THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 — 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, March 15,1994

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House *of Assembly* met at 12.15 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

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

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A., (Econ.), J.P., ' (Prime Minister, Minister of - Economic Affairs, Minister for the Civil Service, Tourism and 'International Transport)

Mr. H. deB FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B.

Hon. 'B. M. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B. (Hons.), (Minister of Foreign Affairs & Deputy Leader. of the House)

Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Q.C., B.A., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Home ' Aff airs and Leader of the House)

-Hon; M. A.- KING; Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General, Minister of Justice and Minister for CARICOM Affairs)

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P., (Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce)

' Mr. N. K. SIMMONS

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc. (Econ.), (Leader of the Opposition)

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

Hon. C. V. -WALKER, J.P., (Minister of Health) Mr. L:V L. BRATHWAITE, J.P., '(Chairman of Committeekl

Mr. E.' E. GREAVES, G.C.M.,V B.A., Ed.M.,

A-tr. W. W. HALL, G.C.M., H.B.M., J.P.

M. C. LeR. TROTMAN, M.A.

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

Hon. D. - J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.), (Minister of Finance)

Hon. H. B. St .[1] JOHN, Q.C., LL.B.

Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A.

Miss B. A. MILLER

Mr. DeL 0.. BRADSHAW, J.P., .B.Sc. (Hons.)

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc. (Econ.)

Hon. J. 0 . TUDOR, J.P. (Minister of Labour, Public Works, Community Development & Sports)

Hon. D.. W. BOWEN,- B.Sc. (Accounts) (Hons.), (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)

Mr. G. W.PAYNE

Mr. R. C EASTMOND, B.A., LL.B.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., LL.B., (Minister of Education and Culture)

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes for Tuesday March 1, 1994 have been circulated and presumed to be read. I therefore beg to move that they be now confirmed.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. SPEAKER: Message from the Honourable the Senate to theHonourable the House of Assembly.

"The Honourable the Senate is pleased to inform the Honourable the House of Assembly that on the 2nd day of March, 1994 .a Bill entitled an Act to revise the law with respect to Offences Against the Person was passed and amended as follows:

to Clause 27, delete subclause (b) and renumber (c) and (d) as (b) and (c) respectively.

As to clause 42, delete the words "and is ,Diable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term of 12 months" and substitute therefor the words "which is triable on indictment or summarily".

Dated March 2, 1994."

I am to announce that I am in receipt of the Accounts and Statements for the month of December 1993 as ;;prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Barbados Port Authority (Tariff Book of Dues and Charges) (Amendment) Regulations, 1994.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I am rising for the sake of the record to indicate that the Estimates for 1994—95 and the Schedule of Personal Emoluments have already been circulated and I am seeking now to formally lay those Estimates.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I,beg to give notice of the Supplementary Appropriation (No. 4) Bill, 1994 and I also give notice of the Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 1994.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Supplementary Appropriation (No. 4) Bill, 1994 be now read a first time.

Hon. M. A. KING: .1 beg to second that.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 1994 be now read a first time.

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

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to grant a sum of $619 974 176 out of the Consolidated Fund and to appropriate the same for the purpose of Barbados for the year ending 31st March, 1995 be now read a first time.

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

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

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, this Statement is on Solid Waste Management in Barbados:

STATEMENT ON SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT IN BARBADOS

Barbados is one of the most densely populated countries in the Caribbean and enjoys one of the highest standards of living in the Caribbean region. In the late seventies Barbados began to generate large quantities of garbage and its disposal has been posing a problem since. In the early 1980's the Sanitation Service Authority carried out landfillipg operations at Kingsland in Christ Church and Black Bess in St. Peter.

Prior to the closure of the Kingsland Landfill the officials from the Sanitation Service Authority, aware that the site was being exhausted, began to seek suitable sites for landfilling operations. Possible sites had to satisfy the criteria of being situated in a zone four or five area with respect to the hydrological map of Barbados and being distant from residences. It was generally accepted that due to the distribution of houses in Barbados, a distance of six to eight hundred yards between a site and houses would be acceptable.

Fourteen (14) acres of land at Mangrove Pond, St. Thomas was identified during mid-1984 as a suitable location for sanitary landfilling operations. Operations at what is now known as the old - Mangrove Landfill commenced in October 1986 following the granting of approval by the Town Planning Department and the Ministry of Agriculture. 12.30 p.m.

During the first year of its operation it became obvious that this site would have been more heavily utilized than the previous Kingsland or Black Bess Landfills. Approximately 120 tonnes of refuse would have been disposed of daily at the Kingsland Landfill, Christ Church, and 70 tonnes at Black Bess, St. Peter, a total of 190 tonnes. By mid-1988 the Mangrove site was facilitating the disposal of over 200 tonnes of refuse daily.

The central location of Mangrove was pivotal to the increase in the number of vehicles visiting this facility and the tonnage that was disposed of daily.

The life of the old Mangrove Landfill had been projected at 5 years. However, by the end of 1990, the available space at this location for all practical purposes was exhausted.

After a further search for a landfill site, the Authority located an area of land at Searles, Christ Church. The acquisition and utilisation of this site would have considerably reduced the tonnage of refuse that was being directed to Mangrove. Unfortunately, though the land identified was in a Zone 4 area, approval was not granted to operate a landfill in order to preclude the possible contamination of the Hannay's water catchment area.

Eight point four hectares of land, 22 acres, was then acquired for a new landfill at Mangrove Pond, St. Thomas. Excavation work for this landfill commenced in August, 1991 and Phase I was completed in September, 1992. The new landfill was scientifically engineered being fitted with a leachate collection system comprising a thick clay liner, leachate collection pipes and a leachate storage tank. A separate area was provided for bulky material.

The planned height of the landfill was to be a maximum 6 feet above ground level and daily cover was to be provided. The entire landfill area was fenced and most importantly, full supervision by two personnel at the University of Gainsville, Florida, was implemented. The 'old Mangrove Landfill was closed and grassed after the opening of the new facility.

It should be noted that grey water, grease, blood from the Abattoir and other similar types of wastes which were disposed of at the old landfill were not accepted at the new facility.

It was projected that based on the disposal of 200 to 270 tonnes of refuse daily, the life of the landfill would have been between 21 to 28 months.

By the end of the second month of the opening of the new landfill, it had become evident that the site could not accommodate the disposal of refuse for the estimated , period. The closure of the Pulverization Plant on account of the unavailability of spares greatly increased the quantity of refuse disposed at the landfill. Also the number of private vehicles disposing refuse numbered 4 000 to 4 300 per month. As a result 400 to 450 tonnes of refuse was disposed daily rather than the projected 300 tonnes.

An area of approximately 1.23 hectares on the east of the existing landfill and another area of 1 hectare on the west were identified to be excavated to yield a total volume of approximately 133 129 cubic metres to facilitate *ongoing* landfilling activities. The area was to be developed on the same basis as the existing landfill with a clay liner and leachate collection system.

Work on the expanded area to hold a volume of 50 000 cubic metres commenced during the month of May, 1993. It was expected that this would have been completed in August, 1993. Excavation work was severely impeded by the hardness of the rock surface which necessitated substantial blasting in order for the work to be completed and caused excessive delay in bringing it into use.

It is expected that the new site will be operational by the end of March at which time, Phase I will be closed and capped with a layer of clay . to eliminate the stench complained of by the residents in the surrounding areas and to prevent collection of leachate.

I would like to give the assurance, based on the technical advice I have received, that the area to be completed shortly, should pose little or no problems for the residents. Cover will be , applied daily and additional equipment being added should assist greatly in its management. It should be noted that approval has been granted for the ordering of one landfill compactor and two trucks. Lighting is also being installed to enhance security at the landfill.

My Ministry, well aware that the long-term disposal of waste needed to be addressed, entered into an agreement with the IADB for the funding of a Solid Waste Management Study. In this regard, a contract was signed with Stanley Associates Engineering Ltd., in March 1993, to prepare a Solid Waste Plan for Barbados.

The Consultants have submitted a draft plan for the Management of Solid Waste over a 22-year period recommending as their preferred option a Waste Management Centre at Mangrove Pond – Content Estate in St. Thomas. The centre would house segregated storage areas for bulky materials, metal and tyres, a yard waste composting facility to incorporate sewerage sludge, animal blood, septage and grease waste; and an engineered sanitary 'andfill designed and operated to maximize protection of human health and the environment.

The other sites considered for the Waste Management Centre were River Plantation in St. Philip and Harrison's Point in St. Lucy, but Mangrove Pond was, preferred by them because of its proximity to the waste centroid, land use compatibility, transportation access, aesthetics and the minimal impact on natural and cultural resources.
12.40 p.m.

"20. The recommended method of solid waste disposal is a scientifically engineered landfill to be built in a mound formation over an area of 45 hectares (122 acres) reaching a height of 40 metres (131.25 ft.) above ground level over a 22-year period.

21. The site idernified includes parcels of land in the Mangrove and Content Estates and will:: close the access *road to the vehicles 'coming from* the southern and central parts of the country. The landfill will cover four *.wells dug* in gullies and several water courses which supply water to the Molyneux well and the Norwood aquifer.

, 22. An integral part of this option would be the establishment of a composting facility to receive yard wastes; namely grass, -leaves, tree and shrub prunings and coconut branches and shells plus. sewerage sludge, animal blood products, septage, greases .trap pumpings and skimmings. The facility would also receive organic wastes such as segregated *food wastes* from hotels and restaurants and spoiled food stuffs.

23, The Consultants have stressed that the proposed landfill would be designed and operated with the objectives of minimising health risks. This would be achieved through modem engineering sanitary *landfill construction. The* design would include a high performance lining system which would minimise the movement of leachate and landfill gas out of the facility. It would also include a leachate collection system which would allow leachate to be withdrawn from the facility. There would be mechanical compaction of waste at the active face, the use of appropriate and daily and intermediate cover materials and the control of surface water. *In light of the cost of* obtaining suitable soils for use as cover, *the use* of mined landfill material for daily and intermediate cover is being recommended. The cover regime would be designed to ensure the control of odour, paper litter, animals and surface water all of which are problems at the existing landfill.

24. The alternative proposed disposal method considered by the consultants- is Incineration with energy recovery. Three sites were considered namely: Mangrove Pond, Texaco Cricket fieldat Brighton and the reclaimed land adjacent .to the FlourMill, The Texaco site is considered optimal because of its placement in the. centre of the Brighton Industrial area; within 200. metres of the Barbados Light and Power Plant and within 100 metres of the West India Rum Refinery, both potential users of energy generated.

25. Incineration will still necessitate a landfill to_ accept the residue from the incinerator and the non-processible and bulky wastes. This would also be sited at Mangrove Pond. The major benefits of incineration with energy recovery cited by the Consultants are:

(i) It offers the greatest potential and all practical waste management options for reducing landfill volume needs and thus land used for landfilling,

(ii) It is a net energy producer. Of the total electricity produced, approximately 15-20 percent of total production is usedto power all the electrical needs of the facility while the remainder can be sold '-to the electric utility system.

However on the negative side:

(i) The operation and maintenance of incineration facilities are extremely complex and expensive. Experienced *plant maintenance* and operations management will : have to be recruited overseas, most likely - in . the form of a long-term private operating contract. This may mitigate. but not eliminate operational risk. Skilled labour can be sourced locally but' may require extensive local and overseas training.

(ii) ° The cost to design, build, operate and :maintain incineration facilities is high.

26. The Consultants have pointed out that whatever method of garbage disposal is used there will be a need for a landfill. However if incineration is used the area required for the disposal of the residue and the non-processible and bulky wastes will be reduced.

27. The Consultants have estimated that the capital expenditure needed for an incinerator and a 50 hectare landfill would be BDS$135.4. million, with the annual operating costs projected at BDS$17.3 million. This is in contrast to a landfill/composting option which would cost BDS$61.7 million with and annual operational cost of BDS$7.4 million. We have to decide whether. we will seek to operate a scientifically designed landfill with measures taken to reduce odours or to use an incinerator knowing up front of its very high cost and the need perhaps to raise a special levy or tax to pay for its operation.

28. It should be noted that a mission from the Inter-American Development Bank" who funded the two feasibility studies,' the one just completed to which I now refer was recently in Barbados to review the Consultants' Report and their findings will be submitted shortly.

29. The Consultants have given the assurance that the sanitary engineered landfill should last 22 years. However as pointed out earlier on two previous occasions the landfills at Mangrove Pond were exhausted long before their anticipated life. There is no guarantee that a similar trend will not obtain as Barbadian households continue to generate more and more garbage.

,30. The problem of garbage is a national one and we will have to take steps individually to. reduce the quantity of garbage. For example ploughing some of. our yard waste, for example, grass and leaves back into the soil

to form compost. We could also begin to sort our garbage to allow for . recycling where feasible and for better disposal. The success of any waste disposal system in Barbados will depend on the involvement and cooperation of the people of Barbados."

Mr. Speaker, that is my Statement. But if I may refer to the Note which says in part that since preparing this Statement the engineers from the Inter-American Development Bank indeed only yesterday evening have now submitted their Report and from my, first glance they are still considering the landfill because of what they call the lease cost to the Government of Barbados. We have not yet made any decision, Mr. Speaker, but as promised to this Honourable House I thought it my duty to come back as promised and give this Honourable House an update on what we are actually doing in this area.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

12.50 p.m.

CONGRATULATORY AND/OR OBITUARY SPEECHES

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, with much regret it seems that every time this item comes to this Honourable House there is need for us to pay tribute. On this occasion, Sir, we shall seek to pay tribute to two late gentlemen. In the first instance I rise on behalf of the Government to pay tribute to the memory of the late Sir Mencea Ethereal *Cox.* He was born on November 28, 1906 in St. Thomas. Educated at Holy Innocents Boys School, he served in this House as .a senior Member for St. Michael, altogether from 1944 to 1961.

In some ways, Sir, Sir Mencea Cox epitomises the aspirations of the very poor toward a position of service in a country that was not designed initially for that kind of movement upward. Sir Mencea Cox is in many ways a role model for all poor, black Barbadians who ever aspired to become anything in public life in this country. He was like another great man who lived nearly 2000 years ago, a carpenter. He worked at his trade for many years and then he went to work at the Barbados Foundry. He then gravitated to being a chauffeur and finally, Sir, in the manner of ambitious and persons committed to improving themselves he became a taxi proprietor.

As I said, Sir, he came into this House in 1944. When he came to this House, Sir, it was a time when what has been called the Conservatives, but more particularly the plantocrats and those who believed verily that the country was theirs dominated in this House. Anyone who has followed the history of politics in this country would not need to be reminded that those were the days of Edward Keith Walcott and John Hadley Wilkinson. He was there of course along with people like Martin Tudor, D. L. Ward, Josh Haynes, James Barrymore Springer Senior, and of course Grantley Herbert Adams (as he then was) and Lloyd Smith. These were the kinds of people who were in *the* House at the time when Sir Mencea joined *this* House. He became early a strong advocate for adult suffrage. In a day when persons now take it for granted that they may or may not vote if they wish it is sometimes hard to reflect that there was a time when grown men – to say nothing of grown women – in this country had no say in what decisions were made for them on a daily basis. The agitation for adult suffrage which was eventually implemented in 1951, for the 1951 General Elections would have to be regarded as the major landmark in the growth of democracy in Barbados.

The contemporaries of Mencea Cox as he then was, Frank Walcott, Theodore Brancker and others whose names adorn these Halls and whose names I do not have to call, are hopefully part of the history which the young people of Barbados now get. But in those days, Sir, the decision to implement adult suffrage in 1951 – I am sure Your Honour will recall the wild celebration which went across the country as it became obvious that all adults however poor, however humble would be able to cast a ballot on how their affairs should be conducted. It would be fair to say that that was the beginning of the change of Barbados from an old Colonial State to a modern State.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Mencea became Minister of Communications, Works and Housing on February 1, 1954 and he remained that until the 1956 General Elections. He was in the first experiment with Ministerial Government and it has been said over and over again that he was among the best Ministers there has ever been in Barbados. He was one of those persons who became involved in the early development of housing estates. He was one of four members of the Barbados Labour Party on the Executive Committee as it then was. He became Minister of Trade, Industry and. Labour in 1956 and remained that until 1961.

Mr. Speaker, when I became Minister of Trade in 1971 I had the privilege of reading the files in the Ministry. This is a practice of most of us who have had the honour to serve as Minister, to read the files that have gone before in an attempt to grapple with and come to some understanding of the broad spectrum of responsibility in the particular portfolio. So I had the privilege, of reading the files and I would say that among his Minutes can be found the most lucid and clear instructions that a Minister could give to civil servants. I also had the privilege of talking to one senior officer who had worked as his Permanent Secretary and who confi[r]med – whereas he told me of another Minister who gave him the nerves – he confirmed that working with Mencea Cox had been the high point in his public service life up to the time when he departed from the General Service and entered into the Foreign Service.

1.00 p.m,

Mr. Speaker, the years before he became a Minister, although for all of the people in Barbados and especially those from *St. Michael, whether* one was involved in politics or not, one was aware of "Bryan and Cox". Bryan and Cox were two names that for us little children did not mean anything, except that somehow "Bryan and Cox" were our representatives. I had never seen them.

' *Aside.*

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Cox and Bryan. I was young. Probably why I. say Bryan and Cox, Sir, is that Mr. Bryan was a close friend or cohort of my father and they used to gather at a watering *hole* owned by T. O. Bryan in Milk Market. Mr. Speaker, as I am sure you are aware, much libation was poured.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: So was Errol Barrow. At that time, Sir, you were either a "B" or nothing. But those were the days when that was all we had. As I said, Sir, he was involved with the creation of the first Tourism Board, the creation of the first Barbados Development Board, and he was involved in the creation of employment with the London Transport System. He was involved in getting workers into the U. S. Farm Labour Programme. That is the framework within which he and some of his colleagues are remembered as Ministers in the Barbados Labour Party Government.

It is interesting what the Honourable Member for St. Thomas said in a passing comment. And I have to remind him that Sir Mencea Cox was actually expelled from the Barbados Labour Party in 1964. It is fact that he was expelled. The political parties and pundits today are acting as if disagreements within political parties started with Richie Haynes. In truth, Sir, they go back a long way and I do not think that this has been written anywhere that, in fact, Sir Mencea Cox was expelled from the Barbados Labour Party in 1964 and ran in the 1966 elections as an Independent Labour candidate. I think the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central would wish to bear in mind this particular fact.

By 1971, Sir Mencea and the Barbados Labour Party had started the reconciliation process. In 1971, he again ran as a candidate for the Barbados Labour Party. I think it would be fair to say that the reconciliation was completed as they no doubt will say in 1976 when he became a Senator in the Administration of Tom Adams.

Mr. Speaker, his life history no doubt will be written. It will record that he was. Chairman of the Constitution Review Commission of 1977 which reported in 1979 and which, incidentally, was responsible for bringing Independence Honours, as we now know them, on the table. The Commission recommended, among other things, National Honours which were put in place in 1982, but he himself had been made a Knight Bachelor under the old system in 1980. Of course, during that time he and another, old stalwart acted as Ministers in the Government between 1981 and when they were unceremoniously dispatched, as is the case with Governments from time to time, in 1976.

Mr. Speaker, what is important about Sir Mencea Cox, however, is not so much the record, impeccable though it is which will remain as a monument to his life, but the essence of his existence and the path of his movement from the lowliest position to a place where there are many who will say that he ought to have become Head of the Government of Barbados. There are many who will argue and some I think successfully that at a time in the history of Barbados merit required that Sir Mencea Cox be the Head of Government. But as Your Honour well knows, social history in Barbados is replete with examples of injustice being done as part of the fabric of the societal arrangements.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He would not fall into that category. As the Honourable Member for St. George South will tell you, that particular member would fall into a different category. He does not belong in the Cox category. Sir, I think Your Honour understands what I am talking about and most Honourable Members in this Chamber and within the sound of my voice would understand what I am talking about. It is a cause for regret, Sir, but it is only a point to be noted, for history does not deal with what ought to have been. It deals with what was. I make the point in passing not in a recrimination, but to make the record which will follow what I have said complete.

Mr. Speaker, it is that late Honourable Member of this House whose memory we honour. I would wish on behalf of the Government and all of the people of Barbados, and I am suremy colleagues on the other side will speak, but also we who are represented on this side of the House would wish to place on record our appreciation of a life well spent and a public service well done and a memory that will live in the political and development history of Barbados with honour for many, many years to come. I would move the usual Resolution, Sir.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I consider it an honour to join in paying tribute to the late Sir Mencea Cox who, in my view, was one of the unsung heroes of the Barbados political firmament. As you have heard from the Honourable Leader of the House, Sir Mencea represented much of what was noble and best about the working-class people 'of Barbados. The Honourable Member for St. Michael west has captured in capsule form almost all of the important contributions and roles that Sir Mencea

carried out during his long years of public service in this country. I would not want to repeat anything that he has said. But there are some other aspects that bear some further insight, Sir.

When Sir Mencea joined the fight for social justice in this country against the tremendous odds of bigotry that was then a very important part of the social scenery of Barbados, people from his background required extraordinary courage and character to be able to do what he did. Almost 87 years old, he was born in a rural village of working-class Barbadians. To have been able to break out of the shackles of a servitude that was necessary -at that time for survival, that someone during that period and with his background could join in the fight almost as a standard bearer to fight off all of the social inequities that pervaded the society at that time, Sir, required the talents of no ordinary man. This remarkable courage manifested itself in the way he saw service to country, not only as an honour but as a duty. He felt a compelling need to serve in the interest of the large numbers of Barbadians who were deprived of the normal rights and privileges and the resources for- half decent living at the time.

1.10 p.m.

Sir Mencea was 'a man of a patrician bearing, and I .use this in the best sense. He was an extremely proud man, and I use "pride" in the best sense and not in the sense of arrogance. The way in which 'he carried himself showed that this was a man who thought that to achieve meant to live a life that manifested the best aspects of human personality. This was what he considered to be crucial for the role which he was carrying out. It is important why I say that, because he was jostling at a time with, as we heard, the old planter class and the people of commercial interests in Barbados at the time; he was jostling with the lawyers, British trained lawyers, at the time; he was jostling with a solid group of university educated gild middle-class activists at the time and he brought what many of us would have seen as a handicap — his background, his lack of formal education — not as a crutch in the fight he was carrying, but almost as a weapon to beat and bludgeon a way on for.himself and for people of his ilk.

He was a proud man, Sir, and it was evident in his bearing. He was a man who was always meticulously dressed. I recall in the 1971 General Elections when the Barbados Labour Party was presenting its candidates in Independence Square for that election a decision was taken that all the candidates would wear' a beige shirt-jac suit of similar material, including the then one female candidate we had, Miss Norma Weekes. She wore the same shirt jac top, but we had a little difficulty with Sir Mencea who was a candidate, because none of us had ever seen Sir Mencea other than in a three-piece suit, a collar and tie, even if you were visiting him at home, and we wondered how he would make out wearing this shirt-jac top. But typical of the nature of the man, he was able to move away from all that he considered right and proper to play his part in the team. All of us who were then members of that team can remember him sitting on the platform in Independence Square squirming, uncomfortable in the way that we had dressed him. That was the kind of man he was, who would adapt for the team.

Sir Mencea, as I said, was an extremely well-dressed man, but apart from being well dressed he was extremely well-spoken. Word is that he was one of the finest Ministers this country has ever seen and this is a common view expressed by Permanent Secretaries and senior Public Officers who were operative in the early 1950's. He was a man who was the master of detail related to his Ministry. He never left anything to chance. He knew everything about his Ministry, every small detail, and he was not concerned about trivia. He was concerned about detail, and I draw the distinction between detail and trivia.

He was a solid public speaker and debater. He was a man who eschewed a lot of vain rhetoric and rather put a lot of stress on reasoned argument. For that reason, Mr. Speaker,. when he spoke in the House of Assembly in the days when he was a member, even those who were opposed to him had to listen in silence because of the force of his arguments and the amount of detail that he gave in relation to his Ministry.

Sir Mencea, as I said, was one of the pioneers of social development in this country. As we have heard from the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, he played a major role in many facets of social planning in this country. In relation to housing, he built the Pine Housing Area. I remember as a boy where the Pine Housing Area now stands was one massive grass piece and he is the one who started this massive housing project because he had seen through the 30's the conditions in which the mass of people in this country were living and he , felt that there were certain basics to which people were entitled and that persons in this country of low income groups could not aspire in those days to have decent housing without the assistance of Government. He took it on almost as a holy mission to bring about that kind of change.

He made important contributions in the field-of public transportation and industry. I remember that he was responsible for all the negotiations and the final decision to have the Banks Brewery established in Barbados. We take these things for granted now, Sir, but it required a great deal of vision in those days to be able to do the things that Sir Mencea did. As Minister of Labour he negotiated with the British Government to relieve the high unemployment that there was in Barbados at the time by having thousands of Barbadians emigrate to Britain to work in the London Transport, in the Lyons tea shops and in the hospitals in

Britain. He also played a major role as Minister of Trade and he is on record as being the Minister who moved Barbados as the first country in the Commonwealth to boycott the *importation of goods* from South Africa. That is how , strongly he felt about the injustices that were inflicted on black people *in South Africa* and he spoke out then *and took* a decision that did not meet the approval of *many of* the ingrained interests in Barbados, the bigots and the *conservatives,* and it was a *decision of* which all of us on reflection must of necessity be proud.

Sir Mencea served in two Adams' administrations, , Sir. That must be the only detail that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West left out of Sir Mencea's public life. He served with Sir Grantley Adams in his Cabinet, first in the Executive Committee and after the introduction of ministerial government in Barbados he became a Minister, but in the Tom Adams Government in 1976-1981 he served for a while as Minister of Health. Not many people remember this, but as I said, Sir Mencea is an unsung hero. A lot about him is not known. to many Barbadians, but he did in fact serve in the Ministry of Health and in that capacity those of us who were in the Cabinet at the time were able to benefit from his knowledge that he had acquired from a lifetime of public service.

In his later days, Sir, his health began to fail. He lost his sight. He became blind about a dozen, years ago and there is something about that development that remains always with mt. I had the good fortune to deal with him on a regular basis, and indeed to look after his interests, and what I saw when he lost his sight was a veil of philosophic calm that came over him. It is not well known that his parents were Plymouth Brethren. In fact, there are very few Barbadians who have ever been of that religious persuasion, but when he became blind and I saw the calm that enveloped him, I was led to believe that it was as a result of his exposure as. a young boy in the home of his parents to the tenets, the principles of the Plymouth Brethren that enabled him to live his new life, his life of blindness, with a calm and a peace that should make all of us who are now moving on into advanced age reflect on. 1.20 p.m.

His life was also characterised by ascetism. He was also a proud person who believed that his private and public life must not mingle and therefore he did not allow many people to get a-view of what is essentially the private person. I had the good fortune in his later years to have been afforded an . opportunity to share a lot of his reflections, not only on public affairs but his private views on many of the issues that are current in Barbados now and during that time.

Sir Mencea was always a strong member, of the Barbados Labour Party. I mention this only because the Honourable Member for St. Michael West said there was a temporary fracture in the sixties with the Barbados Labour Party but that related more' to a quarrel with an individual or two than to the philosophy, the history, the background and the direction of the Barbados Labour Party. The break was for a very short period. When that fracture was healed, he lived a life devoted to the philosophy of the Barbados Labour Party from which he never swerved until his death.

I have most of his personal papers relating to public matters and they have given me an insight into the thinking, the ideas and the issues that formed a lot of the policy of that time. I will always consider them as one of the most important assets that I have acquired in my lifetime.

Like other Honourable Members I am full of emotion as I express my deep tribute to the late Sir Mencea and hope the remaining members of his family – I speak not only for myself but for Members of the Barbados Labour Party Opposition – will accept our deep and sincere tribute and condolences on the passing of this outstanding Barbadian.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it was my fortune to have met and to know the late Sir Mencea from as early as the mid-1950's. It was a relationship to which I was introduced by another ex-member of this Chamber, Lloyd Beresford Bratbwaite. I think that the tributes that have been paid have been generous and deservingly - so because Sir Mencea was really an outstanding man in his own right and one of the principal political characters in Barbados from the late 1940's right through until the Barbados Labour Party lost government in 1961. In fact it is not now widely known and remembered that Sir Mencea was not only an outstanding debater in this Chamber always putting the Government's case in a formidable and effective way, , always well dressed as has been mentioned and always walking with his files whether in the House of Assembly or whether he was on the public platform. Even when he was on the hustings he always carried 6-8 files under his arm.

Those of us who remember him from the 1950's will remember that in the campaign he always spoke on the issue. He was scarcely a *man for ad hominem* comments but he spoke with a lucid, convincing and effective way both on the public platform and in this Chamber. He was really one of the architects of the transformation of this society being on, the stage between the late 1940's and 1961.

When the Barbados Labour Party in its political meetings had only 3 speakers like in the 1956 campaign in the last week when Sir Grantley, Mr. Adams as he then was, came back from London negotiating the' Deep

Harbour loan. The Democratic Labour Party appeared to have had the BLP on the run and the meeting was held in the Lower Green and there were only 3 speakers. In fact there were only 2 speakers. There was the Chairman, Mencea Cox and Grantley Adams. That is the standing he held as a public speaker in the Barbados Labour Party and in the Barbados of that day.

His life was really a triumph over adversity and over odds because no one listening to him would have known of the limitations in his formal training. You would have felt that you were listening to an Oxford and Cambridge trained graduate of the time the way he acquitted himself in this Chamber and on the .public platform, his style and class and with great conviction and in a very formidable way indeed.

I do not want to repeat the many instruments of change in which he was involved in helping to push. Many have already been identified. It is enough to sum it up by saying he was really one of the principal players in the political stage for about 15 years or so in this country and was one of the principal agents of change in this country during that period.

Sir Mencea had a great interest in young people and he was always concerned in encouraging me and a lot ,of others. He kept a formidable newspaper clippings library and it is not known that he had clippings for over 40 years in his house in Collymore Rock. He was a very courteous and charming man in many respects and always introduced and invited you to share a nip with him. He was a man in the nip bottle tradition which was very much a part of that era. Some men were 3-gill bottle men but he was a nip bottle man. He always invited you to share a nip with him. Those who knew the man know that to be correct.

I just want to share with you, Mr. Speaker, some experience I had that points to the dignity of the man. Whatever he was doing, he showed character and class and large intelligence but he was always a man of dignity and distinctive style. In the very early 1970's I was caught one morning around 8 o'clock in a traffic snarl-up in Upper Roebuck Street just below the Globe. In fact, that was the usual 8 o'clock experience going into the city. The delays were so long that persons would sometimes take out their newspapers and start to read and get as far as reading the first page.

'One morning in the midst of one of these snarl-ups I looked around me and saw a man delivering eggs in a three-piece suit with the eggs in a tray in both hands. *When* I looked carefully it was M. E. Cox delivering eggs in Roebuck Street *in* a three-piece *suit, his* back ramrod straight and immaculately dressed. That was the nature of the man.

1.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, after the mid-1950s and for sure after Sir Grantley went to the Federal Parliament, I would say that he carried the Government of Barbados. He was the most formidable, knowledgeable and effective voice and he was the most outstanding character on the Government side after W56. That continued until 1961 when he was effectively the Leader of the Barbados Government.

It is no reflection on him ' but ' a reflection on the difficulty that was experienced then and even to some extent today in getting the merit principle to triumph that he was not named Head of Government and he was not chosen to succeed Grantley Adams in 1958. It is no reflection on him but it is a commentary on the temper of the age that the merit principle could not then triumph. But there is no doubt about it that he was by far the most formidable, effective and most able member of that administration, 1956-1961.

The fracture that developed between himself and Sir Grantley Adams in 1964 is a matter very much to be regretted. I think that the lesson to be learnt by all of us, and the role we have to play is this that always in political parties, strong political leaders may temporarily try to frustrate,. disappoint and even succeed in getting expelled particular members who are their colleagues and rivals. But, and this is the important point which the Honourable Member for City and others may be well-advised to learn that it is always the duty of others, as it is the duty of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and others, always to make sure that justice is in the end done.

They prevailed upon the late Tom Adams, who needed no lot of persuasion in that matter, that Sir Mencea Cox has to be rehabilitated and he ought to take his rightful place in the history of this country. To that extent, he was brought back into the administration. He was given his place in the Senate. He was asked to chair an important *commission. He was* given a knighthood. In the end, he takes a deservedly high place in the annals of the political History of this country.

I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I too very much regret this passing. I think it represents a significant loss and I join in supporting the Resolution before this Honourable House.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Speaker, I do not have the position of experience from which the Honourable Member for St. George South, or the Honourable Member for St. Joseph were able to address the subject but I do nonetheless speak from a position of tremendous' admiration for the late Sir Mencea Cox. In fact, Sir, two of my brothers and one sister were able to leave Barbados in 1955/56 and go to London to be employed. I attributed that then, as I *do now,* directly to the efforts which Sir Mencea played in providing employment for several thousands of

Barbadians who would otherwise not have been able to find satisfying employment. Their success in that place is in no small measure due to the tremendously hard work which Sir Mencea put in the service of the people of this country.

Sir Mencea was one of those leaders of the Barbados Labour Party of whom my father and other members of my family in St. Joseph at the time which, as you know, Sir, was very much the special province of Sir Grantley, that they admired very much, and my father being one of those was- able to show me and guide me regarding the work which they had done, particularly those two, within the organisation of the Barbados Labour Party.

It goes without saying, Sir, that we would all remember that when the Barbados -Labour Party was formed, it was not formed merely as a political organisation, but going hand in glove with it was the Barbados Workers' Union as the arm that was being used to promote the interest of the working person.

The names that come out from that that we remember very much today are the names of Sir Grantley himself, Sir Hugh Springer and Sir Frank Walcott. But it would be difficult to perceive of a situation in which, Sir Mencea Cox, given his commitment to upbringing and upgrading the standard of life, particularly of the underprivileged person, to see him in' a position where he was not fully supportive of the positions which were being taken by those other persons mentioned before.

When there was a separation of the two institutions around 1954, history does not clearly indicate where Sir Mencea stood, but it is very clear to us that in the work he continued to do as a Minister of the Crown, that he was a champion, as they were champions, of the underprivileged man and the underprivileged woman, and that is, in my mind, one of the main reasons why the very large numbers of thousands of members of the Barbados Workers' Union, particularly those older ones who remember the work which Sir Mencea has done, they even now hold him in very high esteem.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that for us his personal life and his success is an indication of what we ourselves have striven for. Ii is an effort that he has made to move from very humble beginnings to ride beyond the levels of the social adversities which there might have been at the time, and as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph said, to have made himself so well established that unless one knew one- would not have been able -to have recognised, as indeed many others of the people of his generation were able to do, the very humble circumstances and the levels of misfortune which would have attended his efforts to upgrade himself.

We are very pleased that Sir Mencea worked, and worked very hard in the area of employment, housing and trade to look after the interest of our people in this country. We are particularly happy that his life is an example for people at the grassroots level to remind us that we do not have to concern ourselves with crying about misfortune but rather because there js a better opportunity now than there would have been when Sir Mencea was growing that we ourselves can provide the opportunity to grow beyond our circumstances. I think that when people make those kinds of contributions that history must indeed reflect the appreciation of those of us who remain for their lives and contributions.

It is a good thing to recognise that the Barbados Labour Party was able, in the term of office when they came back in 1976-4986, to see that they were very careful to take care of arranging the programme of Government in such a way that Sir Mencea and persons like him would not be forgotten by the community. It is so easy for us to remember the evil that men do or to reflect on people's history by making spurious comments about their past, and it is very seldom that the good which persons have done that one finds a willingness on the part of the community to herald that good. It *is only on* occasions such as this in this Honourable Chamber that we have been able, in this case, as indeed in others before, to recognise the tremendous contribution which Sir Mencea and other persons have made.

It is our hope, mine certainly, that because of the knowledge which some of my colleagues who have spoken have had of our late departed Sir Mencea, that this knowledge of what was called by another speaker "an unsung hero", may even now be the kind of knowledge and information that younger persons would be made aware of. and, it is our wish further, that information of this sort would do much towards being used as part of the social history of our country as a means of serving as a guide to those people who seem very often to be rudderless and without examples of what and whom they should follow. 1:40 p.m.

I wish on behalf of the organization I represent, although I am not the organization, but on behalf of the organization the Barbados Workers' Union, on my own behalf and on behalf of the members of St. Michael Central, which is part of the larger constituency that Sir Mencea represented for many years, to express our sincere condolences to his family.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not wish to prolong the tributes paid to Sir Mencea. But I think, as one who had the opportunity of serving in the National Executive of *the* Barbados Labour Party with Sir Mencea for a period of time and who also had the opportunity to speak to him on politics during *that* time, that there are one' or two things which I would be able to

say which would help to place in true perspective some of the matters that have been mentioned today.

There is no doubt about it that Sir Mencea felt that he had been overlooked at the time of the succession to Sir Grantley when Sir Grantley went to the Federation as Premier. But lest it be forgotten I think I should place on the record that he , felt very strongly that the leading opponents of his succession were not people of what he regarded and what he called the working-class background. He felt it was people within the Party and, within society who had the advantage of a university education who had led the movement against him on the ground that in an era in which great emphasis was placed on education, it would be most unfortunate for Barbados if Barbados ignored that and placed someone at the head who did not have the benefit of formal education.

Indeed he felt that the 1961 campaign in which he was the real target of a tremendous amount of political venom from his former colleagues really illustrated his point of view. Sir Mencea was exceedingly proud of the fact not only that he participated in politics in breaking the stranglehold of the minority, the plantocracy in Barbados, but he also felt proud of the fact that as a Minister he served in the first Cabinet of Barbados and that no one could legitimately question his integrity during the period of time that he was a Minister. He was exceedingly proud of all of those who tried to suggest that on the election of the blacks in Barbados to Ministerial office that Barbados public affairs would be run in a manner which was different from how it was done before. He was therefore fiercely proud of the fact that he was able to make it abundantly clear, as a Minister of Trade, that as Minister of Trade he would make his decisions in accordance with what he regarded as right.

He used to recall that there was a contest for pioneer status in those days between Banks Breweries and Carib Beer. I heard him say it on the platform. He used, to say that the proponents of the Carib Beer application felt that all they had to do was to hire Sir Hugh Wooding who was a friend of Sir Grantley's to lobby on their behalf and that they were sure to get the permission over Banks Beer which, at that time, was being proposed by a Guyanese Mr. D'Aguiar. According to him, he said, he felt that the presentation that was made by Banks Beer was superior to the presentation made by Carib Beer and, as Minister, he made the decision. He was proud of the fact that he could make that decision, an independent decision uninfluenced by lobbying because of political connection.

Sir, there is one other point that I think I should mention. The period of difference between Mr. Cox and the hierarchy of the Barbados Labour Party was a period of great trauma within the Party. Obviously as was said by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph some of us who lived through it, all of us bitterly regretted the injustice which we regarded that was done. I well remember the occasion, it was an occasion for which some of us as younger members of the Party we always felt that at some period of time something should be done to remove what we regarded as that injustice. I am proud of the fact that we had the opportunity not only of ushering Sir Mencea back into the Party in 1970 but also of ensuring that when we regained office in 1976 that his contribtition was placed in true perspective in Barbados."

There is one other point I should like to make, Sir, because as the Honourable Member for St. George South has said Sir Mencea loved to separate his public life from his private life. But I think there is one area that he would be very pleased if someone remembered it and that was that among his passion was a passion for horses. He loved horses and he liked the best horses. He was a great follower of English racing and of local racing. I think he had a particular admiration for the horses of Mr. David Seale and he always told you that he liked the best, if you wanted to know who he was going to bet on. So that he did have a private interest and horses took pride of place in his pleasure.

I join with others in paying tribute to a great Barbadian. One only has to look at the present situation in Southern Africa in which people are now struggling to attain in a political plane the place where – because of efforts of people like Sir Mencea and others – we attained as long ago as 1950, 1951.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is part of the generational change that is now overtaking Barbados' politics that I have to concede that, as Leader of the Barbados Labour Party, I hardly knew Sir Mencea Cox. Indeed I have the distinct privilege and pleasure of having been granted what could have been called an audience with him on one occasion. I came away from that audience as struck as many other Members who have spoken in this debate have been struck by his bearing, his manners, his love for learning and his deep understanding and commitment to advancing the cause of :poor people.

I join this morning to associate myself on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party in general with the very warm and generous tributes that have been paid to Sir Mencea Cox and to say that, in my judgement, Sir Mencea Cox represented one of the greatest gifts that the Barbados Labour Party has given to the people of Barbados.
1.50 p.m.

He embodied, Sir, in my judgement a triumph of small man in this society and he embodied what can be accomplished when people of his background are given an opportunity to parade their talents on a wider national arena.

I would however, Mr. Speaker, not want to miss this opportunity to say as I have said on other occasions that there is a passing parade taking place. Many men who were at the foundations of the creation of modern Barbados are passing from the scene without leaving behind any written word that would tell future generations that this is how they saw it from their vantage point. We had it in the case of Grantley Adams and Tom Adams and Errol Barrow and we recently had it in the case of Allder. But I really believe that the time has come when we, as a nation must not lose this valuable part of our social history. The memoirs and the views of those who played a formative role in building this society are too rich for us to do this. I would like again to press for a heritage foundation that could really enable persons of the character of Sir Mencea Cox to have access to the resources and properly report the social history of this country and to tell the people of this country through the written word that this is how I saw it from my vantage point.

On behalf of all the Members of the Barbados Labour Party I would like to join in the tribute and associate myself with the warm and generous remarks that have been made on this occasion to the memory of Sir Mencea Cox.

Mr. SPEAKER: The thoroughness of the tributes paid this morning to the late Sir Mencea Cox has really left little room for me to add any further contribution no more than to say that persons of that generation have been an inspiration to all of us to participate in the political life of our country.

Of course I was a resident in St. Michael when he was around and one of the things we found as young people when political meetings were held was that there was no doubt the Barbados Labour Party at that time had some of the soundest speakers I have ever heard and Sir Mencea Cox stood out as one of those speakers who impressed many of us knowing full well that we would not have been able to get the advanced education to match some of our other colleagues that he inspired us with the limited approach to so pursue representation.

