you are going to* do it in any area as it comes up.

I know that in the Virgin Islands they did it in a geographical area and they had a team. They would go in the area for 6 weeks. Everybody had to go there and work on it. That is how it was done. I would like to know why we have reached this stage.

Hon W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think it is important that we speak on this one. As was said by Members on the other side, I think Barbados is losing a golden opportunity to set an example of how a cadastre should be compiled. Those people who have an interest in the science were looking forward to Barbados for 2 reasons. Because of the nice flat terrain in most of Barbados and the distinctive parcellation of plans in Barbados it was thought ideally suited for a cadastral compilation by the registration system.

My view is, Mr. Speaker, and it was advocated, that Barbados could have been completed by both a systematic compilation as well as a sporadic compilation going hand in hand. The rationale was that there are some 4 000 parcels of land that come on to the system yearly. I am at a loss to find out why some 10 years after the system was thought about that there are still areas in Barbados where the tertiary control is not in. There are 2 strategic definitions as far as land registration is concerned - this is the legal definition of the parcel of land as well as the geographic definition of the parcel of land. Under the system the whole of Barbados has a series of points starting from the primary trigonometrical control points, where you see the little red tops on hills. These are the main points on which Barbados was surveyed. That control is then carried along, the main road where we had intended to have geometrical control every quarter of a mile tied back into the primary control system. The reason for that was - let us take the systematic compilation that we are seeing now - that the Lands and Survey team intended to work on the systematic compilation, go into an area, demarcate it as a registration area, work on that area right through and tie it on to a national grid. But at the same time the tremendous amount of work being done by the private surveyors was intended not to be lost, so work coming on would be tied on to the national grid by coordinating from the tertiary control the individual parcels of land that would allow the cadastral sheets to be built up as a jigsaw puzzle. With the modern surveying equipment

and the accuracy of that equipment there is no reason why, if the country was properly broken down with the number of young surveyors controlling it on to the national grid with the cadastral sheets already demarcated, that the two should not be plotted hand in hand. 5,10 p.m.

My feeling, Mr. Speaker, is that there seems to be a lack of coordination between the private sector and the public sector in this exercise. For some reason the public sector had been trying to keep the private sector out of the exercise and wanting more control of it Let us look at it, Mr. Speaker. What is the worst you can have? You now have registration of deeds. Even if you do the sporadic system and you do it by trying to coordinate and give it a qualified tide as far as the geographical demarcation is concerned, it would still be a better title than the Registration of Deeds we now have. So there is no

excuse not to bring on the sporadic maps by allowing the present surveyors when they do a survey to tie it on to the national grid and have Lands and Surveys Department plot it on to a cadastral sheet and build up that sheet by years and time. The technology is known. The instrumentation is available. Surveys are available. Therefore, I do not see why Barbados did not take the opportunity to establish itself as one of the leading lights in this.

Mr. Speaker, it even goes simpler than that. Let us take the country districts with all of those sugar estates. Photo-geometric methods are now good enough that a system of aerial photographs could plot every single plantation by photo-geometric methods. All you need do is to demarcate the boundaries with a very cheap demarcation and when the aircraft flies over it, it would pick it up. You would then coordinate the points and plot it on. This technology has been known for 20 years. It is not new technology.

I just believe, Mr. Speaker, there is not enough resolve, application, coordination between the private and public sectors and not enough understanding for the system to grow. Therefore, I think the Minister should not give them any'further extension than the present 3 years they have. Send them back to the drawing-board and make them come with a system which would allow them to capture both the systematic system they are doing and the sporadic system that the hundreds of surveyors in Barbados are now willing to do, but cannot do.

Thank you.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I think the contributions of Honourable Members to this debate are valuable. My only regret is that the public servants who are charged with the responsibility for carrying these developments were not in the Chamber to hear the points which were made. Indeed, Sir, when I took over the

Ministry of Housing and Lands and this matter came up my immediate reaction was that since they were indicating that they were having some problems, they should concentrate on one geographic area, finish that and then move to another area. I cannot get up here on the floor of the House and say what I would like to say but let me just say that I too am dissatisfied in the turn this particular matter has taken. I would just like to make "a public appeal to the persons concerned to cooperate and recognise that this is a national issue and not a personal one. I have said that over and over again.

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Did you hear what I say? I do not want to say anymore. I am sure if you were following what I was saying you would understand where I was coming from. It is difficult for me on the floor of the House to say what I would really like to say. I am just hoping the persons concerned would recognise this is something which was put in place, as the Honourable Member for St George South has indicated, to make access to titles easier. There are real problems in terms of accessing titles in Barbados/The whole idea, as I said, was conceived to make it much easier. Unfortunately, we get all sorts of problems which are raised. I am told, for example, that in Barbados people move line marks. Even after surveyors put down line-marks they shift them around. I am told, for example, that houses have been built through watercourses. Houses are located where they should not be. All those kinds of problems are raised and these seem to hinder the progress of this particular exercise. The points which have been made by the Honourable Members I will certainly take into account. They coincide to a large extent with the views which I hold. I am grateful that the House sees we are making an effort and, hopefully, at the end of the 3-year period we would have been able to complete the work which still has to be done.

I would want to say that technical assistance was obtained from CIDA to start the programme. That assistance has continued up to this point. The Chief Surveyor has indicated to me, however, that he

has received communication from CIDA indicating that this assistance will soon cease. What they are seeking to do now is to upgrade some of the equipment which they have to ensure they have equipment which is necessary to carry the programme through to finalisation.

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

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

3070

ORDER NO. 12: THE EMPLOYMENT LEVY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1993

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, in 1991 the House amended the Employment Levy Act to give effect to the establishment of a public employees fund into which half of 1% of the contribution made by an employee or self-employed person under the Employment Levy Act should be paid into a Public Employees Fund. This Fund is administered by the Accountant General to be used exclusively for the payment of benefits to redundant public employees.

Originally the amending Act had a life up to March 31, and its life was subsequently extended indefinitely by Act No. 10 of 1992. The principal Act will be repealed effective December 31, 1993 by virtue of Act No. 26 of 1992 and thereafter there will be no deductions towards the Employment Levy. The intent of the original amendment was to pay severance to public employees within the meaning of the Public Employees Pensions Act, the Casual Employees Act and those employed temporarily within the meaning of the Pensions Act The expression "public employees" contemplated payments to those persons.

The Government proposes to advance funds to the Transport Board to finance the first instalment of severance due to be paid on March 15, 1993 to severed Transport Board workers and to give effect to this decision. The definition of the term "public employee" is being clarified by this Bill. If is anticipated that the Transport Board will repay the Fund after the sale of any assets in the process of privatisation. "Public employee" for the purpose of this Bill is set out at section 2(b) and includes an employee of a body corporate established by law for public purposes which are funded wholly, or in part, by moneys provided by Parliament. And this will avoid any doubt that the Fund can be used for this purpose envisaged. 5.20 p.m.

The Fund to February 1993 had collected $9.1 million. The amount disbursed from the Fund to February 1993 was $5.4 million. The balance in the Fund at February 1993 is $3.7 million and there are some outstanding commitments - in other words persons who have not yet collected their severance - which amounts to just under $100 000. It is projected that to December 31 the Fund would have collected $5.4 million and this is based on an average quarterly intake of $1.8 million. The amount due to the Transport Board severed workers is $6 673 040.29 and as I said the proposal is to pay half no later than March 15 and half no later than June 15, 1993. With those few words, Sir, I beg that this Bill be read a second time.
Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the only reason why the Opposition is accommodating the Government by dealing with this Bill at this time is because we believe that the Transport Board workers in particular and other Government employees who have been severed for several months, some for well over $1V_2$ years, deserve to be paid their moneys. That is the only reason why we are accommodating the Government. We are not however condoning the lax and scandalous practice of bringing Bills arid major pieces of legislation and Resolutions without giving the required notice as mandated by the Rules of this House.

This is not the first time this has happened. It happened last week when we had to deal with a Resolution to borrow $12 million from overseas sources to help the Government finance the day-to-day running of this country's affairs. In my view it speaks clearly to the inefficient manner in which the Prime Minister is presiding over this country, the disorder in the Government, their failure to recognise what is required and when things must be done; and it adds up to the complete lack of confidence which the workers and the other people in this country have been manifesting in this Government from time to time.

It is shocking that the Government should only now realise that it has to go to the Employment Levy Fund to pay workers from the Transport Board whom they have severed several months, and as I have already said, in some cases well over a year ago.

It is absolutely shocking. What is even more disgusting is that some of these severed workers would have contributed by way of levy to the very money that is now going to be paid back to the workers themselves. That is disgusting.

I said in here, Sir, when the Employment Levy (Amendment) Act was brought in that I found it repugnant to ask the workers to pay for their own severance. It is against ILO practice and good industrial relations as practised all over the democratic world. This is an anti-worker Government bringing an anti-worker measure with which none of the workers can be satisfied. It is about time that the workers understand that they do not seetn to have the support that they need from those representatives who also represent them at the trade union level.

Let me spell it out again. Of the $3.7 million that still remains in that Fund, some of these workers would have contributed something to that $3.7 million before they were severed. And those workers are now to be paid from the money that they paid into the fund. That is what is happening. I have to spell it out in simple terms.

The Honourable Member for St. John says *sotto voce* that "that is foolishness. It is a fact that Transport Board workers who have been severed in the last few months would have contributed to this very Fund themselves.

3071

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I was always of the impression that comments made *sotto voce* were supposed not to be part of the record and the Honourable Member for Christ Church ...

Mr. SPEAKER: I would suggest to the Honourable Member not to put it in.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Precisely, he put it in by saying that the Honourable Member for St. John said that he is talking foolishness and therefore I think that should be struck from the record.

Mr. SPEAKER: A fair request because I...

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I have no problem with withdrawing the reference to the Honourable Member. I should say a Member, Sir. I have no problem.
I am also against the Government paying the Transport workers in 2 tranches. The workers have suffered long enough. The Severance Payments Fund clearly provides that when there is a deficiency in the fund that that deficiency should be made up from moneys voted for the purpose by this Parliament. And the ILO expert who carried out the last actuarial review concluded that the Fund has been deficient since 1990. The Minister says, no, Sir. I have read it into the Report. The Fund was deficient from then and there were tinpaid claims. Therefore, the Government must have known a long time ago that with more and more people being thrown out of employment by the Government statutory boards that there would have been a further deficiency in that Fund. Government should have made adequate provision. What is more, Sir, the Transport Board up to October 1992,1 think it was, owed over $16 million with an additional $3 million in interest. We are going to show you UIQ paper. We have a copy of the paper. The Government had to pay off that amount. That is the position. 530 p.m.

Sir, the Transport Board has, on the Minister's admission accumulated a further deficit to the National Insurance Board. The Minister said that as of February this year it was close to $2 million. I think he said that it was $1.6 million. Now that is absolutely shocking. The Minister has not said that he has asked the Chairman or members of the Board to resign. How are you going to make these persons show a sense of

accountability when they are going to allow the funds to go into deficit and, what is worse when they permit the Board to collect money from the
workers and not pay it into the Fund? That is what has happened. I am telling the Minister that this has occurred in both the National Insurance and the Severance Payments Fund and yet no heads have rolled. Not one head has rolled for this way of conducting the business of the Board. This is not the only statutory board, where this slackness has
happened.

Workers have been severed from other Government statutory boards, including the IDC, and have not received their money up to now. When you see the people marching and protesting, it is because they are hungry, they are without the means of maintaining their families and they are suffering because this Government has treated them scandalously. Those points must be made very clearly. They have been treated worse than the old plantocracy used to treat their workers before we abolished slavery and before 1937 when we had the riots in this country. We are going back to a pre-1937. There are people who have to go and fight now for their rights. They have to fight the very Government that they have elected in order to get their rights. That is what is happening in Barbados today. When we speak about it, we have to speak in these terms so that people will clearly understand that these bad practices have crept in. The Government should feel bad as a Government coming down here to increase a hospitality and traveling vote for Ministers to travel to Australia whilst workers cannot get their severance money to feed their children, pay for their electricity, to pay rent and their water rates.

Sir, I am worried, too, that the workers who are still employed have to pay for the severance for their out-of-work fellow workers. The Government said this will be up to December 1993, having regard to the provisions of the Miscellaneous Repeals Act passed in this House in 1992. But I would not be surprised if the Government comes once again and fool around with this bit of legislation and extend it further. I will not be surprised, Sir. Do you know why I would not be surprised, Sir? Because the Government's recent household survey statistics have shown that unemployment is now at the level of 25 per cent. The last time the Prime Minister spoke on the unemployment figure has placed the figure at 23.1 per cent. Why will they not publish the statistics Ulat are now available to show that there has been a further increase to 25 per cent in unemployment in Barbados? This is the highest that we have ever had in the history of this country.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am telling you what the Government's statistics are saying: that unemployment has risen further. Do you know what that means? One of every 4 able bodied persons who wants work and is willing to work is out of work in this country. Yet I am being told that Government's programme under the I.M.F. has been

a success over the last 18 months. Could there be any greater human tragedy than taking people and throwing them on the down heap as though they must be disposed of as garbage? That is the position we have in Barbados tonight This was caused by the Democratic Labour Party and presided over by a Prime Minister who constantly tells us how successful he has been in managing the IMF Programme. Human tragedy and human suffering will eventually lead to drastic acts being taken by people.
We have performed our duties as a responsible Opposition. The Government must understand that it cannot continue to hammer away at people in this way particularly the poorest of the poor in the society and expect the continued support and a peaceful country to be in place forever. We must understand that quite clearly, Sir. Whilst we are going to support the measure so that the poo-workers can get back some money in their hands, yet we must express our disgust at the length of time that it has taken to pay these workers, our disgust too at the fact that the workers are being asked to fund their own severance and our disgust further, Sir, at the fact that they are paying the Transport Board workers in 2 stages.

I must also make this point, Sir. The severed workers are also not being paid their fair compensation. I

am going to explain why I hold this view, Sir. A supervisor who has worked for IS years at the Transport Board and who is now severed is to be paid his severance payment for that period of time- and he is being given the same notice period of 4 weeks as a conductress who has being working there for *5* years. It is wrong in law. The law has always made it absolutely clear - and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central should listen to me on this, Sir - the law of Barbados has always made it clear that the time for notice is determined on die length of service, the status that you have held and the opportunity to get a job in the future. Those are the 3 .main considerations. If you read any of the wrongful dismissal cases decided by the Courts, you will find that people who have had long service are given a longer notice period than people who have had shorter service.
Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I am not talkirig about unfair dismissal cases. We have no Unfair Dismissal Act. Let me tell you why some dismissals have been wrongful? Some of the workers have gone to work only to be given a letter of summary dismissal. That is wrongful dismissal. You should be given reasonable notice. The Honourable Member for St. John is looking at me because he knows that I am right on this. He knows that I am right.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I have known that workers at Government statutory boards have been given less than the requisite notice. I am saying that in those circumstances that constitutes wrongful dismissal and the persons snouid be paid fair compensation for the requisite notice period. They cannot all be paid for 4 weeks, Sir. What is unfortunate is that some of these dismissed workers do not pursue their rights-through the Law Courts. In my view, there can be no doubt about this at all. We have argued it in the Courts. There are decided cases on the matter. It is a clear legal principle.
Sir, once again I am appealing to the Government to review the case of each person who has been severed from any of the statutory corporations and ensure that each person is given not only the redundancy or severance payment but the relevant amount of money representing the relevant period of notice to which he or she is entitled in law. Only then can I feel satisfied that we are doing by the workers what we should properly do and what we are required in law to do, Sir.

As I have said before, we have reached a sad* stage. No doubt next week we will have a lot to say about proposals to get rid of the scourge of unemployment in this country. None of us can be happy about this type of measure which comes at this time when we are seeing so much human tragedy - and suffering from growing unemployment in Barbados. In short, close to 30,000 people are out of work tonight in Barbados. 5.40 p.m.

I do not want to guess at the figure. It is 25%. If they tell me the work force is 120 000, that is a lot of people in Barbados out of work. There is massive social dysfuntioning of the society compounded by growing social upheavals. I can hear nothing positive coming, Sir. Can you imagine unemployment in Barbados is now higher than unemployment in Jamaica? I cannot understand how this Government can feel in any way satisfied to be presiding over an economy in which we have moved from difficulties to disaster to devastation in a short period of 3 years. Every word I said in this House and outside since 1989 has been proved to be correct. I do not feel happy about it. It has been proved up to the hilt that this Opposition was right, that we forecast exactly what would have happened with the economy and the tragedy to which we would have come in this country.

The Honourable Member for St Michael West is looking like he wants to make a little room between himself and the others. He is therefore coming up with new proposals. But it is a great tragedy for all of us, Mr. Speaker. We cannot be happy. There should be no Barbadian tonight who can feel happy about the tragic circumstances that have overtaken this country, and

about the tragic, almost cruel, manna* in which we have treated the workers of this country by the sort of

policies we have implemented to destroy, in my view, their confidence in themselves and their ability to remain as human beings.

Mr. Speaker, with regret I have to support this measure.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the Government came here today seeking to make funds available to the Transport Board to pay severed employees from that Board. I want to say from the beginning that the Barbados Labour Party can feel proud on this occasion, because it has recommended to Government what should be done and I want to compliment the Government for taking advice from the Opposition. They are beginning to learn. I have heard people who are supposed to be spokesmen for some other political nuisance party advising severed workers what they should do, what legal steps they should take and all that sort of thing. I must say also on this occasion I have heard the Union representing the workers of the Transport Board, giving them advice as well. I disagree with both of them, the political party and the leadership that was recommending certain action and also with the Barbados Workers' Union. I will say why.

I felt that provision was made for the employer, *or* the Government, to deal with this situation. I did not think it was necessary for the people or for Government to go to the National Insurance Board for funds. I know that one political party and its leader recommended that people go to the National Insurance Board and even take the corporation to court.. I disagree with that, because as I said, and as it was reported in the newspaper, all Government had to do was to come to Parliament, seek a supplementary and give it to the Transport Board to pay the severed workers. It is as simple as that. Last Tuesday's newspaper recorded it. My contention was that the Government had always subsidised the Transport Board, the subsidy was to meet expenses incurred by the Board and severance was an expense incurred by the Board. That is why I said I would find no difficulty and it should not have been difficult for Government to come to Parliament and seek funds in order to give to the Transport Board. That is why I said it was tantamount to harassment of the workers when Government has taken so long.

I am going to say something. While I recognise that the Government does not have the funds, I must also admit that it would have been necessary to bring an amendment to cover the source of funds Government is now making available. When the Employment Levy Bill was passed, it did not make provision for people working in Statutory Corporations. I was quite clear on that, nobody could have confused me. Therefore I knew that Transport Board workers and people working in Statutory Corporations could not draw down from that employment levy and it was wrong and misleading to suggest to them or to convey any impression to them that they could go and line up and get this money from National Insurance. I am fed up with the way some politicians conduct their business with the public nowadays. You send people to National Insurance when you know that that should be the last resort. The only, way you should send people to National Insurance to claim severance is when you are satisfied that the corporation, the company, the firm or the employer is broke and gone into liquidation. 5.50 p.m.