There is one thing that stands out in my mind during that period and I will never forget because in some way it has taught me how to campaign. In those days Queen's Park used to be the only polling station. There were not the kind of prohibitions. People campaigned as they liked and I met a man walking through the Park and he took out one of the lenses of his glasses and put in it a card marked "Cox". I asked him, why did you present this way? He. said, "First and foremost, Cox is a man you must see eye to eye"'. That was his campaign because he felt that he was the kind of person you could not miss if you were in a political campaign and ever since then I recommend and I recognise successful candidates must be able to see their constituents eye to eye in order to receive the kind of support so necessary for them. It is in that rein then that we learn a lot from the political campaigners in those days. I have no doubt that he will go down in history as one of the few black Barbadians who have made a significant contribution to the overall life, both politically and socially, of Barbados. I therefore associate myself with all the remarks made on behalf of the late Sir Mencea Cox, Minister and Member of this House. I now invite you to stand in one minute's silence as a mark of appreciation on the passing of this Resolution to his family.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not relish and I am sure you yourself will not relish the fact that in this item we also have to pay tribute to another great Barbadian. Even though he reached the ripe old age of 91 I am sure that it cannot be easy for Your Honour that we have to pay this tribute while Your Honour is sitting in the Chair. In a sense I am sure that from what I know of that great old man he would have wanted such tribute as paid to him to be first of all brief and secondly that one of his distinguished children should be presiding at this time in circumstances of which we all approve.

Mr. Speaker, of course I speak of your late father, Ervin Lloyd Weekes who was laid to rest at Westbury Cemetery during the last two weeks. I wish personally to regret that my being out ' of the country precluded an opportunity to share with you and your family the great grief which I know would have -enveloped that very close knit family which is unique in the history of Black Rock if not the history of Barbados. .

Ervin Lloyd Weekes was an engineer at the Barbados Light and Power and in the performance of his duty as an engineer those colleagues who had the privilege of working with him remember him as being above all meticulous. He was meticulous in form. He was meticulous in attitude and he was meticulous in speech. I think too that while those who worked with him would remember him in those ways he is probably better remembered as the grand old man of the wider Black Rock area. The house over which he presided was one that opened to all and every facet of social activity in the Black Rock/Brighton/Fairfield area and there is no one who had the privilege of growing up in that area of Barbados who did not at some time or other benefit from either wise counsel or some other form of benefit from your late father.
2.00 p.m.

He had six children. Mr. Speaker, I feel bound to say that he had some of the most beautiful daughters that anyone young and observant in Black Rock can remember. Although most of them are now out of Barbados, the fact is that everybody remembers Mr. and Mrs. Weekes' girl children-and then, incidentally, they remember that. they

also had three boys. That family was cosmopolitan in the sense that it runs the ambit in their achievements in life. It has run the full ambit of professions, vocations and of attitudes. I think it is not fully appreciated that it was possible, and this is a fact, that two members of the same family could participate in a political activity, one on the one hand and the other on ,the other hand and yet at no time was there any rancor or any meritricious expression that would have affected the bond that had been created in that household.

Sir, I had the unique opportunity, if I may so term it, of having your distinguished sister as my opponent in an election. It was . the strangest experience which unfortunately not any *other* Honourable Member will be able to share *where* one had to retain the quality of relationship born of social and family relationships while at the same time vigorously pursuing a particular political point of view to the point of political death. Only one of the persons could survive and I think Your Honour, with all due respect, would have agreed that the better one would have to survive. Even at the end of that, I am able to say with impunity that she is one of the persons with whom I can -still get some of the best counsel.

This is the measure of the kind of household which your late father presided over. I say preside, Sir, because anyone who is 91 years old and had a household of this size presided over it. He was in charge of the household. He was the one to whom all looked for guidance and that is the case, not only in your family, but in the families of all Honourable Members and indeed all Barbadians of this age group. I think it would be fair to say that his values have been manifested in the utterances and behaviour patterns of his children.

Sir, I have had the honour of knowing Your Honour almost from the time we were little children and I have had the privilege of seeing Your Honour retain the same sense of fairness and the same sense of rectitude throughout that entire period. I know of no one in our immediate environment who has been more courteous as a human being than Your Honour, except possibly the siblings of Your Honour. I remember well an older brother, who is now I believe in Canada, who was the epitome of courtesy in terms of the expression of people walking along Black Rock. Yes, *he was* the epitome of *courtesy and* decorum and it was clearly a hallmark of Your Honour's household as indeed the household of many of our colleagues in the area that courtesy to friend and foe was first and foremost in the lexicon of do's and don'ts laid down by parents like your late father and mother.

Mr. Speaker, it is therefore difficult while paying tribute officially in this House not to make personal references of which one is aware. In offering the condolences of Honourable Members on this side of the House, I am sure that I speak for all of those persons in the wider arena of Black Rock. As Your Honour knows, Black Rock is a very long road and a very wide area. But I think that I speak for all of the persons who have known Your Honour's parents and siblings and who regarded your father some with awe most with love and all with respect.

Sir, I think that you, your brothers and sisters can be proud of the fact that he lived to a ripe old age of more than four score years aid ten, indeed 91 as I said. During that time, you were always able to provide the succour, especially in the later years, the kind of intellectual and physical succour, which is the watch-word of a family. I know, Sir, that in spite of those long years together that you must grieve the loss of your father. But I would invite Your Honour to remember that such grief will pass and that Your Honour will be able to remember even better the good times which you and your family had under the guidance of this very good man. I regret but nonetheless feel honoured to be the one who has the opportunity today to say on behalf of the Honourable Members on this side that we extend our condolences by way of the usual Resolution.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate Members of the Opposition with the very warm tribute that has been paid to your late father on the occasion of his passing. None of us on this side can speak from a position of deep personal' knowledge of your father. But we make bold to say that your gracious and dignified presence at all times in this Chamber in of itself speaks of good parenting and must also say that your father was a fine gentleman. We, therefore, take the opportunity to express to you our personal condolences on this occasion. And we trust that you would convey to your family the heartfelt sympathies that my Members would want to express to you on the loss experienced by your family.

Mr. SPEAKER: I just want to thank Members for their kind sentiments and I will convey them to my family. We shall now stand for one minute so as to observe that.

All Honourable Members stood. for one minute in observance.

ORDERS OF THE DAY
SUSPENSION

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have reached the point that it is 12 minutes past two and I suggest that it would be better for us to suspend until 3.15 p.m. today. I so-move, Sir.

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

The question that the sitting be now suspended until 3.15 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative

'without division, .and Mr.. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.
2.10 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. Government Business is the order of the day.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

ORDER NO. 7 – THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (NO. 4) BILL, 1994

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, this Supplementary Appropriation Bill is seeking Parliament's approval for the sum of $815 221 as supplementary provisions for the 1993-94 financial year. This is in respect of Personal Emoluments, goods and services and capital formation.

I will be very brief, Sir, in saying that the sum of $48 009 is to be used by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries to pay employers' contributions to the National Insurance Health Levy and Transport Levy under various Subprograms.

In respect of goods and services, the sum of $32 212 is required by Government House to purchase kitchen utensils and linen which are presently in need of replacement. In addition to that, both the Governor-General and the Honourable Prime Minister will be required to host functions and official receptions for the UN Global Conference, for which supplementary provision is needed, to replace various items, worn carpets in State rooms and other necessary items, for the hosting of those events.

In respect of capital formation, the sum of $670 000 which the Transport Board urgently needs to purchase spare parts in order to put an additional 20 omnibuses back into daily service and. to provide the kind of transportation which is urgently needed. This increase in the working capital of the Transport Board has occurred as a result of the consultants' report on the Barbados transport study which indicates that there is a need for an increase in parts availability, particularly as the Transport Board is looking to reorganise its operations.

In respect of this supplementary savings in the sum of $815 221 have been identified in the 1993-94 Estimates to offset these supplementary provisions now being required.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, in respect of the amendment to the Explanatory Note, the Government proposes to provide a loan to the Barbados Development Bank to redeem the fifth issue of National Development Bonds and we wish to do this not later than March 31, 1994. Originally it was proposed to do some domestic borrowing by way of a roll over of those bonds and subsequent to that it has been agreed that Government would advance a loan to the BDB and avoid going to the market at this time and have those bonds redeemed. Funds are therefore available under Head 19 — Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, Programme 11 — Lending, Subprogram 01 — Loans and Advances, Object No. 828, Loans to Agencies to operationalise the $10 million lending to the Barbados Development Bank. However, that particular Explanatory Note associated with the Subprogram makes no mention of lending to the Barbados Development Bank, and therefore I am seeking the House's concurrence to amend that particular Explanatory Note accordingly to effect. the change in order that the payment can be met from the Consolidated Fund.

With those few words, Sir, .I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. C. V. WALKER, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 4 inclusive were called and passed.

The Schedule was called.

Ho'in. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Schedule be the Schedule to the Bill.

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

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

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

On the separate motions of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. C. V. WALKER, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Supplementary Appropriation (No. 4) Act, 1994.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Mr. SPEAKER: There is . a request to revert to Government Notices. If there is no objection, so be it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I be$ to give notice of a Resolution to guarantee a loan to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation from the Bank of Nova Scotia in the sum of $900 000 to assist with the purchase of certain equipment and vehicles.
3.25 p.m.

ORDER NO. 2 – TO MOVE THE SECOND READING OF THE SHIPPING BILL, 1994

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, this Bill seeks to replace the existing Shipping Act, Cap. 296 of the Laws of Barbados. The long title to the existing Bill, as indeed the long title to the Bill before the House today, describes the Bill as an Act respecting ships, crews and safety at sea and for matters consequential, related or incidental thereto.

The main purpose of the Bill is to update the existing legislation on shipping and to make the Barbados Shipping Registry more effective and attractive and consequentially more competitive. In order to achieve this objective the Bill incorporates relevant provisions of various international maritime conventions especially those relating to standards in respect of certification and manning, tonnage and the limitation of ships owners' liabilities.

Several definitions have been added to the existing law. For example, "aircraft", "bareboat chartered", "Near Coastal Trading Area", "Original Registrar" and a few other definitions.

Definitions like "Near Coastal Trading Area" and "Caribbean Trading Area" replace the old-fashioned and archaic concepts of the Home Trade Area. The existing Home Trade Area in the region is quite a vast area and its limits under the existing legislation are very vaguely defined. We find that indeed in existing legislation throughout the region the Home Trade Area in relation to CARICOM countries tends to cover almost the entire Caribbean Sea.

Now, vessels trading in what can be described as the Home Trade Area tended to be fitted with minimal navigational and safety equipment and to be manned by masters and officers with limited qualifications. By providing for a Near Coastal Area and a Caribbean Trading Area, various standards of certification and manning and training can be required for particular areas.

The Near Coastal Area and the requirements in respect of that would not be as of high a standard as the requirements for the Caribbean Trading Area and equally so the requirements for the Caribbean Trading Area would not be as high as the requirements in relation to foreign-going vessels which would be of the highest category.We are going to have 3 areas. In relation to the Near Coastal, the Caribbean Trading and the foreign-going vessels there may be varying levels of certification and standards required in relation to ships.

One of the main amendments incorporated into this new Shipping Act stipulates first that a ship must be registered and it simplifies the criteria for registration. What I will do is to outline in general terms what the amendments do and then identify as we go along the specific areas which are covered. Perhaps what I can do also is to identify the areas where there are new provisions introduced into this Bill.

Some of the major areas of amendments then relate as well to adding to the list of requirements for entry in register books provision for ships which are under construction. Under the old regime there was no provision for registering ships under construction, but under this new legislation there is a provision for registering ships which are in the process of construction.

This new legislation will also provide for registration of vessels on bareboat charter. Now, "bareboat charter" is defined in the legislation as meaning a vessel "leased without a master and crew and for a given period of time." So this is the leasing of the vessel without the master and the crew.

There is a requirement in the Bill that if a ship is a foreign vessel, before it can be registered as a Barbadian vessel, the foreign registration must first be cancelled. But there is an exception to that requirement in the case of boats which are leased on bareboat charter. Section 9(2) says:

> "A ship registered under the law of a foreign country shall on application, if she is bareboat chartered to any citizen of Barbados or to any body corporate established under the Laws of Barbados, in addition to being registered under the law of that foreign country, be registered for the period of the bareboat charter as a Barbadian ship and the registrar shall notify the proper officer of that foreign country of such registration as a Barbadian ship."

Under the normal requirements, a foreign ship would first of all have to cancel its foreign registration before it could be registered as a Barbadian ship, but where there is a bareboat charter, provision is made for a registration of

the vessel during the period of the bareboat charter as a Barbadian vessel despite its foreign registration.

Some of the other areas covered by the new Bill relate to replacing the current system whereby the Director of Maritime Affairs is required to be a public officer and to register all ships. There is a new arrangement in place where provision is made for the appointment of a principal registrar. who will not necessarily be *a* public officer. There ' will be a principal registrar and registrars who will register all ships in excess of 150 gross registered tonnes, regardless of the trading area in which they operate. There will also in addition to the principal registrar and the registrars be a Director of Maritime Affairs who will register local fishing vessels and who will also register all ships below 150 gross registered tonnes in a Small Vessels Register provided they are not subject to registration by the Barbados Port Authority.

Among the other provisions of the new Bill is a clause to provide that the Minister may make regulations governing what is required to be done in establishing this Small Vessel Register.
3.35 p.m.

The legislation makes provision for reinforcing the protection of mortgagees of vessels by providing that the owner or agent of a ship must deal solely with the original registrar of the ship and that the written consent of every mortgagee must be received prior to a change of any flag. That is not to prejudice the rights of mortgagees of ships where you can change flags at your will or discretion without notifying the mortgagees and therefore be able to move the ships out of the area of the protection of the mortgagee.

Provision is also made to take account of maritime liens and their ranking in order of priority. These are entirely new provisions, I. believe, in relation to maritime liens. A Part has been included in the Bill which relates to maritime liens. That will be seen at Part VIII of the Bill.

In addition to all that, Mr. Speaker, the principal Registrar and the Registrars and the Director of Maritime Affairs, may undertake provisional registration of ships. Under the present law the only person who could register ships overseas would be Barbadian Consuls. Now, under the new regime, Registrars appointed under the Act and the Director of Maritime Affairs can undertake provisional registration of ships. So they will have that capacity in addition to the right of Barbadian Consuls overseas to undertake such registration.

Then there is provision for the determination of shipping fees by the Minister responsible for Maritime Transport. These fees were previously fixed by the Minister of Finance. That duty how falls on the Minister responsible for Maritime Transport.

I had indicated, Mr. Speaker, earlier on that one of the major aspects of the Bill was to provide for the acceptance of a number of conventions introducing them as part of the Law of Barbados. I will just outline those conventions and say briefly what they represent. They are:

1. The 1976 Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims Convention.

2. The 1978 Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping Convention.

3. The 1974 Convention Relating to the Carriage of Passengers and their Luggage By Sea and its 1976 Protocol.

4. The 1978 Protocol to the 1974 Convention on Safety of Life At Sea.

5. The 1976 ILO Convention No. 147 Relating To Minimum Standards For Seafarers; and

6. The 1988 Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against. Sea. Safety of Maritime Navigation and its 1988 Protocol.

Now, just a brief word, Mr. Speaker, about all of these Conventions so as to identify what we are doing. The Convention relating to Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims, 1976; very briefly, defines the claims which are subject to limitation and broadens the parameters which were established by the 1957 Brussels Convention relating to the Limitation of Liability of Owners of Seagoing *Ships*.

The limits of liability provided for in the Convention are calculated according to the ships tonnage on a sliding scale with the amount of the currency getting less in proportion to the greater amount of the ship's tonnage. *The* concept of registered tonnage has been replaced by the term "gross tonnage" of the ship.

Article 7 of that Convention deals specifically with claims 'in respect of loss of life or personal injury to passengers under a contract of passenger carriage. Then there is a chapter in the Convention which sets up a fund known as a Limitation Fund and this provides for the fund to be established with a Court and other competent authority in an amount as set out in the Articles of the Convention.

The second Convention to which I refer, the International Convention on the. Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping for Seafarers, lays down minimum standards for training, qualifications and seagoing service .of officers and seamen in order to ensure that

seafarers are qualified and fit for their respective duties from the point of view of safety of life and property at sea and the protection of the marine environment.

This Convention also recognises the peculiar needs of individual states to allow a state to adopt the type of training methods which are most appropriate to *its* needs provided that the selected methods do not fall outside the broad parameters of the regulations.

It also makes a provision *that* in circumstances of exceptional necessity in relation to ships engaged in near coastal voyages, a contracting party is permitted to impose less stringent requirements and it is entitled to dispense with compliance with standards set out in the Convention. By incorporating this Convention into the Laws of Barbados we are thereby by implication legislating the minimum standards for training, qualifications and seagoing service of officers and seamen who are engaged on Barbadian ships in order to ensure that they are qualified for their duties from the point of view of ensuring that the safety of life at sea and property is preserved and for protecting the marine environment.

The Third Convention to which I referred was the Athens Convention relating to the carriage of passengers and their luggage by sea. This Convention recognises the desirability of determining by agreement certain rules relating to the carriage of passengers and their luggage by sea. It imposes a liability based on the fault of the carrier occurring during the period of carriage. This period covers embarkation and disembarkation including the ship to shore transfers provided by carriers in excursion programmes. Loss on the quayside is, however, not covered by this Convention.

The Convention assists also, Mr. Speaker, by creating a presumption of loss where there is a shipwreck, a collision, stranding, explosion, fire or defect in the ship, so that any person injured as a result of any of these occurrences has that presumption operating in their favour and the onus would then be on the shipowners to establish and prove the proper navigation and management of the ship and that the loss was not due to their negligence. Like most of the international Conventions in this area, this Convention permits carriers to limit their liability to certain defined amounts.

The 1978 Protocol to the Convention on Safety of Life at Sea is the next one, Mr. Speaker. The main point about that Protocol is that the Protocol provides certain standards in relation to carriers of crude oil.
3.45 p.m.

All ships of 1 600 to 10 000 registered tonnes are required to be fitted with radar, and ships with 10 000 gross registered tonnes and above must have two radars each capable of operating independently. All tankers of 10 000 gross registered tonnes and above must have 2 remote steering gear control systems each operable separately from the navigating bridge. There are a number of important Regulations designed to improve the survey and certification of ships. This protocol deals largely with establishing standards in relation to carriers of crude oil.

The ILO Merchant Shipping Minimum Standards Convention of 1976, this is Convention No. 147. This Convention aims to improve the efficiency and safety of navigation, enhance measures to protect - the marine environment and advance seafarers interest in the fields of health and safety working conditions and trade union rights. Convention 147 prescribes a set of minimum standards relating to safety, social security, ship board conditions of employment and living arrangements to be observed in merchant shipping registered under any flag by reference to a number of other ILO Conventions listed in an Appendix to the Convention.

These Conventions cover such things as minimum age, medical examination, articles of agreement, officers competency certificates, food and *catering* on board ships, accommodation, prevention of occupational accidents, sickness or injury benefits and repatriation. The Appendix also refers to two other Conventions on freedom of association and the protection of the right to organize and to bargain collectively.

In addition to all this, there is another provision of the Convention No. 147, which refers to the standards of hours of work and manning to ensure the safety of human life aboard ships. That is to prevent people from having to work for too long hours without appropriate safeguards for relaxation and rest. Another requires that due attention be given to an IMO concerning the vocational training of seafarers.

The final Convention to which I made reference was the 1988 Convention on the suppression of unlawful acts against the safety of maritime navigation and its 1988 protocol. The purpose of this Convention is to assist in the formulation of internationally agreed technical measures to improve security and reduce , the risk to the lives of passengers and crews on board ships. The protocol to that Convention is directed towards the suppression of unlawful acts against the safety of fixed platforms located in the continental shelf. It of course matches the major provisions of the Convention.

By incorporating the requirements and the provisions of Conventions *which* provide the detailed requirements for observance in so many areas, the substance of the law is incorporated into the Barbados requirements.

I should just like.to spend a brief moment, if I can, Mr. Speaker, at this point outlining the specific areas of change which have taken place in the legislation. In Part I which is headed "THE SHIP" covered in Sections 8-85 these changes are made. In Section 8 *"Bareboat Charter* registration" which I spoke of earlier is an exception to the requirement that a foreign registration must be cancelled before a *ship is registered as a* Barbadian *ship. I did* expand on that at the opening. You do not now need to have to cancel a foreign registration in order to register a ship as a Barbadian ship which is on bareboat charter.

Section 8 provides a simplified description for the qualification for registration *as* a Barbadian ship. I spoke of the near coastal and the Caribbean trade *area which* have been terms used in substitute of the "home trade area" and that is dealt with in section 10.

In Section 12 -"the Director of Maritime Affairs" is a liaison with the Principal Registrar of Ships instead of having the latter designation. He is not now called a Registrar of *Ships. There* are 3 different categories of persons. There is a Director of Maritime Affairs and there is the Principal Registrar of Ships and there are other Registrars. But the Director of Maritime Affairs is the liaison with the Principal Registrar in this regard.

Under Section 12, these are the new things that have been instituted, the Principal Registrar must designate a central registry in Barbados - where all the details of Barbadian ships must be kept.

Section 13 — after first registration any other transactions must be done only in the original Register relating to that vessel.

Sections 27 — 84 also have some changes and some new provisions, not a lot, but there are a few which I would just mention very quickly. In Section 27(1) (e) for instance in order to register a foreign registered ship on bareboat charter -the proper officer of that registry must certify the temporary transfer of the vessel and inform of *any liens* attached to the vessel.

In Section 38 a Barbadian vessel on bareboat charter to any citizen or company of a foreign country may be registered in that country and upon this registration the original Barbados Registrar shall notify the proper officer in that country of the suspension of the Barbados registration of that ship.

In Section 40 — I am just speaking of the changes which are made — a Barbadian Registrar at a foreign port as well as a Consular Officer may now grant provisional registration of a ship. I did mention that earlier.

In Section 47 (4) and (5) no mortgage instrument may be required with respect to a bareboat chartered ship registered under the law of a foreign country and having an existing registration as a Barbadian ship, nor may any such action be taken in the foreign register.

By Section 55 a provisionally registered ship may now be the subject of a mortgage.

By Sections 56 and 57 a mortgage of a ship may also secure future advances in any units of account. The currency is not limited to Barbadian currency but any unit of account may be used. Sections 58 and 59 provide that the change of name of a Barbadian ship no longer needs to be gazetted before it becomes valid. The previous law required that once you changed the name of a Barbadian ship there was a requirement that that change of name be published in the *Official Gazette.* That is no longer required.

Under Section 68 the beneficial interest in ships may be enforced by or against owners and mortgagees of ships in respect of their interest therein in the same way as in respect of any other movable property. I have already mentioned the requirement that the Minister responsible for shipping, instead of the Minister of Finance now has the power to prescribe fees under the Act and any instrument used for the purposes of the Act are exempt from Stamp Duty.

3.55 p.m.

Section 82, prior to the registration of a ship its tonnage must be ascertained by a surveyor who should grant a certificate of survey specifying its tonnage and other particulars.

In section 82(4) in making tonnage regulations the Minister shall have due regard .to the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969 as amended subsequently.

In Section 85 a distinction is made whereby the Director of Maritime Affairs and the principal Registrar of Ships may both appoint qualified persons as surveyors to survey and register ships.

In Part II, Mr. Speaker, which deals with the crew, sections 83 to 85 in the present Act have been deleted. They contain specific provisions in relation to the types of certificates which may be issued and the quota of ships personnel to be carried depending on the nature of the ship and the type of voyage.

.IsTow in relation to these specific provisions which have been excluded in sections 83 to 85, it is intended that they will appear now in regulations.

Section 86, Mr. Speaker, provides for the Minister to make regulations on such matters so that the Regulations would then cover the areas in sections 83 to 85 which have been deleted from the present Act.

Section 90 is a new one which provides that an officer is not duly certificated unless he is the holder of a valid certificate or a licence issued under this Part.

Section 95 also is a new provision and introduces a penalty where a ship may leave or attempt to leave a Port in Barbados whilst under detention under this Part.

Section 96 provides that the Principal Registrar may suspend or cancel a licence or certificate issued under this Part if the holder has been convicted of an offence related to shipping matters.

Sections 97 to 135 are basically unchanged. They were the old sections 94 to 133 of Cap. 296.

Section 136 provides for the maximum daily *compensation* due to a seafarer where his allowances are inadequate and these have been increased from the previous provisions.

Sections 137 to 151 are repeated. They . were previously 134 to 139 in the old law.

Section 150 in the current Act which deals with deserters from foreign ships has been omitted. This section has been omitted because it runs contrary to the provisions of the ILO Convention ,on the avoidance of forced of labour to which Barbados is a party.

Sections 152 to 192 were previously 151 to 190 and they have been repeated but the penalties which have been provided in some of these sections have been increased.

In Part III under Passenger Ship, Sections 193 and 194 have been repeated.

Part IV — the provisions in relation to safety. In this Part in section 196 there is a new definition added of "short international voyage" but apart from this definition, sections 196 to 210 are a restatement of the existing law except that the main functionary in that regard is now the Registrar rather than the Director of Maritime Affairs.

In sections 230 to 266, these were formerly 228 to 264, the Registrar is the main operative in some cases replacing the function provided by the Minister, for example, as regards suspension or cancellation of a certificate of registry because of load line offences.

The Minister retains power to make the appropriate regulations and the penalties in the old legislation are increased. Wherever the concept of home trade existed under the old law this has been replaced by a reference to either the near coastal area or the Caribbean trade area.

Part V deals with wrecks and investigation. The penalties in this part relating to offences have been increased but apart from that there are no substantial changes in the provisions of Part V.

Part VI — Limitation of Liability. This part is comprised in sections 301 to 311 and this is one part. of the Act which has been substantially amended. The substantial amendment is as a result of the incorporation of the many conventions of which I did speak and to which Barbados has become a party. Two of these principal conventions are attached to the new draft of the First and Second Schedules.

The provisions relating to the extension of limitation of liability, limitation of liability of port authorities and owners of docks, the release of ships with security, division of liability, joint and several liability, right of contribution, the extended meaning of owner, these have been retained from the old law with few amendments. For example, the limitation of liability of port authorities and dock owners has been increased in accordance with the 1976 Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims Convention. So that the Part on the limitation of liability Part VI as I said has been substantially redone to take account of the incorporation of the new conventions to which Barbados is party and which we seek to incorporate into the law of Barbados. The revision to Part VI reflects all of that.

Part VII identifies the Conventions to which Barbados accepts and provides for legal proceedings.

In section 336 there is protection given to officers and immunities extended to Classification Societies which are nominated by, the Government to perform surveys and inspections.

Now the section on Maritime Liens is an entirely new section. It is not a long section but Part VIII is a new section. Part VIII on maritime liens is a new section and is designed to provide a regime for taking account of maritime liens and their ranking in order of priority.

4.05 p.m.

Part IX which is supplemental, is a restatement of existing Sections 338 to 343, but some of the sections have been expanded to provide that the Minister may make regulations with respect to registration of Government ships to which the Act is not applicable, and the term "Government Ship" is defined.

Section 345 relates to the suspension of a Certificate of Registry. But there is a new Section 345, Subsection 4 which has been added in order to provide that a ship with

a suspended Certificate: of Registry may proceed out to sea or enter or leave port and the Registrar may record any mortgage instrument with respect to such a ship provided that the ship is not recognised as a Barbadian ship and does not hoist Barbadian national colours. That is Section 345(4) which provides that a ship may proceed to sea even although there is a suspended Certificate of Registry in relation to it.

Section 349(1) (e) is a new section providing for the waiver of sovereignty over Barbadian ships registered under Section 27(1) (e) when the control of that ship is committed by the owner to the Government of another country for requisition hire or charter in the time of war or state of emergency of such a country. Ships registered under Section 27(1) (e) are ships registered in a foreign country but are bareboat chartered to a Barbadian citizen or company and are registered as Barbadian ships during the time of the charter. So that section provides for a waiver of sovereignty over Barbadian ships in those particular circumstances where the ship is chartered to a Barbadian citizen and therefore carrying a Barbados registration in times of crisis.

Now in Section 349(3), this was formerly Section 344 (3) of the old Act. This has been modified to provide that certain United Kingdom regulations which are listed in the Third Schedule of the Act are what are called "applicable regulations". The earlier Section 344(3). provided that the Minister may select from the list of the United Kingdom's regulations in the Schedule to the Act and make an Order declaring those which are applicable.

In Section 349(4), the regulations in the Third Schedule are to be construed, modified and so forth to bring them in conformity with the Act and any Conventions to which Barbados is a party. Previously, the regulations would be so interpreted only in accordance with the Act.

Section 349(4) (d) provides that any certificate, form or code of instruction printed officially and published for use in compliance with the regulations shall have the same force of application as the regulations.

Section 350 is a transitional provision really providing that ships registered under the existing Shipping Legislation shall be deemed to have been registered under the Shipping Act once that it is passed.

The final Section 351 repeals the existing Shipping Act. There are all the Schedules, as I have indicated, which incorporate a number of Conventions by reference. The Third Schedule lists several of these: United Kingdom Technical Regulations which are made pursuant .to the provisions of this Act. The majority of these regulations updates the technical requirements in the specific areas covered by the regulations. Those then, Mr. Speaker, are some of the major changes made by this new Shipping Bill, the object of which I have indicated at the outset that is to modernize the Barbados Shipping Law and to provide for a more competitive regime in providing for a Barbados Shipping Registry. ,

With those comments, Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, again we find ourselves in a position in which this rather large Bill together with a number of amendments, the significance of which we have not been able to appreciate having regard to the fact that we only had a look at it. While we do not oppose the upgrading and updating of the Barbados Shipping Act, we really cannot debate the whole of this Bill today. I would suggest, Sir, that we postpone this Bill until another time. Particularly, Sir, I would draw to the attention of the Attorney General that there are important matters of principle raised in this Bill with respect to a pattern of legislation in which we incorporate specific regulations of the United Kingdom into our Bill and many of us who are not lawyers will be unable to appreciate in detail the significance of those regulations unless we have summary or access to the main provisions of those regulations. What is equally important, Sir, in the Bill is that, as we understand it here, there is what is called an ambulatory provision, the effect of which is that from time to time as those regulations are amended so too will be the Barbados appropriate law.

I wish to check that, Sir, and to draw to the attention of the Attorney General some very important learning on this. In St. Lucia, there was such a provision in the Companies Act and it led to some strange consequences because very often in the United Kingdom and other areas these regulations are made against the background of an institutional framework which is non-existent in these territories. So that an important point in principle arises. There is a great conflict of judicial opinion that where you have such a provision it is possible for it to be workable when there is no such institutional framework. In St. Lucia, the relevant law was the Companies Act. As I said, when the law was passed in the United Kingdom, it was a 1929 Act. It is now a 1985 Act and there is a vast difference in the concepts and other provisions. The judge there held that it would be totally impossible to work it against the background of that framework. There is even an article published by Dr. Anthony of *the* University *of the West* Indies. That is a very important point. So I want to draw that to the attention of the Attorney General. I do not mind incorporating legislation, but I feel that you should- have

the existing legislation. If you put in the ambulatory provisions, you are going to run into trouble.

The other point is that I recognize...

Aside.

Hon. H. $. St. • JOHN: I do not know. Are you *accepting* the postponement?

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, good.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, if I may continue, I should have made reference to a list of proposed amendments.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: *No, no. I am speaking* on a point of elucidation. There is a list which I circulated, Mr. Speaker. The list is not very helpful. Let me put it that way. It is helpful to me but *not* to Honourable Members from the point of view that there are a number of adjustments which I have made in my script. What this does for me is to identify the adjustments which have been made so that during the course of Committee I can identify and move the appropriate amendments. But let me say, Mr. Speaker, that the amendments which are going to be made are largely typographical and are not amendments of any substance. For instance, the opportunity is being taken to tidy up a lot of situations in the old bill.
4.15 p.m.

For instance, in the definition clause where you have the definitions listed in alphabetical order, some of them are out of alphabetical arrangement and an attempt is being made just to clean that up. In a number of cases where the definition clause has "Registrar" with a capital R, for instance, right through the Bill there are lower case r's, which are being corrected. There are matters of that nature, which are not matters of substance, in respect of which the amendments are being moved and I would just like to move them in a general way *so* that those who edit the Bill eventually can identify the changes which need to be made.

Where there are substantial — and they are not seriously substantial — amendments which are more than of a purely typographical nature, I will formally deal with them in the Committee stage, but I 'will assure Members that the amendments which are being moved do not affect the substance of the legislation.

In view of the comments 'made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, Mr. Speaker, I move that further consideration of this Bill be postponed.

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

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

ORDER NO. 5 — RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT LOWLANDS, ST. LUCY

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to detain this House, because I think I spoke on this matter in 1992 and 1993 when we dealt with the Third Education *Project, and* since the Minister of Housing and Lands is not in This Place, I will quickly state that this involves a third education loan for —

Education and Training Project for Barbados
St. Clement's Primary School
Holy Trinity
Beulah Primary
All Saints' Primary
St. Christopher's Primary.

This has to do with the acquisition of land, 24,159.4 square metres, at Lowlands, St. Lucy for the construction of a school and the development of a playing field, which is the Rockfield playing field.

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

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

ORDER NO. 6 — RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE LEASE OF LAND SITUATE AT COVERLEY, CHRIST CHURCH

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution relates to the lease of Government property at Coverley, Christ Church to Mrs. Udine Ramsay.

As far back as 1978 Government purchased 181.025 acres of Coverley Plantation for the amount of $160 000. The property comprised 140 acres of arable land, 16 acres of tenantry, 25 acres of yard, road and pasture land along with the plantation house. As the Honourable Member for St. Joseph would attest, .the plantation was used for the growing of sugar cane and cotton and was under ` the control of the then Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation. As a matter of fact, the plantation was seen as an extension of the Spencer's Plantation, because Spencer's and Coverley were adjacent, and was used for certain developmental purposes.

Mr. Speaker, it ,was originally intended to use Coverley for the establishment of the experimental processing plant, but as we are all aware now, as we all know, the processing plant was established at Fairy Valley and the Coverley Plantation was returned to the Ministry of the Environment so that they could find alternative uses for it. It is now proposed that the lessee would be responsible for putting and keeping the plantation house and other structures in good repair and condition and payment in respect of utilities and taxes. The Commissioner of Land Tax has advised that under the conditions stipulated above a rental value . of $6 000 per annum should apply to the property in its existing condition.

It is therefore being recommended, Mr. Speaker, that Parliament approve the lease of 12 137.9 square metres of land, together with the plantation house and other structures thereon at Coverley, Christ Church to.Mrs. Udine Ramsay under the following terms and conditions:

1. The lease would be for a period of 15 years with an option to renew for a term to be determined and subject to the approval of Parliament.

2. The lessee will be responsible for –

   (a) the payments in respect of utilities;

   (b) taxes; and

   (c) all repairs both of a maintenance and - structural nature to the Ministry's satisfaction.

3. The annual rent for the first five years would be $6 000 per annum, the rent would be reviewed at five yearly intervals, and

4. The premises will be used for commercial catering purposes and ancillary residential use.

With these introductory remarks, Mr. Speaker, I move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I am well aware of the land as well as the area. I have absolutely no doubt that the lease will facilitate the lessee in carrying on a business, which is a well known business, of catering and it functions in a very effective manner.

I think Honourable Members will appreciate that this land is part of Coverley Plantation *which* was acquired essentially at the time of the construction of the ABC Highway. As a matter of fact, this plantation is divided by that road into two separate and distinct areas. What I really wish to elicit though from the Minister is whether the Government has in its mind a specific land use plan for that part of the land of Coverley which was used in the past for quarrying and/or for the growing of sour grass. 4.25 p.m.

I well recall there is an area io the East of the new road bordering almost on Lowland Development which was always a grass piece or a quarry land. Now, there is a tremendous demand for sites and services. There is no question about it. There is a tremendous demand for house lots for wood and wall. There is bound to be an area within the whole of this Coverley Plantation which can be suitably laid out for this purpose without in any way detracting from the amenity of the land which we are speaking of in this acquisition. That road, the way how the road has divided this plantation on the eastern side was a tenantry land. On the *western* side, so to speak, is where you have the housing development of a more costly nature and the plantation house is on that land. If you are going to the Airport in the Fairy Valley Road you will see there is a whole series of house spots some of which are in a wooded area, the plantation house is in that area. Then you see a new series of houses being built before you come to the roundabout and there again that land was subdivided previously by the owners and not by the Government. If you are going to Bridgetown on. the other road the ABC highway you will see a whole area where there are a number of smaller houses.

All we are asking for, Sir,-is that an analysis be done of that part of the plantation so that that land which is good for agriculture; keep it in agriculture. That land which was rab land or quarry land, let us see if *we can* put that land into some kind of use because you have spent a lot of money on the highway and I recall when the highway was being planned it was always envisaged that there were particular areas along the highway which would be open for development because of the fact that there were marginal rab land of no value to agriculture *and that they* themselves would help finance the cost of the highway.

In particular, this area was one, and there was another area lower down which I see now in the newspaper, the property of the Agricultural Development Corporation. I believe there were bids for it the other day. Near to Warners Roundabout Junction; Graeme Hall area and there are other areas too. That is all I am pleading for, Sir. Of course I hope that preference be given to the people in the eastern part of Barbados, not only Christ Church East but St. Philip too. This is contiguous to the Fairy Valley, St. Philip, the good part of St. Philip. This is the Woodbourne Valley. I have no problem at all in that area. All of St. Martin's. That is a good area too..The people up there are always' asking. Everybody in Barbados is asking. We do not wish it to become a another parish land. Why I say that is that I remember that in the 1960's when I was in the

House I moved a resolution asking the then Government to make sure that parish land was subdivided. Everybody agreed and this is now 1990 and they have been still trying to subdivide it, Sir.

This is an ideal area and I wish the lady well. She does a catering bus ,ness and if you wish to marry she will marry you and all.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Without wishing to detain the passage of this Resolution, I just want to say that the comments and the call made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is so important that it really bears underscoring. I know the area well. In fact, apart from living nearby at one stage, for many years I was representative of that part of Christ Church where the land in question falls.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that the demand for house spots in Barbados is one of the acute social needs in the country. There is no doubt about that. I feel the cry acutely in St. Joseph but it is one that is across the land. Everywhere people are anxious to help themselves but they need house spots either for lease purposes or for ownership. As I remember this area particularly, the yard and the land that runs to the North as though you are going back to Searles north *of Coverley Plantation house is.all . unproductive rab land, bounding and abutting on Leadvale for example, ideally suited for house spot purposes or for some form of light manufacturing activity.

I think that the plea that has been made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is absolutely timely and valid. The Government needs to move with despatch in having a land use plan for the area. Twenty-five acres for a yard is a lot and much of that can be used for housing purposes or for other uses. While the cry remains unanswered for house spots in particular I feel that this is an area ideally suited to be used for that purpose and I will call upon the Minister to exert himself on behalf of the people and to have consultations at an early stage with the appropriate Ministry, the Ministry of Housing, so as to ensure that something is done in response ' to the call which we are making on this side today.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: The short contributions from both Honourable Members are appreciated. Let me say that the land from an agricultural point of view was always marginal land and the fact that the highway has fragmented the land has brought a new twist to the future uses of the land.

Earlier this year or late last year, I paid a visit to the area from an agricultural perspective because there is a well at Coverley. We were looking at the possibility of using some of the better land for allocating to landless farmers. Some land still remains, to my mind, in agriculture but the question of house spots must also come into focus and I am told that certain parts of Coverley have already been allocated for housing purposes. I think the thinking might be to relocate some of those persons who are right now in the flight path and I feel sure that within the next few months we will have a fairly definitive position on the use of the entire Coverley Plantation.

I do not particularly like to see the land as it stands now idle. Rest assured that I will leave no stone unturned. Although I must hasten to point out that the land is right now in the hands of the Ministry of Dousing and Lands and I am sure that through proper liaising with the appropriate authority or the appropriate Minister that a solution could be found for the expeditious allocation and use of the land.
4.35 p.m.

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

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

ORDER NO. 8 – A BILL TO AMEND THE MARRIAGE ACT

Hon. M. A. KING: This is short. This, I believe, Mr. Speaker, is not a controversial Bill. Under the provision of the Marriage Act, Cap. 218A persons intending to marry can be issued a licence only if they have resided in Barbados for a period of at least 3 days immediately proceeding the application. Furthermore, a marriage cannot, except the Minister is asked and exercises his discretion to waive that requirement, be solemnized under the authority of a licence earlier than the third day after the date of issue of that licence.

The intention of the Marriage Act, as it stands, Mr. Speaker, was to provide a third party with an opportunity to object to the issue of a marriage licence or a Magistrate's certificate in circumstances where there exists a valid impediment to a proposed marriage. The pre-application three day requirement does not, of course, assist in this regard and the waiting period between the date of application and the date of marriage is routinely waived once parties apply for a waiver.

The upshot_ therefore is that the proposed legislation is unlikely to have any adverse social effect. What the existing law did in fact do was to take up a lot of time of the Ministry of Home Affairs where people who required a waiver of the waiting period just went to the Ministry of Home Affairs and invariably the waiver was *granted* so it

took up a lot of administrative time in dealing with a matter which, as a matter of course, was usually acceded to.

What the legislation is, in fact, doing is to recognise the existing practice and to facilitate the practice which, in effect, has been part of the practice of the Ministry of Home Affairs for quite some time. This legislation, I am told, Mr. Speaker, is strongly supported by the Ministry of Tourism, the Barbados Tourism Authority and the Barbados Hotel Association. It will assist the country in meeting current market demands and the promotion of Barbados as a honeymoon destination.

In the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill to amend the Marriage Act to remove the three day waiting period that upon application invariably was always waived be now read a second time.

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

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: We on this side, Sir, have no quarrel with the amendments being made to the Marriage Act as indicated by the Honourable Attorney General who has just spoken on the matter. I would just like to say, however, that many issues relating to marriage and the family are governed by two Acts in Barbados, the Marriage Act itself and the Family Law Act.