I have contended that this matter with the Transport Board is not similar and does not stand on the same footing as that of the sugar workers. That is why I said you should have come before. It is just a matter of finding where the money should come from. Half a loaf is better than none. I am not so happy that part of the money is paid to them, although I am going to accommodate the Government. I want you to understand that this is grist to the mill, but I feel that half a loaf is better than none. I am not one who will tell the people all or nothing because there is nothing out there.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East were ordered to beexpunged from the record by Mr. SPEAKER.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, since November last year I raised on the Floor of this Parliament the whole question of severance for the Transport Board workers. I did ask whether the Transport Board workers who were severed were paid and I asked the Government to say how soon they would be paid. Let's be clear. I do not want anyone to steal what should be given to us on this side. The question was asked how soon and I was not even treated with the common courtesy of being told how soon.
Only today I checked and heard the money is for it. If the Minister did not say, I would not even have

known because the Addendum does not even say that. Mr. Speaker, if the Minister claims at sometime that he said it I want to say that I felt the Minister having been aware that there was a Parliamentary Question should have answered it in here. Treat your colleagues with respect. It is a Parliamentary Question that was made November 10,1992 and it has never been answered, but now I am going to hear by some other route. It was asked by the Member for St. Michael South East, yours truly. If the reply had come, we would not have had those marches because the people would have known what the position is and the

Minister would not have gore -?: record and have misled ihe people by telling them to register at the National Insurance Department. Tac Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation said a couple of weeks ago in response to some query that the workers should go and directed them to the National Insurance Department

You have to be careful with what you say in the morning and what you say in the evening and I am saying that the Minister, on reflection, will realise that he made a blunder. If there was no blunder, all I can say is that I would take credit because if I did not say what I said in calling on the Government to come to this Honourable Chamber to get the money that the Government would not have taken this course. So I am glad that the Minister on sober reflection has recognised their grief.

I am saying that these things could have been avoided and that is why I am telling the Government that they must listen to this Opposition. It is not an irresponsible Opposition. Sometimes we make suggestions to them which I know as a Government they feel that they should not implement; but we know what is right and, on this occasion, the Government has bowed to the requests of. the Opposition.

I am concerned about something else. You are taking funds from this Employment Levy. I want the Government to understand what the other questions are that will follow. The last time I remember the Honourable Member for St. John saying that some of the money was paid out to those workers who were severed from the Public Service. It means therefore that there will still be people who are yet to be paid.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of elucidation. The point that is being made is that of the claims that are known there is a very small portion of the existing funds which will go to settle them. By and large, nearly all of the claims for severance have been settled out of the Fund already.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I will take that explanation from the Minister. That goes a little further. I remember during the debate last year I tried to extract from the Minister of Finance how much money was owed, what was the total sum and whether the money being collected was adequate and what would be the excess. I want you to understand why I asked those questions. All of them were relevant because I wanted to know. You see, you have collected more money as I am suggesting now. I said that based on the claims that I heard were outstanding - the total sum, Government with this Employment Levy would have realised more money. What I said then has proven to be correct. Otherwise you would not have the excess money to pay the Transport Board workers the first tranche. You see, that is a matter of asking questions and sometimes when we ask questions we know why. Now here it is, more money was collected than what was required. But it is serving a means and I have no quarrel with that now. I would hope in future that we do not have to do that and have to make any adjustments, that what we ask for should be as accurate as possible so that we will not have to make certain amendments or changes as we have sought to do today to accommodate these Transport Board workers.

I would think that the workers of this country must be careful. I am going to say this publicly. There are some people out there who are seeking short-term, cheap, political mileage misleading the workers of this country. The time has come when somebody should tell the NDP and those people that what

they are doing is wrong. This country calls for responsible leadership and I think it is doing the workers an injustice when you go out there and mislead them.

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I have to take them to task, too. I will criticise the Government and I am criticising the Government but when I see irresponsible people who say they are leaders of a political party going out there and telling the people to go to Court and to go this place and to march and do not march with them, and do not work, I am worried about that. What message are you sending the people? That is wrong. That behaviour is wicked. I am not referring to anybody in here. The workers deserve leadership.

I want to go on further. Since this Resolution has to deal with the Transport Board workers I also want the Government to consider the question of retraining and retooling those persons. It is all knitted together, Mr. Speaker. You cannot separate them. You are making money available to persons but I have not heard any mention of how and how many people have been retooled or retrained and what they are doing. I am following very closely and have been asking these questions time and time again. What is the success rate? How many people from the Transport Board - there are about 1 300 who have been severed...

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: You see, you are not counting what Don Blackman put on. It is all right with me. Discarded them when they sent the ones from the Ivy home first - 600. I know the numbers.

Asides. .

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

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Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I have asked these questions in here. I do not want any asides from anyone. I want answers to my questions. I want those answers in here. It is tied up with the severed workers. Some of them could not go to training because they do not have the money to pay bus fares. The National Training Board does not provide bus fares for trainees of this sort. 6.00p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the cross-talk and interruptions are necessary at this stage. I would give people the opportunity to be relaxed in their debate but not to disturb the Member from speaking. Continue.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The thing about it is that some people would want to take credit for things they do not deserve credit for. They have the ability to initiate things and would not but yet they want to take credit for it. I am saying this is a valid question. It is reasonable to enquire how many people have been trained. If I am to learn that 200 people out of 600 were retrained, I want to know what has happened to the other people. We have to think about their concerns. They were workers. They are now unemployed. We want to know about their welfare. How are they existing in these times? It is what is called "caring," and a Government must be caring if it is to succeed. Understand that is what I am asking about.

I am going to say this too because it means that in the future those who are left at the Transport Board will be looking over their shoulders at any time. That is all it is. The question is, when are you going to sever the other people? Severance of additional workers will have to take •place if the

Government's policy, as enunciated by the Prime Minister in his last statement here is to be realised. The Prime Minister made a statement before this Honourable Chamber in which he said that the Transport Board will be privatised. That means that the staff will be cut as well. I want to go a bit further and ask some other questions. I want to know how many workers are expected to go on the bread line. How soon will you pay them? It is serious because if those workers are severed by March 31, you can have additional people unemployed and an additional bill so the same $6.6 million that is now due to those several workers could remain the $6.6 million when the additional people have gone. You can understand that logic? So we would have gotten nowhere.
We still have to look for money so do not let us smile and think we have got out of this situation. We have to look down the road because unemployment with the severance money will increase as a result of further dislocation of the Transport Board. These are the problems, so let us face up to them. Do not let us smile today. Let us look down the road to see if we will not have to come back in here with the same problem. I am asking

Government even as it goes up to the end of the financial year to make provision for this now so that we would not have to come in here and to deal with it again.
I am going to say this. One of the things I will be asking Government to do is to make sure that it meets its promises. I am going to support this Resolution with the understanding that the Government is committed and it will honour its commitment by paying the workers on the stated date. Under no other conditions will I support this Resolution. As I said, I will support it because I believe . people are out there who cannot pay their mortgages, send their children to school and meet their debts. I am in sympathy with them.

While this is so the Government must not smile and think that they have won a battle. Please do not sit down on your laurels because workers are out there. I can articulate some of their views and I am sounding what is out there. I want you to understand that you are going to face it as a Government. Do not ignore it. That is why I call on Government to do everything in its power to retain some of the buses. I am asking the Minister. He always implements the things I suggest to him. I know that. He is a good student That is by my standard. I do not know if he could get a pass by anybody else's standard but I will give him a pass, 4 out of 10 - good marks.

Mr. Speaker, I would like, on a very serious note, the Government to take the union representing those workers into its confidence and deal with these matters differently, contrary to what we have heard. We have heard about the consultation that took place, or is supposed to take place between the workers' representative and the Transport Board. Much to the surprise of the union, things have been done. I do not want to see that sort of thing. It does not augur well for industrial relations in this country. If the workers have a representative body, they should be consulted at all levels. In an issue as important as the privatisation of the Transport Board, the union must be involved at the highest level. I am not making out a case for the union but I feel it is only fair. It would augur well for the stability of this country in future. We are seeing too much of this.

I have spoken out vigorously against the workers' representation because it seems to me they have sat down and allowed this to go too far. I tried to get them to understand that I would not sit idly by and allow this to happen or allow them to sit down and contribute to their own .demise. I want to see trade unionism in Barbados prosperous. I am going to criticise them whether they like it or not whenever I feel they are not projecting the image I feel they should. I am responsible enough and they know me. I have sat with them as a former Minister of Labour. I know something about industrial relations. I would not do anything to destroy them.

I am seeing some ugly signs on the horizon that employers, especially at the Transport Board, have ignored the unions. I am glad to see they realise now that they must involve them. It must stop under this or any

other administration. This son of thing is bad for the industrial climate of this country. If this country is going to recover economically, it means we have to understand what is meant by the employer, employee and Government relations, the tripartite body. We must have them working. People out there are asking questions. That is why the workers went marching from the Transport Board. You know there is something significant about this; that for the first time I saw people bandying themselves together walking without any advice from the union or anybody at all and paying scant regard to anybody. But other fledgling people are doing that. That is bad for this country. Say what you like, it is a sign of unrest in this country. Do not ignore it. There is something wrong. I used to hear the former leader of the Barbados Workers' Union condemn wildcat strikes. This is a different kind of wildcat strike.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: You do not understand what I am talking about? Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that certain things do not really concern them. I am concerned as a Member of Parliament that I am seeing people out there not organised by a union but walking about bandying themselves trying to protect the rights of workers. What is even worst those persons had no right doing that by themselves. They can criticise me. My back is broad on these matters.