The Family Law Act has been on the statute book, I believe, for some 11/12 years or thereabout and it has affected many revolutionary changes, you may say, with respect to distribution of property, matrimonial property and the dissolution of marriage. It has put an enormous strain on the court system. Almost one-third of the work being done in the court system now results from the Family Law Act and some action initiated thereunder.

What I would like to elicit from the Attorney General is an assurance that this legislation will be reviewed because many of us who have practised under it feel that it has revealed many weaknesses which have societal implications and that the time has come for a serious review of the Family Law Act.

All that I am concerned to do at this point is to alert the Attorney General to the impact that it has had on the workload, the fact that it has, in many respects not done justice in the area of the distribution of matrimonial property and that we feel that there are several important amendments which could, after study and review, be made to that legislation.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member asked for an assurance in relation to a review of the Family Law Act. I have no difficulty myself *with* reviewing legislation because all legislation does need review from time to time but I am sure that the matter would be greatly assisted if the practising profession perhaps could identify specific areas of concern which would assist in the process of review. I do give the assurance that in the fullness of time, once the appropriate submissions are made, they will be considered because you can get nothing better from the practising profession and the people who are actually involved in the process making the recommendations and once those are in they will be taken on board and considered.

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

On the motion of Hon. M. A. KING, 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.

COMMITIE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in committee.

Clauses 1 – 5 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon.. M. A. KING, 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. M. A. KING, seconded by Hon. C. V. WALKER, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

4.45 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that brings us to the end of Government Business for the day.

As you know, Sir, tomorrow morning we begin consideration of the Estimates and although this sitting will in fact have begun today, for technical reasons we have to suspend until 10 tomorrow because if we adjourn... Unless of course we suspend a Standing Order so we could adjourn and properly begin tomorrow.

But I think that if we suspend and begin the Estimates tomorrow, as long as we give 5 full days .to the Estimates we would comply with the requirements of the Standing Order. It is more convenient for the staff of Parliament for us to suspend at this point.

' I am going to move that this House be now suspended until 10.00 a.m. tomorrow morning. I wish to remind Honourable Members that a suspension requires a

. prompt start of the proceedings and that there is no 15 minutes grace. I. would not wish Honourable Members, especially on the other side, to come in tomorrow and feel that somehow we had started without them.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAF T: Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is the only Honourable Member in here who can speak with impunity of being deposed as Prime Minister. I have no problem. He can speak with authority on this matter. He is the only one. Any other Honourable Member who attempts to assault him would have a little difficulty.

Sir, I beg to move therefore that we suspend until 10.00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly at 4.50 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. Order No. 4.

ORDER NO. 4 -- BILL TO GRANT THE SUM OF $619 974 176 OUT OF THE CONSOLIDATED FUND AND TO APPROPRIATE THE SAME FOR THE SERVICE OF BARBADOS FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 1995

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, as Minister responsible for Finance, I have the honour and am required by Sections 108 and 109 of the Constitution to present to Parliament the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the Fiscal Year 1994/95, the Schedule of Personal Emoluments and the Appropriation Bill, 1994. I do so on behalf of the Government which is committed to certain broad macro-economic objectives, political objectives and developmental objectives. These objectives, together with the framework in which they will be achieved, are set out in the Development Plan 1993-2000, the Democratic Labour Party's 1991 Manifesto and various policy statements on sectoral matters made from time to time, both in and outside of this Honourable House.

Mr. Speaker, these Estimates have been prepared against a background of consultation with Ministries which has taken place over the past four months. They represent, at the least, that the level of expenditure planned by Government is appropriate for the coming financial year. This implies a careful and balanced assessment of the needs and resources, of the implantation capacity, and of the appropriateness of the size of the outlays to achieve specified economic policy goals.

It also implies that the resources will be utilised efficiently. This will mean technical analysis and accountability to show that one can effectively measure the *value citizens are getting* out of their tax contribution. Without the assurance of efficiency, citizens will ask, and rightly so, "why should we comply with laws and pay taxes?"

The third implication, Mr. Speaker, is- that in the *allocation of resources,* the losses of the few are intended for the good of the many. By this we mean that reallocation of resources by the Government is made against the background of its consciousness, that it must put the greater good of the country first.

The documents now before us for consideration have been presented in fulfillment of those requirements, Mr. Speaker, and I consider it appropriate to move that the Appropriation Bill, 1994, be now read a second time so that the House may proceed with the debate on the 1994/95 Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure.

In just under two weeks, and all other things being equr' I will present to this House and the entire nation, the 1994 Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals. As is customary at that time, I will review the performance of the economy for 1993/94 and will speak in detail about the *policies which* will be pursued during fiscal year 1994/95 as we seek to conclude our negotiations with the International Monetary Fund for an Enhanced Surveillance Programme and the Inter-American Development Bank for an Investment Sector Loan.

However, on this occasion, it is still necessary for me to speak on some of the issues which will come up again on the 28th, in order to assist the House and the public in Understanding how the economy has been performing and the framework within which the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure have been developed.

Before I do this, Mr. Speaker, I wish to. point out to the House that in considering the task of preparing these Estimates, Government is more than conscious of the perspectives of many competitors in the process.

A. Premchand in his book "Public Expenditure Management" characterises this problem in these words:

"To an optimist, expenditure management is a bridge between unlimited political rhetoric and limited financial resources. To a pessimist, it is a ritual performed per-

functorily like a simple folk rite, more with faith than with reason. To a politician, depending on the podium and the occasion, it is a framework for accountability, or a needless impediment, or a brimming honey-pot. To an administrator, it is a religion with defined ceremonies to be performed at regular intervals. To a representative of a spending agency, it is a tool of power in the hands of over-zealous bureaucrats in the Ministry of Finance. To an official of the Ministry of Finance, it is a source of frustration — a broken bridge between what is needed and what is delivered. To a macro-economist it is the primary instrument that stands between his hopes for macro-economic stability and chaos. To a professional contractor, expenditure management is a system that stands between his capacity to enhance his profits and the actual level of profits. To a citizen, if there is a typical one, it is everything that seeks to provide a satisfactory answer to the numerous questions that he may have on what he has paid and the benefits he is getting, or, even more importantly, why some other groups are getting more than their due share of those benefits."

Mr. Speaker, you will recall that the fiscal programme for 1993/94 was put together with a view to achieving an overall deficit of less than 1% of Gross Domestic Product. In keeping with this objective, the original Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure indicated that revenue would have been $1060.0m while current expenditure, including amortisation, was targeted at $1 141.5m and capital expenditure at $138.7m. This suggested that the overall deficit on the basis of our presentation of the data would have been $220.2m. When this was converted to the basis used by the . international institutions by excluding amortisation and showing the operations of enterprises such as the Airport and the Printery on a net basis, the deficit would have been $26.4m or 0.9% of Gross Domestic Product.

At that time, the key macro-economic variables on which the programme had been prepared were that the economy would have experienced a 2% growth in real GDP, an annual rate of inflation of 2.4% and that retained imports would have increased by 28.6%. However, Mr. Speaker, because of the slow recovery of the international economy, the temporary difficulties which were experienced in the local tourist industry and the slow recovery of the sugar industry, the anticipated 2% growth in real GDP did not materialize.

As a result, it became necessary for us to revise the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure downwards. On the basis of anticipated growth rate of 0.9% in really GDP, a rate of inflation of 2.7%, and a 20.7% growth in retained imports, the revenue was revised to $1 013.6m. Current expenditure including amortisation had to be reduced to $1 '118.3m with capital expenditure of $100.9m. This is expected to result in a deficit of $205.5m. When that is converted to the basis used by the international institutions, It becomes $8.2m or 0.3% of nominal GDP.

Mr. Speaker, the Government had made it clear from the outset that it would manage our resources prudently and would ensure that the fiscal management was tight so as to maintain the delicate balances which we have engineered. 10.10 a.m.

Current Revenue for 1993—94 is expected to show an increase of $9.1 million or 0.9% over that for 1992—93. However a close analysis of the data will show that because of the tax reform measures which were implemented during 1993—94 as part of the restructuring of the economy, the composition of revenue changed significantly. It would be useful, Mr. Speaker, for the House to note these changes and to compare them against my own assertion during the debate on the direct tax reform during the session: For example while there was a strong growth in taxes on incomes and profits as a result of the changes to the income tax structure and on taxes on goods and services because of increases in the consumption taxes there was a substantial decline in the collection of levies. Therefore personal income tax is expected to increase by $49.7 million or 37.3% as a result of the widening of the tax base and the elimination of exemption while the levies are expected to decline by $34 million or 40.6% as a consequence of those changes which were effective from January 1, 1994.

Mr. Speaker, you will also recall that on January 1, 1994 the Health Levy, the Transport Levy and the Employment Levy were eliminated as part of the direct tax reform.

Consumption taxes are expected to increase by $28.6 million or 12.3% as a result of the increase in April, 1993 while it is anticipated that non-tax revenue will decline by $16.2 million mainly because of the decrease in the profits of the Central Bank by $15 million.

Current Expenditure

The major feature of the 1993-94 outturn of the current expenditure is the restoration of the 8% to public workers. This decision is expected to raise wages and salaries by $20.6 million or 5.5% to a total of $390.2 million because the National Insurance contributions and other levies did not increase in view of the reduction which took effect during the year.

Expenditure on Goods and Services is expected to fall by $61 million to $98 million. However it is important to know that the 1992–93 Goods and Services figure included the sum of $60 million which was provided to cover the settlement of intra public sector arrears and therefore would not be present or reoccur in 1993—94. As a result expenditure on Goods and Services in 1993—94 will be at about the same as in 1992-93.

Mr. Speaker, I have been at pains to explain this matter because Members should appreciate that in spite of the tight fiscal programme which we have pursued as part of the restructuring process, the Government has been able to provide continuing services without any significant deterioration in the quality. In other words we have been able to maintain the quality of services even in those areas where we were fogced to reduce financial resources.

Debt Servicing

During the fiscal year under review the Government continued with its strategy to reduce its borrowing on the foreign commercial market. Thus even though in global terms the debt servicing costs are expected to increase by $16.8 million to $327 million in 1993-94 interest cost are expected to decline by 7.6% and this is taking place in spite of an increase of 1.6% in domestic interest cost largely because of a 23.9% decline in foreign interest cost as the foreign component of the national debt has declined. At March 31, 1994 the national debt is expected to be $2 397.4 billion of which the foreign component will be $675.4 million and the domestic portion $1722 billion.

The substantial increase in current transfers of $44 million or 19% over those for 1992-93 is the result of the settlement of arrears to the University of the West Indies ' and the provision of $9.5 million to meet the operating deficit of the sugar sector.

Capital Expenditure

Mr. Speaker, capital expenditure is projected to fall by $19 million or 15.8% below that for 1992-93. The largest area of decline is in transfers to the Barbados Development Bank. Net lending is projected at $12.1 million which is $1.1 million less than 1992–93. Provision is made in that amount for a loan of $10 million to be made available to the Barbados Development Bank to meet the cost of redeeming the National Development Bonds which• it has to redeem at the end of March 1994.

This approach has been adopted because it is felt that with the present financial climate and the fact that Government has other securities on the market, the Barbados Development Bank might experience some difficulty in having a new issue fully subscribed in the event that it tried to roll over this maturing issue. Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that in spite of the decline of $19 million in the capital expenditure and net lending, the amount spent on capital formation of $62.3 million is the same as in 1992–93. In other words while the difficulties which we experience ' did not permit us to increase spending on capital formation we made sure that we at least maintained the same level as last year.

Estimates for 1994–95

Mr. Speaker, with that background information on the expected outturn of the fiscal programme for 1993–94 out of the way it is now appropriate to turn our attention to the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for 1994–95. The fiscal programme for 1994–95 is going to be just as tight as that for 1993–94. In due course as the medium term economic programme unfolds Barbadians will have a clearer picture on issues such as the role of Government, the nature of the public investment programme and the macro-economic framework on which resumption of higher levels of growth will depend.

In the present circumstances there is simply no room for excessive spending in the public sector or for loose financial policies and every effort must be made to achieve more with the same or less resources. In other words, the emphasis will have to be on improving the ways in which we do things. On this point the difference between vague, wavering capability and fixed indubitable performance, as Thomas Carlisle lamented, needs to be narrowed. The document now before us indicates that we expect revenue of $1 022.2 billion while current expenditure including amortisation is projected at $1 099.5 billion and capital expenditure at $170.9 million. This data results in an overall deficit of $248.2 million. When this is converted to the basis used by the international institutions the deficit is reduced to $40.4, million or 1.4% of GDP, that GDP figure being $21.3 million.

Mr. Speaker, although there is some room for us to accommodate a deficit which is slightly higher than that for 1993-94 prudence dictates that we should strive to restrict the deficit to no more than 1.3% of GDP. What this means, Mr. Speaker, is that the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure at present are $3 million in excess of what would lead to a deficit of 1.3% of GDP and that during the course of the year steps would have to be taken to achieve the targeted deficit of 1.3% of GDP. At present the ,Government, with the assistance of the World Bank, is conducting a study on expenditure patterns and when that exercise is completed in a few weeks it will be clearer to us how to eliminate that excess of $3 million. The decisions are ours to make since our ability to attract the support of the International Monetary Fund and the Inter-American Development Bank hinges on us developing a workable public expenditure management programme over the medium term.
10.20 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, contrary to the information carried in the Press, provision has been made in Personal Emoluments for the payment of increments from October 1994. However as I have pointed out before, I believe everyone accepts that we can no longer operate on the basis that the payment of increments will be automatic but have to devise an appropriate mechanism to ensure that

the payment of increments is in some way linked to increase productivity. It is an issue which we were able to confront, though not solve, in our discussions on the prices and incomes protocol and like all Barbadian I am interested to see how the -measurement of such public sector productivity might be achieved and hope that the Productivity Board might provide some early conclusions for our consideration. Furthermore I am anxious for a mutually . satisfactory legislative framework to be established to adjust the way in which increments are now paid.

The fiscal programme for 1994—95 has been constructed on the basis of certain assumptions and with certain objectives in mind. The more important assumptions are that real GDP will grow by 2.7%. The annual rate of inflation will be 2.3% and retained imports will increase by 28.6%.

Mr. Speaker, the growth in the economy is expected to be generated by improvement in the tourism industry, in revitalization of the sugar industry and developments in the construction sector. In this regard I wish to indicate that the effort to restructure the sugar industry has started to bear fruit and progress in the face of much precipitate adversity and opportunism, has been satisfactory. The two companies which were established by the Government are functioning and it is anticipated the sugar production this year will be about 50 000 tonnes and this is an achievement.

During this year, and in subsequent years every effort will be made to encourage persons to return idle land to sugar cane so that our production of sugar will steadily rise above 50 000 tonnes and in that regard a *provision of $1.8* million is made under Capital Transfers to facilitate an incentives scheme which is being organised by the Ministry of Agriculture. *In* addition *provision* is made *in* the Capital Estimates for onlending of $11 million to the Barbados Agricultural Management Company. I should point out that the incentive scheme really is for the non-indebted plantations which are not part of the management by the Barbados Agricultural Management Company and the on-lending of $11 million to the Barbados Agricultural Management Company will be for the purchase of equipment for the factory and field operations of the sugar industry. This project is being funded by the Caribbean Development Bank and will improve the efficiency of the industry greatly.

A number of major public sector construction projects, including those for roads and sewerage treatment will get under way during the year and will contribute to increased activity within the construction industry.

Mr. Speaker, the major boost to the economy is expected to come from the tourism industry through the combined efforts of the public and private sectors and investments are *coming on* stream and we anticipate their intensification during the year.

ESTIMATES OF REVENUE 1994—95

The revenue of $1,022. 2 million shows an increase of $8.6 million or 0.9% over the projected outturn for 1993-94 as follows:

	1994—95	1993—94
Taxes on incomes and profits	$302.8m	$300.3m
Taxes on property	$54.2m	$54.2m
Taxes on goods and services	$399.2m	$377.7m
Taxes on International Trade	$86m	$77m
Other Taxes	$84m	$81m
Non-tax revenue	$69.1m	$55.5m
Special receipts (which is essentially levies)	$24.1 m	$61.2m
Loans and advances	$2.8m	$6.7m
Total	$1,022.2	$1,013.6

The major areas of difference are as follows:

(1) taxes on goods and services are expected to increase by $21.5 million and import duties by $9 million mainly because of a higher level of retained imports is assumed than for 1993-94.

(2) the increase of $13.6 million *in* non-tax revenue is the result of an anticipated increase *in* the profits of the Central Bank while the decrease of $37.1 million in special receipts is the result of the elimination of the levies, except the training levy from January 1, 1994.

CURRENT EXPENDITURE

The current expenditure of $1,000.5 million constitutes a decrease of $34.5 million from the projected outturn for fiscal year 1993-94 as follows;

	1994—95	1993—94
Wages and salaries	$396m	$390m
Statutory personal emoluments	$279.3m	$277.6in
Other personal emoluments	$116.7m	$112.5m
National Insurance	$26.2m	$26.4m
Goods and services	$110m	$98m
Interest	$156.7m	$151.3m
Amortisation	$168	$176.5m
Current Transfers	$242.5m	$275.9m

The major changes in the composition of *the current* expenditure are in the areas of foreign amortisation and transfers which have declined by $13.5 million and $33.4 million respectively.

During the fiscal year 1993-94 a special effort was made to deal with arrears due to the University but the

same effort is not necessary this year and that is largely responsible for the decline in the transfers.

There is an increase of $5.8 million in personal emoluments mainly to reflect the provision of paying increments.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The capital expenditure and lending of $170.9 million *shows an* increase of $70.9 million • over the projected outturn for 1993-94 as follows:

Acquisitions	—	$3.2 million	1994—95
		$4.2 million	1993—94
Formation	—	$123.8 million	1994—95
		61.8 million	1993—94
Transfers	—	$18.5 million	1994—95
		$93.4 million	1993-94
On-Lending	—	$25.4 million	1994—95
		$12.9 million	1993—94

the difference being $70 million with $170.9 million being provided for in 1994—95 and the outturn projected at $100.9 million 1993—94.
10.30 am.

Mr. Speaker, it is clearly demonstrated that one of the objectives of this year's fiscal programme is to provide for a substantial increase in spending on capital formation. The idea behind this objective, if it were needed, is to assist with the projected growth in the economy and in the reduction of unemployment.

The major areas of spending under the Capital Expenditures are as follows:

Tax Administration and Expenditure Management	—	$8.8 million
Sugar Sector Rehabilitation	—	$11 million
Project Cycle Management	—	$1.2 million
Primary Education Project	—	$3 million
Barbados Community Hospitality Institute	—	$6.3 million
Third Educational in Human Resources	—	$1.8 million
South Coast Sewerage	—	$17.8 million
West Coast Sewerage	—	'$2.3 million
Health Services Rationalization	—	$1.5 million
Solid Waste Study	—	$1.1 million
Geriatric Hospital Upgrade	—	$4.7 million
New Polyclinics — Glebe, St. John	–	$1.1 million
Coastal Conservation	–	$4.7 million
Industrial Estates	–	$4.2 million
Technical and Vocational Educational & Training	—	$2.6 million
Highway 2A Second Road Rehabilitation	—	$11.2 million
Bridgetown Road Safety	—	$1 million
National Transportation Plan	—	$1 million
Water Resources Study	—	$1.2 million
Subsidiary Roads	—	$0.9 million
Sir Garfield Sobers Sports Complex	—	$1.3 million
Tourism Development Study	—	$1.2 million
Sherbourne Centre	—	$5.5 million
Airport Expansion Study	—	$0.9 million
Airport Improvement	—	$2.8 million
Bridgetown Port Expansion Study		$0.7 million

I have only really accounted for $106.3 million of the total Capital Works Programme. There will, of course, be other *projects which* will bring it to $170 million during the course of the year.

Mr. Speaker, these Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure have been constructed on the basis of certain assumptions about the micro-economic variables and the performance of the major sectors of the economy. If for any reason any or all of these change, the framework will of necessity have to change. However, whatever happens the internal balance of this programme will have to be maintained. For example, a slippage in revenue will require a compensating reduction in expenditure. On the Expenditure side if it becomes necessary for a Ministry or Department to undertake expenditure not identified in the original Estimates, a compensating reduction in some other area of expenditure will have to be made to accommodate that new expenditure. This has been something that has been ongoing for the past two years with some success. So that the overall level of expenditure will remain unchanged and keep the deficit within the target of 1.3 per cent of GDP. It also gives Ministries the chance to re-prioritize their spending during the course of the fiscal year. In that regard, the effort to continuously make changes and adjustments reminds one of a statement by Mr. Dennis Healy, Former British Chancellor of the Exchequer in his book entitled "My Life" who said, "The phrase economic management might be a contradiction in terms of oxymoron like crisis management".

Mr. Speaker, the time will shortly come for us to discuss the details and one looks forward as usual in the course of the Estimates debate for the House to deal with the nitty-gritty of the Estimates and for us to talk of shoes and ships and ceiling rats, cabbages and kings, why the sea is boiling hot, and why do pigs have wings. I am ending by saying why do pigs have wings, Mr. Speaker, only to say that sometimes in the course of the Estimates debate we have interesting discussions, but we always prepare ourselves for absurdity.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in moving that this Bill be read a second time.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that it would be fair, proper and appropriate to begin by observing that in every respect the House has been treated to a presentation which comes to mind the old saying, Sir, "The boy who stood on the burning deck while all around had fled". This will be the first time. since 1966, I think, when a matter as serious as the presentation of the Estimates and the discussion of the Appropriations Bill would have been distinguished by the absence of the Prime Minister of the country and the Deputy Prime Minister. One sympathizes with the Deputy Prime Minister for his absence. But in the case of the Prime Minister...

Hon. M. A. KING: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is making a misleading statement. He is misleading the House. Everybody knows that the Deputy Prime Minister was in the hospital and is not well. He has had an operation. On the Prime Minister, it is public knowledge that he has returned from Washington and he has been advised by doctors to take a rest for two weeks.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that the least it can be said that it is uncharitable to make a statement in the context that it was said in full knowledge that we are aware of the absence of the Honourable Members and the reason why they are not here.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, I make my statement in the context of the assumptions which the Minister of Finance has informed the presentation of these Estimates. The Minister of Finance was very careful to say that these Estimates were based on the presumption that there will be substantial growth in the Barbados economy this year to the extent of 2.7 per cent. At the very outset of my presentation, I feel that I have a responsibility to say that the existing political crisis to which the Prime Minister has contributed substantially is ,leading to the destabilization of the Barbados economy. This may very well mean that these Estimates are dead on arrival. I need also to say, Sir, that the Prime Minister has a responsibility for the general overall economic management. He is the Minister of Economic Affairs.
10.40 a.m.

It is to be regretted that while he is not well enough to be in the House to discuss matters pertaining to the direction of the economy, he is well enough, in accordance with his statement, to be searching for plotters and destabilisers. I sympathise with the Minister of Finance that he is now forced to have to concede Estimates that are based on the presumption of growth in circumstances where the leadership of the country has been doing its best, and continues to do its best, to put *this* country in an unsustainable path towards *continuing* recession of the economy.

I believe, to set ' this debate in its broad political context, Sir, we all are hopeful for the re-emergence of growth in the economy. We would love to believe that there could be growth this year of the order of 2.7%. But on present course the crisis of confidence that has been engendered by the antics and the actions of the Prime Minister of this country may more than any other consideration put the achievement of that growth rate beyond the Barbados economy at this time.

My opening remarks that the Minister of Finance's presentation reminded me of the boy who stood on the burning deck when all around had fled, Sir, goes directly to the heart of the economic crisis that is being engendered in this country at this time by the political crisis inspired by the actions of the Prime Minister of Barbados, who unfortunately is not in his seat today.

Mr. Speaker, the Estimates are a reflection and the representation of Government's financial policy, and Guvanment's financial policy has to be set within the context of the economic development of the country at the time when the Estimates were conceived. These Estimates this year take on, from that point of view, ra special significance and that special significance itself derives from the fact that this financial year to come, 1994–95, was supposed to mark a radical change in the manner in which the economy functions and' is developed.

In short, Sir, the financial .year to come, if we are to believe the pronouncements of Government's spokesmen, was to mark that year in which the economy shifted from the stabilisation phase, which is supposed to have been satisfactorily and successfully completed, to one of growth through productivity and adjustment. It was to be part and parcel of that shift from stabilisation to growth through adjustment for one to see evidence of an effort to galvanise public sector activity. The move from stabilisation to growth and adjustment was supposed to be accompanied by major changes in the composition of public sector activity with a view to boosting public sector productivity. The shift from stabilisation to growth and adjustment, which 1994–95 is supposed to be about, was supposed to have been accompanied by serious attempts by the Government and the private sector working in collaboration to begin to address many of the important economic and social problems which arose directly out of the severity of the stabilisation process itself. Therefore, Sir, to the extent that these Estimates are being presented to the public at this crucial juncture in the development of the society, where we are supposed to move from stabilisation to adjustment, they have to be read with regard to the question as to whether they can indeed succeed in galvanising public sector activity, whether they can. indeed bring about so fundamental a change in the composition of public sector productivity as to lift public sector activity, and they also have to be read with an eye to the question as to whether

the massive economic and social problems that arose from the stabilisation process will now begin to be addressed.

Now, Sir, when I read these Estimates with reference to those criteria — and I think the House can agree that those are not politically charged criteria, those are criteria the Government itself will recognise are valid — these Estimates do not suggest to me any serious departure from what the House has been presented with.over the course of the last two years by way of Estimates and Government financial policy.

I do not make that statement lightly, Sir. Over the course of the last two financial years, Mr. Speaker, the very core of Government's economic policy and its capacity to execute that economic policy rested fundamentally upon Government being able to access, in a substantial way, major funding from the multilateral lending institutions in order to finance the structural adjustment programmes in this society.

In the course of the last two Estimates, Mr. Speaker, the financing of Government's deficit was to be undertaken largely by the draw down, we were told, of funds from the IADB, the World Bank and other International Lending Institutions. We know what came out of that adventure. These Estimates are based again on the same precept, that the Government this year is going to rely largely on access to funding from the multilateral institutions, in the case of the IADB by as much as $73 million, to finance the Government's deficit. In the absence of a very clear statement from the Minister of Finance in relation to the present status of Government's negotiations with those institutions, Sir, we have no *prima facie* basis upon which to say that these Estimates are different from those of the two previous years which had at their core reliance upon those institutions for the financing of Government's deficit.

I also want to make the point, Mr. Speaker, that in my judgment these Estimates are not likely to galvanise public sector activity. This is largely because, when we read the Estimates scrupulously, most of the activity that will have a direct bearing upon the productive sectors still takes the form of pre-investment studies or sector studies, as is the case of a sector study again to be undertaken in the tourism industry which.... This in and of itself must be telling the House that the Government has not yet made up its mind and agreed upon the critical aspects of the adjustment programme to be executed at the level of the productive sectors which could improve the performance of the private economy of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I have carefully tried to probe the Government's Capital programme to find those elements of projected Capital expenditure which'in my judgment could serve as the foundation for galvanising private sector activity. And I must confess — and I stand to be guided by the Mi ister of Finance and to be corrected on this point — that a of of the Capital experiditi re is Capital expenc!iture to stir ort projects that have been in the planning stage fo[g] many years; the road rehabilitation, the sewerage plant which we welcome and we support. But in terms of new, imaginative, capital activity t lat can enhance private sector activity at this time and c[r]e tte the basis upon which the economy ca:-i move from stabilisation to growth znd adjustment, one examines these Estimates carefully but without seeing any serious commitment to such lines of economic activity.
10.50 a.m.

The Minister of Finance will also agree — in fact, he has said — that one is presented here with these Estimates that indicate a very tight fiscal programme. Government is in fact not intending to spend on the current side in nominal or in real terms anything more than it spent last year. The critical point I am making is this. If you are constraining expenditure on the current side and if on the capital side you are making the *execuuoll a you eapitu* programme dependent, as it was in the course of the last 2 years, on your ability to access funds from the World Bank and the IADB, given what you know about your relationship with those 2 institutions, you can possibly have overall fiscal contraction. You are faced also with the stark possibility as well of continued contraction on the capital side in the absence of a very clear statement from the Minister of Finance that all arrangements have been satisfactorily concluded to make sure that what has happened over the course of the last few years does not occur again.Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I say that if you are looking for these Estimates to galvanise and provide the basis upon which the Government can contribute to the improving of public sector activity one will look in vain for them.

The second criteria I specified as what guided me in evaluating the Estimates is the question as to whether these Estimates address themselves to one of the burning questions facing Barbados at this time. The people of Barbados have been put through a lot of sacrifice by Government as part of the effort to stabilise the economy. They have been given the assurance that the economy is improving. And they are expecting therefore that *with an* improving economy, the Government will address itself to the relief of many of the important social problems that have arisen and are arising out of the stabilisation programme itself.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the Government on page 41 of its new Development Plan committed itself to this as a' matter of policy:

> "Government recognizes that in a period of rapid adjustment the need for an adequate social safety net becomes even more important than normally. Accord-

ingly every effort will be made to ensure that adequate funding is provided to sustain existing social programmes."

That is a commitment made by Government, not in the manifestos that the Prime Minister has repudiated, but in the new development programme that he has enthusiastically laid before this Parliament.

Now, Sir, this is a commitment on the part of the Government, in its own words, to step up its support for the safety net, support for the Child Care Board, Welfare, care of the aged and the indigent in our society and Those particularly who have had to carry the burden of the adjustment made in the economy because of the draconian nature of Government's stabilisation programme.

The question that therefore has to be asked and answered is to what extent is that commitment on the part of Government to address the social problems of the society reflected in the financial allocations?

The answer is found on page 5 of the preface to the Estimates. The Government shows its commitment to maintaining what is called the social welfare net, assisting the poor and the dispossessed and the indigent in this society by making transfers to households, non-profit organisations, public institutions and the kind and those are called Current Transfers.

In the last financial year, the Estimates made provision for $264.6 million in subsidies, grants to non-profit institutions like the Child Care Board and so on, grants to public institutions and the like. This financial year, Sir, when the Development Plan is telling us of the important need to address the problems of social dislocation caused by the stabilisation programme we would expect that the allocations should have been increased. On the contrary, the allocations are to be decreased from $264.6 million to $242 million.

We have to set this in the context of the social dimensions of Government's overall financial plans. What these Estimates are telling us is that the Government has already made as much adjustment as it can from a financial point of view by sending home workers. As a result you will find that the provision for personal emoluments this year is marginally smaller than for personal emoluments last year.

At first, Mr. Speaker, I thought that meant that the Government would not be paying increments but maintaining the level of employment in the public service. If as the Minister of Finance tells us that provision in these Estimates have been made for the payment of increments this year, then it would seem to me that if the personal emoluments bill was $395 million last year, and did not include increments, and is to be $396 million this year, including increments, some people will have to be going home. If this is the case, I really must remind- the Government that it has committed itself to an incomes policy protocol, a fundamental part of which is a moratorium on the sending home of people in the private and public sector.

The Government must understand, Sir, that if at the heart of these Estimates is increased layoffs in the public sector, this Opposition in discharge of its responsibility could not in conscience vote for this Appropriation Bill, and will not. I therefore would like to hear the Minister of Finance speak to the issue of how much of this $396 million represents the payment of increments after October. And if provision is made for increment; by how much will public sector employment decrease given the fact that the wage bill this year is to be no more than the wage bill last year.

The point I was coming to is this. A lot of the adjustment that has been made in this society hitherto has taken the form of increased unemployment caused by layoffs in the public sector. These' Estimates are saying to us that the Government is prepared to respond to what the Minister of Finance represents as a tight fiscal situation by now adding to layoffs in the public sector, a cutback in grants to individuals, a cut back in the services of those critical institutions like the Child Care Board, the Welfare Department and the Community Development Department, activities which are necessary to support the standard of living of the worst off and the dispossessed in our society.

I would like the Minister in his response to address this issue. There is a tendency on the part of people to believe that you can always get more for less. It is the knee-jerk reaction that is given when the question of reaction to tight financial situations is raised. If the Government indeed wants to cut its support for the dispossessed in our society by $24 million, and that is what is implied here, it should present to this House a carefully thought out programme that can *satisfy this* House that a $24 million cut in ,support for the social services of this society will lead, nonetheless to an improvement in *the* delivery of social services. I do not believe in those Crazy Eddie approaches to financial management.

Very rarely, will a cut of $24 million in any programme lead to an increased delivery of services. I think that in all fairness if the Government believes that the financial situation is still so tight that it *is in no position to* improve or expand delivery of services as is contemplated in its Development Plan, it should come out and say so. But the public out there has been led to believe that the stabilisation period has been successfully concluded, that things are looking up. The Government will find that there will be a rebellious society that will not easily now accept that in the context of an improving economy further. cuts

must be made in the delivery of welfare services. This matter will exercise the attention of this Opposition throughout these Estimates.
11.00 a.m.

I am warning the Government from now, Mr. Speaker, that we will be following through, in every Head, where there is a reflection of a cut in the provision for welfare services to understand what are. the implications of it. I will warn the Minister that there is an inconsistency in the presentation of these Estimates and the, presentation of the Development Plan and it has to be addressed.

Now, Sir, that brings me to one of the key considerations that concerns me as a professional economist. There was a time when I used to make my living as a professional economist by the accuracy of the forecasts that I had to send to the Jamaican Parliament on the price to be paid by the Aluminium Company. My fascination with forecasting is not only because it is part of my discipline, but fundamentally too many decisions to tax, in this country, and to penalise the poor people of this country through increases in stamp duty and consumption taxes, have in the recent past been the result of just lousy forecasting.

My concern with forecasting, Sir, is not the esoteric concern of a professional economist. It fundamentally has .to do with the fact that the Minister of Finance will take a decision as to tax or not to tax, based upon the adequacy of the revenue forecasts that are presented to him. Therefore, it has a wider relevance than that which has been attached to it by persons in this House who have been inclined to see forecasting as economists trying to play God or to operate at a level of prophets.

Now, Sir, the immediate relevance of it this year is this that the Minister of Finance is projecting that the economy is going to grow by 2.7%. But he is also telling the House that in the context of a 2.7% growth in the economy, revenues are slated to grow by about 0.3%. On the face of it, one would be led to the conclusion that Government must have a fundamental lack of confidence in the economy for it to accept that a 2.7% growth in the economy is not going to stimulate no more than — I had better use numbers, Sir — a $9m, increase in the take from taxes.

Mr. Speaker, the Government is in essence telling us that in the course of the financial year to end in March 1993, it is going to take in $1 013.6m in'taxes and that in the financial year to come, with a 2.7% growth in the economy, the tax take [is] to be no more than S 1 022m, a net change of $9m.

Now, Sir, I recognise that there will be an adjustment in the form of a reduced take from some of the levies but it would seem to. me that the Government has been very, very conservative in the relationship that it is seeking to establish between the growth rate of the economy and the impact of growth on taxes. This becomes important because the Minister of Finance, if I understood him clearly, has made a veiled threat to raise taxes again this year.

I understood the Minister as saying, Mr. Speaker, that there is still going to be a modest gap between what Government regards as a realistic deficit and the deficit implied by the statement of the numbers in these Estimates; and that gap will have ¯to be closed, he said, during the course of this year.

I want to urge, Mr. Speaker, that this Government has to give this economy a chance to heal. Now cannot be the time for increased taxation; and certainly now cannot be the time for increased taxation based only upon poor and inadequate forecasting. I believe that this year is the time when the Government should be looking to remove the withholding tax on savings of pensioners and I want to repeat that. I believe that this year should be the time when the Government should be looking ¯to remove the withholding tax on savings of pensioners.

I believe as well that this is the year that the Government, if it is serious about boosting the construction industry, should be looking to restore the concessions for the reduction of mortgage interest and for the home improvement allowances. I believe that this is the year when the Government of Barbados should be looking to boost private sector activity by granting some relief to the productive sectors on the duties they are paying presently on their inputs.

I am saying this, Mr. Speaker, to let the Minister of Finance know that we would like the Government to have a look again at these revenue estimates from the point of view of their relationship to his stated projected rate of growth, bearing in mind the entire budgetary exercise that took place last year.

In the course of the last financial year the Minister of Finance came to this House and he imposed taxes on the people of Barbados and those taxes were imposed because Government started with the presumption that the implementation of the Common External Tariff would have caused import duties to fall to as low as $51 million: The Minister of Finance found it necessary to increase taxes on the people of this country based purely on the presumption that the import duties were to fall to $51 million from $80 million because of the adjustments through the CET.

Now, Mr. Speaker, during the course of the financial year, the rates of. import duties were not increased and rather than yielding $51 million as projected by Government, the Government is now telling us that the import duties yielded $71 million. So that a large

proportion of the taxation imposed on Barbadians last year could have been avoided if more realistic revenue estimates were presented to this House.

The precepts of good financial management generally require that the Ministry of Finance is better served if it uses relatively conservative estimates than overly optimistic estimates of revenue and I do not see the need for a departure from that. But the Government has been imposing too much taxation, in my judgment, based not on the expansion of public services which would justify taxation — and we must come to the situation itt this country where we must make increased taxation relate to the provision of a new service.

If we are going to build an incineration plant, the public must understand that that is an expansion in the size of the public sector and that it will need to raise taxation for that. If we are going to have a massive highway programme and it is an expansion of the public infrastructure, new taxation might be required for that. If we are going to create new institutions, new taxation might be required for those things. But too much of the increased taxation on the backs of the people of Barbados in recent times has come from just flawed forecasting. At the risk of being described again as being too technical on these matters, I have to urge that this matter must be addressed. 11.10 a.m.

And I have to urge, Mr. Speaker that it should be addressed because one of the most important elements of changes in the composition of Government financing this year is in the support being sought from the House for the radical modernization of the Ministry of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with this issue. The move from stabilisation to structural adjustment in Barbados, I would accept and the House must accept, should involve a radical change in the composition of public sector expenditure with a view to boosting productivity in the public sector. I do not think anybody can challenge that that is a reasonable premise upon which one should examine the presentation of public accounts. Therefore, Sir, one has to welcome the effort being made to boost productivity in the Ministry of Finance with a view to making the Ministry of Finance itself more efficient.

I have examined the documents that have been presented in relation to the large expenditure in the Ministry of Finance of $20 million over 3 years, $8 million this year. But I am seeing no provision whatsoever for boosting the Ministry of Finance's capacity to send to us sensible forecasts upon *which we,* as decision makers, can take the decision bearing upon how much taxes *the* people must pay in this country.

I want the Minister of Finance to understand clearly, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that if the Ministry of Finance's performance is to be improved, it is not only going to be improved by spending a lot of money on high price consultants from abroad to help modernize the Treasury and the Customs which I will support in principle though not at the price *at* which they are being sought. But internally there must be expenditure, on the Ministry of Finance's capacity to provide us as decision makers in this House with better information upon which we can take the decision as to whether to tax or not to tax. I see no provision for that and, I therefore cannot give my wholehearted support to the Ministry of Finance's provision.

But I want to go to the larger point. While these Estimates show some commitment to improve productivity in the Ministry of Finance, one looks in vain to see a commensurate commitment to improve productivity in any other Government department and in particular those that have a bearing on the performance of the productive sectors and the performance of the social sector, Sir.

Indeed, within the Ministry of Finance itself I see a contradiction. This House this year is being asked to support $8 million to support improvement in tax administration but only $406 004 are being sought by the Ministry of Finance to support the most important emerging new sector in Barbados' economy, the International Financial and Business sector.

The Opposition does not have the discretion to require the House to increase a Government vote. But I believe, fundamentally, that in light of the opportunities that represent themselves at this juncture for substantial employment foreign exchange generation and income generation to arise from our giving the highest priority to the expansion of our international financial sector and international business sectors, a $406 000 allocation in light of the work that needs to be done is too small. It is a token. It will also mean that all of the opportunities that have been identified as far back as the Langley Report, all of the work that has to be done on the trust legislation, all of the work that has to be done to diversify the mix of products that Barbados can now tap into to create new services' in this country, to create new forms of employment, to create new streams of foreign exchange earnings are not going to be taken advantage of.

If the Standing Orders of this House . allowed the Opposition to move amendments to increase allocation — and we cannot — I would like to see that $8 million that the Ministry of Finance is spending on tax administration amended such that a reasonable amount could be spent on improving the tax administration system. But at least half of it this year should be spent on our getting the very best legal advice to put in place the important missing pieces

of legislation that stand in the way of Barbados optimizing its opportunity to become an important offshore financial economy.

I therefore feel that the Ministry of Finance's priorities are bad. The Ministry of Finance proposes to spend $8 million this year to improve its capacity to be a tax collector. But it will spend $406 000 Mr. Speaker, Sir on that key sector of the economy, that falls to its responsibility and which can be the salvation of the economy in terms of its increased capacity to generate jobs and generate foreign exchange. 'I think that this House should press the Minister of Finance to withdraw – in light of the priorities that we all agree upon – the $406 000 in token expenditure that he, acting in his own volition and his own discretion wants to allocate to the support of the offshore economy in this society and ask him to put in a reasonable expenditure that would give all the young people in my constituency, Sir, and yours and those on this side and St. John and St. Michael Central, give the hope to all the young people of this society that we are serious in this House when we tell them that the development of the international business community is a large part of the future and that we can support it by the expenditure of public funds. These Estimates on the other hand tell them that when it comes to the crunch the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Finance prefers to spend money on tax gathering rather than supporting the international economy.

It reflects in my judgement a fundamental confusion in the mind of the Minister himself. It seems to me that he has cast himself in the role of a tax gatherer because he wants to improve tax administration; but he does not see that it falls to him at this juncture Mr. Speaker, Sir, to be the key developer of the Barbados economy. Those are the kinds of considerations that cause me to feel that at this critical point where we must, if we are serious, cause this economy to move from stabilisation to growth, the priorities as reflected in the allocation of expenditure, in these Estimates, do not suggest that the Government is seeking to galvanize private sector activities in the crucial areas. In addition the Government is not, in my judgement, giving effect to its statement in the development plan, that it recognizes the enhanced importance of correcting the deficiencies in the society that have arisen out of the severity of its stabilisation programme.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that the Minister of Finance might have embarked on a path of increased taxation largely because, in my judgement, there is no reconciliation between the assumption of increased growth and the projection of very minimal revenue intake. I am making allowance for the fact that I recognize that there is a netting out this year of the levies. I warn the Minister that he must give the economy a chance to heal. The only way this economy cannot be healed this year is by the imposition of increased taxation at this tone when it is so critical for the economy to move from adjustment to stabilisation.

11.20 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I cannot however leave these Estimates without pointing to the fact that it is absolutely necessary that the Government sees the capacity for adjustment in this economy and the scope for taking action to deal with Barbados' long-term economic and social problems in a framework that is wider than that set by the International Lending Institutions. I say this, Mr. Speaker, Sir, because I would imagine that although the IMF has not said so, although the World Bank has not said so, and although the IADB has not said so, all Barbadians recognise that the provision of a reliable, safe and high quality water supply has now emerged as one of the critical problems facing this society and is likely to emerge as one of the constraints for the future, not only on the growth of the economy, but our capacity to support the standard of living of the people of this country.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a serious problem. It is a problem of national dimensions. I feel, Sir, that if we are going to project sustained growth in the economy as represented in the Development Plan and as is warranted by the extent of our social and economic problems, the investment has to be made this year to develop the water resources of Barbados and we must drop the assumption that that water supply will be as safe, secure and of the high quality as it 'has been for the years past.

The Democratic Labour Party made a fundamental mistake, in my judgement around 1986, when in attempting to make Richie Haynes look good it took in all of the surpluses then being held by every school in Barbados, including the Alexandra School that was building surpluses to build a school hall, it took in, Sir, all of the surpluses that were being accumulated also by the Barbados Water Authority to support a continuous capital programme of maintenance. We now have the shocking situation in this country, where because adequate provision has not been made for capital investment in the maintenance of the physical facilities of the Barbados Water Authority. The problem of massive leakage has now started to represent itself as one of the factors that is contributing substantially to the poor water supply that is now plaguing every section of this Barbados society.

Mr. Speaker, this House has a responsibility, whenever fundamental national problems of this character arise, to deal with them. The Government cannot pretend that it is unaware of it. And I do not believe ti. it we will be serving our present economic circumstances properly, far less making provision for the future growth of the economy and the preservation of the standard of living that we want to enjoy, if we were not in these Est' nates to

show the imagination and the vision and the foresight to commit ourselves to a serious capital investment programme for the Barbados Water Authority.

It would surely, Mr. Speaker, Sir, solicit immediately the support from my side. And it would suggest that the Government itself is not now so constrained by the blinkers of the International Monetary Fund as to not recognise that it' has a responsibility to react to urgent national problems where those national problems exist.

I therefore, Mr. Speaker, Sir, see in these Estimates not even the faintest inclination from the Government side to the release from those kinds of socio-economic constraints that imperil the future of the Barbadian society. So that these Estimates, Sir, as the Minister of Finance has said are reflective of Government's presentation of its best options in the context of what it sees as a tight fiscal problem.

The fact that the Government itself is prepared to say that it is facing a tight fiscal situation may indeed cause us to believe that the Prime Minister may be misleading us from time to time when he keeps promising us, as is now his wont whenever he speaks and he is not speaking about plotters and destabilisers and enemies and so on, about the light at the end of the tunnel.

We feel on this side, Mr. Speaker, fundamentally that these Estimates do not represent a departure. They have been conceived- too entirely within the context and with reference only to the constraints imposed on Government's financial planning by the International Monetary Fund and what it conceives of as the requirements of a presumed programme with the Inter-American Development Bank. And the Opposition feels, Mr. Speaker, fundamentally that at this juncture in Barbados' development, if Barbados is in fact to make any satisfactory transition from stablisation with pain towards growth, with progress, even our fiscal policy has to be conceived of outside the boundaries of the constraints imposed by those institutions.

We feel that the Government is missing an opportunity as a result the composition of its expenditure, by the statement of its priorities, to create a departure from the social and economic nightmare that has descended upon this country in the course of the last 3 years.

The Minister I feel, believes that he is being very disciplined. He feels that he is constrained by expenditure allocations that predate him. The Minister obviously is constrained by the fact of having to support Sherbourne, The Minister is also constrained by the fact, that although he did not support the St. John Polyclinic, because it was never in the St. John Development Plan because the St. John Development Plan never existed, he feels bound to commit himself to having to support these things now.

We will seek, Sir, to urge the Government not to make these Estimate "dead on arrival Estimates" but to open up them to critical review within the House this year, given the vital point at which Barbados is poised. That point, as I said, is critical in our country's economic and financial affairs it will determine whether we will remain in the phase of stabilisation with pain, or move to the phase of growth with progress. I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is that this Bill be read a ...

I take it that no other Honourable Members wants to speak.

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and that the House ... Where is the Chairman of Committees? We are going into Committee.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. Sir ...

Mr. SPEAKER: You really. cannot raise a point of order in the middle of a motion.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member was not aware what was happening and he wishes to speak on second reading. And I am raising a point of order to ask Your Honour ...

Mr. SPEAKER: But we cannot have a point of order in the middle of a motion. A motion has been made in the House and therefore once the motion has been made...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not completing the motion Mr. Speaker because I was looking to see whether...

Mr. SPEAKER: You have not completed the motion but I have completed the exercise in respect of putting the motion. I always believe that where there is some agreement in this House I am prepared to accede to that.
11.30 a.'m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I just wish to draw to your attention that two Honourable Members who wanted to speak on second reading were not following the procedure. I did not think that the Honourable Members on this side would have any difficulty.

Mr. SPEAKER: In that case, if it is agreeable to both sides of the House and they want to recommit that particular aspect, I giv that permission. There seems to

be no objection. Then I will recommit that particular aspect and now open the question not to be read a second time stand. So if any other Member who wants to speak, so do. The Honourable Member for St. Michael Central.

Mr. C. LeROY TROTMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for accommodating me in this area. I think in light of one or two other matters for which responsibilities I have that it is necessary for me to state very clearly for the record what my position is in regard to this exercise and the exercise which follows it very shortly.

In 1993, Sir, I had occasion to leave the back benches of the Democratic Labour Party and among the several reasons I had 'then and I still have was that I was concerned about the management of the economy. I was concerned among other reasons at what appeared to me to be a foreign take-over of vital aspects of our heritage in this country. I was concerned as well at the contraction of the economy in areas which contradict the goals which we have set or the goals which we ought to have set ourselves. I felt, therefore, that it was necessary for me in light of the commitment I have given myself to represent the interest, not merely of my constituents, but of the broader constituents of workers in this country to declare where I stood on a number of those matters. I find myself in the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, today in a position where I have to express fundamental disagreement in the area of the management of this said economy because in my view what we are being led to do ' is something which might occasion, if it has not already started to do so, a movement in this country where we may have to accept that there is growth, but where that growth might not relate to the most critical concern that we would have as Barbadians. I am thinking that, whereas industrialized countries may be able to afford the luxury of a growth that does not carry employment with it, in Barbados any growth arrangement that there is which does not have at its very centre the creation of additional jobs for the people of this country cannot be an arrangement for growth with which I can share a oneness with the people who lead such a position. I think it is necessary for me, Sir, to make that point clearly and unequivocally.

That position has gotten to all sorts of proportions, Mr. Speaker, if you will allow me, that we find that where we ought to have been able to make arrangements over the last year for systematic work in cleaning the countryside and ' repairing our highways that we have not been able to do so, even if we have had the will to do so. Therefore, we find ourselves in a moment of urgency, if you will, where work which should have been done by people was not done at the level of payment of flat rates. Those people find themselves now being called upon 'to work overtime to do the same work. I am talking about people from the National Conservation Commission who could easily have been working more days than 3 days a week and who might be required now to work overtime to do what should have been done on an ongoing basis all along.

Sir, I am making the further point that, if we are concerned with the development of our country and with our environmental improvement and not merely concerned with that at this time on the basis of a Conference on Sustainable Development, we ought to be concerned with recognizing that tourism is one of the vital sectors of our economy and it is a major engine in *which* economic growth will take off. But if we are going to be able to see that as physically taking place, it seems to me in looking at the same subject of funding in that specific area that there would be a very critical problem of having our community deteriorate so much so that the very people we would want to enjoy the tourism plant that we have and the benefits we have in tourism at our beaches and elsewhere that is not being addressed, or the very ridiculous situation which obtains where one of our biggest drawing cards for tourism at the level of the "Cave" is not being serviced because simple things like standby replacement parts are not being provided.

We have a contradiction in terms and I think we ought to be able to recognize it. I do not say what I say out of malice; I say what I say out of concern for the fact that, if we are really interested in the masses of the people who are unemployed in this country, we have to gear ourselves and our programmes for development in such a way that those people are not left behind. It seems to me that any provisions which we have in our Estimates are going to have to be provisions which will relate to certain stringencies and would have to target those areas where we expect that we can get some benefits from increased activity.. It will, therefore, have to be targeted towards spending more money in those areas.

The concern that you would have to cut back in the provisions under various Heads to Ministries would therefore have to be looked at in that context. If the Government determines and we determine as Members of this Honourable Chamber that we have a problem relating to how the economy will be resuscitated and if we have a concern of what areas will generate increased growth with employment, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that we have to find the ways and means by which to target those areas even in stringency situations for additional funding and additional personnel.

I am not satisfied that we have been able either in this particular exercise this year or as part of the consistency of the action of the Government to travel in that particular direction. The result is, as I discover in what I do on a daily basis, that even though we have talked about reducing the level of economic recession, we are still even today being brought face to face with additional lay-offs and additional cutbacks in areas of business with the result

that more people are still even now becoming unemployed. Government has a responsibility and by now would have hopefully reached the stage where it can by its action bring the confidence to bear in the economic environment where, far from seeing additional jobs being lost, we ought to be 'able to see jobs being created. Where that is not being done, I think we will have a problem and I certainly, from the position in which I stand, do have such a problem.
11.40 a.m.

' The concerns that I have, which are shared by my organisation, are concerns which I would like to believe that the Government and the Minister and Ministry of Finance are fully seized of by now and I would like to think, Mr. Speaker, that in their planning, whether it is for now or for supplementals or however else they intend to do this exercise, it will be recognised that we cannot at this particular stage of our development concern ourselves - and I refer to the season and not merely the Estimates - we cannot relate alone merely to mathematical calculations and to the balancing of equations.

I have made the point before, Sir, and I need to make it again, that the pains and the concerns and the interests of the masses of people of Barbados cannot be satisfied by a statement relating to the balancing of the budget or to how the Estimates are structured or restructured. They can only relate to the level of hope that the unemployed man and the unemployed woman will have, if not for himself or for herself, for their children. if there is not on the horizon - and I do not speak, Your Honour, of the distant horizon, I speak of the here and the now - the kind of rainbow that would suggest that there is and there will be the opportunity for employment, then we are going to have a very grave situation facing us.

I know that those international agencies with which we do business have been very strong in their protest against the approach that I would want to see us take, and I have heard officials both of the IMF and of other institutions insist that we need to reach a stage in our development where we have balanced budgets and where we do not spend more than we earn, and I can understand that and the theoretical construct that leads to that kind of statement. However, I am of the view, Mr. Speaker, that much more than that need to make mathematical equations come out right is the need for structuring the economic activity in such a way that we move away from what is happening now where the activities themselves are resulting in levels of recession rather than bringing about the kinds of development we are looking for. If people are not being employed or, if those people who are being employed are being put on a reduced work week, as is happening in many work places, the end result of it all is that the level of the purchasing power of the community becomes significantly reduced, with the end result that the Government itself as a net tax taker from that economic activity is going to receive less revenues through taxes, and then is less able to cater to the social needs of the public via that measure. The result could very easily be that those things which we took for granted as things which would be performed by the Government of the day for the people of the community, especially those less able to provide them for themselves, those might then become areas of activity where the people have to pay even though we have- a tax system that allows for them. I refer to health services, educational services, the subsidisation of transport which we always understood to be part of what a socialist government would be concerned with providing, and we might find ourselves wanting to talk about commercialising the level of transport when in fact the public transport is, or certainly is recognised by me, as being an activity where only those people who are least able to pay the bus fare anyhow are the ones who take the public transport.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that those are some critical areas of concern which persons like me would want to express in this exercise before us this morning. We need to express those concerns because, if they are not expressed, the view may be had by the Government that it is good, all right and satisfactory for us to keep going in the direction we are going as long as we are able to register growth, when in fact that growth has to be accompanied by growth in employment if we are not as a'people together to suffer significantly. .

That contradiction goes beyond that point, as you would appreciate, Mr. Speaker. It goes not merely to the immediate and the here and now, but it goes. as well to the level of security which we may have as a people. Because in the situation which I am describing for you, where people even now are being laid off, a situation where even those people who are at work are being brought into situations where their work week is reduced and their levels of earnings are reduced, there is going hand in glove with that arrangement to be a psychological problem, a psychological difficulty; because a level of insecurity is creeping into the society where those who have jobs are no longer able to demand the rights which they have claimed before - human rights and trade union rights - as they previously would have claimed them, because the loss of even that half-day job is very real, very evident and in some cases all pervasive.

The task of those of us who represent the interests of those people, however much it is beefed up, by the level of our commitment and the level of our effort, cannot be by itself enough to address the grave difficulty which that psychological problem is presenting. In those areas where we ourselves have not been able to target the work places, you need to be aware, Mr. Speaker, of situations that are rife fot exploitation, and where the exploitation is taking place in a way that causes grave fears among every one of us. Any time that there is poverty, or pockets of poverty in a community, that poverty will constitute a danger to the

calm and the prosperity everywhere else where people may exist. The poverty created by unemployment and by underemployment, is leading to a situation of massive exploitation, exploitation to the extent that we have reports of a situation where an employer even determines what workers should wear in their casual time off and out of working hours, here in Barbados. If they are seen in the city or on the beach dressed in a way that the management of the company would consider to be outside of the norms that the company has set to be the correct norms, then that person is punishable. The people are struggling against that but not being able to be voluble in expressing disaffection with that kind of reprehensible behaviour because of the psychological problems that come from underemployment and unemployment.
11.50 a.m.

The Minister of Labour has indicated that he will be addressing that very shortly and I am very pleased to hear him say that *sotto voce;* but I think he would have to recognise that problems of that sort will eat into the fabric of the society in any country where large numbers of people remain unemployed.Government in any event has a responsibility in my view to be the employer of last resort. That used to be the philosophy of the Government and the Estimates from time to time would have shown Governments moving in a direction of being employer' of 'last resort.

The international agencies have made a determination that far from that, governments must so construct their businesses that unless the jobs they provide for people are long-term and sustainable jobs, whatever that means, then the governments have no right to provide those jobs. I have said to some of those officials from those agencies from time to time that they have to make a determination and they have to advise governments how and where they want them to spend the money. Either they can assist the governments to spend the money in social programmes and in work programmes, or they can instruct the governments not to spend the money in work programmes, but to spend it on jails and feeding people in the jails. That is the reality of the situation we are faced with.

It is not just a Barbados situation. It is a situation that all governments in developing countries like ours and in many of the industrialised countries as well have to face and have to confront. We in the developing countries have made the point before now that it makes more sense to have make-up work and to provide employment for the household so that the household can take care of itself and the young people who are at the street corners, rather than to have a situation present itself where the household does not have jobs.

The people at the street corner cannot play football all day because of the hot sun and because you cannot play games *constantly,* especially. if you do not have money to buy bread. The end result is that the levels of petty crime and the levels of crimes which are not so petty have risen altogether to a level that this society cannot tolerate. Then that has a boomerang effect. Because that is taking place, it is going to put pressure on those very sectors of the economy which we expect to be the main engines of economic growth. The engine of economic growth in our country is going to be the financial sector. But if the financial sector is going to be part of the engine of economic growth, if tourism is going to be part of economic growth and if both of these together depend on the stability of the society to the extent to which they can assist in the effort of recovery, then I think that our actions in the one area will affect the presentation of the other.

We need to be able to recognise that for the fact that it is, and address it very frontally. I am not suggesting any wild indiscriminate spending that we could not see within certain constraints, but I am at the same time recognising that we have to do something, and we have to do it urgently. The Estimates are before us and I recognise that they have already been presented (and I will have a comment to make about some of the structures within them later). Even though they are already presented, we have – I have a problem with them. I am saying that outside of this exercise those persons who have the responsibility for the governance of the country have to be able to move beyond pencil and paper and deal with flesh and blood, with people, the needs of people and the aspirations of people and the concerns of people.

I am hopeful that this will be looked at in a way that it is not being looked at at the moment, in such a way that there can be hope and, to use somebody's language, light at the end not of a long tunnel but perhaps of a shorter duct.

To the Estimates themselves I wish to make one particular observation which is of some concern to me and I raised it in another place yesterday. It has to do in my view with a sort of cynicism which sometimes attends these exercises.

I saw, for example, Mr. Speaker, and I hope you will allow this, where the Estimates are addressing the Ministry of Economic Affairs and where at Head 20, Object 212 – I am speaking in specific terms to make a general point – it makes the point about operating expenses, and then proceeds in the explanatory note to say that this item includes provision for postage, cleaning materials, fees to Board members and then subsequently for all activities relating to the programmes and projects of the Board and the figure quoted is $159 340. The National Productivity Board.

Mr. Speaker, if somebody were writing or speaking and said there was a gathering somewhere and that His

Honour the Speaker was there, that the Prime Minister was there and *that the Leader of* the *Opposition was* there among other invitees I would wonder if you would not accept that it would be a fair conclusion to arrive at that in the estimation of the average listener or reader that those 3 persons His Honour the Speaker, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition were the 3 centres of importance at that gathering.

If when we read the Estimates and we see that the items *include provision* for postage, cleaning material and for fees to Board members and then go on to say "for all activities relating to the programme and projects of the Board", are we not left- to believe that a very significant portion of that $159 000 is paid in stamps, for cleaning materials and that the Board members are soaking up the rest of it?

I have grave concern for saying this and I expressed it in another place because I just happen to be a member of the Board. How can this be put down like that? Any funds that will go the Productivity Board have to go to research and several other areas which were better mentioned rather than to give the impression that we will have to buy $159 000 in stamps. We would have to have an awful lot of cleaning to spend -$159 000. Maybe in the concerns we have for presenting the Estimates as dictated by other considerations or as governed by other institutions we have had the problem now of not being able to express ourselves in a way that would do true justice to the understanding of how the Estimates should be put and the explanation there should be in the Estimates even for simple readers like myself.

I have been told that I should be able to read this to understand that the words· that follow the 3 headings should be considered to be important. But I am only a simple person and I think , that when you raise these things you raise them in order of priority and importance. When I get past those 3 I do not see what else there is for me to look at. That perhaps is characteristic of the cynicism which attends part of this exercise, and which I think we have to address in a manner which will give us the opportunity to come to grips in a very meaningful way with the concerns we have for Barbados in 1994.

It is not my concern, and I am going to close now, Sir, to do other than to work towards the rebuilding of the walls of this country; but that can only be done in a situation where there is understanding that we cannot build if the building happens to be seen as representing only something for the satisfaction of those who now have jobs. If• we leave out those significant thousands of persons underemployed and those thousands who in another month or two are going to join those ranks. Then, Sir, we are not building effectively.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, I join this debate on the Estimates presented by the Government for this year. These Estimates are continuing, to lay the foundation for the kind of development we expect in our country for the coming years.
12.00 noon.

Unlike, for instance, the Honourable Member for St. Peter, who chooses to make the assumption that these Estimates will be radical in terms of being a transitional set of elements and that the elements in the Estimates should show some magic transformation, some significant or revolutionary difference from other elements, I choose instead to see these elements within the framework of the last five Estimates delivered in this Honourable Chamber, and as part of the on-going work of the Government of a country, to maintain the fundamentals of Government and to make whatever changes are to be made in an evolutionary and a very solid way.

I have no doubt, Sir, that we are moving away from the problems we have had in the lack of stability in our country. I have no doubt that we are also moving towards the structural adjustment but I have no assumption that this will happen in one dramatic year. I believe that fundamentally we will see incrementally as we live in this country and carry out the work of this Government that these changes will be coming about. I have no assumptions to make that any of the social problems that we face will be wiped out in any one year. I have no assumptions to make that this Government is any different from any other Government anywhere in the world battling with the problems that confront us and the reality of the economic impasse that this world is in now where President Clinton is appealing to the seven countries to try and improve the economic condition of the United States of America, Germany, and all those other countries that are also facing the economic and other problems that Barbados is facing, magnified sometimes, and that is the premise on which I speak.

The second premise on which I speak, Mr. Speaker, is based on a philosophical position of understanding that the Democratic Labour Party has always put itself up as a party in or out of Government that looks after certain social interests in this country. That is why I will be looking at certain areas of the Estimates. I have looked at those areas of the Estimates over the last five years because I am not one afraid to tell the Barbados Labour Party that their economic policies between 1976 and 1986 are the debt accumulation that they have put on this Government which is one of the large problems that we are facing in this country. I am not afraid to tell them so.

I want them to understand that I do not speak out of context. I do not put one year as against another year because history is built up year by year and what we face now is something that has been built up over the years. I am not afraid to tell them that the problem that we are facing now is largely of their making. But I am not going to dwell on that because we have our role to do too. That is why I am analysing' what ,we have been doing in Estimates in this particular House between 1991 to now.

Sir, I have all the figures before me. I have looked at the Estimates over the period 1991 to now and looked at some of the critical areas, the area of education, and how the Democratic Labour Party had performed over the last five years in terms of its allocations for education. I can show, beyond the shadow of a doubt by all the information that I have here, that this Government has continued to provide funds for education. It has not wavered. Two hundred and one million dollars in 1991 it is now at $216 million. It peaked at $248 million in 1991/92 which was unusual. Last year it was $216 million, 1992/93 it was $202 million. We have maintained our commitment to educational services in this country. We have not fallen away from that pledge to the people of Barbados that we are going to support educational services. If you look at these Estimates they are in keeping with that pledge. We have nothing to be ashamed about in terms of our provision for education. That is fundamental to me in terms of .my . philosophy as it relates to the Democratic Labour Party.

I switch now to the provisions for health because when you are talking about the health of a people you are talking about the masses. You are talking about a fundamental commitment to the masses of these people of our country. In -1990/91 we were providing $131 million, in 1994/95 it was $185 million. Last year 1993/94 it was $174 million, almost $11 million more than the last year and you are talking about a commitment to people in this country, or falling away from commitments? Health is a fundamental area that shows a Government's concern for the masses of the people. I am saying once you can maintain this kind of spending on health services you are talking about a Government who understands that even in the toughest times, and we went through a rough period between 1992/1994 – 1991 was when the period of destabilisation and structural adjustments came on us, when the economy shook and we are now moving out of that. During that period, in 1992/93 we spent $157m on health. In 1993/94 we spent $174m and we are committing ourselves to $185m. So why should I not support these Estimates which are out there for the working people of this country?

Let us look at social security ,and welfare. You are talking about safety nets and so on for the people of the country. In 1990/91 we spent $74m. In 1991/92 it was $88m. We are .now at $85m. In 1993/94 we went to $90.7m, last year. Have we fallen away from a commitment to provide safety nets and support? That is social welfare and security.

Housing and Community Services, Sir. Apart from peaking at $53m in 1991/92, in 1991 it was $31m. In the last three Estimates our provision for housing has been rather low. That is known. In 1992/93 was $16m, 1993/94 it was $17m, 1994/95 it was $19m so even in this particular set of Estimates it is' a little better than it has been before but that is a matter clearly for discussion. That in itself I am sure will have some discussion in terms of Government's provision of housing and related matters. It has to be discussed within the context of things like our balance of payments and our foreign reserves because we all understand what housing and construction means in terms of balance of payments and foreign reserves. We all know that when your balance of payments and foreign reserve position is delicate, you have to be careful in terms of how you feed that particular sector of the economy at any particular time so all these things are linked. You cannot see them in separation one from the other.

Then the Honourable Member for St. Peter talked about subsidies and transfers. Let us look at that in a focus. Let us put that in a certain focus because the suggestion was that all of a sudden the Government is running away from providing safety nets. The Government is not satisfying certain elements in our country. The facts are that between 1990/91 when subsidies and transfer hit $263m, in 1991/92 it was $259m, 1992/93 it was $230m, 1993/94 it was $264m and 1994/95 it is down to $242m. 1993–94 $264 million, 1994–95 $244 million. Yes, there is a drop between 1994 and 1995. But you will find that the 1994-95 level goes back to better than the 1992–93 level. 12.10 p.m.

In addition to that the Honourable Member for St. Peter well knows that these subsidies can be broken down into different areas also. The ones I would look at specifically would direct subsidies which in 1991–92 was $17 million again. Then if you look at subsidies to non-profit organization it has waivered between $8.6 million in 1991–92 to $6 million generally between 1992 and now. Subsidies to public institutions which is the one he must be thinking about, if you look at the figures for 1991–92 $159 million, 1992–93 $127 million, 1993–94 $150 million, 1994–95 $129 million. The 1994–95 figure is about the same as the 1992–93 figure whilst if you are at 1991–92 and 1993–94 it is about $150 million or more.

But he should also know that part of the privatisation efforts of Government will necessarily mean that Government will not be allocating the same amount of spending to subsidies and transfers. That is part of the whole privatisation effort. It is the whole effort of trying

to trim down the amount of money that Government is spending. But the conclusion must not be drawn as has been drawn by him that because there has been a reduction in subsidies and transfers that this necessarily means that Government is removing safety nets. This is the implication of what he was saying, that because there has been a reduction in subsidies and transfers that this necessarily means that Government is abandoning poor people and that conclusion cannot be drawn from the ,information when we go into the details of the information that he is looking at.

Mr. Speaker, we have to look at Government's economic services, the amount they are spending on economic services over the period. That is vitally important to us because in areas like education and health, housing and welfare, those are not income generating areas not directly, only in a very indirect way, when you spend money on health or when you spend money on social welfare or education only very indirectly are you going to be generating income. But you are supporting the masses of the people of the country. Therefore we look to see how much money Government is putting on the economic services agriculture, tourism and so on in terms of its policy because there is a blend.

Within the Budget Government has a certain amount of money. You can put some in those social areas and you have to put some in economic areas also. It seems to me that that blend has been maintained. In - 1990—91 Government was putting $154 million in the economic services, 1991—92 it skyrocketed to $223 million, 1992—93 it was $185 million, 1993—94 $174 million and it is now at $171 million. I would like to see more money being spent on economic services but as I said, it is one economic pie and it is relative to the zero sum if you take from some you have to put on others, unless you are going to be looking for money overall to spend on these various services.

When Government has its money to spend overall, it total expenditure the pie has to be divided in such a way that the money has to be spent on certain areas. Let us understand, if you put it on health and on education and you put it on your social and welfare services then you only have so much to put on your economic services. You have to be blended.

What is bothering me, Sir, is the one that the former Administration between 1976 and 1986 landed on us that is gradually eroding the amount that can be spent on those other areas. I am talking about debt servicing. I am talking about the fact that while in 1990—91 you were spending $191 million in that area, in 1991—92 it went to $294 million. This year you are talking about $350 million. It went to $359 million in 1992—93, $374 million in 1993—94.

The point I have 'made in these Estimates before and in Budget speeches is that because of the Barbados Labour Party's policy of borrowing their way out of problems in the 1980s instead of doing the kind of structural transformation that was being done by this Administration, we are now landed with the situation where the amount of money that we have to spend on debt is eating away at the amount that we could be spending on health or on economic services. They stand accused. They borrowed their way out of a crisis in the 1980s.

This Administration had the courage...

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Yes. At the cost of what the Honourable Member for St. Peter says sacrifice by the people as though the people are apart from the economy from anybody else. This economy is not the Government's economy. It is the people of Barbados' economy and when it goes wrong the people have to carry the sacrifice. Do you think somebody in Jamaica or St. Lucia will carry it. This economy belongs to every grouping inside here. ,That is what you all have to understand. Do you think the economy belongs to the Government or it belongs to a particular individual, the Minister of Finance? The economy is the people's economy. When the economy runs into trouble, when we cannot get the foreign exchange to satisfy the level of needs that we have, that is the people's problem, not the Government's problem, When we cannot earn the foreign exchange that would create jobs because people tend to think that jobs come out of the sky. That is not the Government's problems, that is ' the people's problem too. The more we become courageous enough to tell the people, not looking for cheap support and popularity, the more courageous we are to let the people of this country know that things like economics have to be explained to them. So do not believe that employment is something that is generated by a wave of a wand. Some magic wand that somebody can wave and the unemployment level goes down from 27% to 10%. How do you think you can get unemployment go down unless you are able to earn your way in the world? Sell the goods and services. Earn the foreign exchange to provide the jobs. The Honourable Member for St. Peter knows that is a fact. He knows that and he knows that as the economy stabilises, as the structural adjustment programme bites and takes place that unemployment levels will come down. The country would stabilise. There is no question about that in my mind or anybody's mind. All of us know that the adjustment is going on. Probably at the level of mental adjustment that is where we have not reached yet and that is where we have to reach, the whole question of productivity, the whole orientation of our minds to where the future is. That is going to take some time.

But before we get accustomed to it there is going to be a whole lot of thing happening in the economy and

the society because there is a struggle for the future of Barbados. In that struggle for the future of who controls Barbados, that is a very serious struggle, a lot of institutions are going to be very uncomfortable, a lot of individuals are going to be very uncomfortable. In the struggle for who controls the future of this country, when the structural adjustment has to be carried out, that is going to be a big battle and you better, believe it. Who controls sugar and how it is managed, that is big battle. You had better understand it. When the Democratic Labour Party made the kind of adjustment they are making with sugar as an effective banking institution in this country the tentacles of sugar reach far and wide. This Administration that took on that adjustment which would make a difference in the future, do you not think you are going to create enemies? Do you not think there are going to be people who are *going to be* very concerned about that kind of adjustment? Oh yes. You had better believe it.

Tourism and the hospitality sector, there are going to be structural adjustments there too. You had better believe it. And again there are interests who will be concerned about the direction of who will control our country in those areas. My brother these are not easy things. These are serious matters. But there is a commitment to tackle them one by one. We have to make the adjustments. We did not do it in the seventies, we did not do it in the eighties, ,we have to do it now. It is not a job for the faint-hearted nor is it a job for the ignorant. It is not a job for those who do not understand what they have to do. It is not a job for those who do not understand their role or those who shirk it, or for personal or other reasons, make their decisions, but these adjustments will be made in our country. They have to be made in our country. We have delayed making the adjustments.- In delay there is danger.
12.20 p.m.

The further you delay the harder the adjustments and the worst it is going to be for the masses of our people. It is not going to be any radical adjustment as the Honourable Member for St. Peter thinks, that you will come in here and in one set of Estimates or one budget and make all the changes. He knows that is not true. The adjustments that have to be made in terms of our trading arrangements, those are going to be hard and harsh adjustments.

Adjustments in terms of our fiscal policy: All of these are adjustments being carried out by this administration and when that final package is put to Barbados, when the final networking is done, a job would have been done in transforming this economy by this administration. We are seeing it now darkly as through a glass, we are seeing it piece by piece but someday as I said, when you get to 1994 you can better examine what you all did between 1976 and 1986 because gradually the facts will emerge and you will put it in a pattern and you will look at it.

People will be able to do the same thing for this administration too. Each administration will be held up in time but it is only down the line sometimes that you can look back and see this as the pattern that emerged. The pattern that emerged between 1976 and 1986 is borrowing your way out and you have put a debt on this administration after 1986 that it could not borrow its way out.

Fortunately sometime in these adversities you get good things coming. It has forced us back on ourselves on to self-reliance. Sure we have to accept the IMF but out of that combination is coming an approach to the management of public finances that is coming out in Estimates like these, Estimates that talk about prudence. Estimates that talk about managing what you have. Estimates that show we still have to put out some on education. We still have to put out on Health. We still have to put out on Housing. We cannot go splurging but we are maintaining the system by maintaining that balance and once we are able to get over this hump then the growth will be there. That growth is dependent, as I said, on our outlook in Barbados.

Yes there needs to be confidence in the political sector. We are a country known for political stability. If we lose that image it is going to affect every person in this country. We in this Parliament will be affected but more so the man in the street will be totally confused about what is happening here in the country at this time. Yes, all of us must express concern that the present political impasse does not lead to that build up in confidence that we would like, especially at a transition pace. But the truth is that it is happening and we do not run away from reality. The truth is that it is happening and with me, I confront and deal with reality. I do not run away from it. That is a fact.We have to make sure that we get political stability in Barbados if this transformation is to come about. There is no doubt in my mind about that whatsoever. But I am making the point and I will continue to make the point, this administration has stuck to its guns. It has established a pathway, a pathway that is for the good of the masses of the people of this country. These are facts you cannot run away from, that in spending on all of these vital areas the administration has not shirked its responsibility. It has put money into education. It has put money into health. All of these fundamental areas it has put money in consistently. There is no record that it has endangered the education policy of this country. There is no record that it has undermined the health policies. It has not pulled money out from these fundamental areas and that is the record that is there.

I share the view with the Honourable Member for St. Peter that it is not a revolutionary set of Estimates. But he comes with one set of assumptions that it should be and I come with a set of assumptions that you cannot really look for a revolutionary estimates at a time in our :ountry,

quite frankly, when you are still stabilising. You are not out of the woods yet. You are still stabilising because I will take his definition. Yes if he is saying that you cannot have full stability when you have twenty something percent unemployment. You have dealt with those issues that were the outstanding issues of the time – balance of payments, reserves, etc. In doing that you have created another set of difficulties and you now have to address those difficulties and I am saying you have to address, those difficulties, not in any *ad hoc* way but in a systematic way.

When you approach an issue like employment, I remember reading Mascoll doing a very good paper on wages in Barbados, an Economist by the name Clyde Mascoll. I am sorry to use his name in that way, Sir, but I am not using it in a bad way. Clyde Mascoll is a recognised young Economist. His assumption after looking at wages and productivity and employment in Barbados, is that it takes about 10% growth to cause a 2% reduction in unemployment. That is a study carried out by a learned young man. Backing that would be Compton Bourne, a West Indian Economist writing out of St. Augustine in Trinidad. It takes about 10% growth to erode unemployment by about 2%. These are theories that have been tested by empirical research so anybody would understand from that that it would take quite a few years of growth in this country before you make any serious and meaningful impact on the unemployment level. These are serious things.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter knows that there is no high correlation between growth and reduction in unemployment. He *knows* all of the Arthur Lewis theories on this and so *on*. He *knows* that Arthur Lewis would have *been* talking about the rigidity in our system that would stop employment. It is not an easy thing and therefore I think that if you work systematically on it, if you have a plan to erode. the level of unemployment by creating sustainable jobs a lot of things have to be put in place for that to happen. Therefore it is on the basis of estimates like these that you will build in the coming years to deal with what is a problem.

Yes, I have a serious concern for all of those who are unemployed. There is a group in our society that we cannot feel comfortable with. We understand what unemployment means to persons and that is why we have created certain safety nets to assist the unemployed. But it is my point the best thing that can happen to the unemployed is to put this country back on a growth path to ensure that the private sector takes on its responsibility as the engine of growth because if the public sector tries at this time to usurp that function then we would get back to the same problem that we had in the 1980s. That is one of my major concerns at this time. Therefore, quite frankly I believe it is going to be a mix of public and private sector enterprise based -on a commitment to see this country move forward against an ethos of productivity that is going to be the answer to our difficulties in the short run. If we can overcome the problems of the short-term I have sufficient confidence in Barbados that in the medium term we would be able to hold our own with any other country in the world as we have done in the past.

Mr. Speaker, in concluding I wish to say that these Estimates are sold and sound Estimates. In my view they lay the groundwork for a year of Government's economic activity and it is my hope that all those agencies and groups that have anything to do with ensuring that the Estimates are operationalised in a very positive way will join together to make sure that these Estimates, and I am sure they will anyhow because of the common sense of Barbadians to provide that path for the growth that will come later. I thank you, Sir.
12.30 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, as you will have realized earlier today, it was never the intention of both sides to have a prolong debate on the second reading. But when the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central indicated that he wish to contribute, even then it was not anticipated that this second reading debate would have been prolonged. But of necessity, Sir, this debate now has to be prolonged as 'a result of the intervention of the last honourable philosopher, the gentleman who every year since he has been in this House has expressed his philosophy in relation to some aspect of national concern. I have to deal not in detail with the Estimates, but a debate allows the interplay of views from either side. So for some part of my contribution I have to respond to what has just emanated of the effluvia...

Mr. SPEAKER: I did not hear what you said. Did you say effluvia?

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Emission then. Do you like that? I have not qualified.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I said emission. I withdraw effluvia. I have to deal with the Honourable Member in historical context. The Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs who just sought to interrupt me in 1986 told me that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central was well connected between here and here, *that is* between brain and mouth, and that he spoke sensibly.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the relevance? I have to be very careful. There are certain compliments that the Honourable Member is famous for and, therefore, I have to be very careful of *these* compliments.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, it is a compliment. I am saying that I was led to believe that because of a certain quality of brain or mind what came out of the mouth of the Member for Christ Church East Central was expected to be sensible and the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs told me so. I had expectation of a great contribution from the Honourable Member. But for the 8 years almost that that Member has been in here I must say, Sir, that he has disappointed me, he has disappointed his constituents, he has disappointed the trade unions to the point where he has disappointed the workers of Barbados, to the point where workers at the Port for` the first time ever put in writing that they no longer wanted his representation as their worker's representative. Do you know why, Sir? Because the Honourable Member allows himself to be carried away with emotionalism and will never speak to the facts as they exist. When he got up this morning, his first...

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of order, Sir. Facts are facts. They either exist or they do not exist, Sir. That is the nature of facts. So I want to be very clear on what the Honourable Member is speaking.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I accept what he has said, Sir. I said that he speaks from a position of emotion rather than from a position of fact and I will give a simple definition of fact then. It is something that was or is but not something that can be or may be.

Sir, the burden of his contribution this morning was that all of the problems which have confronted Barbados in the last 8 years which bedeviled the economy today has been entirely due to a large level of debt incurred by the Barbados Labour Party...

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is trying to mislead the House. I never said that the only factor that led to problems. I said a large problem was the debt problem that you all inflicted on this country, but not the only problem. I used the term "large" problem, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The first point that he made was on his philosophical position or understanding that the DLP will look after certain social interests. The second point was that he looked at the Estimates over the last 5 years and he is convinced that the Barbados Labour Party between 1976 and 1986 has incurred the largest debt ever in the history of this country and has caused the problems now being faced in this country. You said that. He then said that all the problems are due to the BLP.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: What has the Honourable Member risen on?

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Honourable Member has not stated what he has risen on, then that comment cannot be placed in the record. What has the Honourable Member risen on?

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is trying to mislead the House. The Honourable Member must understand that I am not afraid of personal abuse by you or anybody else.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now that is the kind of unparliamentary approach that I will not approach. The language must suit the dignity of this Chamber. I will ask the Honourable Member to either rephrase what he said or withdraw what he has said. Now I have to get a comment on that because I will not sit in this Chair and allow one Member to abuse another. I *will* not allow that. I cannot move from that position until the Honourable Member rephrases what he has said or withdraws it. You have withdrawn it.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I have not heard one thing.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well, I have to hear. Do not worry about that. I have already corrected that and now the record is straight. You must remember that you are addressing the Chair and not the Members *per se*.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let us look at the facts in the same document that he has about the level of debt that has caused the problems or contributed to, or have been largely responsible for. Look at page 27 under Appendix D. He has never looked at it. He does not even know that it exists.
12.40 p.m.

' What have we found, Sir? A statement in relation to local loans levied under the Local Loans Act, 1988. Now, Sir, between 15th January, 1980 and 21st April, 1986 the Barbados Labour Party Government, as we then were, incurred $35 million *in* local loans which have to be repaid. Between 20th October, 1986, after they took over on May 28, 1986, and to date, as at 31st December, 1993 — and I am reading from page 28 of the Estimates, at the back — they have incurred $730 million under the Local Loans Act and still have to pay it back.

I go on now to loans raised under the External Loans Act, Cap. 94D, nothing to do with the BLP, t ey incurred up to date, as at 31st December, 1993, $192 200 000, and the person responsible for the incurral of such massive loans has been the one whom the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central supports blindly.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not call him a psychophant, I would not do that. He supports him blindly in everything he does, and the person who incurred the loans is the present Prime Minister of Barbados, temporarily.

Now, Sir, turn to page 30, Appendix D. The Savings Bonds as at December 31, 1993, $75 million, of which the first 15 at the top were incurred by the Barbados Labour Party. I cannot go into all, Sir, but we will come to them during the Estimates. They make a point. The point that they make is that, contrary to the Honourable Member's assertion and contrary to what he would wish to mislead the public of Barbados into accepting, the greatest part of outstanding debt is debt incurred by the Democratic Labour Party since 1986 for their own purposes.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of order. My point was not a comparison between the debt of the Barbados Labour Party....

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has risen on a point of order and I have to hear the point of order the Member is raising.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Jusi one minute, please.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, but if he has risen on a point of order that is a legitimate exercise in this Chamber and I have to hear the point of order. Let me hear the Honourable Member.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation. My point was not a comparison of the debt incurred by the BLP between 1976 and 1986 and the debt incurred by the DLP afterwards, my point was that between 1976 and 1986 the BLP incurred debt of such magnitude that it forced the Democratic Labour Party administration....

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: But you cannot learn, so I cannot elucidate for you.

Mr. SPEAKER: But the Honourable Member should not answer that. I have .given the Honourable Member permission to elucidate what he said.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Thank you very much, Sir. The point was that the heavy debt burden that came to the Democratic Labour Party, the Democratic Labour Party itself had to incur debts in order to try to deal with that plus its own programmes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I hope you are keeping a close watch on the clock and how he has been taking my time.

Mr. SPEAKER: You know I am very fair on that.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I let him talk, I did not say a word, but I made my notes and prepared. I just want the same opportunity. The Point the Honourable Member is now trying to make is not the point he made earlier this morning, but that will be answered during the course of the next five days also. It is a myth, but it is the same point that, you see, hanging on to the coat tail of the leader, to *the point* that he leads you like a little lamb, is causing him to fall into the same problem, because year after year, every speech his leader made on television was interlarded with statements about the debt, the debt, the debt, and blaming tilt Labour Party for it. That is now a fixation with the Honourable Member.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: And the truth is that you are destabilising the Barbados Workers' Union also because of your stances in there which put you out on a limb by yourself. Even the Honourable Member who is now sitting , next to you will have nothing to do with you, because you do not share more foolishness. You are an embarrassment to the leader, if you want to hear the truth now.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will adjourn the sitting if I cannot hear Members in silence. I think there is a Standing Order *which* permits a Member to be heard without interruptions, *and I have to ask all* Members to observe that.