The union had better understand there is some faith the workers have lost in the union. They might have lost faith too in the political parties. I know it is a reflection on the unions in the first place. I know that people would be ready to defend the action of these workers. It does not mauer what they say today. It was the Barbados Labour P? :y and the Shadow Minister for Transport and Works t!" it recommended this action be taken.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The Barbados Workers' Union did not recommend it. The NDP did not recommend it. Nobody recommended it I heard the H6nourable Member for Christ Church East Central say that he advised - I heard him on the programme saying he advised the workers at the primary stage to fill out forms. I heard him last week. 6.10p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are putting something into the record by the Member who has not spoken which is not privy to the Chamber.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I heard it, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: You should say where you heard it.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: It was not part of this record. I heard it I take your point, Mr. Speaker. Because if the Honourable Member had said it here I would have got up and objected to the statement on a point of order. What I am saying is that I have heard these things and I am quite aware of what is going on. People are saying that this Opposition is complacent. It is not complacent when it can recommend to the Government something that the Government can do or can take the initiative in doing. That is all we can seek to do. I am saying that the Barbados Labour Party must take credit for this and I welcome it but I want the Government to honour its pledge to pay the remainder of the money. I do not know how much more money will be available or where the rest of money will come from. I hope that the Minister will be kind enough to tell us where the remainder of the money will come from. We know where this is coming from. I want to know in advance if provision is going to be made in the Estimates to pay these people or if some other source will have to be found. That is what I want to know and these are questions which any reasonable person would ask.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I said we are supporting this Resolution as the Leader of the Opposition said but we understand the circumstances. I would have preferred all of the money. It is a long time the people were waiting and 1 would have preferred all of the money to be paid at the same time but I understand the Government's financial position and therefore I am going to give in to that. I can accommodate the

Government in this regard.

I do not think Honourable Members on that side should be mad because I say that. We have to accommodate them and therefore, Mr. Speaker I hope that this will go a long way to alleviating some of the tension that is prevalent among these severed workers. I have heard them believe you me. I speak this way because I am in touch with people on a daily basis. I am very close to the ground and all I seek to do is to let Government benefit "from what is being said abroad so that we can come in here»as a mature Parliament and deal with these matters and these issues as they should bs dealt with.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, I find it a bit tiresome, quite frankly, listening to political harangue on matters that are, I think, a bit nnre technical than some people would want to make them
First of all, Sir, the quesion of the Leader of the Opposition giving advice about bgal severance matters. Sir, I would weigh first of all whethr I would take that advice because the Leader of t'u Opposition is more

to giving the advice to the employers than to the employees. He might be a little out of practise giving advice to employees so we would have to be very careful in listening to any advice coming from that side.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member is not in a position to know to whom I give advice because I have not had the pleasure of giving him advice on anything in his life yet but I do advise a lot of employees.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Sir, I made a qualitative statement that I will repeat. The Leader of the Opposition is more accustomed to giving advice to the employers than to the employees but he has a mixed practice. He gives some advice to employees but when you advise one employer who runs a massive corporation, there are not too many of them around, so you only have to advise 5 of them in Barbados and you are advising a lot of people. The employees are thousands so on matters of legal advice about separation packages I would listen very carefully, Sir, to the advice that is given me in that direction. If the advice that is going to come from the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East is the advice he is going to give in here I cannot take it at all. If he is saying to this Honourable Chamber that if people are made redundant and they come to the Barbados Workers' Union that it would be wrong, for the first thing they are supposed to do, is to make sure that they fill out that necessary form. I hope they do not come to you for advice on these matters. Because all you are doing is providing a safety net in case something does not happen as it should and that is the advice that any lawyer on your side would give and that is what the Barbados Workers' Union has been doing for the •longest time.

I will try to put some of these things in context. The first thing is, Sir, that when the Transport Board workers were made redundant, and they were not made redundant all at one time, they went out in groups starting perhaps about March 1992 and then going off on 3 monthly intervals and so on. Therefore at the time of severance being paid some people might not have been out for more than 3 months, some might have been out for 6, some might be 12 and so on. So the fact is that all of them were out for a long time. But, Sir, while they were out there were 3 000 persons who qualified for severance in Barbados and some of the lawyers on that side might be representing some of those 3 000 persons who had not got severance over a year, over $V/_2$ years and so on.

Now, why would the Barbados Workers' Union, representing all workers, have a kind of dual position that for one group of workers we would be saying they must be paid severance now and for 3 000 workers, some of our members, we would take a position that they should not get their severance. It is a matter of politics in the situation and I will get to that too.

Let me say this, Sir, I have never supported and will never support the dismantling of the Transport

Board. That has been said by me many times and it will be said again. I did not support it. I do not support it and do not expect me to support it. I did not agree when the Barbados Labour Party, in office, started to give a lot of licences to private operators and that started to eat out the Transport Board and to destroy it. Let us understand that From the 1980s they started to give out the licences to their friends to undermine the system. This present administration has continued the policy and the inevitable result is that the Transport Board is where it is now. Let us be very clear about that

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: The records will show that in the 1980s, Mr. Johnson and others were giving out licences. I will take some advice from you but I know it is true. Perhaps even before him. I will go on your superior experience on this one. Bolden started but I am saying it because I was on the Transport

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: There are rules of the House that prevent Members from just drawing reference to peoples names. And there could only have been one Bolden to whom he is referring and there could only have been one Johnson. In fairness, Sir, the Member has not given you notice that he intends to cite these persons so I am asking that those remarks be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know who is Johnson. You must remember the Rules themselves. The nearest that will come to is calling names in Parliament but then the point is this, it is made in such a general sense that I have difficulty determining whether Johnson is whoever he is.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, when successive Ministers of the Barbados Labour Party...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has now made a clear statement which I will listen to. 6.20 p.m.

I have made my ruling on that Will the Honourable Member continue.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, when successive Ministers of the Barbados Labour Party in the 1980's, I was on the Transport Levy Board when licences were given out and Mr. Johnson was the Minister then. I am told that Mr. Bolden was there before, Sir. That started the destruction of the Transport Board as we know it. The policy has continued, quite frankly, and the Transport Board was operating on a massive subsidy that the people of this country have to pay. Apparently, a decision was made to privatise, dismantle or whatever. I was not in

support of that and will not be in support of that. Many people have benefited from it and they will continue to benefit from that sort of disruption in the system. This is where a lot of people are associated and I do not want to get into those things. But I know that it was inevitable that what has happened now would happen.

Sir, once the Democratic Labour Party's administration decided that it was going to dismantle the Transport Board, it also knew that it had certain obligations to the workers. Once a plan was made to dismantle in the way that it is being done, then the administration^must be responsible. Under Severance Payment legislation, the responsibility for paying severance must be on the employer. In this case, it is the Transport Board. The Transport Board cannot pay and, therefore, it has to lean on Government. The way how Government wants to go in terms of meeting that responsibility whether it does as it is doing now in using this Levy to get money and paying up front or whether it wants to put it into the Fund, it does not matter to me which approach was used as long as the money was delivered to the workers. That was the most important thing. For those who are standing on the outside of the industrial relations system and who can see everything that is going on in the inside, it seems now that people's business must be done on the highways and the back streets of this country. Those on the

outside of the industrial relations want to be inside. They want to be at every meeting. It is true that some of them send in their people who go back and tell them. That happens all of the time. No problem.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: It is true that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East will have a good friend who is part of the negotiating committee and who will report to him at the end of every meeting what is going on.
Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: He is my friend too. So the reports come to you. We understand all of these things. I can see that Mr. Carmichael is a member of the Barbados Labour Party. He said so up front and he was leading the 20 people.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am going to put a stop to this thing. I have already said the calling of names will not meet with my approval in this Chamber unless I am made aware of what you are going to say about those names. Now it is a different thing if you are saying something in reference to something that is a fact in terms of former Ministers or a Prime Minister. These things are permissible but names are not going to be allowed to be banded about here just like that. I am warning Honourable Members.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The leader of the demonstrations was a declared member of the Barbados Labour Party. He said so. That was a public statement that he made. The masses were 20 comprising 1 or 2 of the CPLU and so on. Apparently, he could not get enough from the Barbados Labour Party camp to follow him and he went to CPLU and got a couple from there. Those were failed marches and the Honourable Member is saying now there was some breakdown in the system and that you do not have anymore confidence in this person and so on. What kind of interpretation is this? What kind of analysis is this about public affairs in this country? Hyperbolic, strange and foolish! Six hundred or more people were cut off and 20 persons marched. All of those 20 people were not people who were cut off and that shows a breakdown in the public system! That clearly cannot make any sense to anybody who has an idea about reality.
Sir, what is happening is that there is a lot of political interference in the industrial relations of our country. We understand that This has always been so and this has been going on for a very long time. Some people are now trying to make a mountain out of a molehill. I am not going to be bothered about that. But the system that we are talking about is where workers were being severed by a public enterprise. This is unusual in that people have always been severed from the Transport Board and have always been paid but, only usually 1 or 2 persons. The Transport Board could not satisfy this demand out of its own resources because of the large demand on the system.

Therefore, Government knew that it had a responsibility up front It cannot be anybody's responsibility other than Government to satisfy that. The trade union's advice was the same advice that it would give to any other workers. Come in here and make sure that you cover your tracks. Fill out these forms. That is the first thing. Then we would engage Government in discussions about when it would be able to pay. That discussion is not carried out with anybody other than the General Manager and staff of the Transport Board. Those are the only persons that we deal with. They will take their instructions to whomever they have to. When the decisions are made, hopefully they would be made at the negotiating table and the General Manager will come back to the Barbados Workers' Union and say that we have arrangements to pay severance payments by such and such a date.
Let me make a point around that, Sir. This is the fundamental point The point is that severance is not a negotiated matter, Sir. Before 1973, we used to negotiate severance. Severance is a legal matter. So anybody who is going around saying that the Barbados Workers' Union did not negotiate the payment of severance would have to be foolish people. Severance is a legal matter. For the

Honourable Member to say that he disagree with people who said they would carry the Government to Court on the issue of severance, you do not know what you are saying either because it is a legal matter. It is not something that is negotiated. We stopped negotiating severance long before 1973. As soon as statutory law was provided, we do not go and negotiate severance with anybody. That is the law and therefore the gentleman was correct when he said that if he did not get his satisfaction that he would go to Court. The Union might have been using industrial relations to settle the matter to see if it could settle the matter up front. But he has the recourse to the Court because that is a statutory provision we are talking about. When you say that the man did not know what he was doing, you are wrong there.
Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: He is right and I support him too. The Severance Payment Act says that severance has to be paid within 2 months. You can get an extension for a further 2 months. If you pay after that, you have to pay the person interest The only way that interest is not paid is if it is paid from the Fund. If it is not being paid from the Fund, the person can ask why the interest is not paid that is due to me. For some reason, the Fund does not pay interest. If the employer does not pay within the statutory time, the employee can ask for the interest that is due to him. You are given "street" advice because you do not have any responsibility for an institution or for individuals. You can keep giving wrong advice all of the time. That is why on a Saturday 120 came and sat down with me because they knew they would get proper advice and 20 persons would go on the street who are not members of the • Transport Board. Of the 20, Bobby Clarke makes 5 and Comissiong makes 10 and that is what it is.