I want to raise another point. Even though I may permit some discussion, there is a Standing Order that deals with the conduct of Members. If we get into the conduct of Members I will not permit that. We are dealing with a debate on the Estimates and Members are allowed to respond to comments made by other Members. If we are going to get into conduct, it will not work.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I hear what you say, Mr. Speaker. I will never stand by on this side and hear misinformation perpetrated about my party and not defend it with all the gusto I own. I want that clearly understood.

Sir, before the Honourable Member sat down, he said that unemployment levels will come down, "just give us a chance".

12.50 p.m.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS; Having talked about Compton Bourne he then said unemployment will come down and efforts are being made now to tackle ....

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: A 2% growth in employment. That is the rate I set up. Therefore I didn't give any clear statement that something would come down.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not permitting that. The Honourable Member cannot respond to another Member sitting down.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If he is denying that he said that unemployment would come down then he is foreseeing a maintenance of the current levels. Therefore, if that is so, he is then consistent with his projections of the Development Plan because this Development Plan of the Democratic Labour Party for the period 1993 — 2000 projects that unemployment will remain in the 21st century. Listen:Sir,1993 — 24%,1994 — 23%, a drop of by 1% (on your theory, it should have a growth of 5%), 1995 — 22%, 1996 — 20%. These projections are telling the youth of Barbados that there is no hope. It is on page 53 of the Development Plan.

The projection for the labour force from 1993 to 2000 and the unemployment rate is there forecast. This is a serious thing, Sir. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central have quarrelled this morning that unless an attack, indeed unless war, is waged on the unemployment problem, Barbados can have serious social problems of instability and dislocation of the social fabric in the foreseeable future. That is nothing that we are unaware of because recent experience has shown that with high levels of unemployment pervasive in Barbados there has been a significant increase in crime in certain areas.

For example, I *will* just quote one as I do not want to be too specific in this type of debate. *In* the Bridgetown Division, housebreaking in 1991 recorded 525 offenses. By 1993 — I have the latest statistics — that has doubled. It is a frightening thing. The number of house breaking offenses reported to the police in 1993 in the Bridgetown Division had risen from 525 to 1043 under that lot who promised relief from crime.

The connection is that when people do not have work, if the new Minister of Education wants to know and they cannot get money, they have to break and enter to steal and in some cases to steal food to survive. All of that is happening under that Front Bench. *It is serious, Sir. I am* not trivialising it. You can laugh and the Minister of Education can laugh but it is a very serious thing. It behooves us all to pay attention to the trends and the statistics and to see and put our heads together...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not helping to cover up anything in here. What the Commissioner said... It is going down? He wants me to cover it up and don't tell the public.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is quoting statistics and is purporting to have statistics that are official and he should make it a document of the House because the Commissioner of Police himself recently put out information that crime is going down. Therefore, if the Honourable Member has better information, he should make it a document of the House otherwise it will confuse the population.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, let me finish. I am not saying that there has not been a decrease in certain types of crime in certain areas. I was specific in saying that I am not at this stage debating all of the questions.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. You will have special time. Don't worry about it.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I was only explaining that in one area there has been a significant increase in one division. When I get into my Heads I *will* deal with the whole thing in a balanced way but I am only drawing a reference. It is a factual statistic. That is why, having regard to the problems of unemployment, having regard to what we perceive as a cut in the social services, we are warning the Government that unless there is a protection of that safety net these Estimates as bold figures representing cuts in important areas are going to be meaningless to the future development of Barbados.

We were poised, or so we thought, for a movement into take-off, if you like, by statements made by the Prime Minister himself last year and the reality is that he talked about seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. If these Estimates have the *country* under double wraps. If you were a jockey you would know what I am talking about. Tight reins. The Honourable Minister of Finance this morning himself said that we are *in* a tight situation. There is no light, there is no elbow room, you cannot release a thing on the reins. You cannot go anywhere.

What we are submitting, Sir, is that that is going to confuse the public because a matter of months ago the Prime Minister was giving the impression that we were riding out of the difficulty and that people can have some hope. Now, the reality of these statistics is that we are not yet ready to go anywhere. There has been...

The Honourable Member spoke about housing, that there is a decrease from $53 million to $3.1 million but that does not portend any hope for anybody to get housing of any substance. In fact, the Development Plan is predicted 50 houses a year for a massive housing program. Education from $242 million to $202 million. That is severe contraction. If I am wrong, correct me. I thought you said from $242 million to $202 million. Did you say that? I stand corrected. Now this one I will stand correction on.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member will have to rise.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: From $242 million to $216 million. That is still a substantial drop. You are still $26 million short. I like his last phrase, we are seeing the transformation darkly. That will go down, must go down. He said we are seeing the transformation darkly. He said so. He cannot see, Sir. He said we are seeing the transformation darkly. That is as good as the one in the 1978 bye-election. That is a classic. It came from our side but it is a classic.
1.00 p.m.

Now, Sir, I wish to submit, Mr. Speaker, that we are not having any transformation. The truth is that these Estimates clearly show – I am going to make a couple of points and I am grateful to you, Sir, for taking into account the interruptions. These Estimates really suggest, quite clearly, on the bare figures that the Government is spending less than in previous years.. Secondly, that Government will be taking less in revenue in this fiscal year. Thirdly, from our standpoint as we have interpreted these Estimates, Government is clearly endangering, what I have noted as the "safety social welfare net", and that there have been savage cuts to public institutions and provisions for the sick, weak, disabled, indigent and that set of people.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is true, if you read the Estimates clearly. There are savage cuts to them, Sir. What is very disappointing over the years and Honourable Members who have been in here from the 1970s will recall that in an Estimates Debate the Minister of Finance, of whichever side, and I was in here during Mr. Barrow's time as Minister of Finance, in the presentation in the second reading was in a position to explain to the House what were then called the highlights of the Estimates and in particular the highlights of capital expenditure which would give an idea of how Government was planning not only to redevelop but also to create employment and so on. These Estimates are bereft of any highlights. There are none. We are only taking over and marking time.

I only wanted to intervene in this debate to set the records straight in relation to debt because the position of debt is not a matter of assumption. It is not a matter of belief. It is all written down here for anyone who can read and understand produced by that side in their document for this year, and a simple analysis will tell us the truth about it. It is really not fair, I will only put it at that level, on the part of the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central to speak glibly without reference to the fact. Now, he is a historian and he should have' respect for facts.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Sir, I did not speak glibly about anything. In fact, my presentation was based on facts each time. I take it as an attack on my credibility that he is saying that I am speaking glibly about these matters. That is not true, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I make no apologies for saying that I was attacking his credibility. I am not attacking him as a person. I am attacking his credibility and his use of facts and statistics.

I just want to say, Sir, that the Honourable Member should recall whenever he is attributing blame for the problems of this country to the Barbados Labour Party that it was his own Prime Minister in 1989 who was boasting: It had nothing to do with the Labour Party. The country was performing well. Things were going well. It was performing, in his words, like Sir Garfield Sobers and breaking records. He was not then attributing blame to us. I cannot have it. I will not have it that five years later a Member on his side is coming to disavow the statements of his own Prime Minister and purport – that is all he can do – to cast blame where it is not due.

I am obliged to you, Sir. SUSPENSION

OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker I believe that the time for refreshment has probably arrived. I beg to move that the sitting be suspended until 2:30 p.m.

Hon. W. 0. FRANKLIN: I beg to second that.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 2:30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.
1.08 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to say a few words about the Appropriation Bill. I first wish to make a few general comments with regards to the situation in which these Estimates were framed. As the debate proceeds I *will* have to speak on certain Heads.

I do recognize that Estimates are framed and they have to be some relation between the Estimates and the amount of money that one expects to receive during that financial year in taxes and foreign financing and domestic financing and so forth. But, I am extremely concerned when I look at these Estimates on the non–effect that these Estimates will have on the unemployment situation. I am extremely concerned because as far as I can see in Barbados today our number one problem in my view is the question of unemployment.

The Estimates as I said, in my opinion, do not address the question of unemployment at all. I do not think that because in the coming year certain capital projects will come on stream that that nullifies my point about tackling the unemployment problem. Because if we admit that there are about 35 000 people unemployed, we then have to admit also that these Estimates have done absolutely nothing to reduce that level of unemployment.

I wish to say, Mr. Speaker, that what has struck me — and I will get back to the question of unemployment later on — about these Estimates is that in a year when the Government and other persons are projecting and predicting GDP growth of 2% and I have heard today growth being predicted of 2.7%, I am concerned that in a year when you are predicting GDP growth of 2.7% that the projected revenue will only be $1 022 million compared to a projected revenue for last year of $1 060 million.

Mr. Speaker, the reason I say this is this. Anyone who is concerned with the finances of this country would expect that normal inflation for any year will and does cause an increase in revenue that the Government receives. I am wondering how it is that with a predicted growth in GDP this year of 2.7%, revenue is projected at less than it was projected for last year.

In fact I will wish to say this and I will turn to page roman.numeral (i). I see here:

"STATEMENT OF CURRENT REVENUE FOR THE TEN YEAR PERIOD 1983–84 TO 1992–93"

In only one year for that ten–year period that is 1990–91 did the current revenue below what it was for the year before. In fact in 1984–85 it grew by $33 million above what it was the year before. In 1985—86 it grew by $74 million, in 1986—87 by $21 million, 1987—88 by $38 million, 1988—89 by $156 million, 1989—90 by $109 million. Then it fell in 1990–91 by $40 million, It grew again in 1991–92 by $37 million, grew in 1992–93 by $15 million, grew again, according to the latest figures that we have had for last year by about $9 million. But now we are projecting that we will receive less in current revenue for the coming year than what we have projected for last year.

Mr. Speaker, I have listened and I have heard about the levies being removed and things like that. But despite the levies being removed, Mr. Speaker, my information is and from listening today and taking notes that actual revenue taken in, taxes taken in increased by about $42 million. If I am wrong, I stand to be corrected.

The point I am trying to make is that there seems to be either an admission or a supposition that this coming year will not be as strong or not be. as rosy as was previously predicted. That is my reading of this situation here.

The other thing that concerns me is the idea of tax revenue. Tax revenue if I am reading these Estimates correctly page (ii) now Projected Estimates for fiscal year 1992-95. Tax revenue here is projected at being $950 million. The Approved Estimates for last year was $992.9 million which shows a drop this year in projected revenue of $42 million.

I have not had any explanation yet as to what is likely to cause this drop in tax revenue by almost $40 million. I am asking a question, I am not criticizing or anything like that. I would like it explained to me why the projected tax revenue this year as stated on page 2 of this document, up to the front of the document where it is projected at $40 million less than the Approved Estimates for 1993-94.

The next thing I wish to address is the question of foreign financing. I think that it is very important that this matter be addressed. For the past 3 years the Government has been projecting and expecting a certain level of foreign financing. In 1992-93 the Government projected a deficit bf $170 million. Foreign financing was expected to be $160 million of that figure of which the IADB and the World Bank were to provide $51 million. Th it was in 1992-93. The actual foreign financing received that year was $56 million with the IADB and the World Bank providing only $50 million when it was expected that those two institutions would have provided $51 million.
2.40 p.m.

In 1993–94, Mr. Speaker, the Government projected a deficit of $220 million. Foreign financing was expected to be $174 million of which the IADB and the World Bank was to provide $85.5 million. The actual foreign financing received from those 2 institutions, Mr. Speaker was $15.7 million. For the coming financial year, Mr. Speaker, the Government is now projecting a deficit of $248 million.

Foreign financing is expected to be again $173.9 million which is about the same $174 million that it was projected to be last year. The IADB/World Bank is expected this year to provide $87 million.

Mr. Speaker, I recall that in last year's budget debate in this Honourable House I said that most of what the Government was projecting and predicting at that time was contingent on the Government receiving the funds from these two institutions and I asked a question then. I asked what made the Government believe that it was going to get the level of funding that it was predicting that it would get from those two institutions when the record has shown for the previous year and the year before, that that sort of projection of foreign financing from those two institutions was not likely to be received. But here it is, Mr. Speaker, that we have come back this year and once again we are projecting that we will receive $87 million from the IADB and World Bank and a foreign financing component of $173.9 million.

I do not know and I did not hear in here today any statement to make us believe that that figure would be open. I would like in no uncertain terms to be told how far the negotiations have gone? What sort of commitments have been made by these institutions that 'have led us to believe that we will receive that degree of financing in this year? I am not saying it will not be received but we predicted that we would have received it last year and we did not get it.- We said we would have got it the year before and we did not get it and the year before. Now we are again *projecting* that we are going to get it this coming year. So this would be about 4 years that we have been predicting and expecting a large amount of financing from the World Bank and IADB.

What is very interesting to me is that these institutions are saying what a grand job Barbados is doing with their structural adjustment and stabilisation but they are not coming up with a cent. I cannot understand it. How you could have institutions who are saying what a great job when they want to say it. Let me just qualify that. They are complimenting Barbados on the job that it is doing with regard to stabilisation. I do not know if they are also wondering how come so much pressure could be put on ordinary citizens therefore they have to say this Government is something else. But they are not coming up with any money and I find it strange that we are again predicting and expecting this level of financing and we are not told how far the negotiations have got to make us believe that we will get the money this year when we did not get it for the last 3 or.4 years.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to return to the question of unemployment. The Government has set itself apparently irrevocably to an idea that it has always got to have a deficit of 1% of GDP: Mr. Speaker, I can understand if you were telling me for the last two or 3 years that the IMF, as one of its conditions, dictated that the deficit on the *current* account should be 1% of GDP. I would understand, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Barbados saying, okay since we need the funding from the IMF and we are *in* an IMF programme therefore we had better do what the IMF has suggested. But we have heard that we are now out of an IMF programme but we still believe and we are still operating under the strictures that your deficit should be *no* more than 1%.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I have heard inside this Honourable Chamber today that the deficit is about $3 million too high and that there will have to be cuts in other areas in order to cut down that $3 million that is above the limit that has been imposed. $3 million, I could not believe it. We do not even have a leeway of $3 million within which to operate and I found that remarkable.

I have always believed and the IMF people who write all the books about fiscal adjustment and everything have said that a deficit should bear some relationship to inflation, what the Government can do and other things in the economy. It does not mean a balanced budget or it does not necessarily mean 1% or things like that.

Mr. Speaker, what Hind very interesting is that here it is in a country where there are about 35 000 people unemployed, that is the last figure I have got so I am going with that, and the Government is saying that they will have to keep the deficit within 1% of GDP and if it goes over by about $3 million they will have to cut in other areas in order to bring it back to what it should be.

2.50 p.m.

Another point, Mr. Speaker, and it is related that I would wish to address. For the past 5 years or so, we have believed in Barbados that a deficit can only be attacked on the expenditure side and that is what is causing a lot of heartache and problems for the people who are unemployed in this country. The same idea is being carried on at this time as well. If you believe that a deficit can only be tackled from the expenditure side, then you are always going to be attacking expenditure and, therefore, you will always tend to put more and more people out of work. Why cannot the deficit be tackled from the revenue side? Why can you not look at increasing the amount of revenue or the growth in the economy and tackle that side of it, then the percentage deficit can very well be smaller because you are starting from a larger revenue base?

We have consistently said and we get the impression that we are predicting revenue of a certain level. Therefore, the deficit that we are predicting of 1 per cent is being attacked always on the expenditure. Why not the powers that be look at the revenue side and the growth side and

attacked the growth side and see *how much* can be done *within* the limits in which you are set to increase GDP and increase the revenue? Then you will notice that your percentage deficit will be less or probably the same. But we are going down one road all the time. What is bothering me, Mr. Speaker, is that everytime there is a little idea or little chance of some growth being generated in the economy is that ypu get the economists and people who should know better throwing their hands up in the air as though it was something unexpected. They lower certain interest rates in order to stimulate certain activities. As soon as the activities start to be stimulated, they throw their hands in the air and say, "Okay, interest rates have got to go up again". These are things that should be expected.

Sir, if you are going to put certain things into place or if you are going to drop interest rates in order to get certain increased activity and when the increased activity comes, you cannot throw your hands up in the air and say that inflation will start up again as though you did not expect these things to happen.

Mr. Speaker, let me get to the point of credibility and confidence. Every prediction being made in Barbados for the past two or three years including for next year depends fundamentally on confidence in the Government. If there is any person in this country who can tell me that what is now taking place in Government is calculated to increase confidence in Government, the person needs to get his head examined.

I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that throughout the last two or three years we have been hearing that the private sector has to lead in this recovery, which I believe. I may not believe that it has to lead. I believe that it has to be a player and that is where I take my position. Whether it has to lead or not is open to debate. Because I find it strange and I find it a contradiction to ask the private sector to lead in any recovery when the number of people out there with money in their pockets to buy the things that are being produced by the private sector is dwindling. I find that a contradiction and I am getting back to this question of confidence. If we in Barbados believe that for the past two or three years there was not the necessary confidence in Government's programme and in what the Government was doing overall by the private sector and, therefore, there was not the level of investment in this economy, can you imagine what is happening at this time? Can you imagine any person with money to invest in this country at this time and seeing the total confusion in Government? Do you really expect those people with the money to invest will invest it in the country at this time?

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, we have been saying for the past two or three years that any growth in this economy has to be led by tourism. Tourism is basically a private sector business. The Government only owns two beds at the Hilton and three at Heywoods, and they just sold Heywoods. So it is basically in Barbados a private sector business. If tourism is the engine which is to drive this economy and if the same tourism is a private sector led industry, would it not be basic common sense to come to some agreement and accommodation or any other word that you want to find with the private sector? Would this be the time to alienate the private sector as is being done? Would this be the time to do that? People have to understand what is happening in this country and, all the talk about this and that this country will go on spinning a top in mud until certain changes are made.

I find it extremely hurting to believe that in the year when tourism is projected to be your chief money earner and the engine on which your economy has to be driven things can be done to make the tourism people who are private sector people throw up their hands in the air. I am telling you this, Mr. Speaker. What has just taken place in the engine of growth in this economy should never be allowed to happen again. I am saying this now for this Honourable House to understand it and for all of those persons who believe that they can make excuses for people. I am saying this now that we have reached a stage in Barbados when we have to cry hard. Stop. That is what we have to do now because this country is more than a party and the party is more than any one man. Those who really believe in their country should stop sitting down and saying that you cannot do anything. I believe that the same situation occurred in Guyana. I have no doubt about it that there were persons in the Guyanese Government when Burnham was moving rampant throughout that country who sat down and said that they could not do anything about it. You cannot do anything about it. You have got to be joking. You want to let the country go down the drain all the time. Something has to be done about it. Unless there is confidence in the Government, unless there is confidence in what Government is doing, as I said before, we will all be spinning a top in mud.
3.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the question was raised today about the increments. I am going to talk about that. I find it strange that in a year when wages and salaries have been projected to be $396 million, where last year they were $396 million and last year there was no provision for increments. But with an increase of $1 million or less I am hearing there is provision in that figure for increments.

Mr. Speaker, I also heard at a previous time that all Ministries will have to operate within their budgets. Now, Mr. Speaker, if you are telling me in a year when your wages and salaries bill was $395 million with no provision for increments, the following year wages and salaries $396 million with provision for increments, are you telling me that I am to believe that there are not going to be any lay-offs in this figure here? The only 2 alternatives,

Mr. Speaker, would be either cutbacks and layoffs in the service or no increments are going to be paid. Full stop.

You either pay the increments and lay off people or you keep the people and pay no increments. But I have no problem with the explanation because I have listened today very carefully and I have heard increments will be paid and I am only repeating what I can remember but we have to understand that increments cannot be paid as they used to be paid and have to be based on merit.

Nobody yet has decided or determined what is the merit or what is the measurement so that measurement or merit can take another 5 years. But this figure does not really bother me. I understand the position. You have not worked out what is the merit. You have not yet worked out the productivity or anything so. So how will you pay and according to what? That is why I believe for any radio station at all in this country to have come out as the radio stations came out about 2 weeks ago, quoting people saying that increments will be restored without saying and continuing to quote what was said... Increments will be restored but they will not be as they were before. They will now be based on merit and productivity which have not yet been worked out. So how are increments going to be restored? When?

We have to understand what is happening. I am asking questions and, I believe, explanations. I have said at the outset of my speech today that I understand that increments have to bear some relationship to the amount of money that is available, but I also believe that the truth has to be told and I listened today to an Honourable Gentleman who quoted the economist, Compton Bourne who said that a 10% growth in GDP will only generate about 2% growth in the economy.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member's time has expired but you can wind up.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, if that is true, do you understand what we are saying? What that is saying is if we continue, if the Government that I belong to continues on the economic road that it is on, half of the unemployed people in this country will have to understand that they will never again in their lifetime find a job in Barbados.

If you go along with the argument, if you say that that is true — I don't believe the figure is that large but I know because in Britain... It is a large figure but it may not be 10% generated but in Britain they had 5% or 6% growth last year and the economists said it (lid nothing to unemployment. So I am saying that if you interfere, if you go along with even a more conservative estimate and we continue down the road we are going where we believe that we have to always have a balanced budget or 1% deficit we are condemning half of the unemployed people in this country to unemployment for a lifetime. I am not an alarmist. I am speaking what is a fact. If you have 35 000 people unemployed and you are not putting any programs at all in place to dent that unemployment, can't you see that once certain things are not put in place to attack that unemployment that you are condemning persons to unemployment for all their lifetime.

You all can make sport about voluntary idleness and all sort of things. I believe that people are voluntarily idle when they have become tired of looking for work and therefore decide they are not working any more. That is my view of voluntary idleness. There may be a few people who are not interested in work, but that is only a few and we have to stop making sport about what is happening in this country. I believe that we have to attack this unemployment problem. I have not seen anything in here that addresses the unemployment problem. I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to put the record clear and I am very sorry the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central is not present here because he was bold enough in here to make statements with respect to the present condition of.Barbados and to indicate in clear and certain terms to anybody who was listening to the debate than the major causative factor of our present position was the borrowing between 1976 and 1986.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas brought before- this House a number of statistics to indicate that the present debt profile, both internal and external,. that these Estimates address in respect of interest and amortisation according to the figures provided in the Estimates themselves, indicates clearly that the major component of both the internal and external loans are loans that have been incurred since 1986.. I want to emphasise that.

I also want to emphasise, Sir, that the position in respect of the fiscal deficit is revealing. In the last 3 years, as a result of the fiscal discipline imposed on this country by the International Monetary Fund, the Government of Barbados for the first time in their Estimates have shown their deficit and spoke of their deficit net of amortisation. There is no doubt about it that if one reads the record of the speeches of previous Ministers of Finance in the Democratic Labour Party Administration since 1986. One will see that the fiscal discipline that has been imposed by the IMF was imposed because of the fiscal irresponsibility of successive Ministers of Finance since 1986 and it started with the first Budget in July of 1986 which was fully supported by the Honourable Member who is not in here now.

3.10 p.m.

I want to go further, Sir. I *want to quote,* for the Honourable Member's benefit, the 1990 Economic Report because I think the record must be put straight. I am quoting from the Economic Report of 1990 laid on the Table of this Parliament. I got it from the Library. It does not have the date. The stamp is not there. It is the "SUMMARY," page 1. It says this:

> "Government's fiscal deficit net . of amortisation in 1990/91 was $229.2 million or 7.8% of GDP."

Mr. Speaker, I want to say this. If the Honourable Member is looking for the real cause of the strictures that the IMF has imposed upon this economy, he should look to this document. There is no question or doubt about it that that was the height of irresponsibility and that budget, 7.8% of GDP net of amortisation was fully and amply supported by the Honourable Member. There is absolutely no doubt in this that the Honourable Member when he is speaking on these matters commits himself to take leave of what is rational and reasonable to allow his emotional and political bias to cloud his better judgment. That is the position. We do not have to go any further. It is absolutely nothing to do with any borrowing.

Now, Sir, let us go further.

> "Factors responsible for this were a 3.2% decline in revenue and an increase in expenditure. The decline in revenue was due in part to concessions in the 1990 Budget which provided additional incentives for the productive sectors, and in part to the tight monetary policies which reduced the level of consumer imports. A 10.2% increase in current expenditure net of amortisation was mainly a consequence of a major regrading in the public sector followed by salary increases."

Mr. Speaker, you do not have to go any further than that to see again further evidence of fiscal irresponsibility. The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central fully and amply supported that. It is no wonder that he finds himself in the position in which he is today, diametrically opposed to his fellow member and Trade Union because one is here and one is there. The Honourable Member for St. Michael Central is in here expressing his concern about the financial situation and his colleague on that side is over there justifying the economic plight. Now that is the position.

Sir, I go back again on the debt. The record must be clear. Page 21 of the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals delivered on Thursday, April 28, 1988. That was the first Budget of the Prime Minister. It says:

> "Conventional ratios used by international institutions to judge the burden of debt, when applied to Barbados therefore, indicate that its foreign debt burden is considerably lower than that of many countries. We can therefore safely say that by international standards our debt service and debt to GDP ratios are not in the danger zone. Our international obligations are within manageable limits."

Sir, this is the statement...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is a question of the pursuit of what is truth, what is honest and what is the record. That is all we are interesting in. That is the only reason I am speaking in this debate because normally we would go into the Heads and I do not intend to prolong our detailed examination anymore. I think the evidence is abundantly clear that all those who make the statement that the present condition that we are in arises from the debt burden left for the present Government to carry on are people who are either not speaking to the truth or are incapable of understanding what they read.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I do not wish myself to prolong this debate and I certainly did not intend to have a winding up but there are some things that have been said which strike at the very root of the issues that I had raised during the presentation of this Bill. I must say that the longer I am in this House the more I learn and having heard the Honourable Member for St. Philip South outdo himself today in this debate, I think I should take stock as a politician of the way in which one can swing from position to position with such facility.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, that having heard the pleas, the criticisms and the supplications of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South on behalf, as he alleges, the poor, about a Government that was murdering people with taxation, I am amazed to hear in this debate that the answer to the issues of the deficit in Barbados is revenue raising. I am only saying to you, Mr. Speaker...

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. If there are people holding office who do not understand, they should say they do not understand. What I said was, and I will repeat it, that for the past five years or so, we have attacked the deficit from looking at the expenditure side instead of looking at the revenue side.

Mr. Speaker, just let me. I have to explain it.

Mr. SPEAKER: No, you cannot make a speech now. You have to make the point.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: The point I am making is that I said we are attacking the deficit from the expenditure side rather than revenue growth side. I went on to say that we should be looking at getting some growth in the

economy where the revenue will grow and therefore the percentage deficit would remain the same or reduce instead of just cutting expenditure. That is the point I was making. If they do not understand, just explain it to them.
3.20 p.m.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, there is no Economist alive or dead who would seek to answer that chicken or egg question, other than the Honourable Member for St. Philip South. I am not an Economist but one of the things that we constantly hear in this country is that one of the reasons why the Government's so-called growth economic strategy will not work is because of the high levels of taxation. Do we not hear that? That is one of the things we constantly hear from Economists from all walks of life.

There is no Economist yet, that I have heard of, and I have heard many and read many who have been able to answer the question either with the blundering heavy handedness of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South or the sophistication of...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, just in case you are not carefully listening. All of that is unparliamentary. It is really unfair. I cannot understand what is happening that the front bench is attacking the backbench and the front bench is talking about plotters. It is open warfare in here, Sir. Please protect Honourable Members.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has not made the point for me to really make a ruling on it. It is just a generalisation he made.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You can blunder through analysis, Mr. Speaker, or you can be sophisticated in your analysis. But I would not attempt to answer that question because as I have said there are economists with doctorates who cannot answer it.

I know that the Honourable Member for St. Peter would not even venture to seek to answer that chicken and egg question because that is at the very essence of issues relating to economic theory. But I have heard what is an answer from the back and I am now told address the question on the revenue side. There are a number of options available. We know how Government gets its revenue. If we do not increase taxation h means we need to murder the people who are not paying taxes now. In other words – I assume this is what the Honourable Member for St. Philip South might be saying. It is the only thing he could be saying , we need to get those defaulters to pay more taxes. We have had analysis done by the Fiscal Affairs Department in relation to both indirect taxation and direct taxation. It could not yield enough money to make an appreciable difference.

In any event the question of organizing the revenue collecting departments to the extent that they would be able to efficiently attack this problem is something that in itself is going to require resources diverted from other areas or increased resources by way of foreign financing or other sources. Mr. Speaker, I have now come full circle in my understanding of how the mind of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South works in these debates. Each year the ground just shifts and it seems as though we are dancing around and there is no one common position.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I have not shifted on any ground. I will repeat what I said again that if you attack the problem of growth the natural increase in the economy that is consequential on that growth gives you an increased revenue as your base. Therefore if your deficit remains the same you are operating with a higher revenue base and therefore your deficit would be a smaller percent of your total revenue. It is as simple as that.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you. I am aware like everybody else is in here that where there are high levels of growth that the revenue should improve, assuming that the tax levels remain the same. It should be more buoyant. That is not a big issue. How do we get to that growth economic framework? We design it with the assistance of the institutions, Mr. Speaker. This is why it is a circle. It is not just- an ,issue of getting up and talking for the sake of talking in here. We designed that growth economic framework with the assistance of the financial institutions which make resources available to us to finance a medium term economic programme to restore growth to this economy.

Each step that we have taken, Mr. Speaker, we have been told by some of those same persons that we are lying prostrate before the institutions, that we have capitulated to the World Bank, that we would sell our souls to the IMF and that anything the IADB tells us we will do. The same people say that, that you are supposed to go up to Washington and tell them these are the words that I am always 'told – These are the words I am supposed to go up to Washington and say, as Minister of Finance: "Fellows we are going to do a, b and c and we are not going to do d, e and f." I am not a moojin and I am not leaving this country to embarrass anybody and not a sovereign Government which I represent. I will determine, along with my colleagues here in this Cabinet, what the elements of that framework will be and what the public of Barbados feels is acceptable and can implement. And then, together with the institutions who, in the first place, would have assisted us in designing that framework, we will decide what position we are going to take with respect to the institutions.

The issue of foreign financing, Mr. Speaker, is an issue which has come up in this debate. Most of the foreign financing which is identified is project finance in which they keep making this point. When you see the World Bank identified here, it is specific World Bank projects. That is as distinct from the funds that we had anticipated from the Structural Adjustment loan. We have written off that issue. It has ben said in public more than once, both by me and the Minister of Economic- Affairs who is the Minister responsible for the World Bank. That is not on the agenda. We have also said that we are seeking an enhanced surveillance programme with the IMF which is a non-funded programme but which requires us again to have an appropriate macro-economic framework so that we can trigger resources from the IADB.

We anticipate that we will be able to conclude our discussions with the Fund shortly and that once that framework is put in place, we will get the funds from the IADB. But if we do not — and I have made this point in here already — it does not mean that we will fold our arms or sit down and cry or roll over and play dead. We will seek other avenues of finance whether on the commercial market, whether domestic finance assuming that the reserves position in Barbados can support that kind of financing or from whatever other source is available. We did not get some of that financing last year. In the absence of that finance we looked to other sources to finance Government's operations. That is as simple as the alphabet. It is not a difficult issue. It is not an issue that requires anybody to get hot under the collar and believe that Government is misleading the public. Because I have made this point more than once before that where we do not access those funds we will go to other sources. I know that Honourable Members in here know that we are looking at other sources and we hope that we will be successful in that regard.

I want to make this point, Mr. Speaker. The institutions may very well say that we are doing ,a grand job or-have done a grand job so far. But the role of the financial institutions is not to throw money at you when you have done a grand job. They always want you to do better. They never think you have done enough. If they did they would be countries like the United States that they will be lending money to, not Barbados. They lend to countries in adjustment programmes for the purpose of adjustment. Because they say you are doing well does not mean you have adjusted. The institutional point is that the stabilisation programme has been successful in their view and in ours and, that consequent on that, assuming that we have the right macro-economic framework, they will make resources available to us to finance the adjustment programme. That however requires us to be in agreement with them on the conditionalities which will apply to those funds being made available.

When we come to that agreement the same people who are suggesting that you should access these funds right away are going to take to the streets again and tell people that they should not remove licences and liberalise the trade regime, that you should not liberalise public expenditure management, that you should not keep your deficit low, that you should have a higher deficit, that you should increase public works programmes to employ people and a whole range of other issues which themselves are totally inconsistent with the kind of management which the institutions tell you, you are to pursue. It is a complete conundrum.

3.30 p.m.

And whether it was me over here or you all or somebody else, at least I can understand those basic points. And even if I took up some points of trivia from time to time you will excuse me because I would not take a big point like that, Mr. Speaker, and seek to trivialise it in the way that I have witnessed in this particular debate. It is unbelievable.

The Government has said it is pursuing a deficit at about 1% — overall deficit. I never said anything about current account deficit. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Philip South say current account deficit. Overall deficit at about 1% of GDP. I want to make that point because that is an important point to make and the Government therefore feels that this is the kind of macro-economic framework it might pursue.

It would be useful if one could pursue a higher deficit assuming that the other factors of the economy would support it particularly the level of the reserves, particularly the other aspects of economic interplay in the economy and I am not sure that is so right now.

We have said, Mr. Speaker, that the programme which Government is pursuing is based on private sector led growth but this does not mean that the Government is surrendering. So that if the private sector and Government do not agree on an issue that does not mean that our policy must come to an end. The private sector has to work with Government. Therefore if in any sector, be it tourism, manufacturing, sugar or the offshore sector the Government and the private sector do not agree it does not mean that Government is going to surrender and capitulate because we have our programmes and they have theirs. It is at the point of convergence that we will seek to do things together and that is very important, Mr. Speaker.

Let us deal with the question of the decline in the tax revenue because- this issue was raised. In my presentation I made it very clear, Mr. Speaker, what the outturn in respect of the revenue was likely to be. If you therefore keep focusing on what the Approved Estimates were you are bound to come to the wrong conclusion. If you seek to take the Approved Estimates for 1993–94 and compare

them to 1994–95 without understanding that I have given the House in my presentation the benefit of the outturn which in fact shows that with respect to revenue as a whole that we expect the outturn to be $1013.6 million and that revenue for 1994-95 would be $1022.2 million, I think anybody would understand that revenue is projected at slightly higher levels in 1994-95. So it does not make sense quoting this and making it appear as though there is some sleight of hand that $42 million is missing somewhere in the equation.

In any event I made the point also, Mr. Speaker', with respect to non-tax revenue that the increase of $13.6 million in non-tax revenue is the result of an anticipated increase in the profits of the Central Bank while the decrease at $37.1 million in special receipts is the result of the elimination of the levies except the training levy from January 1, 1994.

Now it is clear that the basis on which the Estimates were constructed in 1993-94 has changed and I came to the House from last September when we brought the first supplementaries and I updated Members and told them the kinds of changes that had occurred and therefore we had to function at a lower level of economic activity and therefore revenues by the equations I have been given here today by those who should know better than me, or do know better, would decline also and they did decline.

We made compensatory adjustments . therefore to accommodate the decrease. in the revenue. It is as simple as that and I do nOt think it is any major issue which needs, as I say, the kind of commentary which we have heard in this debate.

On recovery in the economy, I have not told the private sector in Barbados to concentrate on producing goods and services exclusively for Barbadians so anybody who says that a decline in purchasing power is the major factor that will affect the recovery, as far as I am concerned, is misrepresenting the position. We have constantly said to the private sector that the object of the recovery is to earn foreign exchange.

Now, I just heard that when Government cuts back people get less money and the private sector then sells less goods and therefore that is subversive of the recovery. That does not bother me too much. I know where the recovery has to take place and I believe that Honourable Members know that the recovery has to take place by producing goods and services that people who have money outside of Barbados will buy and that is the basis of the programme which this Government has been pursuing.

The impact of this programme on unemployment is only going to be significant in respect of the increase of the investment programme. As to what effect that will, have I would like to be optimistic and I am optimistic but I do not think that it makes sense, Mr. Speaker, for this Government or any Government to follow precisely the precepts which led us into the economic difficulties which we were in previously. I will not be party to it, Mr. Speaker. I am only speaking for myself and I have not put it to anybody else but in terms of the management which is required even in the face of larger events in this country requires us to be prudent. I would like to see levels of employment come down much faster and hopefully there will be opportunities through the public enterprise investment fund to have more investments in small business, in hotel refurbishing and in a whole new class of business people so as to create the self-sustaining employment which is necessary. But the prospect of Government providing an immediate solution by way of its own resources to the issue of unemployment is not something that I contemplate.

There has been no major change in relation to the expenditure on welfare provision contrary to what the Honourable Member for St. Thomas said. The level of provision for the Welfare Department remains at about the level which was provided last year and I see no significant adjustments in that area.

With respect to increments we have an agreement with the Unions. We have to honour that agreement. I am only saying what my view is that we came to an understanding during the protocol and I understood that public officers were interested in a payment system which acknowledged productivity and I hope, Sir, that in due course we will be able to get that under way. But it is not my job to determine how to measure productivity in the public service.- That is the job of the Productivity Board. It is charged with that responsibility and I hope the Board will undertake the work which it is supposed to undertake diligently so we can have that before October at the time when the increments are supposed to be repaid.

The last point I want to make relates to the point raised by the Honourable Member for St. Peter about the Offshore Sector. He did make a lot of that point and perhaps one should, acknowledge that it would be wise to make more resources available to the International Business and Financial Services unit which is a new unit by this Government to focus on issues relating to the Offshore sector. '

Let me go on to say that the private sector contribution to this area has been so significant that I fear myself that if we started to provide more money to the unit that the private sector would, as it always does, withdraw from its pioneering role and feel that Government has come to take over and that will be the worst thing possible, Mr. Speaker. I think the private sector role is probably twice as large as Government and should 'continue to be that. Our job is to make the legislation and provide the regulatory framework.

3.40 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is not true. We have just retained private contractors to complete the legislation because it cannot be done fast enough in Government. The real point is that we have to be conscious of the fact that in taking that sector forward it does not necessarily require a lot more resources by Government. What it requires is the attention of the regulatory framework, the legislation, and issues of that sort. I am not saying no resources. But I am not saying that we need to trouble Government's input. I am saying that the private sector still makes a contribution and I would like it to continue to do so.

I think those are the major issues, Mr. Speaker. It is not for me to comment on the views which Members have about confidence in the Government. A Government only gets confidence based on performance. I can only judge people's views about me as a Minister based on what they say to me. I cannot base it *on* what politicians say about me, because like the rest of the public what politicians tell me I accept with a *pinch of* salt, and I will continue to do so.

Mr. Speaker, when this issue of confidence was made, I heard the private sector say only months ago that the level of collaboration between Government and the private sector has never been as good. Well, I cannot imagine anything has happened since then to change that. Do you mean that they want to run a Government Department and that has changed it? So if I try to run BS&T and if I try to run the Goddard's Group *of* Companies, do you mean that the relationship should suddenly change?- I believe the problem we have in Barbados is this that we as people do not understand what our respective jobs are. A lot of people in here want to do my job, they want to do the job of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, they want to do the job of the Attorney General and there are a lot of people outside too. But they will not do their own job. The Opposition will not do its own job according to the public. The public said that you all are not doing your job, but you want to do my job. I am trying to do my job. It is legitimate for people on the back bench to want to do my job. It is a political development that I cannot complain about. If I were on the back bench, I probably would want to do it too. When you are on the back bench, that is understandable.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: On a point of order, Sir. I want you to do your job. I do not know which person on the back bench that he is referring to. I do not want any job in front of there, no job at all.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I want to make the point that you had better watch out that nobody does not bring a vote of no confidence against you. It is just that we will not be voting on it. The public out there apparently has a very low opinion of your performance as an Opposition. So I only want to say to you that when you are trying to do my job instead of your job, we have problems. So for the time being, the best way to have confidence in terms of the political economy of Barbados is to let us do our job over here, you do your job over there, and let those who legitimately want to do this job continue to do what they are supposed to do, and let the public make their assessment of the performance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The question that this Bill do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative with the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. B. M. TAITT, Hon. M. A. KING, Hon. W. 0. FRANKLIN, Hon. J. O. TUDOR, Hon. D. W. BOWEN, Hon. T. C. ESTWICK, Hon. C. V. WALKER, Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, Mr. E. E. GREAVES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN and Mr. W. W. HALL – TOTAL 13.

Noes: Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Miss B. A. MILLER, Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Mr. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. L. R. TULL, Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Mr. DeL. O. BRADS HAW, Mr. G. W. PAYNE, and Mr. R. C. EASTMOND – TOTAL 10.

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. B. Al. TAITI', Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.
3.50 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is in Committee.

HEAD 10 – GOVERNOR GENERAL
– $347 603

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 10 – Governor-General in the sum of $347 603 stand part.

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

The question that Head 10 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 11 – JUDICIARY – $44 797

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 11, Judiciary, in the sum of $44 797 stand part.

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the spokesman for the Opposition is not in his place, but I think it is about time that we all here on a non-partisan basis take notice of the position we have in Barbados today with respect to the number of criminal cases in particular that are not heard within a reasonable time. Not because of the fault of the individual judges but because of the fault in my opinion of the system that we administer in our Courts in' Barbados.

Barbados is no different from any other part of the world and if there is one thing that is common to the Commonwealth and to other democratic societies is that periodically it is necessary to review the system of the delivery of - the administration of justice with a view to seeing whether there cannot be an improvement resulting from the utilisation of modern technology in the form of audio-visual recording both of the taking of evidence inside the actual courtroom and also outside.

We believe here, certainly I do believe, that Barbados could benefit greatly by an objective review of our existing systems by people who are experts in this area. It is very wrong for us to have a situation whereby Assizes after Assizes judges have to state publicly their views with regret that a number of cases cannot be dealt with because the time allocated to the sitting of a particular Assize is over and all the matters have not been dealt with. We have to make up in our minds that something must be done about this.