Unfortunately, Sir, you get some wrong perceptions in the media because 120 workers came and sat down in our auditorium and we brought Mr. David Parris, for instance, of the National Training Board, to advise them that there is still life after severance. We got them also to fill out the" forms to get them into the retrenchment programme. They were asking about training in computers. Then some person for their own reasons will pick up 3 persons who are disgruntled and give a Press story giving the impression that the meeting had a fundamental disagreement. It does not matter that 120 people sat down for 3 hours and got advice and recognised that the Union .was doing everything possible for them. The newspaper gave the impression that there were 3 persons who were disgruntled for whatever reason. I do not see why there should not be more than 3 persons who are disgruntled. If 120 people are not getting their severance payment for a whole year, 120 should walk out of the meeting and should not come anywhere. People in Barbados still have a fundamental sense of decency and an understanding of how
to behave. There are some people who are looking at the fringe elements instead of looking at the majority who will do the right thing because the Press is highlighting those 1 or 2 who are badly behaved. The wrong impression is being cast within the community. 6.30 p.m.

I am saying to this Honourable Chamber that this payment of funds to the workers would have been anticipated by the Government, even as they were dismantling the Transport Board, and Government had a fundamental responsibility to make provision for it, to decide up front how it would be done. I see nobody else who can take responsibility for that, except the employers: Transport Board, and the Government of Barbados. I want to be very, very clear about that, as clear for Transport Board, as it was for NCC workers or anybody else. I therefore applaud the Government for doing what is necessary to make sure that the workers are taken out, for the time being, of that traumatic situation which faces them, because, as I said, the problem for them is only beginning. When you lose your job in Barbados and you are 45 years old, the few thousand dollars you get will pay debts and keep you for a few weeks, but after that, as the old people say, "monkey smoke your pipe".

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Yes, retraining, but then they are asking you, very sensibly, after retraining, what? I know we cannot despair and we therefore have to ensure that they are retrained, but when you are dealing with the reality of 45-year old men and women looking around for jobs in this environment, with all the retraining in the world do you think it is going to be easy? Do not let us be romantic about this. They are getting their severance pay, which is due to them by the law, but the future for these people is the concern

of all of us now.

I believe strongly, for instance, that our unemployment benefit scheme has to be looked at again, especially in terms of people who ....

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: No, no. Give me a hearing on this one.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member cannot ask the Members to give him a hearing. I am hearing you. They do not have to give any hearing to you, and it would be better not to listen to them anyhow.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Sir, there is a lot of personal feeling in this, but that is not true. I will try to put it as crisply as I can, but the truth is that the severance payment

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scheme was set up in 1973 and it was one of the best in the world. It was set up because the Barbados Workers' Union pushed for it In 1981 or thereabouts the Barbados Labour Party decided they would establish an unemployment benefit scheme. No problem. I support that completely. Good social philosophy. My problem then, as now, is that when you have 2 schemes that are basically performing a similar function, you should integrate them. That was my point then, it is my point now, it will be my point tomorrow. For whatever reason, that was not done. What we have found developing is a history of a Severance Payment Fund that cannot be controlled, an Unemployment Benefit Scheme that is going up and down. Sometimes it is liquid, sometimes illiquid and so on. We still have to get back and rationalise those 2 schemes and I stand on record as saying so. When Mr. Adams introduced the scheme it was a good thing for workers. There is no doubt about that. The difficulty was that there was no integration of the 2 schemes, and that is still true. Those who know about the schemes know that is a fact.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: If we did not have the 2 schemes it would be more than that, so those 2 schemes were used as a safety net.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: It appears to me that the Honourable Member is having difficulty in making his speech, due to the fact that the interruptions are not necessary and are not called for in a debate like this. All Members will have equal time to make their responses. I am asking Members to observe that rule.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Sir, apparently the Honourable Member for St. Peter has been given the task of trying to disrupt me. You cannot do that, you are only wasting time and making yourself look like a nuisance in Parliament. That is all you have done, basically. You cannot stop me on my tread, Brother. You had better understand that.

The point I was making, and will continue to make, is that we have always to be looking at our welfare systems. I was making the point, and I will make it again, for the Member for Christ Church South. I have always had problems with giving somebody 60% of their income and telling them to stay home for 26 weeks. I prefer to give them 100% of their income and tell them to work. I prefer "workfare" rather than welfare, because for somebody to be sitting at home and drawing 60% of their income and nothing is being put back into the economy, that is bad. I would say give him the other 40% and let him work, so that something will come back into the system. That is my position and again I am not moving from that.
I feel strongly about these matters. We have to develop work cultures and the work ethic. I do not want to see anybody down and out, but if you are drawing off a fat lot of severance pay, why should you be home sitting down for 26 weeks? Give you 100% and let you work out that period and return something into the

system. I do not care how the Press reports it. I believe in that fundamentally. I am also saying, however, that there is a real problem. There are some people whom we could reasonably expect would get work after 26 weeks, if they are young and are in a certain environment, but when you let go people at 45 years of age, there is no real expectation that they are going to get work within 26 weeks. I do not believe in the dole, but I have no difficulty in sustaining those persons for a longer period. You are not really sustaining them to pick up work again, but you are sustaining them to maintain what they have built up - families, mortgages, *et cetera* -and hopefully if they can retrain themselves and reorganise their thinking, they might be able, if they cannot get back as employees, to do something to help themselves, but I believe it is a serious matter which needs to be looked at.

Let me address the question of the Transport Board as it is now, Sir. I hope that the public transport system does not deteriorate any further from where it is. I am most uncomfortable with the standards and values associated with the privatised transport system. I have always been. There is a lot of lawlessness. If there are 100 accidents in Barbados, I believe 99 are associated with that privatised system. I do not support the music, the bad behaviour and the names on them. Furthermore, employers are talking about lengthening work hours, bringing in workers earlier and sending them home later. You cannot depend on the private transport system to provide that kind of transport for the workers in the private sector, so if you want to open a shift early or close one late, then the workers would be in jeopardy in terms of getting home, because those chaps are out there to make money.

I came across a case with a young man who works with a particular transport company. After a year he was told that he could not get vacation pay. Let me tell you why, Sir. This particular company owns about 14 of these so-called minibuses. That is.not just a small deviation or anything like that, he is really a small concessionaire. My understanding is that the system of paying the workers is that after they put in money for diesel and so on the drivers get 20% of the take and the conductor gets 10%. It is a matter that might agitate the mind of the Leader of the Opposition, who wants to give employment law advice. Apparently, this employer takes out the NIS, income tax deductions and so on and pays them in, but at the end of the year when the employee asks for holiday with pay the employer says he does not have to give him holiday with pay, he can give him 3 weeks but no money. The advice is that according to the Holiday with Pay Act holiday with pay-is paid on basic wages, not on commission, bonus

or overtime. When we talk about commission or bonus or overtime there are additional forms of compensation, but clearly the spirit and intention of the Act could not be that narrow, that if somebody is paid 20% of the take that what might be called commission really becomes that person's basic salary. That has to be basic. That cannot be contract for service, but a contract of service. 6.40 p.m. I understand some people have tested this in Court in some areas but it cannot be the spirit of the law nor the intent of the Holidays with Pay Act that hundreds of workers will be out there working for these small concessionaires and when they come for holiday pay they are told they can get the time but not the money. That is riding roughshod through the laws of our country in terms of its intention. I am saying that that system will breed those kinds of difficulties. I hope that the lawyers of Barbados are not giving that kind of advice, going to the concessionaires and getting their fees and telling them employ these hundreds of workers in such a way that they are working year round in very stressful jobs driving up and down the highways at all kinds of speeds delivering people and at the end of the year they can get 3 weeks or 4 weeks but with no holiday pay. I hope that is not the kind of advice that is coming out of the legal system in our country. If you want anti-worker advice that is where it would be. Not only anti-worker but it would be setting out advice to destroy the laws that we have put here to protect workers. That is where the problem is coming from. Some of the lawyers are giving advice that is detrimental to the welfare of people in this country and puts in jeopardy a social welfare system that has been built up over several years.

I think those are the things that have to be looked at. I am saying to the lawyers that they should look at those systems and see if they are giving proper advice, if you are dismantling a Transport Board and then setting up a system in its place where several workers will be running around without proper

benefits.

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

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In conclusion, let me say that Barbados is a country in which there are a lot of vested interests. Sir, I am not afraid of any of them. There are vested interests in this whole transport business and the basis of the transport system as it affects the workers and the country might not be ventilated in the way it should be ventilated but I am saying that fundamentally the disruption of the Transport Board has had an extremely negative impact on the lives of several people, not only those who lost their direct employment but it will affect the entire community.

We have been an orderly community and we expect order in our transport system too. I would want to advise the Government of the country to look very seriously in terms of where it goes further in the transport system.