The development of the modern family law has had exactly the same impact in Barbados as it has elsewhere. The introduction of greater rights for the other party to the marriage has resulted in a phenomenal increase in a number of Family Law cases. In other jurisdictions they have found it necessary to create special family law courts to deal with this matter. We in Barbados, certainly the profession in Barbados is, divided as to whether that is necessary but what they are not divided upon is the fact that there is an urgent need to increase the amount of judicial time that is devoted to this area.

I may also mention that as an offshore financial service centre now of some 10 years standing, we are beginning to see the development of litigation which arises as a consequence of Barbados being an offshore sector. Again that is going to call for a greater claim on judicial time. When we look at it from the point of view of the -criminal law and we look at it from the point of view of family law and we look at it from the point of view of the likely projections for business arising out of Barbados being a financial sector and we look at it from the point of view of the normal run-of-the-mill civil cases, accidents and damages and things of that kind we see that there is a clear case for an examination of our judicial establishment.

Periodically, we have increased the number of judges but the point is that for some reason or the other even though we have increased the number of judges we have not placed the number of judges in place who ought to be there. We have a' number of acting appointments. Now, with a bar of 238 people or 240 people Barbados should not have a shortage of candidates – 'I am told it is 300 but I have lost count of'the number that there are. We should not have a shortage of candidates for posts but the point is that we have a number of people acting in the post. .

Sir, I wish to speak to the need for a resolution of these matters and I hope that in this financial year that these matters will be resolved because there is a tremendous amount of talk out there in important places about the present state of the administration of justice and I am not seeking here to suggest that our state is the fault of individual judges. I believe the system wants a radical overhaul. I believe the management of the system in Barbados has to be looked at in the light of the need for the utilisation of computers, the utilisation of modern audio-visual technology, videos and things of that kind.

There is a clear case for that. This is a case for a specialist examination and before I sit down I want it to be clearly understood that Barbados, should not feel in doing this exercise that it does not need to have an independent review by people outside of the service or indeed outside of Barbados. The Lord Chancellor's Department in England has hired consultants. They have reviewed other Commonwealth systems and this is an area in which there is a tremendous amount of utilisation of expertise wherever it is available. So, too, we in Barbados should not be so arrogant as to think that we can do it ourselves without calling upon others. But it has to be done otherwise a greater crisis is going. to develop.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: On many occasions in the recent past the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in particular who on occasions has been supported by other voices from this side has spoken in respect to the inefficiencies in the delivery of services in the justice system and the need for serious repair and reform. I have carefully chosen my words because I think the tone set by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is admirable and ought to be followed. We need to speak with restraint although with seriousness in respect to this matter. 4.00 p.m.

I do not think it would be wise to involve ourselves in any emotional expressions such as that the system has broken down, or anything of the sort, but it is fair to say that the delivery of the service is much slower than it used to be. The time taken to get cases heard is very much longer. There is an enormous backlog of cases to be heard and there is enormous misuse of the time of judicial

officers, attorneys and other members of the court system because of what we regard as the faulty administration of the system.

The last speaker has correctly identified some of the sources of the increase. The increase arises in part from the fact that there are more and more cases in administrative law. It arises in part too from the Family Law Act. It arises because of the fact that there is an extension of the Legal Aid system in Barbados to the point where a large range of issues can now attract legal aid support. There was a time when I first came to the Bar that there were only five offences for which there was legal aid, murder, manslaughter, concealment of birth, I think rape and some other offence which attracted legal aid. Outside of that there could not be no legal aid. Today you get legal aid for a large range of criminal and civil matters.

In addition to that, Sir, the community has become more aware of its rights generally and on the whole we have become a more litigious community. For all of these reasons, in addition to those given by the last Honourable Member who spoke, great demands are made on the justice system and there is a lot of overloading at present on that system.

Over the years the administration of justice has got a low priority. There is a perception that there is no politics in it. Keep it going but you do not have to spend a lot of money on it because there are really no votes to be gained in the efficient and proper administration of the justice system. I think that is a wrong view, Mr. Chairman, because the point has often been made, again by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, and certainly by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West on several occasions in this Chamber, that the efficient administration of the justice system and the proper enforcement of law and order constitute critical components of development.

A country in which there is a malfunctioning justice system and in which there is not an effective law and order enforcement machinery is lagging in its development process so that it is true to say that it has a direct economic component in terms of gain when you have in your country a well administered justice system. I think that if it can be seen in that context as a part of economic development, we appreciate that more and greater resources have to be diverted and devoted to the administration of justice in this country.

I think the time has come, Mr. Chairman, when we ought to think in terms of the system outside the existing structure. I do not think that a lot can be achieved by tinkering with the existing structure. The demands are *now* too great. The system has outgrown its relevance and viability. What we need to do is really to review the system from the beginning, in its entirety *and* that review can best be done by a mix of outside people and inside people, locals plus outsiders knowledgeable sitting down and reviewing the system with a view to modernizing it and equipping it to function in the last days of this century and well into the next. In that respect it is going to be necessary to introduce modern technology. There is no doubt about that. The idea that a judge has to write all day every word that comes from every witness is too burdensome and is very much a waste of judicial time.

I had the good fortune a few years ago to work in the United States of America with some American lawyers in a remote town in Michigan known as Battle Creek. It is perhaps best known as the Headquarters of Kelloggs of Kelloggs *Corn* Flakes. It was a case involving Barbadian interest, and the modern technology of which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South spoke was very much *in* place. At the end of two days' hearing the judge himself had only made about two pages of notes, points that he observed about the demeanour of witnesses and things that occurred to him. But at the shortest notice, as has happened throughout the case, he was able to get a printout of the evidence of a particular witness just by signalling the lady who was operating the machinery to stop and provide him with the printout which was immediately made available to all parties in the action.

It occurred to me that a similar matter tried in Barbados, according to our old-fashioned, handwritten mode, would have taken about a week and that case was completed in two days so that there could be enormous savings in time and an enormous speeding up of the system if only we were to introduce the modern technology of which so much has been said in this Chamber in recent years.

I am not satisfied, and I hope that the Honourable Attorney General is listening because I really mean this, that the Government is addressing the matter with the seriousness which it deserves. I know that there is assistance available from many international institutions, rrom the Commonwealth, particularly the Fund for Technical Cooperation, and that we could put together at the finance of others, a team to start the, investigative work and determine after reviewing the system and hearing evidence, those who work on a daily basis in the system as to what is best for Barbados and how we may set about reforming and improving the system for the next 50 years or so in this country.

Perhaps, there will be need for a new structure of judicial officer between the magistrate and the judge. Perhaps there will be need for more support for the judges: Perhaps there will be need for an increased role and jurisdiction for the magistrates. All of these are likely ways in which we may go about affecting some improvements but on the whole I think we need to do a thorough-going reform of the system thinking thoughts outside of the

existing framework. In that respect I am happy to support the call made and the views expressed by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South.
4.10 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The first point I wish to make about this Head, Sir, is that I wonder if we should be debating it at all because this is a Head that only provides for judges' salaries. What is the point of having judges' salaries placed under one Head and all the other matters that relate to the Judiciary are scattered elsewhere throughout the. Estimates? It is untidy. For example, Sir, the question of the transport of the Judges, the cars which the judges get and the allowances in respect of housing paid to the- Chief Justice, if it can be called a housing allowance – perhaps that is a misnomer for it – that appears elsewhere. It is untidy year after year for us to have Head 11 as one separate Head just dealing with judges. If we are going to deal with Judiciary put everything that relates to it under a Head. I am not going to continue speaking on matters of ignorance.

One of my concerns about the Judiciary – and I will be speaking under other Heads about the problems of law and order which will reflect on the Judiciary and which *will* interact and which will call for some discussion on the Judiciary elsewhere. But I just wish to say that, in a great hurry, we went ahead and set up a separate Court of Appeal. Let me be clearly understood. The principle of having a separate Court of Appeal is sound. I am not to be thought of as criticizing the principle of establishing a separate Court of Appeal. But if you have the Court of Appeal as a separate entity, separately constituted from the other courts and it is the most senior court in Barbados then I think you must do a proper job in the establishment of that court.

I seem to think it was November 1991 that it started to operate. We made some make shift arrangements for the Court of Appeal. Everybody knows why the Court of Appeal as presently constituted was established in such a great hurry. We understand that.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Because you wanted to implement the Act. You were not expecting that. There was a calypso which said "The vice is in their own head." You understood why you wanted to bring it in, to appear to be doing something.

I complained in here in the Estimates I think it was or just about the time it was established about the state of the accommodation for the Court of Appeal Judges. We are going to 3 years and nothing has changed. Do you understand, Sir? Three of the Court of Appeal Judges – and I have gone into the Chambers of two, but three of the four Court of Appeal Judges are in little boxes that are called Chambers without any ventilation. It is a good thing our friend does not smoke. The air-conditioning unit in one set of Chambers had broken down.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: How I know? They talk. But there is no window that *can be* opened to air the place. This is three years now we are going where....

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am hearing talk on the other side that this is what they wanted.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would caution the Honourable Member. Purity of the Record of Parliament must be maintained.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I know. But you see, Sir, I want to head off the Attorney General reply to that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But I am not going to allow you to respond to what you may consider asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I said I hear. What I am saying, Sir, is that it is like telling me when a client comes and tells you the facts of 'a case and tells you he is not guilty and when you look at the facts you tell him, you are guilty, you have to plead guilty. And even though, technically, we use the phrase instructed you have to tell the client sometimes what the position is, most times. I would not have it that that is what the judges wanted because you must say to them this is not commodious. In these circumstances I am saying that we rush madly into the constitution of a Court of Appeal without adequately providing for it. Okay, it was a rush job. But we have had time since then to correct the problems.

Having constituted the Court of Appeal as it is not in terms of personnel, but I mean in terms of physical location the lawyers have been put at a great disadvantage. What used to be' the robing room is now generally not accessible to lawyers. We used to be able to go in that room from the concourse area outside and walk straight through. To get in there you have now to go through the Court of Appeal if it is open and nobody is sitting, come through a little door to get in there if you want to get to the Chief Justice's Chambers with a matter. You cannot get from one point to the other as far as I can recall. You cannot go through the old robing room into two of the Judges of the Court of Appeal by the old route. The whole thing has been thrown into confusion. We are seeing no attempt to deal with it even if that had to be a temporary measut'e, by now what has become permanent is not satisfactory. We need to look at a way of dealing with that again.

I understand the problem in not appointing an additional judge. I am not talking about the acting appointment. I am talking about a completely new Judge because there is no physical accommodation for an additional Judge of the High Court. We could not think about it until something was done; in terms of the establishment of the new Magistrates' court at St. Matthias. I would like to her what plans I mean realistic plans — the Government has for the improvement of the High Court and the Court of Appeal. I want to make it clear, I am not making any suggestions at all during these Estimates for the improvement of the system. I have done that too often. I am not a Government, I am not a Member of any Government. You might hear something about it in the Budget. You will certainly see it in the Manifesto. But as far as that is concerned I done. I am just going to pick holes, criticize. That is my position in these Estimates.

I see in the Development Plan that during the period 1993—2000 this Government has published that it will:

> "construct a High Court and two new Magistrates' Courts, as well as to upgrade existing court buildings, in order to provide adequate space and facilities for Barbados' courts."

That appears on page 127 of the Development Plan. If you are going to construct a High Court during the 7-year period 1993—2000 I would expect to see adequate provision made for that super structure and reflected in the projection of capital expenditure over the period. When I was Attorney General I had two proposals made for the construction of a new court building including Court of Appeal, Attorney General's Office and Director of Public Prosecutions Office.
4.20 p.m.

In 1986, assuming that we could even have got money that Mrs. Thatcher had available to English contractors the cost then was $22 million so I would like to see reflected in the Capital Expenditure for the period some substantial funding. Now, what do I find? That you are building a High Court and it is not in the Estimates for 1994-95. The Estimates for 1995-96, the 4.05 has moved to 6.14 and then $3.95. Let me give you an idea so it is clear what I am talking about and it is that no provision is made in these projections for any High Court.

In 1993—94, for example, Home Affairs was projecting to spend capital of $8.7 million. This year $4 million. Next year $6.1 million and thereafter it declines. 1996—97, 3.9 million, then 1.9 million, then 1.3 million, then 790 000 in the year 2000.

Similarly when I look at the Ministry of Justice and Caricom Affairs I do not see any substantial provision. The best that we are .doing is $1.8 million this year.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, I will conclude in one minute. So that is why I say I am not making any suggestions. I am tired. From the time of the 1986 Manifesto, the 1991 Manifesto, all we are getting out of Government... I cannot believe that civil servants will sit down and write this, that Ministers will approve it, that it will go to Cabinet and then ' Cabinet will collectively approve it and nobody" examines it to see if we are not having the public on, because this is what is happening. The language of the narrative does not harmonise with the arithmetic and we are being taken for a ride. We must stop fooling the public, Sir, because people who are going to apply very careful analysis to these documents, like I am applying right now throughout this week, next week and the Budget and into the election .... I am going to expose all of it as share, raw, naked empty promises.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What election? You nearly had one today.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the comment of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that the language of the narrative does not harmonise with the arithmetic, I take it he was making that comment in relation to the Development Plan particularly in relation to the courts, where at page 127 it says that the objective during the planned period is to construct a High Court and two new Magistrates' Courts as well as to upgrade existing court buildings in order to provide adequate space and facilities for Barbados' courts.

I suppose the Honourable Member makes the assumption from that that the language of constructing a High Court is talking about the judicial centre which had been planned some time ago. But my own understanding of that is that the High Court which is being spoken of is the High Court for an additional judge. So there was no arithmetic error. That is what it relates to. That is all we are talking about because when the Magistrates' Courts at St. Matthias have been completed and the civil court moves out of Bridgetown provision *will* be made for providing an additional High Court in that area. That is what I am talking about. So you are not going to see any millions.

Now, in relation to the comments by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas on the separate Court of Appeal: He complains about the fact that there is no ventilation for the Judges in the chambers. There is, Mr. Chairman, air-conditioning in the Judges' Chambers. If the

air-condition has broken down it is a matter of just replacing it. If that is the case I will take immediate steps to see that it is addressed. That should not be a matter which should take the service forever to deal with. The fact is that the arrangements for the separate Court of Appeal have been put in place to accommodate a Court of Appeal which everybody knows was not designed to be in its present location permanently.

Plans, as everybody knows, have been in place for constructing a new Judicial Centre over on White Park and the - lands in fact have been acquired. The plans have' been drawn. The consultants had been engaged to start work on the building and then the economic situation could not accommodate the construction of a Supreme Court.

One sees at page 124 of the Development Plan that the construction of the new Judicial Centre, the Supreme Court Complex, was deferred. So it is not that this Government did not have plans for the development of a system for the effective delivery of justice, it is that the plans had to be deferred because of the economic situation in the country but the plans had been made and had been embarked on.

Now, I hear some Honourable Members and the Honourable Member for St. Thomas was one talking about the Court of Appeal having been put together hurriedly and that proper arrangements had not been made for constituting it in the best way possible. I am talking about the physical conditions.

Mr. Chairman, we have to look at all of this against the background that the Bar Association and the lawyers of Barbados and the public of Barbados have for a long time been agitating for a separate Court of Appeal. We had the original Court of Appeal where the existing Judges of the High Court were Judges of the High Court as well as the Court of Appeal and when one Judge heard a case and that case was appealed it went to the other three Judges of the High Court. And we always heard talk about the scratch back Court of Appeal. Lawyers were agitating vociferously for the removal of this scratch back Court of Appeal and the institution of this separate Court of Appeal was largely in response to that. And I am one of those, Mr. Chairman, who is of the strong opinion that the Court of Appeal which has been established is doing good work and has done good work and is something which we should all be proud of.
4.30 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I was not reflecting on the quality of it. I have my own views about that and I am not going to express them publicly. I was just reflecting on the quality of work and I made it clear that I was not being critical of having a separate Court of Appeal. What I was saying is that if you are going to bring it in as the most senior Court in Barbados do it properly and it has not up to now been done properly.

Hon. M. A. KING: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas is not commenting on the quality of the work, but I can comment on it. Nobody can prevent me from commenting on it and that is my own personal view. The Court has been established and it is not in the best accommodation possible ,but all of it has to be looked at against the fact that the arrangements and plans had been put in place for the building of the Judicial Centre in which provision would have been made not only for all the High Courts of Barbados, but for the Court of Appeal as well and perhaps two Courts to accommodate the Court of Appeal. Provision had even been made for a Court to accommodate the Caribbean Court of Appeal if it did come into existence. So the plans are there. But because of the economic situation besetting the country, those plans had to be postponed. I am looking forward, Mr. Chairman, to the day when work on the Judicial Centre can be resumed and a proper Judicial Centre can be established for the delivery of justice in this country. I anxiously look forward to the day when the country is in a position to afford the construction for the new Judicial Centre.

The Honourable Merriber for Christ Church South has made the point that a review of the delivery of the administration of justice in this -country is necessary. Now I agree that from time to time we have to stop and review the delivery - of the administration of justice. The Honourable Member goes on to make the point supported by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph that Barbados should not think it is so arrogant, and those are the words of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, that it can do the review all by itself and should get expert advice from overseas.

Now I do not know, Mr. Chairman, that if we really need necessarily at this time any expert advice from overseas to tell us what is wrong with our judicial system. I would imagine a lot of know to a large extent what is wrong with it and how we can substantially improve the delivery of justice in this country without any expert advice from overseas. There are some things that are wrong. I accept that. I do not have to hide from that because the fact is that in the court system we need computerated transcription systems that *will* speed up the process of recording evidence. I accept that. I *will* not quarrel with that and that *will* go a long way towards relieving a lot of complaints which presently exist in relation to delays in that area of the administration of justice. But I think all of us also have to accept that is not the only area in which delays occur.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: There are other areas, Mr. Chairman, in which there are delays. Let me just say this. Having said that, we recognize that we need to make some progress in this area of recording evidence and having it transcribed so that the appeal process can be speeded up. In recent weeks, there has been quite a lot of discussion with International Agencies with a view in trying to get funding for this p;ocess • of providing the computerated transcription services for the Courts. There are a number of techniques that have been recommended. One particular agency that was interested in providing this service. There are some delicate discussions which are going on at this time. As recently as last month, I met with the Chief Justice and an overseas agency who is interested in helping in this region. But because of the delicacy of the discussions, it is not something which I want to speak about publicly at the moment. The options are being put forward about video recording entire Court trials in the High Courts as well as Magistrates' Courts. The system for which I myself would have preference would be the computerated transcription service where all the evidence is taken and transcribed immediately. Because the problem about video recording is that you still have the problem of transcribing what has been taken. As I understand it, a lot of the . delay takes place in the technicians actually transcribing what has been taken down.

So that the discussions are going on with a view to trying to put together the most adequate system for the Courts because we believe in this area that significant progress can be made. There are some delays too, Mr. Chairman, in the area where the whole trial has been recorded. The evidence has been completed but then there are some delays in the judicial process itself and in the decision making process. Whether you need technical assistance to aid in the process of decision making, I am not too sure about that. I do not know how you can provide technical assistance in dealing with the whole problem of decision making itself. I know that there are programmes which are being considered and also judicial training for even senior judges. This is a thing that one does not sneeze at because at every level the whole process of continual training and keeping up-to-date with modern techniques and the way of dealing with problems is something of great importance.

So that the point I am making is that at every stage of the process there are delays in the administration of justice. In my humble opinion, Mr. Chairman, at all levels there is a share of responsibility. There is responsibility at the level of the lawyers themselves, at the level of Government to accept Government's responsibility for ensuring that the systems are in place that will assist the personnel and even at the level of the judiciary itself in giving decisions urgently and on time once all the material is before them. I am saying that these are areas which certainly need to be addressed in Barbados which can go a long way towards in improving the delivery of justice in this country. I am not at this time convinced that we need overseas experts to tell us what the issues are which need to be dealt with. Perhaps what we need is technical assistance in getting the systems in place in the Courts in order that the technological advances which we need can be put in place.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to delay the debate except to ask of the Minister a question. The Minister said that a High Court is going to be constructed and I expect that that High Court will be constructed where the existing District "A" Civil Magistrate's Court now operates. Now that is dependent on the Magistrate's Court in St. Matthias being completed.
4.40 p.m.

These are my questions for the Minister. Is the Minister aware that the proposed St. Matthias Court has been under construction for close to 2 to 3 years and that one of the reasons for its slow progress is the constant disappearance from site of material which was dropped during the day and which cannot be found the next day? Is he aware that such a state of affairs is a shocking shame to the people of St. Matthias and to the public who are concerned that so much money is being wasted in such a manner? Will the Minister give this Committee some assurance that this state of affairs will be investigated and early steps taken to complete the work? Will the Minister tell this Committee how much money has so far been spent on the rehabilitation and what steps are taken to prevent further stealing from occurring on the site? In short, how is the Government dealing with these problems which I have posed?

I also want to ask the Minister what is the justification for keeping a person acting as a High Court Judge for 3 years without confirming his appointment. It is contrary to the Constitution of Barbados; it undermines the principle of security of tenure and ultimately the independence of the Judiciary. It is also a very bad practice. There is no reason why the Prime Minister who has the obligation to initiate action for the appointment should not have done something about it earlier. It is bad government and it is the sort of inaction that undermines people's confidence in the Judiciary.

I am sure the Minister, as a constitutional expert, would make the strongest representations to the Prime Minister about the matter. If a man is good enough to act as a Judge for that length of time and has performed well, then he should be confirmed. One of the things that is wrong with the judicial system in Barbados is the belief that it must stand still.

This country has roughly 260 000 people, about the same number as the Bahamas. The Bahamian Courts are

staffed by many more judges, because the Bahamas recognises that law and order is very much part of economic development. We cannot develop our economy, particularly the offshore sector which inevitably brings the concomitant problems of litigation without recognising that . we have to deliver justice very quickly.

Because of the defects in our existing system, the public complain about the increase in crime, when we cannot respond quickly either at the level of the police or at the level of the Judiciary. It is a mistake for the Government to spend increasingly less on such an important area of what I call economic development, that is law and order. We must not delay in improving the physical conditions of the Courts, reforming their procedures, modernising the way we do business in the Courts, if we are serious about maintaining the independence of our Judiciary and making sure that the Constitution functions in the way that will maintain our democratic traditions.

We are indeed fortunate that there have not been any major scandals among our Judiciary; but I cannot be certain that our luck will hold forever. The Judiciary is stretched to the limit. It is difficult for the Judges to move straight from the Assizes into the civil cases, sometimes without getting an opportunity to do the proper research necessary to maintain a high standard of judicial performance.

I believe we have to spend money on our Judiciary. I believe that we have to reform the Rules of Court more frequently than we have been doing. When I left as Attorney General, there were draft rules for reforming procedure in the Magistrates' Courts. Those have not yet reached Parliament. Some of the rules of the Supreme Court promulgated in 1982 are now themselves out of date. We have to amend them so as to simplify the way of doing business in the courts. This is another aspect of simplifying the doing of business within the governmental system itself.

There are now modern methods of dispute solving. Some of these are less costly than formal litigation and I regret very much that we are lagging behind in our current thinking on these matters.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, one of the unfortunate things about the administration of justice in this country is that Governments of Barbados on both sides have not given as high a priority as ought to be given to the establishment of facilities for delivery of justice.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West would well remember that in his time when he was Attorney General they had put in place plans for the construction of a new Supreme Court Building on that area which is now a parking lot opposite the Central Police Headquarters. But the whole point is that the Honourable Member left office as Attorney General nearly 13 years ago and his Government continued in office for 5 years after that and that Court has not yet been built.

I am saying that Governments of this country have too often and for too long not given as high a priority as possible to constructing the physical facilities necessary for the delivery of justice. I am not making an excuse. All I am saying...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: let the Honourable Member proceed.

Hon. M. A. KING: The point I am making is that I am sure that we all recognise that work in this area needs to be done.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West asked some questions in relation to the Court at St. Matthias. The construction on that project started a. long time ago on October 3, 1992. It was originally anticipated that the project would have been finished quickly because it was thought that what was needed was just some minor construction work, but once work started it was discovered that they practically had to rebuild the whole thing.

You listen to the advice of the experts whom you ask to advise you. So you work on the advice of the experts. You contract people to do work for you and this is what we get. As a result, the project turned out to be much larger than what it was anticipated it would have been. The building turned out to be extremely dilapidated and termite infested and it became necessary to replace the entire roof as well as the floor of the main building so that the job ended up as a job of major construction.

4.50 p.m.

Work has progressed quite slowly. We have been told that it *will* be completed in July 1994. We had been given a series of dates before that. I remember November 1993 was one date which had been set for completion but we are now at March, 1994. Expenditure on the project as of February 15, 1994 was some $802 124.60, labour $415 389, the materials $392 735. That is the amount expended so far on this project. It is to hold the civil court, juvenile court, domestic court and. the ancillary offices required for those courts.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: I cannot answer the question at this time as to what is the projected final cost.

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

HEAD 12 — PARLIAMENT — $3 545 007

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I move that Head 12 for the sum of $3 545 007 stand part.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, democracy as we know and cherish it in the country is maintained by certain national institutions. A Parliament in our style of Government is one of them. The Judiciary just recently debated is another. The trade union is another national institution which helps to underpin the democratic process.

I have observed time and again that one of the major differences between the Latin American countries and the Caribbean countries, irrespective of whether they are republics or not — and I still hope to live to see the day when Barbados becomes a republic — but I often remark upon the fact that the difference between those countries and our countries have to do with the inadequacy and the corruption of institutions which underpin democracy. That is one of the major reasons why democracies in Latin America and South America, Central America generally speaking, do not fare well and in some countries do not survive and why, even despite in recent years the attempt which is to be lauded by many Latin countries to democratise the lack of underpinning of those institutions, serves to undermine the effort and many have regressed in their attempts.

I fear, Mr. Chairman, that in Barbados in my time I am seeing the beginning of erosion of some of the national institutions with which we grew up and on which we rely. When we make the boast, as has been made in this Honourable Chamber already today, that stable Government is something of which we are proud and it is a reputation of which Barbados is jealous, we need now, in this last decade of the 20th Century, to be thinking twice and looking twice. The fact is that particularly in these recent years under the Democratic Labour Party administration, several of our national institutions appear to be under threat.

I have spoken in this Chamber before, and I have no doubt I will speak again, as I intend to do today, on the whole question of the crying need for parliamentary reform. In 1966 when Barbados became independent within the Commonwealth, we did very little to modernise, upgrade or in any way refurbish these national institutions of which I speak. We have swallowed the colonial model lock stock and barrel, cursing it all the while in some cases, but in almost every aspect of our national life we have failed to be selective about what we would retain from the colonial system.

Now, as we approach a new century, I think, Mr. Chairman, the time is long past for parliamentary reform, as it is for judicial reform, reform of the education system and reform in the trade union movement. In fact, it has been suggested that the trade union movement in this country needs to sit up and take notice of the fact that it almost needs to reinvent itself if it is going to be a viable institution into the 21st Century.

I feel very strongly about the reform that is needed in our Parliament. It has fallen into grave disrepute. Some will say that that is universal, that the parliamentary process is in disrepute in the public domain almost everywhere in the world. There may be some truth in that but my initial concern, my paramount concern has to be with the parliamentary process and the Parliament of which I am a Member. It does not give me any pleasure to be commenting year after year on those areas which fail the people of this country.

The committee system in this Parliament does not work. The Management Commission itself, if it meets twice a year it meets a lot. Its agenda is an apology for an agenda. It does the minimum that it needs to do. There are urgent matters which need to be discussed by the Management Commission of Parliament which never are discussed. There are other committees of Parliament which do not meet and even a committee like the Public Accounts Committee, which will struggle from time to time to meet and certainly under this Leader of the Opposition and the Leader before him, made every attempt to make at least that part of the machinery of Parliament work to get on with that...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Not with any support coming from the other side.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, please.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am addressing the Chair, Sir. But there is a lot of noise in the pit.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are you referring to this Chamber?

Miss B. A. MILLER: Naturally not, Sir, in the process of saying that I hold this Chamber in great respect and I am deeply concerned about areas of slippage. 5.00 p.m.

I am saying, Mr. Chairman, Sir...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order, please.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am saying that I am deeply and genuinely concerned with the slippage that I am seeing in this institution called Parliament.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is past time for us to start reform at least at the level of the Standing Orders in this Parliament. These are now outmoded, outdated. I am saying, Sir, that it is time for us to tailor this Parliament to answer the needs of ourselves as Parliamentarians and of course of the wider electorate out there who representatives we are in here.

I say it again. I find it incredible that in 1994 there is no standing committee of this Parliament on tourism. Imagine that tourism is the leading productive sector of the productive sectors in this country. We walk about and say how it is the greatest foreign exchange earner and we are depending on it. The Minister of Finance and the Minister of Economic Affairs tell us that without it we would all be in Maxwell Pond.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: We would be out in the gully. Imagine that in this Parliament there is no standing committee which looks into the matter of the business of tourism.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I have made it and I have to make it again. We are doing nothing about it. I will continue to make it. As the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is saying *sotto voce* that we have no standing committee on CARICOM Affairs. We have no standing committee on Agriculture.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: We have 3 Ministers of Agriculture but no standing committee on agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am deadly serious about these matters. We gave a lot of lip service to an idea or to a concept that we need to have at this stage of our development greater collaboration between the public and the private sector. I have said that the Barbados Labour Party in due course will commit itself on this that the way in which we conduct our business in here does not permit of that interaction between the private sector and the public sector.

We used to have Local Government in this country. We no longer have it..We used to have a system of statutory corporation. They are now being overtaken by creeping dictatorship.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: It is about to go into a gallop but certainly they are being overtaken by dictatorship.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is that related to Parliament.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg your pardon?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is that related to Parliament.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, Sir. Because . the instruments of that dictatorship sit in this Parliament.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am talking about the Statutory Corporations that you are speaking of. Is that related to Parliament.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes. Parliament encompasses all of that. Statutory Corporations are responsible ultimately to this Parliament, Statutory Corporations which never tabled an annual report in this Parliament. Statutory corporations which get new Boards every 3 weeks according to the whim and fancy of a Minister. These are abuses in the parliamentary system which Barbadians are making clear they are not going to tolerate any longer. They are a reflection on all of us *in* here. I can sit down and talk again. The Honourable Minister would like to shut me up now.

Certain remarks made by Miss B. A. MILLER were . ordered, by Mr. CHAIRMAN, to be expunged from the record.

Asides.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will say that the people *in* this country are not deaf and they are not blind.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member proceed and she has 2 minutes in which to conclude.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: For 2 minutes.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is part of the reason why this Parliament finds itself in disrepute and why the the public has no respect for it because it feels that there is a illegality practised even at the level of the Parliament and nobody will speak out. I will speak out.

5.10 p:m.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: You mean I cannot report the fact in this Parliament on the Floor of this Parliament that three front Benchers have demoted themselves to the Back Bench?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before the Honourable Member proceeds. All that the Honourable Member for the City ...

I will have no difficulty in doing what the Standing Orders allow we to do. If Honourable Members cannot conduct themselves in the way that they should in this Committee I will have....

The Honourable Member for St. Peter. The Honourable Member is raising a point of order but I am not satisfied with the level of behaviour that I am getting and I am not going to tolerate it. I will use whatever authority is given to me by the Standing Orders if this persist.

You are not going to mash it up like that. And if that is what you are saying in your seat, I am hearing it. I am hearing it because ...

Mr. Chairman stands, then takes his seat again.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Firstly let me say this that Standing Orders require all Members to be silent when the Chair is speaking. Therefore I am to hear no voice and do not tell me about asides. Any voices that I hear, I am in a position to interpret them for what they are saying, so do not come with that.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central is on a point of order.

•Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I have risen to make the point that the Honourable Member for the City was in breach of Standing Order 9 which says "that the conduct of Members of either House of Parliament in the performance of their duty should not be impugned except on a substantive motion." So, not only is the Honourable Member attacking Honourable Members over here but Your Honour as well. So it is out of order and all of those remarks should be withdrawn.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have also ruled that that should be struck from the record.

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAI7seconded by Hon. M. A. KING, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked for leave to sit again and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House be suspended until twenty-five minutes to six o'clock.

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

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

RESUMPTION

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

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee is resumed. I just want to bring my own position to what has transpired just before we had the suspension. There was some disrespect as far as I am concerned for the Chair to which I had made reference. It is not in the best interest for the tradition of Parliament. It is not reflective of our best behaviour as Members of Parliament and certainly, as a Presiding Officer, I am not going to tolerate that kind of behaviour under any guise whatever.

I would like to remind Members that the Standing Orders are distinctly clear on the behaviour of Members not speaking. It is also distinctly clear on the conduct of Members while the Chair is addressing the Committee. I want to say that any further disregard to the Standing Orders will be dealt with as the said Standing Orders prescribe. That is the end of my position.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, I will begin by saluting the contribution of the Member of the City who tried very valiantly in her contribution to focus on a matter that is of tremendous importance in the political life of this country. That matter has to do, Mr. Chairman, with what appears to be a fall from_ esteem of Parliament in the eyes of the people of the country. I believe that it behoves us as a Parliament to do whatever is necessary to stop the slippage in the favourable public perception of this Parliament and to do everything that is feasible and necessary to restore our Parliament to the standing that it previously enjoyed

and to the standing that a Parliament ought to occupy in the minds and in the esteem of the people of the country.

There are a large number of fundamentally troubling things surrounding the manner in which our parliamentary affairs are organised. We will not be part of any effort to sweep those large number of fundamental troubling things under any carpet. It has to do in many respects, as the Member for the City was trying to say, to the fact that in some degree Parliament unfortunately is being treated as if it is an extension of Cabinet, a Cabinet which is not functioning well and which may not be functioning at all. We have to stop that. We also have to stop, Mr. Chairman, the decline in the standing of Parliament that comes from the administration of the affairs pertaining to the workings of Parliament as an institution. There can be absolutely no doubt that there has been tremendous slippage and difficulty in this area.

My colleague, the Member for the City, drew reference to the fact that the institutional arrangement put in place for the management of the affairs of Parliament, the so-called Management Commission of Parliament, has had a short experience but a very unfortunate experience. It meets too infrequently. There are a large number of matters that ought to engage his attention that could enrich the parliamentary life that is not engaging his attention. One of those matters, if I may say so without appearing to be engaging in a special pleading, is a number of things pertaining to the terms and conditions of the staff and the facilities of the Leader of the Opposition Office. I will not go into detail today for fear of being accused of special pleading but which I hope will be addressed now that the matter has been aired at this level.

We also have before us, Mr. Chairman, on the west side of this Parliament Building an unfortunate experience in the wastage of public funds. Mr. Chairman, Sir, the effort to renovate Parliament has been an unfortunate experience. The exercise seems to be taking the form of the creation of a financial black-hole into which large sums of money are committed and lost forever without there being any great degree of urgency or accountability. I am saying that the time has come that, if we are going to be taken seriously by the public, we cannot have a matter like that taking place under our noses with no effort being made whatsoever by this Parliament to take the matter by the scuff of the neck and deal with it. The renovation of Parliament is a project that has been going on for almost as long as I have been in Parliament and I have been here almost 10 years. But it seems to be an unending project. The rules for the conduct seem not to be well known. The expenditure is never brought directly to Parliament and that has to stop.

I believe that the ordinary recurring affairs of Parliament should fall within the Estimates as a separate and distinct item from the renovation of Parliament. We need to be clearly shown in the Estimates the amount to be spent on the renovation of Parliament. It is just another capital activity by the state and a clear structure needs to be put in place to ensure that that project is managed in accordance with the same kind of rules and systems as would obtain with any other public building that was being renovated or constructed. But it is an intolerable situation that Parliament has to be put to a great inconvenience while large sums of public funds are spent on a project activity that is badly supervised, if supervised at all. That has to stop. I strongly am of the view that it should be shown not as the responsibility of the Ministry of Transport and Works but as a capital project under the Management Commission of Parliament which will be responsible for its supervision. I would like to see a capital vote reflected so that we can know who we must hold responsible for it.

5.50 p.m.

This Parliament, in my view, should not commit itself to spend money year after year on a project that seems that it cannot be finished at all, Mr. Chairman. These are the kinds of consideration that my colleague wants to call attention to when we speak in terms of the urgent need to improve the climate surrounding the manner in which Parliament functions in this country.

I also want to join with her in stressing the need for the works that take place within this Parliament to be made more alive and more relevant .and be made more of an activity that the people of the country can know about more directly than is presently the case. A Resolution on the Order Paper that calls for the proceedings of this House to be broadcast. It was brought in recognition of the fact that we live now in an information age where it is easy at the flick of a switch to do what could not have been done when this Parliament was first created. The facilities are here in this House to have the proceedings broadcast.

I share her view that we have to look seriously to broadening the committee structure of Parliament, and where some committees exist to strengthen them. I have recently had the experience of observing the functioning of the Public Accounts Committee in Britain. That Committee is a credit to parliamentary life in that country and we should seek to have ours, if not up to the same level, move in the same direction.

There can be no question that the force of the argument of the Member for the City is that the administration of the affairs of Parliament is a factor that is weakening the standing of Parliament in the eyes of the public because the administration of the affairs of Parlian'ient in and of itself leave much to be desired. The opportunity has to be grasped and this matter be aired and dealt with.

The Members on the other side are obviously uncomfortable with the view that there is a general syndrome at work here. Not only is this true that Parliament's affairs are badly administered but that there is a lack of esteem resulting from the way in which Parliament conducts its affairs, particularly those affairs which affect important sections of the society. It also cannot be contradicted, Mr. Chairman, that politicians have been brought into disrepute by the arbitrary way and the dictatorial exercise of powers by Ministers and by the Prime Minister. That is a matter of fact. ,

The public wants to see Parliament act to instal checks and balances on arbitrary, whimsical and dictatorial exercises of powers by Prime Ministers and by Ministers. In the same way that we look to find ways to improve the committee structure of Parliament, it might be true that Parliament might have to look at imposing checks and balances on the powers which can be exercised in an arbitrary fashion by Ministers and by Prime Ministers. That was the force of my colleague's argument.

I think it falls to us not to seek to avoid dealing with these issues because they are difficult and embarrassing, but to give them the benefit of full ventilation and I support the effort of my colleague and salute her effort in having this matter focussed. I will not say any more on this matter, Mr. Chairman, but I would like to see the management of the affairs of Parliament, whether it be in management of the capital activities surrounding the renovation of Parliament itself, making Parliament's work more interesting and relevant to the people in general and as I said even dealing with the specific grievances of staff of the Opposition's office, brought to the front burner and not swept under the carpet as would seem to be the desire of certain persons in certain quarters.

I am obliged to you.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I will attempt to respond to one aspect of the comments made concerning Parliament. I myself will not get involved in discussing the extent to which this Parliament has or has not declined in its powers and/or capacity because I fear that were I to put on record my views we would get into an intellectual altercation which I prefer not to engage in at this stage.

I would remind the 2 Honourable Members who have spoken before, however, that it would be instructive for them to review the debates concerning Parliament and the Government during the period when the late Tom Adams was Prime Minister. That would be instructive. The whole discussion about the refurbishing of Parliament was an almost single-handed decision by the Prime Minister of the day and I think without going into any great detail unless it becomes absolutely necessary...

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading this House. The refurbishment of Parliament was not a single-handed undertaking. The Leader of the Opposition at the time and other Members who now sit on the Front Bench over there sat on a committee which oversaw plans and the construction process while this wing was being refurbished.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: As I said earlier, if we went into the details it would take us too far but suffice it to say Sir, that we have the record of the decision-making process with relation to the reform of the structure of Parliament, the construction of the West wing and the East wing. We have the note by the Prime Minster of the day and if the Honourable Member wishes we will discuss it. I wish to respond, however, to the principle which the Honourable Member raised with which I agree and with which the Management Commission agrees. It is inadvertent that the decision made by the Management Commission at its meeting of January 26, 1994 is not reflected in the Estimates as presently constituted. I have just consulted with the Minister of Finance and he has agreed that in fact the sums which now appear under the Ministry of Labour, Public Works, Community Development and Sports will now in fact be shifted over during the course of the discussion after he sees to the tidiness of doing so.

In fact, at its meeting of Monday 24th the Management Commission of Parliament resolved that the Draft Estimates of Expenditure should be revised to bring the management of the construction of Parliament under the Commission. That was a decision made by the Commission and the Honourable Member is perfectly right. The Members of the Commission felt that the only way to have this matter of the refurbishment of Parliament brought to a sensible and proper conclusion was to put it under the management of the Commission. So I wanted to confirm to the Honourable Member that what she is seeking has in fact occurred.

The Minutes of that meeting having not been confirmed were not transmitted to the appropriate Ministry, the result of which is that the Estimates have been printed in the customary way, under 623 of the Head for the Ministry of Labour, Public Works, Community Development and Sports. I am being advised that in fact it was transmitted by the staff of Parliament through the appropriate Ministry, but I do not know why this has occurred. The Minister has given the assurance that the necessary adjustment can be made and will be made to make sure that Parliament has responsibility for the management; but the sum is included in a figure of $1.50 million under object 623 in the appropriate Ministry.

The Honourable Member can rest assured that his concerns have already been addressed in that regard

because the members of the Management Commission share the concerns which he expressed.

Mr. Chairman, I don't think it is for *me to engage in the debate. I think I shall allow the Honourable Members .to continue.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before the Honourable Member proceeds. I am presented with a little difficulty in the bridge that is used between Second Reading speeches and speeches in Committee. The extent that the amount of money under the Head we are discussing does not include the refurbishment of the West Wing. There is no problem with a reference being made to it but to generate a general discussion point out of it is not what is expected in the consideration of the Estimates. I allowed discussion on it to a point but I think I should have made that point because we need to keep close to what is required of us in the Committee. Proceed now.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, if the Management Commission of Parliament is now to be responsible for undertaking the construction of the West Wing of Parliament, then I have to be even more insistent about what I said. The Management Commission cannot do this if it is going to meet twice a year and I must tell you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that I sit on that Commission and I am not at all appreciative of the fact that sometimes I get no more than 2 days, if so much notice of a meeting. We are all busy people in here. Important meetings – there are matters very important on the agenda of the Management Commission and you cannot give- me notice of a meeting for Monday evening on a Friday evening.
6.00 p.m.

It cannot do. If we are going to be responsible as a Management Commission for the works that are taking place over there well then the Management Commission is going to have to meet on a far more frequent basis and a more structured and businesslike basis than it currently does.

There are works, Mr. Chairman, which also still need to be done in this East Wing. The Leader of the Opposition's Office has one tap in it so if you want to go to the bathroom and wash your hands you wash them in that tap. If you want to fill the kettle to make a cup of tea you have to fill it in that tap.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No. It is not an improvement on what we had. When we were over in the West Wing there was a small kitchenette which had a separate tap. The Public Health Inspector would condemn the Leader of the Opposition's Office. It is a crying shame that we went backward in that respect rather than forward. It is a shocking thing.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes. We know it is temporary, Mr. Chairman, perhaps more temporary than other Members over there are suggesting. I keep making the point in here. We cannot be lawmakers and lawbreakers too. What example do we set?

Now, Mr. Chairman, I also wish to speak to the workings or the non-workings of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. A considerable sum of money is voted every year for the functioning of what is known as the CPA. I spoke earlier about the underpinnings of democracy. The CPA, Barbados Branch, is perhaps the most undemocratically run in the world. It has not had an annual general meeting for at least 10 years.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: How many?

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: The Deputy Clerk suggests to me 1989. It is a disgrace. "

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member knows that you cannot bring the Deputy Clerk into this debate.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No, No. That is not for the record.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But it is for the record if it goes out via the transmission.

Miss B. A. MILLER: The point is, I sit on the executive and time and time again I can show you my diary of years past where I bring it up every time and a date will sometimes be mooted. I cannot put it any higher than that, but it is a shocking shame that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Barbados Branch has not had an annual general meeting. They have not had one in this decade. Let us put it that way and yet every year over $200 000, some years maybe a little less, some years a little more than that, is expended. This year they are asking for $340 000 to be expended on CPA visits and the others things that are involved. It is a shocking thing that the executive, which has to administer a vote of this size is improperly constituted. Again, I am a member of it and I find myself in an invidious situation. I do not want to be part and parcel of this illegality and it has to be corrected.

If this Parliament, as the premier committee of this land cannot set the example for how things are done, and how business is conducted, and how funds are accounted for, who are we to point the finger at organisations and institutions outside of Parliament? What example will we set? The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is required to have an annual general meeting and it does not but I do not expect Members on that side to appreciate these niceties. We are into petty dictatorship in this Barbados. I never thought that I would live to hear people from outside Barbados making that accusation about this country. But, that has come to pass.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: We would be very wrong to make light of these inadequacies and deficiencies which are being pointed out in respect .of our parliamentary system. History shows us that there was a time in another place when the people grew so fed up that they took it over themselves. There was a time in history, for those of us who have read their history, if you look back, when the people grew fed up with the way in which they were being governed and they took it over. The French did it by way of a revolution. In Britain it happened to Charles I. Yes, we have to go back to that because it will happen here.

We are treating this Parliament like a little closed shop, that it is its own trade union, that it is its own disciplinary committee.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: This is it. I want you to do that because now I want to make the point that this is the sort of behaviour that we are criticised for out there that we get in here and we play word games.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the Honourable Member testing my patience?

Miss B. A. MILLER: Far from.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Right. I am saying to you that my understanding of what you are saying is casting a reflection on the Chair and I would wish you to rephrase it.

Miss B. A. BILLER: Yes, and I have declined.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And if you declined to rephrase it then I have ordered that it be struck from the record and then you go on again to make Statements that cast a reflection on the Chair. That is not what I am going to accept. Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, if we do not modernise the very Standing Orders that you hold in your hands, if we do not adopt a quite different attitude to the way that we are going to do the people's business in the 1990s, this Parliament is in danger of becoming an anachronism. Already the line between the legislative and the executive in this country is blurred. It is becoming moreso and it is becoming dangerously so. We now have Government by Prime Ministerial tyranny. That is what we have in this country. We now have Government by Prime Ministerial dictatorship in this Barbados.
6.10 p.m.

The Constitutional law books will have to find a new nomenclature for the style of Government in Barbados.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: It would not stain anything with him. It is a very serious matter, Sir. The Rule of Law, Mr. Chairman, Sir, ...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I have some order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: ...is the one saving grace that we have left. Even within the ranks of the Executive and the Legislative we are seeing attempts being made to override the Rule of Law in Barbados, dangerous.

Aside.

Certain remarks made by Miss B. A. MILLER were order, by Mr. CHAIRMAN, to be expunged from the record.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me say to the Honourable Member that comment, since you are addressing the Chair...

Miss B. A. MILLER: That is *a-sotto voce* remark made...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. We are operating with electronic media.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Why are you picking on me, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must understand that I am only in a position to deal with what I am hearing from persons who are given...

Miss B. A. MILLER: I hold the Chair with too much respect.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:. Let us proceed.

Miss B. A. MILLER: When I look at you, Sir, I am talking to you. When I look over there, I look into darkness.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: When you are on your feet you are to be addressing the Chair. The Honourable Member will have one minute to conclude.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Sir, this is another Head the substance of which we ought not to trivialise in \ here. Because, as I said before, it is a reflection on each and every single one of us and the day is going to come perhaps sooner than later, but it is going to come when we all have to get out there on the hustings and part of what we have to do is to defend this institution. It is no example to set to young people who have to follow in our footsteps and it is a poor reflection on those who went before us and fought hard and bought, at a high price, the privilege that we have to stand in here to be representatives of people's interest and to be representatives of the people's welfare.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, let me respond to the Honourable Member. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have tried to avoid getting involved and discussing this concept of Parliament. But the Honourable Member for the City has a tendency to fulsomeness when discussing this particular head which suggests that she is the repository of all of the wisdom relating to parliamentary reform and that this Parliament somehow has gone into disrepute.

The truth is, Sir, that anyone – and if the Honourable Member had taken a little more time to study the system which she prattles forth as the system that she knows, if she takes a little more time...

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir, I will not be referred to as one who prattles. That is unparliamentary.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I withdraw prattles, Sir. I will substitute spews for prattles.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Spew is like coming out without control. The Honourable Member purports to know about the parliamentary system and then talks about the thin line between the executive and Parliament. But that is a fundamental aspect of the same system which they are always venerating. If the Honourable Member were as seized of this subject as she purports to be, she could not possibly speak some of what can only be described as diatribic rubbish that she utters in here about this system.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. -I did not land on a parliamentary system which allows a Prime Minister to ride roughshod over his Parliament, which allows a Minister, of Government to come into the public domain and to state a policy and within hours have the Prime minister who changed the Cabinet where, allegedly, that policy was discussed contradict it.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am making the point, Sir that when we...

Miss B. A. MILLER: What I am saying, Sir...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what has the Honourable Member risen?

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am on a point of order, Sir. What I am saying is that the system that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West is discussing or trying to describe is not the system that is practised in Barbados today.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But on a point of order you can only refer to what he has described.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And the detail that he describes.

Miss B. A. MILLER: He is now describing mythology, History.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir, I am discussing what they constantly refer to, the Westminster system.

I am saying, first of all, that I agree with her that the Westminster system is not practised in Barbados. It has not been practised in Barbados. There is no Westminster system practised in Barbados. The Honourable Member participated in a Cabinet. The Honourable Member should be that last person to discuss Cabinet Government in this country. When the Honourable Member wants to talk about Prime Ministerial democracy, if she wants to talk about Prime Ministerial tyranny she only has to reflect on the time she spent with her Prime Minister. That is all she would need to do. I have no desire to get involved...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: *I* mean exactly what you heard.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: To each his own. You? You are in the dark. You would never be in the dark.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to get on with the debate. But the Honourable Member gets up in here, casts aspersions and talk about Ministerial this and Ministerial that. The Honourable Member, as a Minister, has done every single act that she now purports to be quarrelling about. She personally perpetrated every single one of those acts, as a Minister.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT Every one that you now complain about.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: That is one of the questions...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member state what she is on?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member knows that I can take her morning, noon and night, any time, anywhere. The Honourable Member knows that I am fully seized of her difficulties left, right and centre. There is no heinous, political or Ministerial infelicity that the Honourable Member does not know. Not one!

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, what has happened? You have your finger in your mouth. I cannot hear anything on this.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what has the Honourable Member risen?

Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg your pardon, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what point have you risen?

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. That language is grossly unparliamentary in case you had not noticed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I think the Honourable Member requires a ruling on this. What I understood the Honourable Member to say is that there is no infelicity that you do not know.

Miss B. A. MILLER: That is grossly unparliamentary.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You were talking about infelicities earlier.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I spoke of infelicities earlier.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Therefore you know about them.

Miss B. A. MILLER: But that is not what he is saying. He is saying that there is improper, no infelicities that are not known to me.

6.20 p.m.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I spoke of infelicities earlier.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Therefore you know about them.

Miss B. A. MILLER: But that is not what he is saying. He is saying that there is nothing improper, no infelicities that *are* not known to me and he earlier said in here, that I have not perpetrated, and you were silent, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: But I am not telling any lies, Sir.

Miss B. A. MILLER: There he goes again, Sir. Your Honour will criticise me when I say that in here is a free for all and you are presiding over it.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member give way? I spoke a little earlier about disregard for the Standing Orders. *The* Honourable Member jumped up just now and made a statement on her feet *which* cannot be allowed to remain in the record because she did that while another Honourable Member was on *his* feet.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Let me get it straight, Mr. Chairman. On a point of order, Sir, you are about to strike from the record what I just said but what the Honourable Member for St. Michael West says is to remain on the record?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: *The* point I am making is that it is almost impossible to conduct the business of Parliament with this kind of behaviour. One must recognise that the Chair has a responsibility to both sides of the House and to the public of Barbados in general and therefore must be given every opportunity to deal with the matter as it ought to be dealt with.

Now there is a lot of cross talk that has gone on and it has gone on because Members do not recognise that the Chair needs this opportunity to deal with the matter. I do not have before me a recording machine and I do not have it in my possession. I can get the information but I need time to determine what has been said from both sides because that is the only way I can do it.

I asked the Honourable Member just now what she was objecting to or on what point she had risen and she said a point of order. She told me what the point of order was.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, every thing that was just said about me, that was unparliamentary, I want withdrawn. I want it removed from the record.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point I am making is that I am not in a position at the moment to determine what those words are.

Miss B. A. MILLER: But you are in a position to determine what I said.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is not going to stand in her place and shout at the Chair. I am saying, if you can determine for me what those words are then I will be able to deal with it.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I have spoken them already. I will not have it said that all infelicities and all improprieties are known to me. That, in my opinion, is grossly unparliamentary. All the talk about what I spewed forth and so on and so forth is grossly unparliamentary.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has taken objection to that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I will rephrase it, Sir. I withdraw the remarks.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order, I have asked for the words to be withdrawn and stricken from the record.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has just said that he has withdrawn them.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: People in glass houses should be very careful.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: But they cannot be in the record if he has withdrawn them.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, this is a perfect example of what we were told as little children, if you live in glass houses you should be careful where you pelt rock stones.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You live in a board and shingle so you would not know what is a glass house but you should not pelt rocks.

I have known you before you were born. Do not pelt rocks. Everybody knows about....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member give way?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member did not land here from Mars, Sir. The Honourable Member has a history that is known.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member take his seat?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is the quality of Parliamentarians. They started to discuss the quality of Parliamentarians and I wish to discuss it.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What I want is some order. The difficulties which are arising in this Committee out of asides confirm my view and my position as regards persons sitting in their places and shouting aloud across the Table which I will consider a disruption to Parliament. I have said it already today and I am going to repeat it. If I am forced to use the authority that is given to me by. the Standing Orders of this House, then I will use them without hesitation and the Honourable Member for the City must understand very clearly the point that I am making.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have been in Parliament since 1976 in this Honourable Chamber and I was up in the other Chamber -from 1971 and I will not allow anybody, least of all the Honourable Member for the City, to cast aspersions on my character without responding to them. As I said, the Honourable Member is a public person with a history that is known. The Honourable Member cannot therefore come in this Chamber and casually throw out and leave the impression that I may have taken money illegally. She cannot.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is not so. I never said that and the Honourable Member sitting next to you can tell you the money was paid back. The Honourable Member sitting next to you *will* confirm that he, himself, said he did not know that the reports had been sent to the Permanent Secretary and he could have got them the last time we discussed it. The note which I sent which I borrowed from what you call one "Johnny". You do not remember that?

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am being drawn into this debate in an attempt by the Member for St. Michael West to rescue himself from drowning in some very deep waters, Sir. I have never at all, Sir, made any statement to the effect that moneys were paid back and I really must confess I do not know what he is talking about.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I would say to the Honourable Member when the matter was being discussed in here during the debate on the No-confidence Motion and I used the papers of the Honourable Member for St. Michael East, the Honourable Member then said that when he was sitting as a Member of the Committee when I said that those papers were available the Honourable Member said in here during that debate that had he known those papers were available he would have asked for them I will refresh his memory about it if he has a short memory but that is what happened.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what has the Honourable Member risen?

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. In the debate in this Parliament on the St. Joseph Hospital...

Asides.

Mr, CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: In the debate in this Parliament on the St. Joseph Hospital I pointedly raised the question about moneys which were not repaid to the St. Joseph Hospital Board. In his reply no reference was ever made to it. It is still a matter outstanding.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: How come you want to discuss a matter that has taken place ....

I would like all participants to get back to Head 12.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Honourable Member just got up and said that in a response I did not say ...

I repeat for the Honourable Member's benefit that I drew attention to the fact that I had written a letter to the Permanent Secretary returning $172.00
6.30 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me determine that aspect of it because it does not relate to this Head.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. But ' it relates to my integrity.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I understand that. This is *why I* allowed you to make the response that you have made.

Hon. B. M. *TAITT: I* am merely saying that, when the Honourable Member said that it was not responded to, it is a matter of record. The documents were made documents of this House including the document which I signed. That is a fact.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get back to Head 12 please.

Hon. B. *M. TAITT: I* just wish to say once and for all to the Honourable Member and to anybody else who wishes to raise matters relating to that that I stand ready to discuss them and all other matters relating to it and all other similar matters.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, you would not know. But I can give you chapter and verse. Let there be no doubt in anybody's mind that I stand ready. When we talk about how Parliament has been reduced and how it has been brought down, it is when parliamentarians past and present fail to recognize that, if you throw a rock up in a tree, it can fall back down and hit you and even. cut you. When parliamentarians fail to recognize these things, that helps to bring Parliament into disrepute.

I was making the point, Sir, that in the Westminster system the members of Parliament are fully seized of the workings of the Cabinet system and the Parliamentary system. I am going to stop here because I do not intend to continue discussing this aspect. Another time will come unless other Members raise issues relating to Parliament when I will be able to discuss the workings of Parliament. Suffice it to say, Sir, that the Barbados Parliament contrary to the utterances which we have been hearing still holds its own as one of the foremost Parliaments in the western hemisphere. Barbados is still regarded by our colleagues and friends in the Caribbean and indeed throughout the CPA as a model of parliamentary democracy. It is still a fact that the kind of legislation passed in this Parliament over the last 15 years has formed a model for legislation passed in other Parliaments throughout the Caribbean and Beyond.

I think that we have to be extremely careful that we do not shoot ourselves in the foot. I think it is proper that we should criticize our own institutions and we should seek to better them. But I do not think that it falls well from the mouth of any parliamentarian to be running down the institution which is itself, because of its historical development and because of where we are, the epitome of parliamentary democracy. It is a fact, Mr. Chairman, that when the other people were in charge of Parliament they, used to behave differently and never can you find in the records any condemnation. They used to attack each other viciously but never condemned the institution.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: We must be very careful now that we have reached this stage that we do not by lofty utterances leave the wrong impression out in the marketplace which in the end is only a manifestation of self-destruction.

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

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for the City made some very valid points and I want to say that we must not gloss over the points that she has raised. Because we operate under a system where it has been in existence for a number of years and because we have been regarded as having one of the finest working models reflective of the Westminster system does not mean that all is well, I fully support the Honourable Member for the City. The Government must not feel in any way- edgy when the Opposition makes an observation. All that this side seeks to do is to draw to the attention of this Chamber that there is time for a review of the Standing Orders of this Honourable House. It is time that we look at certain areas that will help to better enhance the working of this Parliament.

I have been in here for quite sometime and I find that for instance when it comes to Question Time where Parliamentary Questions are brought here that the Standing Order is silent on this as far as the length of time that a Minister is required to give a reply. I feel the Standing Order is silent on that. Most of the time when they are being answered the events would have overtaken the question. I feel that we need a system whereby we can have quicker responses or replies from the Government to make the Question Time more meaningful.

I am not satisfied, Mr. Chairman, that the role of the Public Accounts Committee is clearly established. I am a member of that Committee and I have asked the question time and time again what are the powers, duties and how far can it go. That is a burning question and we need to look at whether the Public Accounts Committee has powers to summon and what does this word "summon" means. Does it have any power to invite members to attend it or not? These are areas that we need to look at. We cannot gloss over it at all. It is quite all right for us to say that we have got a Committee which borrows its powers from Parliament, but at the same we do not set out clearly what is the latitude that it has. That is very important. It is a burning question and that is why we had a recent debate in here regarding the Interim Report that was submitted and the No-Confidence motion. That matter has not been resolved and we need to look at that and that is why I said that I support the Honourable Member for the City when she said that we need to look at that.

Sir, we also have to look at the conduct and some of the language. A couple of weeks ago I was handed an extract of what is parliamentary and what is unparliamentary language. We do not have any here. What I got was an extract from the Canadian Parliament and Australian Parliament. But what is unparliamentary in those countries is not necessarily unparliamentary in Barbados. That is why we have confusion and problems in this Parliament when we say that we are importing certain systems that obtain in certain countries.

6.40 p.m.

It is all right for us to talk about the Westminster system, but we do not operate like Parliament in Britain and I think it is time that we stop fooling ourselves. Every time I hear about this Westminster system but at the same time if we come to this Honourable Chamber, Mr. Chairman, and we seek to move a motion, whether a motion of no-confidence or so, we find difficulty in finding the relevant Standing Orders to deal with it. That is why we have had some confusion in the past. We need to address this `particular situation. How do we or how do I as a Member of Parliament bring a motion in here that would satisfy, that is clear and that the Speaker would understand because the rules are laid down. We do not have that.

Whenever a matter comes up we have to look at some other system. The Public Accounts Committee does not operate the way we operate-here in Barbados. These are the things that we need to look at and I am going to say to the Government that it is time that we really understand. Don't let us sit down and feel that all is' well. When you hear people are critical of Parliament, let us understand that people are beginning to question the very operation or the conduct of Parliament. Don't let us fool ourselves. They too are confused. In fact, we in here sometimes are confused as to the rules and the procedures.

We need to take heed. What the Honourable Member for the City is saying is let us sit down and look at it. The Honourable Deputy Leader of the House has to lead by example. I sat there and I was hearing exchanges but one wrong does not make it well for everybody in here. I want the Leader of the House to understand that we demand from him or anyone who leads a higher standard of debate or conduct in this Parliament.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, what you are saying is that the Chair has allowed...

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: No. Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Well, then, it cannot remain in that form.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: I am saying that at times I am seeing the conduct...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: ... in any debate in this House.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am talking about previous Parliaments.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. You will have to rephrase that.

Asides.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, what I am saying is that from time to time we do not conduct ourselves in a manner that young people...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Before you proceed I am not prepared to allow the comment I made reference to to remain in the record. If you want to rephrase that I am happy with that.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: I am sorry. I apologise if what I said tended to reflect on you, Sir. It was never intended.

What I am saying is that it is time that we understand that the public or the young people are turned off because they perceive that the level of conduct in here is not what they expect. We have to take that. We ask ourselves why do young people shy away from participating in politics and it is because of a perception and sometimes I tend to agree with the way they think. We have to try to do something about it. I am asking therefore that we look at the Standing Orders once again and also look at the Committees and how they are set up and their responsibilities and to whom they are accountable.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to raise a matter. I would like to say that I have been made to understand that there is no provision for replacement to pay substitutes. I would like to mention the Personal Aide to the Leader of the Opposition. I feel that something like this should be... You spoke about it? I would lend my support and my voice to this particular matter because it is not a situation that is tenable and we need to address that particular point. There should be provision in the vote to take care of a substitute in case the Personal Aide is absent. That will help to allow the Leader of the Opposition to perform his duties more proficiently because he would have someone there who can take over and act in a manner that he would wish.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I would like to take my seat for now.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to move that further consideration of this Head be postponed. Earlier in the discussion, I indicated that there will be an attempt to put the actual amount required for the refurbishing of the West Wing into this Head. So I beg to move that further consideration of this Bill be postponed.

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

The question that further consideration of Head 12 be postponed was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 17 — OMBUDSMAN (AMENDED)
— $37 681

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman I beg to move that Head 17, Ombudsman in the sum of $37 681 standpart.

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

The question that Head 17 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 18 — AUDIT
— $326 263

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 18, Audit, in the sum of $326 263 stand part.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, we might have been shown a little courtesy on this side. Heads are being skipped and nobody has said anything. I am asking for some courtesy. Why is the Prime Minister's Office being skipped?

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Oh, they don't have one at the present moment. Thank you.

The question that Head 18 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 19 — MINISTRY OF FINANCE (AMENDED)
— $73 909 762

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I don't think there are any major issues for which I would like to detain the House and I have provided some information on the Tax Administration Public Expenditure and Management Programme and some other elements of the Ministry of Finance's operations.

I think I should give the Members of the House an opportunity to raise issues which they might under the specific subprograms and therefore what I will do is simply move that Head 19 stand part.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: I beg to second that, Sir.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I believe that there is an item here dealing with energy. Every year we

try to elicit from the Minister responsible whether the Government is satisfied yet that the present arrangements we have for the provision of energy in Barbados by the monopoly known as MOBIL is against the interests of the consumers of Barbados, a contributor to Barbados' uncompetitive position and today the Honourable Minister will be able to inform us as to what impact the new trade liberalisation regulations, as embodied in the latest amendment to the Customs Act and the Miscellaneous Controls Act and those myriad pieces of legislation which implement the Government's agreement with the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and which on the floor of this House for many years we were trying to get the then Minister of Finance to agree that he had to agree to that. But it is only subsequently, and I commend the Honourable Minister of Finance in this respect, that he was the first to admit that the Government had made that decision.
6.50 p.m.

Sir, we want to know because it is considered on this side that Mobil is being pampered by the Government going out of its way to provide additional protection and in return what the Barbadians are getting is an inferior product and I am going to state that. I am going to maintain that. I think that Mobil owes the public of Barbados an explanation as to why it is that impossible for people who buy from Mobil to get a certificate of quality from them when they are supplied with their product.

Everybody knows, Sir, that car owners in Barbados have had to face the cost, particularly people with certain Japanese cars and Korean cars, poor people like me who have to buy a Korean car, have had to face this difficulty. You will see that the carburetors of those cars have great difficulty and this has caused a lot of problems. I would have thought that the Ministry that is responsible for Energy would have gone out of their way to protect the poor unsuspecting public against this giant monopoly known as Mobil. It is a very serious thing. I would like to know what efforts were made in the Ministry of Finance to ensure that there was protection for consumers in Barbados because I am sure the Ministry of Finance must have been aware of the grave dissatisfaction...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: No, but it comes under the Ministry of Finance and they should have told us about it.

Sir, we now have another area in respect of energy. We feel very strongly on this. We want to know the position. I do not want to comment on anything that is sub *judice.* I do not wish to do that. What I would like to know is whether the Ministry of Finance, in their quest to receive funds from the sale of assets of the people of Barbados of which they are only temporary trustees, whether they are making sure that the Statutory Boards, and this is a very important point of principle — I hear all this talk about Government selling. One of the things that amazes me, Mr. Chairman, is that people seem to have a fundamental lack of understanding of the structure of a Statutory Board. The Government cannot sell anything of a Statutory Board. If they have puppets you can say that the Government will do this and the Government will do that but as we know, it is very difficult, if you have a determined Board, and it is backed by equally a determined Minister, to effectuate your objective unless you can convince the board and . the Minister that the objective is for the good of the country.

The Government of Barbados, as I understand it, cannot sell the NPC things. They have to sell their shares. There have to be some kind of agreement with respect to the sale of the shares but the corporate structure is vested — I believe the NPC is registered or part of it under Parliament and some other thing so that we must get our ideas very clearly. This is where the confusion is arising. A lot of confusion is arising because the poor workers feel very unsafe. They are told that they are employees, not of the Government, but of these organisations and yet still they are hearing that the Minister or the Government or some other agency of Government is saying that they are privatising and selling.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Well, sell the shares. I am sure the workers would not mind - if you sell all the shares because if you sell all the shares then the new owners would have to continue with the contracts of employment they have. It is the same company and this is where the confusion is arising because the trade unions, and this is what is worrying me that they have people on the other side who spent a large part of their life earning money from representing workers in a trade union and we do not seem to be hearing anything in relation to these matters because the terms and conditions of service are negotiated between the workers and their representatives and the entity 'which owns and controls it and yet still we are hearing that the Ministry of Finance as part of the Government's policy is privatising NPC. It has caused a lot of confusion.

Like I hear them saying they are privatising Heywoods. I know. This is a very important point because I know that the hotel is vested in the Tourism Development Corporation. I know that. It is vested there and nobody but the Tourism Development Corporation can dispose of that real estate subject to the procedures that are provided in the Act, nobody but them.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I have no doubt about it. If they want to agree *with* the Government I. have

absolutely no problem but they know that if they do not agree with the Government that they will suffer the same fate that the Ministers in the Tourism Authority suffered. We know that and the Honourable Member would be a beneficiary thereof.

The point 4 do not allow this confusion to go because it is bad. If we continue to convey the impression, and this is the point that I want to make, that the Statutory Board is a mere puppet of the Minister, we would be doing ourselves a great disservice. We want in this context to have some answers to these questions. But Mobil is a very serious problem. My understanding of the agreement with Mobil was that it came to an end and that Mobil had an option to ask for a renewal.
7.00 p.m.

My understanding of the Agreement with Mobil was that it came to an end and that Mobil had an option to ask for a renewal... My understanding of that Agreement was that the Government had to negotiate with respect to a renewal in good faith. I accept that. But there was nowhere in the Agreement that said that Government was under any obligation to provide in a new Agreement for any greater level of protection than the existing level of protection which was a cess of I believe it was US 1O a gallon on' the
. import of fuel. In other words,Government could, if they so wished, to say we would give you an extension but the only protection you would get is the existing le"'el of US 100 a gallon.

Everybody knows that Mobil cannot possibly compete with large refineries at US 10¢ a gallon is the only measure of protection. Recently they told me that the added protection in addition to the US 100 a gallon, the failure of the Agreement not to give licences, except in restrictive circumstances for the importation of fuel that has been removed and they have put in a special 100% duty. This is what I am worried about. I want to know whether this additienal 100% duty.... Do you have the US 100 or 100 on 10 I want to know. What is the position at the present moment? I want to know what is the position with the Government as shareholder in NPC? What is its position in its privatisation? We have made it clear that we regard...This is not any cussedness on the part of the Labour Party. This is based on hard experience. Barbados has energy resources. Those energy resources are very valuable to Barbados. They are not, so far, of such a magnitude as would attract the large multi-national oil companies. That is our experience. If you go through the history of the eighties you will notice that this very Mobil had rights over the exploration and development of oil fields in Barbados. They bought general crude. They gave it up and they said they were not interested in it.

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I want to know what is the position? Because we feel that we must have cast iron provisions to ensure that people just do not buy these things with the object of closing down. They are too valuable to Barbados. The Natural Gas Corporation which is part of NPC has been a Corporation that from its very inception under successive Governments has always been profitable and that the Barbados National Oil Company exploited a resource which would only have been exploited by the Government.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. George South.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am concerned like many Barbadians about the meteoric rise in insurance premiums for housing and motor vehicles. The result has been that there is a large number of houseowners who have not renewed their house insurance when it came up the last time. There are also a number of motor vehicles on the roads of Barbados that are not now insured. There are 2 things that arise from those situations. The first one the heavy social cost involved when houseowners do not have their houses insured because it is a burden on the Government when these houses are destroyed. In many cases, the Government then has to provide housing for them.

In respect of motor vehicles, all of us who travel on the highway have to be concerned because if we are injured on the highway by a vehicle that is not insured, and we are put in a wheel chair for life, there is no compensation when the owner of that motor vehicle is a man of straw. For that reason, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think the Government is guilty of serious dereliction of duty in not even making a statement in relation to the development of this recent phenomenon.

We have heard from the insurance companies. I have seen things on the television and I have received, when a few of my insurances had become due, a letter written to me that I consider very prolix, a lot of words that do not mean anything to me. I do not understand what it means, Sir. I am suggesting that since my intelligence is about average that a lot of people in Barbados who received theirs do not understand what it means. I have sought to get some explanation and I have been told that the whole problem of reinsurance poses a difficulty because of a number of natural disasters in this region and beyond. I am not getting into those specifics at this stage.

The fact is that we are in a state of crisis as a result of this phenomenal rise in the insurance premiums in this

country. The Government does not do anything. Not a word out of the Government or the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance does not speak for me to hear. He must be whispering.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: That is so. But also a lot of people in this country whose intelligence is, not at the level of the Minister of Finance do not understand what is going on and they are having a burden with it.

I have not heard the Government try to relate the massive increase in premiums to the profitability of the insurance companies. I remember the Right Honourable Prime Minister boasted some time recently, some time last year that he, as Minister of Finance, had done more for the private sector than any other Minister of Finance in this country. That kind of statement is significant particularly at a time like this. This is not raising an issue for the sake of raising it. This is a matter of genuine concern in this country. The Minister of Finance instead of doing the usual speaking from his seat and heckling should get up and give Barbadians some measure of relief first by words and then by action over what is happening in relation to insurance. That is the only point I want to raise at this stage, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to revert to the issue of energy. I begin by restating that the policy of the Labour Party in relation to the sale of the assets of the National Petroleum Corporation and the assets of the BNOC is quite clear. We will find it very difficult to honour any agreement for the sale of those assets. We cannot guarantee any purchaser, that on the return of the Labour Party to Government, we will not be seeking to reacquire those assets. There is a fundamental divide between the Democratic Labour Party and ourselves on the issue of energy and the preservation of the natural resources of Barbados insofar as we are talking of hydro-carbons. It is unfair to the people of Barbados to sell the oil rights which we have in this country and which, in the 1950s were compulsorily acquired by the Government, the Labour Party Government, a socialist Government in the interest of the development of Barbados as a whole.
7.10 p.m.

The National Petroleum Corporation has made a profit. It is not a loss making venture. It has a good earnings record and it has substantial retained earnings, I believe, in excess of $12 million as at December. So it is not *one of* these Corporations that the International Monetary Fund can accuse any Government of mismanaging. There must be a tremendous contradiction in policy where the Government is prepared to give a monopoly to a private corporation such as Mobil over the importation of petroleum products into Barbados and at the same time deny itself the right to exploit its own natural resources in the interest of the people of Barbados as a whole. This is a serious contradiction in policy. How can the Democratic Labour Party seriously claim that it is a socialist party? How can we take seriously the statement of the Prime Minister that somebody is destabilising his Government in the interest of the plantocracy and the aristocracy, when he is making this sort of concession and empowering the foreign multi-national corporation instead of the people of Barbados? It is real hyperbole and junk frankly, because when you examine the policy of this Government there is a tremendous contradiction between their words and their performance and their actions. This is crystal clear when the Government's energy policy is dissected.

On May 20, 1990 the agreement with Mobil expired. The Government has kept Mobil for some time on a month to month arrangement. In the Development Plan 1993—2000 the Government is now speaking in terms that lead me to believe that the Government has concluded a ten-year agreement with Mobil. The Agreement has' not been brought to this House. The public of Barbados does not know the terms of that Agreement other than to the extent that the Honourable Minister on one occasion stated that Mobil was being given a 12.5% return on its capital used and useful. We know that a former Minister — who now walks up and down the country talking a lot of foolishness — whilst sitting over there as the Minister of Finance increased the amount of profit that Mobil earns from its monopoly.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Yes, I am talking about the former Minister increasing the amount, taking it out of the taxpayers pockets and lining the pockets of Mobil Oil with increased profits. Unfortunately the other Members over there who were in Cabinet at that time sat down and allowed it to happen.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: It is said they did not know what was happening. But why are we taking Mobil and making Mobil into this special darling of the Democratic Labour Party? This Mobil Agreement was first introduced in here by a former Deputy Premier of the Democratic Labour Party who is now deceased. And I do not want to speak ill about people who have passed. But, since that time, Mobil has had a favoured position to the extent that the consumers of Barbados have been paying more for oil than they should be paying if we had free competition for our oil products.

The former Right Honourable Member for St. John, the late Errol Barrow, commissioned a study. He had the benefit of the advice of the other oil companies to show that the Government by revoking Mobil's monopoly could have saved the taxpayers of Barbados in excess of $10 million at the time. Such a move would have resulted in a drop in the cost of petroleum products to the people.

Now Honourable Members from the other side have argued in here that they had a duty to negotiate with Mobil. Even if they had such a duty, I contend that they were under no obligation to give Mobil better concessions or reach an agreement on terms that are more favourable to Mobil Oil. I am therefore asking the Minister to lay the New Agreement on the Table of this House. It is important that the people know what is in the Agreement.

Let us examine further the cost to the consumer of continuing the Mobil concession. In January 1991 the ex-refinery cost of petroleum products under the Platt's Agreement was 67.5 cents per litre. By September 1993 it had dropped to 55.5 cents. If we take 1991, April 18th for instance, the consumer was paying $1.27 per litre whereas the price then ex-refinery is 67.5 cents. In September 1993 the consumer was paying $1.58 whereas in September 1993 the ex-refinery cost was 55.5 cents. In short the ex-refinery cost of the petroleum product was less in September 1993 than it was in January 1991 and yet we find that in September 1993 the local consumer was paying more for gasolene than he was paying in April 1991.

Now in 1993 the Government was taking 91 cents out of every $1.58 cents that the consumer pays. That is the position and people ought to know that. That is a graphic illustration of what is wrong with Government's energy policy. The cost is then being passed on either in the form of transportation costs or electricity costs. It also results in Barbadian products not being as competitive in the market as they ought to be.

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: Well, Sir, Since I have only one minute I will resume tomorrow. 7.20 p.m.

What I am saying here is that there is no case for continuing a monopoly of Mobil and that, if the Government has negotiated a new agreement, it did not do so really in the interest of the people of Barbados as a whole and it is a wrong policy decision to have gone along those lines. In my view, to sell the NPC and BNOC at this stage of our existence as an independent nation is a wrong policy. The Labour Party would find it very difficult indeed to honour that type of sale.

Sir, I will revert to the other aspects of the energy policy tomorrow.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal with some of these issues that have arisen because obviously Honourable Members are labouring under considerable misapprehension. I know that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West always seems to get hot under the collar regarding the Mobil Agreement. This issue has been debated in every Estimates by the Minister of Finance. So that this is the third occasion that the Government has had the opportunity to deal with the issue of the Mobil Agreement.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West on the last occasion made it clear to the House that Government was under no obligation to renew the agreement. So I am very glad to hear or it appears to me that his position has somewhat mellowed. I do not know if he has come around to my view. But I do not offer legal advice to Government and I want to make that position clear that I am not substituting my legal knowledge for the knowledge of the people who are paid in the Attorney's General Office to do the work which they are supposed to do. If they say that the contract must be renewed, I am proposing to follow that advice. That is the advice that the Government was given.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not a legal adviser to Government. I am not substituting my view. That must be the way a Minister must function. If the Solicitor General has duties to advise Government, it is not for me to do so. I may ask him whether his view is correct. I may *seek to point* out to him that he should have a different view. But if at the end of the day the view he gave is the legal advice to the Government of Barbados, then I feel duty bound to accept that. I need to make that point because I want to be very clear that the Government has not proceeded to enter into a new agreement with Mobil as some kind of policy decision. The agreement existed and we were required therefore, because of the option to renew, to go along with that. As a secondary position, what the Government decided to do was to seek, and Mobil agreed, to renegotiate some of the terms of that agreement. The renegotiation of the terms of that option, which could only be for 10 years to the year 2000, included' looking at the issue of the rate of return, the way in which the assets are valued for the purpose of calculating the rate of return on the investment, the question of the introduction of unleaded gas, and issues relating to the refinery surcharge.

Now let me make the point very clear, Mi. Speaker. If other options were available, I would pursue them. The cost of operating the Mobil Refinery in Barbados to the consumer of Barbados, in my view, is horrendous. But nobody has ever denied that. So I would like to

understand on what basis Honourable Members over there feel that they are coming from some great position of principle that they could have ended the Mobil contract and saved the consumer. The contract exists and, if we end it, we have to compensate Mobil. I would like to know where those resources would come from to compensate Mobil.

' Sir, that is the whole point about protection. That is the very point about protection. If you have a guaranteed rate of return on a refinery operation which the taxpayers guarantee, then you must have protection. If you- allow others to compete, it means that the taxpayers will be paying twice because they will be buying those cheaper products and also having to subsidize the refinery so that it recovers at the level which is in the agreement. That is the point the Honourable Member for Christ Church South should have led his argument to. Because you cannot have a refinery agreement in which the taxpayers of Barbados guarantee a rate of return.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, that was always in the agreement. I think it was at one point 12.5 per cent after tax. It was pushed up to 15 per cent after tax. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West is quite right. We have got it down to about 12.5 per cent or 13 per cent. But the point that I am trying to make is that as long as the refinery exists you have to have some kind of protection. You cannot allow the marketing companies to import products and compete with a refinery which the taxpayers are subsidizing. It would not make economic sense at any level and I think that must be made clear.

But I want to make this second point, Mr. Chairman, that we have not conclude our negotiations on the continuation. I gave an undertaking to the House and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West's memory is obviously failing him. I said to this House and I maintain, not that I will lay the agreement, I will lay the draft that is proposed to be signed and I will also circulate it to the marketing companies. I said that and I know that Members of the Opposition know that that was the Government's intention. Do not get on as though somebody has signed any agreement behind the backs of the people to lock them into an arrangement which they do not understand.

Furthermore, the issue of the Mobil Agreement came up the last time that we increased consumption taxes on petroleum products. At that point the Press was given the opportunity to solicit the information on the terms of the agreement and the public was given that information, and subsequent to that on a call-in programme. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West was on one end and I was on the other where he asked questions and I answered them, not to his satisfaction because he was scoring a political point. But I answered the questions.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, we have not signed any agreement and, as I have said, it will be made available to the House and also to the marketing companies and whoever wishes to comment on it can comment on it. That is not a big issue.

Now the question arises about insurance premiums. As I recall, what the Development Plan is saying is that. the Agreement will come' to an end in the planning period. Therefore, what the Government will be doing is looking at the alternatives to the Mobil operation during the planning period. That is my recollection of what is in there and I have not checked it in relation to the energy policy, and I was very clear on that.

With regard to the insurance premiums, I do not know what the Honourable Member for St. George South expects the Minister of Finance to do on a matter like this. The insurance industry, in my view, needs some serious competition. I am proposing to have the Insurance Act amended. I would like to force . them to become public companies and increase their capital and a whole number of other things. I do not know if it is going to be possible, but there is too much reinsurance. They are not writing enough domestic risks and we have looked at this problem. Because we are operating essentially in a private sector market, what we hope will happen is that ICB will continue to offer the level of competition desirable together with the new credit unions. Now I see a motor insurance company of which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is a Director is offering an agreed value policy for which the premium should be cheaper. You need all of those new initiatives to bring down the risk. There is nothing that Government can do to bring down insurance rates. I don't understand the question.
7.30 p.m.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order. The Honourable Minister is in danger of misleading. He just 'said that he would like to see ICB do this and do that. It is the same Insurance Corporation of Barbados that just closed out on housing? You cannot buy a policy now if you want to.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: She obviously does not understand what she is talking about. The Insurance companies in Barbados have something called capacity and between them they can only write so much risk. ICB has written their risk up to the height of its capacity. You cannot compromise the company by pushing the risks, whether domestic or the re-insurance, over that capacity. That is a simple issue. You are a director of an insurance company and you don't even understand that?

Anyway I am going to leave you because you are in a different mood and you are not necessarily rational.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, he is not getting off easily like that. This is a government that has made it cheaper to rent than to own anything in Barbados that is now undermining even the potential that people may have to protect their property both motor cars, houses and elsewhere.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now, the Honourable Member again...

Miss B. A. MILLER: ... and some of those snide remarks...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member again has intervened without stating what point she has risen on. I am not...

Miss B. A. MILLER: It was on a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No. You did not state that so I cannot know that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg Your Chair's pardon. I am stating that I was on a point of order.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, the Insurance Corporation of Barbados cannot write all of the domestic house policies in Barbados. It is as simple as that so that to say that the Government must do something — I would like to switch my policy to ICB too and they told me no. So it is not any special group of people that the ICB is turning back. They have written the level that they can take in terms of the market.

Now I don't really think that I need to say anything else about that because it is a simple matter which should be clearly understood. So we need more competition in the sector and we need to underwrite more risks domestically and those are the issues which through the Insurance Act and through the encouragement of greater competition in the domestic insurance industry should achieve that. We have .new insurance companies coming into operation which one hopes will be able to offer that level of competition.

Let me move on to the issue of the National Petroleum Corporation. I am dealing with it now.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You can write or don't write. It is going into the record tonight.

Mr. Chairman, the Government has stated its position on NPC and BNOCL. Assuming that the workers are able to purchase 'those 2 companies — and I know the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central — I think they would be very upset to think that this House does not have the confidence in them such that if they were sold to them that the Barbados Labour Party would immediately re-acquire the...