I fully support this Resolution and I know that it has implications for Government in terms of where it will go and in terms of the rest of the transport system. I do not think anybody wants to come back and debate another resolution dealing with these numbers going for the 690 or whatever workers who are there now. These are not statistics. These are people. They are real people of our country and members of the Barbados Workers' Union. They are citizens in our constituencies and the old saying that property anywhere in the world will affect prosperity everywhere is as true as saying that these poor persons in our country being let off and being hurt will affect the prosperity of anybody else who is within the system. Thank you, Sir.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I intervene in this debate purely to put the record straight in respect of a number of matters. I have had the opportunity in a number of capacities to make an in-depth study of the Transport Board, its operations and the public transport system in Barbados. I think in discussing it we should always try to discuss it in an objective way and that we should pay regard to the truth and the historical development of our present system, It is untrue to say that the problems of minibuses was created by Mr. Bolden or by the Barbados Labour Party. I have before me a Report, a document of this House and I have referred to it on many occasions whenever the charge is made that the causative factor for the decline in the activity of the Transport Board was the licensing of minibuses by the Barbados Labour Party.

I have to point out, Sir/that this Report in 1973 at page 10... It is the King Report, a Report of a Committee appointed by the then Minister of Communications and Works to inquire into the Transport System for the Island and to make recommendations. At that particular time, 1972, a number of the paragraphs of the Report dealt with the issue of minibuses. This is what they had to say, Page 5:-6.50 p.m.

"As at the 31st December, 1972, there were 55 minibuses operating with a Ministry licence, and it is estimated that a further 100 were operating without the appropriate licence."

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In 1972 the institution known as the minibus was an integral part of the transport system in Barbados. By 1976 when the Barbados Labour Party came into office, it was estimated then that there were over 200. It was because of the fact that there was a degree of chaos in the operation of the transport system that the decisions were taken to implement in the main the King Committee Report which was that there should be a single concessionaire for the whole of Barbados, that the Transport Board system should be operating upon that basis and that the single concessionaire should subcontract over defined routes services from the minibuses. That was the policy the Barbados Labour Party tried to pursue when it took over all of the

transport operations from the private sector who themselves wanted to be taken over and form a single concessionaire.

Now, Sir, in 1981 when the new Road Traffic Act came here, Minister Bolden at that time at page 5676 of Hansard, May 26, 1981 stated: -

"We have also looked at the question of the motor omnibus, and the basic reason for defining the categories is this: We want the minibus to operate within certain guidelines. The Government has bent over backwards to accommodate the minibuses in this country. We have licensed approximately 250 minibuses to date." Between 1972 and 1981, a period of 9 years, they moved from 150 to 250. A cap was put on them at that number. The whole object of the regulation was to bring order and discipline to this operation. The colouring of the buses was introduced. I remember Minister Bolden speaking. The demerit system was introduced in order to bring discipline. The route system was introduced. I think it is quite wrong and historically inaccurate to say that the Transport Board's problems were because the Barbados Labour Party introduced the minibuses.

Sir, I go further. One of the problems the Honourable Member has as a representative of a trade union is this. I adverted to it and I am going to deal with it again. The problem was envisaged and pointed out in the King Committee Report that you have a Transport Board which is operating on terms and conditions in which there is a disciplined work force, a well established employer/employee bargaining position and you have parallel with that operating in the same sphere of activity a group of people whose terms and conditions of employment are totally inferior and they are charging the same fare. That is a problem for the trade unions because, as I pointed out before, modern trade unionists have to answer that problem. You have to protect the security of employment of your own workers. You have to help devise ways and means to ensure that when you bargain, with the maximum of your so-called power, with your legitimate employers and demand terms and conditions, and at the same time sit down and allow other people to compete with your employer, you are going to lay the basis for your own destruction.

I have never heard the trade unions of this country rebel over the indiscipline of the minibuses until now. What is more, the King Committee Report made another valid point. In 1972 it pointed out that in the context of Barbados and with the Competition from the minibuses, you must have one-man buses. Now, if ever there was a Government that was hounded by irresponsible trade union activity it was the Barbados Labour Party Government. It was the trade unions that hounded the Government when it talked of the introduction of one-man buses. They hounded Vic Johnson. They buried him alive. They did all kinds of things to him because of the fact that politics was their real motivation. Do not let us fool ourselves. That was another nail in the coffin of the Transport Board. The third nail...

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation. We talked about the management structure at the Transport Board. The question of the one-man bus, the Barbados Workers' Union position on that always was that it should come through attrition, that gradually as conductors went off they would .not be replaced.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am only dealing with the fact, Sir, I had to face this problem and I was prepared to face it with all the political consequences, but I have lived to see that the consequence of not facing up to the problem then has now made the position worse because you are not going to have a Transport Board and you are not going to have any workers to represent. In respect of the little scale down operation you are going to have whether it is run by the Government, the union or anybody else, you are going to have one-man buses. You are just 10 years too late.

The third problem I want to mention, and the truth is, the Barbados Labour Party never licensed Suzuki vans as taxis and permitted them to break the law and operate and pick up passengers from point to point. That was done by the Minister of Transport under the Democratic Labour Party regime and over 200 of those were licensed so you had a different..

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I am the Minister of Transport and I never licensed any of those vehicles. I never registered one. He said "the Minister".
Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I said that was done by a Minister of Transport and Works under the Democratic Labour Party. There cannot be any doubt about it.

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The emergence of the Suzuki vehicle as an instrument of public transport with a licence to operate....

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: You have not done it? That is the whole point, Sir. All the Members on the other side are now going to tell the public in Barbados that they did not know. They are oblivious to the fact that there were hundreds of minibuses, small buses, operating here as public service vehicles directly contrary to the law too. That is a fact. The thing that amazes me, Sir, is that the Honourable Members were part of the machinery that operated in here between 1986 and 1991. They do not know anything about the fiscal proposals. They do not know anything about the Transport Board disaster and soon they will say they are not even part and parcel of the IMF disaster. Everybody is now breaking for themselves.

The position is, Sir, that was a very serious development because of the fact that you were creating a situation where there was a third entrant into the Transport Board system. You moved from a regime in which the Road Traffic Act, 1981, regulated the Transport Board. You were implementing the King Committee Report. So I would say I agree with the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central on one thing that I am profoundly sorry to see Barbados come to a position in which our transport system is going to be operated in such a manner that in my opinion we are exchanging law and order for chaos and lawlessness. 7.00 p.m.

I have a friend who is Jamaican. Sir, he was a great admirer of the Seaga regime but he told me there was one thing in Jamaica that should never have been introduced. And I said, what was that, because you are a great Seaga admirer, he said, when Seaga licensed all of those mini-buses in Jamaica and dismantled the transport system, lawlessness took over. It had a pervasive effect right through the country.

We have to deal with the problem - the indiscipline that has been introduced in the transport system now. I see in Guyana that already there is a major outcry about the mini-buses, the music and the loud noise. One only has to drive the roads every morning from Christ Church to Bridgetown on what was route 13 and see the cutting in, .the cutting out, the stopping, the horns, everything. All of that is taking place in Barbados already. You only have to pass by the bus stand and you will see already that is taking place. So you are creating a recipe for lawlessness. And there are still going to be routes in Barbados that are not going to be run by mini-buses or route taxis. So that, Sir, I foresee that we will have to have more discipline in this area and it is going to cost us more money and my point is this: Once you have made the decision that you are going to rationalise the transport system you must understand that part of the cost of rationalising the transport system was that severance had to be paid if you intended to obey the law. And that is a point you have to accept. If you intend to obey the law it is part of the consequence so provision should have been made for it. It is my view, Sir, that if proper planning had taken place that it would have been possible to price the licences for the new operators who were going to replace the old ones in such a manner as to recoup some of the cost of their severance. That should have been done. I do not mind what they say. It does not matter to me because my views are well known in relation to the transport board. I hope, Sir, that in the future this money that we are voting here today we will make sure that there are other mechanisms to ensure that if you are giving out franchises part of the cost of the franchise should be part of the cost of severing the people who are affected by the franchise. That is a well known mechanism. Thank you, Sir.
Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, it suited the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to

begin with the year 1972 but I am going right back to the 1950s where it all had its genesis. There can be no doubt, history shows that the Barbados Labour Party destroyed the concessionaire system in Barbados. In the 1950s, Sir, it is a fact, he should know, he was with the concessionaires.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not permitting any interruptions from anybody.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: He might not have been in Barbados at the time. I think he was overseas. But he had close connections, Sir, with concessionaires and when the concessionaires asked for a penny more it was said to them "over my dead body". There was a transport strike in Barbados, Mr. Speaker, and the people had to get to work and entrepreneurs, those people who had vehicles, decided that they would put their vehicles into service and they commenced from Speightstown ...

Mr. SPEAKER: I am saying to the Honourable Member, no interruptions.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: They commenced, Sir, from the North and there were a number of vehicles at that time. It started with motor cars and they were transporting persons from St. Lucy and St. Peter into Bridgetown and then to other areas of the country. That, Sir, then gave way to vans called pickups. They were the predecessors of the minibuses. There were the pickups, Mr. Speaker, and those pickups were doing that during the time of the strike and they never stopped. Even when the Transport Board was constituted and after the Transport Board came into being those same pickups continued to run in competition to

the Transport Board. So do not make it appear as though it began in the 1970s.
I am not saying the Honourable Member said so but the way in which he delivered the speech would give the impression Mr. Speaker, that it all began around that time. It did not begin around that time. It began in the 1950s. In other words what I am trying to say, Sir, is that the Transport Board began with the scjeds of its own destruction at that particular time and that is a fact I have a good recollection of that period of time and there is no one who can dispute the fact that it all began then - first of ^all with the taxis and then with the pickups. And it all continued unabated.
Sir, when the Democratic Labour Party came in in 1961 it was confronted with this problem and this problem never stopped. It only became worse and worse and worse. I want to say, Sir, at no time have I, as a Minister, had any hand in this wholesale, as you heard before, granting of licenses to any mini-vans. I am the Minister, I have had no hand in this, Sir. I want to make it absolutely clear. I know you did not say I did it but for the record I am saying I did not do it. I know the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who spoke did not say I did it I am aware of that but for the record, Sir, I am saying I had no hand in that. I came as a Minister to find that as *zfait accompli. I* came as Minister to find about 250 little vans operating, plying the streets of this country.

Asides:

Mr. SPEAKER: I am getting very concerned about interruptions.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: So, we have problems, Mr. Speaker, in our transportation system. The Transport Board has always had problems with the system and we have had more problems. I can only applaud any previous Minister who tried to introduce a demerit system to help to control some of the lawlessness. He made provision for it in the law. It was never to this day introduced. Not once has it been introduced, Sir, which I think is a pity because the law makes provision for it. If it was introduced in my opinion, we would have been able to get some of these lawless and disorderly drivers off the road. But these are some of the problems, Sir, that we have to confront from time to time. 7.10 p.m.

Sir, let me get back to the purpose of this amendment for the Employment Levy Bill. I have spoken on this particular matter probably about 3 weeks ago and I hate to have to repeat myself. It may become necessary because other Honourable Members who have spoken have done just that and I may have to respond to them in the same way in which I responded to them before. It is very simple. Workers have been laid off from their place of employment which is the Transport Board. Workers have been provided for in law. The law provides for these workers who have been laid off and how they are to be granted severance. As I said before and I repeat again, there is only one severance payment law in Barbados. We do not have severance payment laws for former employees of statutory corporations and severance payment laws for persons formerly employed in private industry. The same law covers everybody, Mr. Speaker. When persons were laid off and they had gone ahead and done what they should have done at the particular time and had followed the advice of the union, the Government had a responsibility at law and they had no other course but to go and replenish the Severance Fund so the workers could get their money. It had no other course at that time. No, Sir, these are Government workers and, therefore, the Government must take care of them. What is more, they have been encouraged in this attitude by persons who should know better. That is the position we have here in this country. When I said here 3 weeks ago that they should have gone and registered at the National Insurance Board, I heard that I was wrong. I am not wrong. That is the law. If it is the law, I cannot be wrong. That provision is made in law. In my opinion, they have been let down by their representatives and we referred to the Barbados Workers' Union.

Mr. Speaker, we are all representatives. Everyone of us are representatives. We did not come in here on our own. We were voted in here by persons and some of those persons who voted for us are persons who have been laid off. We are their representatives. It is as much our responsibility to advise those workers properly as it is the responsibility of the Barbados Workers' Union. I am making this point and I will not fail to make this point that each one of us here probably who had voters for whom we have some responsibility should have given the proper advice to those workers so that they would have had their severance long ago. They would not have had to suffer the indignity of organising a march and only getting 20 or more people around the streets of Bridgetown. This is the problem and I want to say this now, Sir.

I came in here on February 9th or thereabouts and I informed the House that the Government had agreed to pay the workers in 2 tranches not later than March 15th and not later than June 15th. This is what I said, Sir. This is what had been agreed by the Government that they should be paid by those respective dates. Despite this, Sir, we could still hear that some of the Transport Board workers were going on a march. The day after the march, I am referring to Sunday of last week, I could hardly get out of my house because my telephone was ringing. There were calls from numbers of people who identified themselves as former workers of the Transport Board. They were saying that

they intend to take their money as the Government said it would give it to them in 2 instalments and do not mind Carmichael. That is what I was told. I am just repeating what I was told. The words were: "He does not represent us. He only represents a few people at the Transport Board."

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Sir, I am saying what I was told - "It is our intention to take the money as the Government said it would give it to us." Mr. Chairman, it was the intention of Government that we should pay severance to those workers out of the Fund. They may have even got it earlier than March 15th because I had said not later than March 15th. We believed at that time that it would not have been necessary to amend this legislation here today in order to make that payment. But the Accountant General has informed that he has got a legal opinion to the effect that the law had to be amended if in fact we want to use that source of funds from which to pay severance. That accounts for the fact that

we are here today to make the severance payments.

Sir, it is not true that any of those workers have been making any contributions to their severance. It is just not true. They were not part of the Employment Levy Fund. They were outside of the net of this particular legislation. This did not concern all employees. It was only for the Government workers. It is not true. They have not been making any contribution whatsoever to their severance so it is not true.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: They were not included among those persons who were making such a contribution. If they were making a contribution, then we would not have had to be amending the law today. We are amending the law today because they were not part of the body of public officers who were making their contributions to this Fund.

Sir, I want to make this point that they have not been making any contributions. They have made no contributions to severance. They were like any other form of employee outside of the Government circle. They make no contribution to their own severance. They have made contributions to the National Insurance Board in terms of other benefits. I want to make this point as well, Sir. Sometime ago the Honourable Member for St. Peter asked a Parliamentary Question and I responded to that question. The Parliamentary Question was limited to a particular period of time. My response was given late last year or early this year but in relation to only that period of time because that was the particular time in which the particular question was asked. At that time the Government had paid a substantial portion of those monies that were owing. The Government had made the decision to be responsible for the liabilities of the Transport Board up to March 31,1992. We went ahead in September 1992 and we paid the National Insurance its monies. The monies that are now owing to the National Insurance for which we are about to pay are monies which have since accrued. I m&de that point as well because that point was made by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.
Sir, I want to say a few words about the public transport generally. I have already stated my position here and it is the position of my Ministry and the Cabinet. It is that the Government would retain a number of units. The Transport Board will sell its units and retain a number. I also said at the time that the Transport Board would be doing the long hauls and the cross-country service and it would also be doing the school service. I said that in here. I did not say at the time what the long hauls would necessarily be. I gave examples of what they would be. It is my hope that these long hauls will include all of the eastern seaboard right around to the north. When I say the eastern seaboard, let me be more specific and say probably from Sam Lords in the south coming right around to St. Lucy in the north and follow normal routes with a cut-off point as has been done in the old days when we had the old concessionaires. As an example, it would be like the St. Lucy route can cut off perhaps in Holetown. Buses from St. John, the Sergeant Street buses, can probably cut off at either Four Roads or St. Judes or some place like that. Buses that come from Sam Lords could probably have a cut-off point at Oistins. These are things we are seriously looking at So that in point and fact buses will be running on all the routes although only permitted to pick up at certain points distant from the centre. Within that circle then the private sector transportation would operate. These are some of the things we have been looking at. We would probably retain about 75 or even more units in order to perform that service.
Sir, the point I want to make is that we have a responsibility to carry out our privatisation plans. We have got to do this. We have given an undertaking to do this in our Letter of Intent At the same time, we have a responsibility to the traveling public of Barbados and we intend to carry out that responsibility. The second point is that it is also my intention to...

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. I had to get the book, Sir. He has misled the House on this matter of who pays an Employment Levy. The law is clear. The law was passed in 1987. It has been amended 3 times by 1991-14, 1992-10 and 1992-24. Now it says quite clearly, Sir: "There is chargeable on the insurable earnings of every person gainfully employed in Barbados, whether

self-employed or not, a levy to be known as an Employment Levy, of an amount to be determined in the manner provided in subsection (2)."

Sir, the Honourable Member must be mistaken that I have not stated the position correctly.
Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The source of payment of these funds are the contributions made by public officers. These monies are being borrowed to pay these workers and have got to be repaid to the Fund. Sir, I would like to get back to my point On the second point, I dealt with the question of the transport workers to make sure that people are able to travel. We also have the other problem of the lawlessness of the private operators. They will have to be re-organised and I am also hoping that we can have the full cooperation of the forces of the law to enforce proper observance of our laws in this country by those private operators. 7.20 p.m.

I have already said, with regard to the Suzuki vans, that no more will be licensed during my term. There is not a single Suzuki van in Barbados today for which a licence has been given by me as a Minister. It is my intention that those Suzuki vans will go by attrition. As they become unserviceable they will be out and there will be no replacement of a Suzuki van by another Suzuki van of that size. It cannot be a mini, it would have to be a much bigger vehicle.

Mr. Speaker, I think we have the problems of transportation on our hands. It is probably more acute at this time than at any time ever in the history of the Transport Board, because of our well known intention to privatise the Transport Board and you find the private operators trying to position themselves to be able to take over from the Transport Board. Let me say here, Sir, that we have had a deadline by which to carry out the privatisation of the Transport Board and it will not be a complete privatisation, as you will understand from what I have been saying previously, because the Transport Board intends to retain a number of units. We have to carry out that privatisation plan and in carrying it out we are going to go all out to make sure that the travelling public of Barbados is not disadvantaged.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, just one or 2 brief points in closing this debate. The first point I want to make is that it should be made abundantly clear, lest this matter detains us in Committee, that this is an advance to the Transport Board which will be payable by the Transport Board when the Board sells its assets in the process of privatisation. The reason why I am making this clear is because the original intent of the Fund was for it to benefit workers *m* the first 3 categories of section 2(b), which would be workers within the meaning of the Public Employees Pensions Act. That was what was contemplated when the legislation was amended to give effect to the Fund. We merely amended the legislation, which expires in December, to give effect to the advance to the Transport Board of the sums required *for* payment of the severance between now, the first tranche, and the second tranche being in June. That should be made abundantly clear. 7.30 p.m.

I want to say that the other contributions are not within my remit because they related almost exclusively to transport. But I have lost faith, Mr. Speaker, in the contribution of the Leader of the Opposition.
When I first entered this Chamber I think one could usually rely on the Leader of the Opposition to seek to research the facts on an issue to present some alternative opinion that has some semblance of respectability in terms of its intellectual value. I have found in recent times he engages in such a convoluted form of political argumentation which seeks to focus more on the individuals and their capacities to-function in their respective Ministries, and seldom deals with the substantive issues which are before the House. So that he ranges far and wide and accuses this Government as being worse than the plantocracy prior to 1937. He talked about devastation, disaster and difficulty. He talked about his own predictions for the economy of Barbados coming true, which if they were coming true, he seems to be so happy that they were coming true just because he was being proven correct These are not qualities, Sir, of leadership that I admire.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order. He really cannot misrepresent my speech. I said specifically in my speech that it did not make me happy. He cannot say otherwise.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I heard what the Honourable Member said. It was the tenor, the disposition

and the demeanor in which he said it which suggested to me that he was happy, were it true, to be able to say that there has been devastation.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member is deliberately on this occasion challenging the accuracy of my statement He is saying I am a great pretender to this House, that when I say it gives me no pleasure then in truth and in fact I meant that I enjoy the position. I do not believe the Honourable Member can do that in the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has categorically denied the inference from what you are saying to be what he said. I think it is fair that the Honourable Member do not persist on that line.

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Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I agree with you, Mr. Speaker, I think he has summed up my own view quite succinctly in this particular matter but as I have said he has ranged far and wide without even a scintilla of evidence for any of the suggestions he makes. I think it is a telling statement, as perhaps the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central would indicate, that he has to stand from this forum to give advice to the dispossessed Transport Board workers whose cause he thinks he is championing.
I think it is a signal of their own view of his role in public life that none of them have sought to ask him to take the action, which he suggested they should take, on their behalf. That, perhaps, is the litmus test of the support by the public and by the Transport Board workers for the validity of the viewpoints expressed by the Leader of the Opposition.

In all other respects, I want to make the point and I do not wish to be presumptuous in doing so, that the Government has already decided about the privatisation of the Transport Board and it does not make much sense to me to continue to look back. With all due respect to the principled position which the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central has taken and the position that he feels should be taken, the decision has been made. I think we can find some creative ways of making the privatisation process meaningful in terms of the development of a transport system in Barbados.

More importantly, time should be spent now on 'Putting those persons who have been displaced in the process back into the system by way of opportunities in the transport sector of one sort or another. Based on the fiscal projections for Barbados in this coming fiscal year one would anticipate that in the future we have to trim our expenses and make sure that we have leaner and more efficient agencies carrying out our policy and for those which are being displaced that they are replaced by efficient private sector entities in which average citizens of Barbados have a chance to share and be involved.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words I beg that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON seconded by Hon. C. V. WALKER, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into committee on the Bill, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee. *Clause 1 was called and passed.*
Clause 2 was called.
•«
Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I want to make it quite clear, Sir, that I have read the Employment Levy Act and all the amendments. I am understanding the Minister of Public Works, Communications and Transportation to say that persons at the Transport Board would not have paid a levy under this Act If that is what he is saying, with respect I am making it absolutely clear that they would have paid the levy under this Act and that one-half of 1% of the contribution made by any employee was paid into the Public Employee's Fund. It

is that Fund which, as I understand it, is going to be used and from which the Government will be making a borrowing to onlend to the Transport Board.
If they are borrowing from that Fund to lend to the Transport Board, they are borrowing from a Fund to which the severed employees of the Transport Board have themselves contributed. The point I was making is that to the extent that some of those employees themselves would have contributed to the Fund, then their money is being lent to the Transport Board to pay these workers severance to which they are rightfully entitled.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: My point is this, Sir. These funds are being used to finance the severance benefits of these workers on a loan system. The Fund has to be repaid. Therefore they cannot be contributing to their own severance.
Asides.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: They are borrowing from a Fund that the workers themselves have had to contribute to. That was the workers' money; so they contributed to that extent.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
Clause 3 was called and passed. 7.40 p.m.

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. C. V. WALKER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour, Mr. SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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On the separate motions of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. C. V. WALKER, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ORDER NO. 4: RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE DRUG ABUSE (PREVENTION AND CONTROL) REGULATIONS, 1993

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this measure is a relatively simple matter although it is attended by a lot of paper. You will recall that in 1990 we passed the relevant legislation, the Drug Abuse (Prevention and Control) Act, 1990. It was supposed to be accompanied by regulations. Now these regulations would permit doctors who otherwise could be found guilty of having substance that is prohibited by the Act to, in fact, have such substance.

The matter has been canvassed with the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners. The doctors are allowed to have them for purposes of prescription, *et cetera.* Clearly if a doctor had this substance for other purposes he would be subject to the same considerations. But these Regulations are considered to be a necessary companion to the Drug Abuse (Prevention and Control) Act of 1990. As I said, they took a long time because they needed to be meticulous. I believe that Honourable Members having debated the Drug Abuse (Prevention and Control) Act of 1990 might not wish to be detained.

As Minister, I have already made the Order. An affirmative Resolution is required. Hence, it comes before this Honourable House. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ORDER NO. 5: DRUG ABUSE (NO TIFICATION OF ADDICTS) REGULATIONS, 1993

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, this is a continuation of the same principle except here this authorises a doctor to report to the Chief Medical Officer. Again the Regulations were made. What this does is it allows the doctor to report but there is no information given about the individual although some information is given that would help in the control of the addict.
I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I beg to second that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, there is just one particular point I want to put to the Minister. The Drug Rehabilitation Unit for many years located in the precinct of the Psychiatric Hospital, started out as a unit really designed for alcoholics. Truly, Mr. Speaker, even today alcoholism is the greatest drug scourge of all in Barbados. More road accidents are alcohol related than not. More household accidents are believed by some to be more alcohol related than not

The use and abuse of alcohol is responsible for loss of productivity, it is responsible for what we call domestic abuse, wife battery, woman battery, child abuse and child molestation. It has a wide-ranging devastating, deleterious effect on life in this country that we under-estimate because we still treat the use and consumption of alcohol as something that is socially acceptable. Barbadians have been reluctant, and I believe still are reluctant to recognise that we have a very high incidence of alcoholism in this country.
A visit to the Drug Rehabilitation Unit or a cursory look at its record will show you otherwise. But in more recent years, the Drug Rehabilitation Unit has been opening its doors not only to alcoholics but to drug abusers of a different sort.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: As the Honourable Member points out, they are chemical dependents. There had been talk coming from the Honourable Minister of Health at one time that a facility was going to be made available for the treatment and rehabilitation of addicts of chemical abuse generally which would include alcohol, chemicals, *et cetera.* We had even heard at one point that there was consideration being given to a half-way house. But now we do not hear any more about it

As I understand it, the whole situation in respect of rehabilitation is not a happy one. The programmes are filled to overflowing. The Unit at the Psychiatric Hospital [1] really is most inadequate for the follow-up programmes and the treatment of addicts in the community. I think the public needs to know what is going on. In the early days of the Rehabilitation Unit when people were being treated mostly for alcohol abuse the age range was a very adult range. Now you will find people who are still teenagers, people in their early 20s and late 20s in greater numbers at that Unit than was the case 10 years ago. These people constitute a very tragic loss to our community. I think the Minister really ought to give us some information, guidance or word on what the situation is, what the Government's plans are and what kind of future we can envisage for these people.
" There are currently complaints in the public domain that many are seen wondering about. There are offices in Bridgetown where the door to the office is kept locked

and you have to knock or press a buzzer to gain entry because, as secretaries will tell you, there are weirdos walking about in town. A lot of them are improperly rehabilitated addicts. A lot of them are people who, through no fault of their own, have fallen into unemployment and coasequently fallen into bad company and find themselves falling into the abuse of alcohol and other undesirable substances. So there is a great need. Structural adjustment will leave us with a lot to answer for in our community. It is important that we know what facilities are available, we know what services are available and particularly for the young people. You do not often see drug addicts of 40. They do not get to be 40 and it constitutes a great waste of human resource in our community. So perhaps the Minister would enlighten us. 7.50 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member has raised the question of drug rehabilitation and the position is that the residential drug rehabilitation unit at the St. Joseph Hospital has been opened and it has had outpatients and I believe that today or yesterday 3 residential patients have in

fact entered that system. Those are fee paying patients.
The Psychiatric Hospital is still continuing its programme of alcohol abuse and drug abuse and they have been looking at a new programme which has been redesigned based on experience.
I agree with the Honourable Member that the level of alcohol abuse seems to be rising but the details of alcohol abuse are not accurate because there are not many people who admit that they abuse alcohol. The ones we have are the ones who actually go to the hospital. As for example with out-patients at Ladymeade where we have an alcohol clinic, in 1985 we had 131 males and 23 females. In 1986 we had 122 males and 28 females. In 1987 we had 170 males and 28 females, and in 1988 we had 187 males and 25 females or 212 persons. Now you know that there are more than 212 alcoholics with serious problems in Barbados. But there were 212 in-patients, and the out- patients *at the Polyclinics where we are running some systems show that for the Tuesday attendances we had 466 persons for example attending in 1987 and on the Saturday attendances 919 persons. So it is very difficult to give information on alcohol that is totally accurate.
For alcohol admissions to the psychiatric hospital in 1990 we had 194. For marijuana we had 211 and for cocaine 154, a total of 559 persons going into the Psychiatric Hospital.
Now that is a lot of people but it is in some ways the tip of the iceberg because these are the ones who actually go to the institutions. There are many persons who ought to be getting assistance who have not yet gone to the institutions.
If I may give you some idea of the numBer of patients per year in the drug rehabilitation programme. In 1986 we had 7 patients. In 1987 there were 41 patients. In 1988 there were 85 patients but in 1990 there were 559 patients.. One of the reasons for that is that we have been able to convince a number of people that they should seek assistance and so we have this sweeping increase of 900 per cent in 1988 over the 1986 figures. Those are the details which I have that I can give to the Honourable Member. But the intention is that we will have programmes going at both the Psychiatric Hospital and the St. Joseph Hospital. We will have those persons who are in the Psychiatric Hospital, who are recommended by the consultant psychiatrist, to become residential at St. Joseph whether they can afford to pay *or* not. We do have some people who will be coming in from the other islands but the programme is on schedule.
All the persons who are at St. Joseph Hospital are the identical people who will be running the programme at the Psychiatric Hospital and we have now stepped up the training of persons who could operate within the system.
I promise the Honourable Member that during the debate of the Estimates, if the opportunity arises, I will give the House substantially more information on the programme. I thank you.

The Question that Ms Resolution do now pass was put to the House and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, Tmove, Sir, at this point that the House do now adjourn until Monday March 8, 1993 at 12.00 o'clock noon.

The question that the House do now adjourn until March 8,1993 at 12.00 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 7.58 p.m.

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