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member cannot get up in here and make that remark. The Honourable Member has been negotiating with the Skinner people for the sale of the private enterprise. That is what I am talking about. The Honourable Member must know that the negotiations have been going on'for the sale to private enterprise.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member cannot go on to make a speech.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, the Cabinet took a position a long time ago that it wanted a consortium purchase of the BNOCL and NPC which involved the workers and another party. No individual company has been negotiating with the Government of Barbados and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is talking absolute nonsense and obviously does not understand what he is saying but that is not unusual with him. He cannot say that the Government of Barbados has been in exclusive negotiation with any individual company.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member again will continue to misrepresent what I said. I said that the Government was negotiating with private enterprise. That is the truth. The Honourable Member might call it nonsense but it is the truth. Why doesn't the Honourable Member say that the workers have come into it at the last minute?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, there was what is theoretically called a staff offer for the BNOCL/NPC from the beginning. Of the 5 offers that we had for the purchase one of them was a staff offer. It is true that it did not include as many members or the majority of members of the National Petroleum Corporation but we were always looking and negotiating with the workers of the BNOCL who were part of that particular offer. As I understood it, it constituted the majority of staff of the National Oil Company. So again the Honourable Member does not understand what he is saying.

Now, the real point is that apart from that, there were other people interested and we thought that we would seek to put those parties all together and to get a consortium purchase of the entities and that is what is being pursued now. The workers are now discussing as I understand it...

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not calling any names. I believe that if you are doing negotiations you

should do them on the basis of integrity and not come in here and wash people's business all over the place. He can call whatever names he wants.

There are private sector interests as well as an offer from the staff and we will seek to put the 2 of them together and see if we can enter into an arrangement in which the staff will have the majority interest if possible or some major participation in the purchase of the company:

. I hope that that succeeds. That is the decision Cabinet has taken and the privatisation unit is pursuing that decision as a matter of policy. I don't think there were any other issues on this but I will wait for the Honourable Members tomorrow and respond, Mr. Chairman.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the sitting be suspended until 1 p.m. tomorrow afternoon. In so moving to sit at 1 p.m. I draw to the attention of Members who are interested that lunch will be available from 12 o'clock noon. For those persons to whom it is important or for those who just wish to know lunch will be available from 12 noon in the usual way, in the way to which we have become accustomed.

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

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

RESUMPTION

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee of Supply. The Honourable Member for St. Michael Central.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, when we took the break yesterday we were dealing with the matter of finance and in that regard I would wish to make some observations. When we dealt with the second reading I was careful to make the point that among the many reasons which led to my breaking with the ruling Party was my concern that there was a trend towards an arrangement through which we would find foreign takeover of vital aspects of our heritage. I wish to revisit that especially as we deal here today with the matter of finance.

Looking particularly at the subject of privatisation and I would wish to have us look at it at two levels, the one I have just referred to and the other one, the philosophical one, which I will address when we look at the subject of MOBIL and the NPC. But in the general matter of the takeover of our resources I think we have to recognize the concerns we would have in the labour movement particularly for privatisation programmes which have seen . critical shares like the shares in Cable and Wireless now BET and of the Telephone Company leaving our shores. It is true that the Minister of Finance will most likely say and I would expect him to say, since he has said in another forum, that there is, under . active consideration, ' a programme which might see those shares returning. I look forward to seeing that but at the same time' I am very concerned that it had become necessary in the first place for us to embark on programmes towards privatisation at such a level and in such a manner that we are, by those actions, contradicting what should be our movement as a people in a democratic society and a society which is run . or should be run by socialist Governments, both Governments we have had being Governments that are socialist in orientation.

And yet we would find ourselves in situations where the commanding heights of the economy are becoming more and more distant from the average man and the average woman in the street, however you may define that term average man or average woman. I think we have to concern ourselves very much about this because both within the ranks of the Barbados Labour Party and the ranks of the Democratic Labour Party we can find several examples in the work that they have done as Governments which would suggest that they have been socialist in orientation.

People in countries like Barbados who lead the society should not be running away from their commitment to socialism, but should be upholding the standards of socialism much more than they do currently. It is for reasons like this, Mr. Chairman, that I get very concerned at the privatisation policies of the Government be it at the level of Arawak, at the level of BET and BARTEL, at the level that appears to be the Transport Board or wherever else it is.

I do not say that there will be no privatisation. I cannot- expect that. In the current movement towards

arrangements where Governments are expected to play less and less of a role in the development process – that is a direct role – that we can escape some of the pressures which would be placed on us by having some level of privatisation. But I did not at any stage believe that we in Barbados had any high level in comparable terms of Government involvement or Government over involvement in the affairs of the state anyhow.

We have to look again at that position and we have to bear in mind that, very often, when we have built up economies and built up sectors of the economy, and then we have moved towards privatisation that there has been a net loss to the people of the country. I would hope that the Government of the day and whatever successor Governments there may be, either in the long-term or in the short-term, that the Governments would concern themselves with looking more and more towards mapping out programmes where, even if the state were to divest itself of portions of what it now holds in trust for the people, that the people may be approached more directly and more openly with a view to having them share in areas of ownership which they believe are within their grasp, and which they believe to be attractive enough. I want to put it that way because I would think that Barbadian people would be much more interested in buying BARTEL shares, if they had been made available to them originally, than they might be interested in buying shares in establishments which might look a little shaky and where there might not be as satisfied about the returns on investment as they would have been for shares in the Telephone Company or in the Cable and Wireless Company.

I wish to look for a minute too on the matter of the effort being made to privatise our natural resources in the area of energy. I have spoken on the subject before. The Minister of Finance, I think, is clearly aware of the position which I adopt both in this Parliament and in my capacity as Leader of the Barbados Workers' Union. I wish as often as is necessary to make the point that non-renewable resources, particularly resources like our oil and our natural gas cannot be resources which the Government can take the luxury of having somebody else take responsibility for.

I think, Mr. Chairman, that if we were to look at the experiences of the industrialized countries of the world we might find that amazing phenomenon which might shock us into reviewing our own position. It is on report that many of those industrialized countries, be it the United States or Great Britain, France or where have you; that at the same time that they might have had all kinds of jockeying for positions in the Middle East or in Africa where oil was being produced, they were careful to protect their resources in oil and gas on their own door steps.

The obvious philosophy is clear that what they realize was that they could exploit those resources in oil and gas very easily in the Middle East but that, sooner or later, the time would come when those fields would be exhausted and they had to be in a position to control what was theirs. We have only very limited resources up to now because although it has been *projected* that we are in this great vein that comes up from Venezuela or goes down to Venezuela, up until now we have not been able to find it. A number of people claim to know where it is but they have not been prepared to say.

Meanwhile we are only getting our oil and our gas in very marginal quantities. Although it is marginal, Mr. Chairman, it is still of very great value to the peoples of this country. I think it would be remiss of us not to repeat in the circumstances that it is our considered opinion that those resources should be held by the Government of the day in trust for the people of the country. I do not support the view that we should be going down the road privatising in those areas. If, as the Government would say and as a Minister was putting forward earlier in the presentation, he would want the people to be involved in economic enfranchisement in that particular department, then there would have to be a clear enough practical assistance programme that the Government would be embarking upon to ensure that the shares which the people were taking were not token shares but rather that they would be able to benefit meaningfully with the Government participating fully at two levels, by an assistance programme and by being the overall holder of the assets. Government could then establish a system where the people themselves could be empowered.

1.10 p.m.

This is not what appears to me. From my discussions what is *coming out seems to be at best an element of privatisation, where the most the workers could hope for would be something less than 20% of the assets. I am suggesting that in a circumstance of economic enfranchisement that it would not make an awful lot of sense for a body of workers to use up very limited tesources for a 20% share when in fact they would have no real say in the direction in which that 20% would be able to assist in the affairs of the establishment.

Added to that we have to look at the persons or the interest which might concern themselves with running the establishment and would have to bear in mind that the running of our resources, particularly that non-renewable resource of energy, has got to be safeguarded for the people of this country and not run for the narrow interest of the people who might buy into that particular interest.

I would think – I have enough time to make a further point, Mr. Chairman – that when we look at the circumstances of the National Petroleum Corporation, the Minister might recall my concern that whereas those

workers at the National Petroleum Corporation are interested in economic enfranchisement that there are certain fundamental conditions of employment which relate to them which cannot be glossed over and which conditions of employment have got to be met and satisfied before there could be any programme involving themselves in any arrangement with any other establishment.

I think it is now common knowledge that they, the workers, have together decided to bring an injunction against the NPC which would prevent that Corporation from being able to enter into any business with a third party while the business of their terms and conditions of employment remains outstanding. That speaks directly to the issue which we were careful to draw to the Ministry's attention long before now, that if the Ministry and if the Government starts from a position where it says that the people's interests ate uppermost in their minds then they have to be careful in the way they work out the details of their programmes. They have to be careful to ensure that there is no contradiction and the NPC situation is one where regrettably there is such a contradiction.

In fact, Sir, it is most dissatisfying and I believe that the Minister, who in my view would be the Minister responsible for the NPC, would want to express similar concern at the fact that although the Government of the day made provision for pensions for people of Statutory Boards, that the NPC after all the time that that decision was made, has up until now still not made any provision. I cannot say has not made adequate provision, but has made no provisions whatsoever to ensure that that determination of the Government was implemented. It cannot be said that in the case of the NPC it resulted from there being a lack of resources. This predates the Minister's accession or is it demotion, I am sure which it is, his accession to the office of be Minister of Finance, so I am not blaming him as a person. I am saying it is the Government's position that is to be lamented. If the Government makes a decision regarding the payment of, or the provision for pension, but then the very Government fails to make sure that it is implemented in an agency of the said Government, then that is doubly to be deplored. That situation causes the workers to be very concerned, very dissatisfied since it is a matter which would touch the lives, not only of the workers at the NPC and at BNOC (wherever I said Mobil before I meant BNOC); but it would also touch on all other public servants because there is a matter of association in the same way as when the matter of 8% is finally addressed in the Privy Council in another couple of weeks that we would expect that the determination of the Privy Council, when it is made in the favour of the workers, would not then have to be subjected to further adjudication but when once agreed for one that it would be implemented for all public servants.

I am obliged to you, Sir, for this but I would like to reserve the right to speak to other matters under this Head.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. James North.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, I am very heartened at the sentiments expressed on this Head by the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. The question of the protection and exploitation of the national resources of the country is an extremely important one. And even though Governments are. apt to do what is politically and economically expedient from time to time.

My subjective view, Mr. Chairman, is that on the question of resources as important as our national energy resources that when it comes to the privatisation of such resources we need to proceed with the utmost caution. Explicit in the very excellent speech by the last Member who spoke ,was that there are certain resources within a country which are so precious as to remain in the hands of the people. Even though it might be impractical,- Mr. Chairman, to actually distribute important natural resources in the hands of the people then, Sir, the Government as one of the principal agencies within the community should be principal trustee for such resources. At this point, Sir, even though I am aware that a lot of policies in respect of privatisation are being pursued by the Government I want to voice my objection to doctrinaire privatisation. I believe that like our water resources our energy resources are so important as to remain in trust for all Barbadians. And where a policy of privatisation is imposed, whether imposed by external agencies like those agencies • that believe that a country should be run along strict economic lines, whether imposed by dire financial circumstances, Sir, the fact remains that it would be unthinkable in Barbados for us to privatise resources like our water resources and if the analogy I am using, Mr. Chairman, between our water resources and our energy resources holds good, and which I submit it should, Sir, I believe that the point made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is a very strong point which is deserving of the greatest support, Sir. The Honourable Member for Christ Church as you will recall last night was suggesting that whenever our side is entrusted with the responsibility for Government in this country we would take back the energy sector, in trust, as a Government on behalf of the workers of Barbados.

Sir, clearly in supporting that suggestion which would be a policy for our Government if perchance we should be entrusted with such a responsibility. In supporting that one must bear in mind that agencies like the World Bank on occasions, the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank, often when approaching Third World Countries seem to lose sight of the fact that in the Third World situation, Mr. Chairman, Governments

have to design policies which cannot always follow strict economic and business principles. 1.20 p.m.

I have no doubt, Sir, that the International Monetary Fund has not much strut for social welfare programmes that smack of socialism., I believe, Sir, that it was at the urging of the International Monetary Fund that the privatisation programmes as embarked upon by the Government was introduced. When I perused the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party, I saw no reference whatever to the fact that given the opportunity to govern in 1991 they would have embarked on any policy of widespread and rapid privatisation. I believe that one member of the Government has already said that his view was that privatisation was imposed and that it was used as a revenue raising means. I believe that, Sir, because I have seen nothing out of what the Democratic Labour Party has promised Barbados in 1991 that suggested to me that privatisation on a widespread basis was indeed a plank or policy of the Democratic Labour Party. I believe also that, if the Democratic Labour Party is as socialist oriented as it has pretended to be over the years, it must watch and be careful with its policy on privatisation because it can very well lead to selling out the people's rights. That is why I found the speech by the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central extremely important, because in Third World situations we still have to let the socialist principles where applicable guide us in the policies that are introduced in these countries. Barbados cannot be run at a Governmental level like Goddard's Enterprises or Cave Shepherd where you maximize...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, on a point of order. I do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member in his stride because I know that I will have a chance to speak again. But I must point out to this House very clearly that the Honourable Member for St. James North is misleading the House. Firstly, he should consult the speech of the former Right Honourable Member for St. John in the 1986 either Budget or Estimates debate in which he made it clear that we would sell the Hilton, Heywoods, Arawak Cement Plant and a whole list of other items. But apart from that, Mr. Chairman, I want to draw to the Honourable Member's attention to page 10 of the Democratic Labour Party's manifesto, the section dealing with public and private sector, which sets out the Party's policy on divestment. Maybe he is confusing privatisation with divestment or he is not sure. But the Party has a policy on divestment in which he said that we would look at the entire public sector and treat each case on its merit.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, I was rather taken up with the manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party. I believe that anything that would relate to what the Right Honourable Member for St. John would have said was not in the 1991. Indeed, Sir, even in respect of the question of divestment, I recall several DLP spokesmen who indicated that a policy of divestment would be pursued in respect to public sector enterprises that were found not to be functioning efficiently in the public sector. I do not have any evidence before me that the National Petroleum Corporation was one such entity that was functioning so badly in the public sector as to be a proper candidate to be thrown into the private sector. Other than a sense of boredom of the day, the Honourable Member for St, John jumps up from his seat to make a point which I believe his three colleagues would not necessarily want to go along with. But the Member for St. John must bear in mind that the fact remains that in any system where you have an emerging Third World country with a background of colonialism...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member continues to mislead the House. To speak of Barbados as an emerging Third World country is completely a misconception. The 20th nation in the world could not be an emerging Third World country. Let the Honourable Member understand himself, Sir.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Sir, it is a poor expression of language which is not really a great divide between the interpretation of being said. But I do not like certain politicians to speak either under the influence of hyperbole or euphemism. The fact remains that even if certain agencies would like to rate Barbados as a middle income country, to most people who are discerning Barbados is still a reasonably poor country. I am saying that I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central that a system of informed enlightened socialism...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us hear the Honourable Member.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, I am respectfully requesting an additional 6 minutes based on the fact that I would have lost that because of the interruption of those two Honourable Members.

. The point is, Sir, that in a society like Barbados, where several people are still very poor and where over the years both sides of the House were able to introduce a number of social programmes in the interest of the people, we find it hard to swallow indoctrinated privatisation. In my subjective and respectful view, Mr. Chairman, to go as far as to privatise your energy resources is very much approximating to the wholesale rejection of socialism and it is repudiating the type of enlightened political philosophy which both parties have purported to have upheld over the years. .

Sir, in that respect, I find it easy to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. In my view, the only problem that would have been facing the National Petroleum Corporation, which is the successor to the Barbados Natural Gas, was that there situations in Barbados over the last ten years where the agency was not often able to meet the demand probably because of the programme not being as expansionary as they ought to have been or possibly because of a shortage of investment finance. I want specifically to refer to the fact that in my constituency that there are persons who see natural gas flow through areas close to them who are concerned that it does not come to their village. I am going to suggest that the Government should examine the question of distribution of energy resources and particularly natural gas and look to see those areas especially close to the source supply and introduce programmes to ensure that the natural gas get to these Barbadians. I am particularly making a request on behalf of the very good people of Fox Club Gap, The Garden, where the Honourable Member no doubt had he visited there would have met some nice people. In that area, there are villages close by that are supplied with natural gas but in Fox Club Gap there is no natural gas.

Aside.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: The residents in The Garden, Fox Club Gap, are concerned that villages nearby are being supplied with natural gas and in their own area there is no supply yet. They find it rather burdensome to buy alternative sources of energy which are more costly and sometimes when it runs out can cause much inconvenience.

Sir, to close, I would like to once again caution the Government that its policy on privatisation, especially as it goes so far as to embrace our energy supply, in my view is ill-conceived, a repudiation of the socialist principle, and a policy akin to selling out the patrimony of Barbadians. In that regard, Sir, I once again repeat the view of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West who said that any future BLP Administration will take back the unit out of the hands of the private sector and rightfully restore it to the Government in trust on behalf of the citizens of this country.

I am very grateful to you, Mr. Chairman, for permitting me this intervention. 1.30 p.m.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, before I continue on any new subject, I want to respond to some of the statements made by the Honourable Member for St. John, the Minister of Finance, in relation to the privatisation of the National Petroleum Corporation and Barbados National Oil Company. When I spoke yesterday I made the statement that the Government had been negotiating with private persons for the takeover of these resources. The Minister in his reply stated that the negotiations were with the workers and that the Government had tried to marry together the workers' proposals and those of certain private sector bidders.

Let me state as a fact that the Government did have a proposal from the workers to take over the organisation which was dependant on some financing being arranged. What the Government has suggested to the workers is that the workers should negotiate with the private sector bidder from Trinidad and Tobago — and I will call the name if necessary — and to negotiate only for 20% of the equity in the company.

One of the other proposals put to the workers is that they should convert their severance into share ownership. The Honourable Member is again shaking his head. Let me say this to the Honourable Member. There is in none of the sales that have taken place so far, other than the most recent sale of Heywoods, has this Government secured the rights of the workers or in fact made proposals for wider enfranchisement of the people of Barbados. When the Barbados External Telecommunications Ltd. shares were sold, the Government at that time had offers on hand from Caribbean nationals, including Barbadians, but the Government was so intent on getting foreign exchange to satisfy the IMF test that it did not give these persons a reasonable opportunity to get their bids considered, despite the fact that the High Commissioner for Barbados in London had interviewed the main bidders and had certified to the Government that they seemed to be genuine bidders and in a position to close the deal. So what we have is that the Government sold the BET shares, having sold the Telephone Company shares which are quite high yielding in terms of dividend and was giving the public of Barbados a good rate of return, and at present it has made the share position of Cable and Wireless stronger with merely a promise — if the Minister wants to call it a safeguard — that some way down the line they would put some of the shares back on the market for the public of Barbados. We will still have to let them take out their capital and their capital gains by way of foreign exchange again, and that is the point I want to make.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member for St. Michael East says *sotto voce*.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. No, I do not want that. When he has made a contribution then you can refer to the contribution he has made.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: All right. It is said, Mr. Chairman, that the foreign exchange position would have improved by then. That is not a basis on which Government should approach these matters and I am saying that in relation to the oil industry in Barbados there is no case for the sale of the shares in the oil industry, having regard to its vital importance to this country.

Now, the only common thread going through the Government's privatisation programme is that anything that the Labour Party has bought they must sell. I can find nothing else that seems to be guiding the Government in its disposal of the assets of the country. Perhaps the Minister will now make a statement to us in relation to the price he has obtained for the sale of Heywoods, and the terms and conditions that will ensure that the shares will not be off loaded again and capital gains made by people very quickly which should remain in the hands of Barbadians. One of the saddest things about these transactions, whether it be Arawak or Heywoods, is that the figures Government has stated it is receiving in its hand is still subject to the liabilities the companies had previously. So that the Government has a liability still for the Arawak Cement Company Limited, despite the U.S. $7 million it has got. It will have liabilities in respect of Heywoods, despite the Bds. $35 million it is getting, and therefore the figures it has given to us cannot be considered as net figures.

I believe that our method of approaching the privatisation question has been very haphazard, very short-sighted and not very well planned or thought out by this Government. I do not see how we are moving towards greater economic enfranchisement if Government approaches the privatisation issue in this way. Make no mistake about it, Barbadians want a bigger say in the economy of this country. They do not want the position where only a few people remain as the owners of capital and all they can contribute is their labour towards increasing that capital. Government must design schemes, and had a wonderful opportunity to design schemes, to widen this position.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member must know I bring to it a certain amount of expertise. I am not the hypocrite the Democratic Labour Party people happen to be. I can go to any company and talk about the position very openly. The Honourable Member must know that.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member talks about sitting on Boards. Which would be prefer me to do? Sit on a Board where my family and I own some of the shares? Or do like Members of the Democratic Labour Party, pretend they are one thing when they are the next? This is the same Board that he just gave Heywoods to.

Let me come to his oil policy, Sir. What has happened is that the Government, during the time it was exploiting the oil resources since it came into power, has had a stop-go policy. From the very high drilling and production that occurred under the Barbados Labour Party up to 1986 – I think it was something like 649 000 barrels of oil, 679 193 barrels were produced by 1985 – we have had a stop-go policy on- drilling, including in 1991 when they produced 454.5 barrels of oil. Believe me, Sir, the Barbados National Bank refused to lend to the company 3_{14} million in order to continue its drilling programme, but it can turn around and lend money to CARSICOT and find itself now, and the Minister has to admit this, that the Government has to bail out the Barbados National Bank to the extent of the $6 million odd from the CARSICOT deal, whereas Scothalls Limited is getting its money ahead of the Government. You could not lend the Barbados National Oil Company. When you look through the Government's Economic Development Plan for the year 2000 it is not approaching the question of energy in any serious manner. I think during the planned period it is going to open something like 80 new wells, less than was drilled in the previous corresponding period. The money which the Government is providing for further exploration of the oil resource is not sufficient and I can only conclude from this document that Government had made up its mind to dispose of the asset and that the few paragraphs it has put in here on the proposal for the oil industry really were just a standby in case that its proposal to sell had not been effectuated.
1.40 p.m.

So, Sir, I find myself, like the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, philosophically opposed to the sale of these assets. I have spoken enough on the MOBIL situation and I am sure the Minister last night admitted that keeping the MOBIL refinery here is a horrendous burden and cost to the taxpayers of Barbados. He has admitted it, Sir. Where we disagree very strongly is that we should have put an end to that position. The Honourable Member,

if he were to read what was said before, not go on impressions like a former Minister of Finance whose shoes he has now stepped into; if he really understood what was being said and used to read, the Honourable Member would have heard from the Barbados Labour Party as long ago as 1979 when we did the Memorandum of Understanding with Trinidad and Tobago that we were negotiating at that time for resources from Trinidad and Tobago in order to buy out MOBIL. .

Why doesn't the Honourable Member understand, Sir? He is behaving like the child he is, Sir. Like a little baby.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. Let the Honourable Member hold on for a minute. I am not satisfied with the cross-the-table conversation while an Honourable Member is speaking. Let us desist from it.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, since 1979, the Barbados Labour Party's position on oil was very well known and we made it quite clear then that the time had come – this is a philosophical difference between us on this – that the time has come for us to put an end to the MOBIL relationship and I will hope that the Government will recognise that the people of Barbados agree with such a policy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in one minute.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I will end on the question of privatisation to say this. The Honourable Member repeated a statement made by the then Rt. Honourable Member for St. John in 1986 that he was going to sell Arawak and he was also going to sell Hilton. I am going to ask of the present Honourable Members' undertaking to this House that the Government will not dispose of the Barbados Hilton outside of this country. There is no case for disposing of the assets in this way.

The other suggestion, Sir, is that one of the things the Government could have done as is being done in some of the other territories is to go into lease arrangements. You lease your freehold, you retain our freehold interest, you are getting a sufficient amount of capital. It could so have arranged the leasehold that it got up front a capital sum or a sum of money instead of disposing of the long-term interest.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must conclude now.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Therefore the Government would have been able to answer the IMF requirements without finally disposing of the people's silver and gold, our assets.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, there are a large number of matters pertaining to the administration of the Ministry of Finance which warrants careful scrutiny by Parliament this year, Sir, if only because most of the large new items of expenditure in this year's Estimates are contained in the Ministry of Finance. It is my view that the House is at its best when it evaluates and scrutinises all new major items of public expenditure.

I want to intervene in this debate not so much to discuss financial policy but to focus on matters pertaining to the administration of the Ministry of Finance as reflected iri the various subprograms under Head 19.

I touch first on the question of privatisation. First of all I agree with the strictures that have been applied on this side regarding the contradiction between the statement of the Democratic Labour Party and the application of the process of privatisation in the field. I endorse entirely the position that has been put by Members of this Party regarding the lack of judgment being exercised by Government, particularly in the sale of the energy based enterprises owned by the State.

My concern with privatisation also is of an administrative nature. There is a lot of confusion surrounding the Government's privatisation programme, Mr. Chairman, arising out of the manner in which information is being provided to policy makers in Parliament and to the general public in relation to Government's programme at any stage of its evolution.

I think it is entirely unsatisfactory that in the matter of the disposal of the assets that were either created by Acts of this Parliament or by the expenditure of funds on the approval of this Parliament to contribute towards the capital of the assets that those assets are being disposed of without reference to Parliament; and that information surrounding the sale of the assets is being put out in driblets which can only lead to confusion.

I have been very scrupulous, Mr. Chairman, in avoiding getting myself caught up in controversies regarding whether an enterprise has been sold or has not been sold and what it has been sold for and to whom it has been sold. I do not believe as a Member of Parliament that I should be involved in any guessing game as to whether an enterprise created by Parliament has been sold. I believe that it is the responsibility of the Minister of Finance, if he is to sell an enterprise which belongs to the people of this country, to bring that sale to this House and to give the House a full accounting of the transaction which led to the sale. I believe that that full accounting should also involve the House being apprised of any alternative that the Government might have been given, the full extent of the alternatives and the bases upon which those alternatives were not accepted.

Therefore, Sir, I want to press again – it may seem like a small point to certain Members – for the Government to bring to the House on a case by case basis all of the details and conditions of the sale pertaining to the disposal of each of the enterprises being sold by Government.

As of now, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not know whether Heywoods has been sold and I do not care to speculate whether Heywoods has been sold. I think that the House which created Heywoods by an Act of this Parliament has a responsibility to be responsible for its sale.

1.50 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: They do not have that but they have an Act called the Barbados Tourism Investment Act in which Heywoods is vested as part of the property of the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation. But the controversy will continue to. swell once we are informed, of a matter as important as the sale of Government assets, by way of small releases to the Press, as has been the case in the past. I feel that the Government would do itself a favour in tidying up this matter by bringing each to the House on a case by case basis in much the same way that when the Government is selling land, this House is put in the position where we manage the disposal of public property by having it brought to this Parliament. I want to plead again for this privatization programme whether we agree with it or not, to be handled in a tidy way.

Now, Sir, I want to turn to the relationship between the Public Enterprise Investment Fund and this year's Estimates. You will recall, Mr. Chairman, that on December 20 a Public Enterprises Investment Fund came into being. That Fund was set up as a Fund into which the proceeds of the disposal of all shares and enterprises owned by the Government should be paid. It was also set up as a fund to provide for the application of the resources of that Fund for the repayment of the pubic debt and for ,the support of specific investment projects in the public sector.

When that matter came to Parliament, Sir, we had some concerns regarding the loose relationship implied by the Act between the Public Enterprises Investment Fund and the Consolidated Fund. We thought that the relationship was too loose in so far as it was left to be administered by the Accountant General and that a difficulty could arise year by year in determining exactly what was in the Fund and what was being paid out of the Fund.

Mr. Chairman, I have a responsibility therefore basically this year to ask a number of questions regarding the operation of the Public Enterprises Investment Fund. It arises from the fact, as you will note from the preface to the Estimates, that no funds from divestment were used last year to support Government's financing of its deficit. The implication is therefore that all of the proceeds from the sale of the enterprises, including the Arawak, will now be available this year to go into the Public Enterprises Investment Fund and to be used for' the purposes as specified by the Act; which are the repayment of the public debt, the rehabilitation of enterprises in the public sector, and other specific investment projects.

Sir, to the extent that proceeds from investment going through the Public Enterprise Investment Fund should be used to repay public debt and help support capital investment in the public sector, one would expect to see under the Government financing plan for this financial year an identification of the amount that Government intends to draw down from the proposed Public Enterprises Investment Fund to assist in their payment of the debt and to support investment projects in the public sector. But there is absolutely no indication as to the amount of the resources of the Fund that will be applied to the purposes as specified in the Act.

Sir, as I said, when this matter came to Parliament, we were very clear that it was important that we do not create a loosely administered investment and financial enterprise in the public sector. I really must now press the Minister of Finance to indicate what are the plans this year regarding the use of funds to be lodged in the Public Enterprise Investment Fund. What is the amount intended to be used this year from the Public Enterprises Investment Fund to be applied for the purposes of repayment of the public debt and of the support of any project both within and outside the public sector. And I must stress this point, Mr. Chairman because. one of the real concerns we had when the Fund was established was that the Fund was not only intended to cover public sector activity but was intended to finance private sector activity as well.

I think it would be too loose a financial arrangement to have a large sum of funds floating around not administered directed by the same procedures that govern the operation of the Consolidated Fund; but to have this large sum of funds lying around without Parliament being involved in its administration. I would want the Minister of Finance to know that to the extent that this present administration remains in office, that year by year I will be pressing for a full up-front disclosure of the way in which the proceeds from the Investment Fund will be applied.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the big new capital investment `this year takes the form of a $8.8 million tax administration and public investment project to be administered by the Ministry of Finance. I must publicly thank the Minister of Finance for the courtesy in making available to me, and hence the Opposition, the Loan Agreements that govern the application of this new tax administration and public expenditure project. But I do not believe that the House would be living up to its responsibility if we were to allow the Government to bring on board a new $8.8 million project that has only to do with tax administration and control of public expenditure without telling the House exactly what is entailed particularly since this expenditure is taking place at a time when the Government is pleading the lack of ability and the lack of financial resources to be able to undertake activity of either a social or economic character that could have a more direct bearing on the relief of distress in this society.

I would also want, having said that, to ask, Sir, how the expenditure of funds under subprogramme 4 called Tax Administration in the Ministry of Finance will be reconciled with expenditure under subprogramme 2 also called Tax Administration within the Ministry of Finance. Are we going to have two departments in the Ministry of Finance concerning themselves with tax administration and should not the Ministry of Finance be the place where the initial effort is made to ensure that there is no duplication of efforts and no duplication of projects?

In a similar vein, Mr. Chairman, I must ask the Minister of Finance to explain why within the context of his Ministry we have two separate and distinct provisions being made for the conduct of the same activity, namely the purchase of consultancy services, to be involved in the undertaking of the negotiating of double taxation agreements.

It seems to me that the Ministry of Finance has been this year very generous with the allocations to itself but not enough effort has been made to ensure that there is not duplication of effort within the Ministry. I therefore would like to press the Minister now that we are dealing with the administration of this Ministry to explain how the Tax Administration Department is going to be reconciled with the work of this major new project in tax administration and public expenditure control.

I may have to come back, Sir, depending on the course of the debate.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I was a little worried yesterday as to whether my memory as to the facts of the Mobil Agreement was accurate.
2.00 p.m.

I want to repeat, Sir, that I do not recall, at any time, ever seeing in the original Agreement a clause which permitted MOBIL to earn a specific percentage rate of return on its capital employed. I have not had the opportunity of perusing that Agreement for many years. But I went back because I recall very vividly the famous debate that took place in this House in 1963 when that Agreement was laid on the Table of this House. Unfortunately they tell me that the Agreement is no longer in the House of Assembly Library, that it relates to a period of time in which all of the documentation, except the debates have been sent to the Archives. But the debate was very interesting. Because at that time the late Mr. Crawford introduced it and he gave a clause by clause description of each and. every clause. None of the Agreement...

I want it to be clearly understood, Sir, that, at that tithe, Mr. Crawford explained this Agreement very clearly and it was to last for 25 years with a right to renew it for another 10 years.

The burden of what we were saying on this side was that at this time of renegotiation there was no need to provide protection for MOBIL greater than the level of protection that the original Agreement provided. Because as was envisaged at 'that time — and if you read the debate you will see that Members of the Democratic Labour Party were worried about it particularly the late Mr. Boxill. Indeed it seemed to have got so hot that at one stage he said: "I believe I know more about the oil company than any other Member."

I do not know what the Minister is getting at. I am entitled to agree or disagree with something. Because my Government brings it down does not necessarily mean I have to agree with it. What do you think I am a puppet? It indicates very clearly that as long ago as 1963 there were Members of the House of Assembly who were worried about the provisions of this Agreement. It was clearly explained that there was a level of protection in relation to the imposition of a consumption tax, it was EC70 per wine gallon. We know that Barbados no longer has the EC$ and we know we no longer use wine gallons. But it is possible to convert that. My memory .says, Sir, that it was somewhere in the vicinity of BDS100 per gallon at the time when I was in the Ministry because we had not gone full metrication. You can convert that now with a relevant thing with litres.

But, Sir, somewhere along the line this concept of a guaranteed minimum rate of return seemed to have crept in. What we have now is the position in which it appears that that is going to form part of the renegotiated Agreement.

At the time when the matter was introduced, the then Minister said that it was possible for marketing companies to import from the rest of the world and MOBIL had only to rely on the production provided by this refinery incentive. At the • time both the Honourable Member for Christ Church Mr. F. C. Goddard and Mr. Boxill raised the issue o1 MOBIL and the site. At that time Mr. Goddard was complaining that he could not see how MOBIL could extend the refinery because it was going to impinge upon the Hilton site. Mr. Boxill was saying that he agreed with that and that far from allowing MOBIL to extend there, they should encourage the electric company to move to the Deep Water Harbour site. All of the issues that we have to deal with today some 25 years later were canvassed and thrashed out.

We have the benefit of our experience and we know that they are good and valid points. Because the world market price mechanism of oil has changed dramatically.

In those days Mr. Crawford was saying that anybody could understand what price MOBIL had to charge because the oil industry published a bulletin, a Plattsoilgram for the Caribbean. That is no longer so because Venezuela no longer gives you posted prices in that Plattsoilgram because the world market has changed dramatically with oil.

I am very worried that this country finds itself tying up its petroleum supply for another -10 years on terms and conditions which are unduly onerous. Quite honestly we would be fools if we did not take this opportunity to have a real assessment of the pros and cons of this. If we have to pay something to get rid of MOBIL, I believe that it is worth it because long-term savings in the form of Barbados being competitive... This is the point I want to emphasize. Energy is an important component in many of the industries. Barbados has to understand and Barbadians all of us have to understand that we are competing with other countries who have energy costs which are lower than others. Energy is a very serious thing.

I want the Minister to hear this because as I have said we regard it as a very irresponsible act, the question of the imposition of a tax on fuel oil. I am not clear now, Sir what is the exact position at the present moment because I know there are taxes put on on fuel oil that at some time that has been reduced. But there should not *be any* tax on fuel of any significance at all because when you tax that you are taxing all of the users of electricity.

Therefore our aim and objective ought to be to have a supply system consistent with our obligations under the Treaty of Chaguaramus which will allow us to have competition for the supply of the Barbados market and we are not getting that at the present moment in the majority of our supplies because people do not quite understand that airlines *coming* to Barbados get their fuel at *internationally* competitive prices because the aviation fuel is not part of the MOBIL Agreement. So if the airlines have to get theirs, I want the electricity company to get theirs. I want to get the basic suppliers of it otherwise we cannot be competitive. Already we know that the *economics of* cement, to a large extent, is a question of the economics of fuel. We know that. I just want it to be clearly understood even if you take the point that you feel that you have an *obligation under* the law to renegotiate with Mobil.
2.10 p.m.

Suppose we concede the point that you have an obligation to negotiate with Mobil and renew the agreement I am quite willing to take that point. There is no part of the Agreement that says it has to be negotiated on the same *terms.*

Secondly there is no part of that Agreement that says that you have to give Mobil better terms and I am saying that the *refinery* incentives that they had at the time of the agreement you can extrapolate that up to present day values and present day costs and my information is that if you do that, you could import from Trinidad the fuel still cheaper. That is my view.

I only want that, Sir, because then it would be out there. Either they will have to buy it from Trinidad and make an arrangement with Trinidad which was clearly contemplated at the time. Sir, I just want to make this clear. In the international market with oil they do all kinds of deals between the marketing companies. What the marketing companies will do is that they will enter into an agreement with one of the companies in Trinidad to supply them for the Barbados market and then Mobil will supply another market on account of the Trinidad company somewhere else around Venezuela or somewhere. That is what happens. But I do not want our consumers, our industry, our hotels and others to provide a price which allows Mobil an artificial rate of return and that is what I am worried about. I am very worried about that, Sir, and I draw that again to the attention because we on this side feel that consistent with our legal obligations we are in a position to extract the best deal now for Barbadians.

I could not conclude, Sir, except by paying tribute to all of those who supported the debate in 1963. All of the problems that. they envisaged with the Agreement have proven to be correct. It has disturbed the site, it has created *a position* in which Barbados has had to pay more for oil *and I will* say this, Sir, at the time the then Minister Mr. Crawford really felt, it appears so, because the words have a ring of sincerity in them. He really felt that by bringing Mobil here that we could have had a spin off fertilising industry because he said there would be two other additional industries. We would get fertilisers and he said that by supplying the sugar industry with fuel other than by bagasse that we would then have a hardboard industry because it would be producing 200 000 tonnes of bagasse and if we substituted oil for the bagasse that you would be able to get greater value added by using the bagasse. Well neither one of the two have come to fruition but I do not blame him, Sir. Great events take place in countries by dreamers, Sir. I never blame him on that but I must say that looking at it from hindsight, Mr. Boxill was right, Mr. Goddard was right and that is the position, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are not winding up, are you?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not winding up, Mr. Chairman, but there were some points that were raised which perhaps I should respond to.

I am grateful to the Honourable Member for Christ Church Soh for his intervention. Perhaps there are things that .one cannot say from this side, if somebody did

not raise them you would not say, but I recall when this matter came up some time ago the former Minister of Finance issued a statement to the Press – Dr. Haynes – in response to what I had said about the Mobil Agreement saying that he did not sign any agreement which is true – giving Mobil a 15% after tax. But what he did not tell the public is that he reversed a decision, probably one of the last decisions of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South's short-lived Government, to reduce the rate of return to somewhere, I think, around 11% or 12% before tax and gave Mobil a 15% after tax rate of return and there was an exchange of letters and therefore it now essentially forms part of the terms and conditions of the Mobil Agreement.

Of course the public does not know about these things. I heard yesterday about the surplus from the Water Authority. Today now I hear about the Mobil Agreement and yet people can walk around this country as sanctimonious as they wish as if they are washed in the Blood of the Lamb. Anyway I am, Mr. Chairman, going to say, thank goodness whatever happened in 1987 happened. That is all I can say, thank goodness. Anyway I am not going down that road today. I only wish to explain that to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South because when I joined him on a discussion on the radio he probably did not understand why I was insisting that that was a term of the Agreement which had to be negotiated. It is because he was unaware that essentially by virtue of that exchange of letters it forms part of the arrangements for Mobil for which one has to negotiate yourself out of it. Therefore we have to look at that issue carefully.

You have to also remember, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South just talked about the incentives surcharge. That protection is still at the same level now that it was in 1963 when that Agreement was negotiated. Now what it means is that there is a marketing company in Barbados which is landing products in Barbados, as I understand it, at less than the cost of purchasing it from the refinery and, I assume, is making the difference.

Now there has to be a problem with that and even though the Honourable Member says that he is questioning the protection offered to Mobil, if the taxpayers give Mobil a guaranteed rate of return and you have other people in the system importing and the protection is not sufficient to discourage their importing then it means the taxpayers essentially end up paying twice because they pay the same price as if they bought it from the refinery. The marketing company absorbs the difference and they also have to support the operations of the Mobil Refinery at a certain level of realm . That is where the concern comes so we are clearly going to have to increase the protection until the end of the refinery agreement if not, when one, really calculates the cost to the consumer of supporting the refinery, it would be even higher than what I have already indicated.

Now, people say, "end the Mobil Agreement". I have already indicated the Agreement runs to the year 2000. If there are options available in there that the Government thinks are worth pursuing it will pursue them. But the year 2000 is not that far away and wherever possible the Government will seek to pass o: to consumers the benefit of any reduction in fuel price and there have been reductions in recent times and we are looking very carefully at that particular issue.

I only say that because I do not want the impression to be given that there is blind support for the present arrangement as exists. We understand fully what the problems are. But I have undertaken to make it available to the House and Members can comment at that time if they wish to. Now that brings me to another point and this is a grave allegation which the Honourable Member made when he said that he is putting out a challenge that everytime that an asset is going to be divested that we must bring it to the House. But that has been the case. When the Pine Hill Dairy shares were sold, a statement was made to the House. When the introduction of the privatisation programme in response to a Private Members' Resolution was completed, I made a formal statement to the House. When Arawak was sold, 1 made a statement in which I indicated the net figure. I said subject to upward or downward adjustment consequent on the due diligence. Now the due diligence in Arawak has caused us to reduce the price slightly because of some error in the accounting procedure, but it is not substantial. Apart from that, when one...

2.20 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No, no, I made a statement in here on Arawak. There is a Ministerial Statement which was made in this House on the sale of Arawak Cement Plant and the Clerk can provide it to you. It was made perhaps about two months ago. I propose to make dne in respect of Heywoods. Now when those Statements are made, Mr. Chairman, and if the Opposition wants to debate them, it is his duty to bring a Private Members' Resolution noting the Statement or criticising it or asking the House not to support it or whatever. That is not my job. That is his job. Do you know why I am so conscious of what I speak?...

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. There is a Private Members' motion in my name be-fore this House on privatisation which I will be glad if the Government will allow it to be debated. Thank you, Sir.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member has introduced the motion. You are getting forgetful.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member has already introduced that motion because it was in response to that...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I once used the opportunity at the end of a speech to speak about privatisation, but I have not yet formally introduced a privatisation motion to the best of my knowledge, Sir: It is on the Order Paper.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Perhaps the Order Paper will show that. I have asked the Clerk to check. He may not remember, Mr. Chairman. At any rate, we will get the record on that. We have had three privatisation debates. Well, anyway we will get the record. We *will* not worry about that, Mr. Chairman. We are being assured that we have the record. But worse than that, Mr. Chairman, is that when I brought the Public Enterprise Investment Fund Bill to this House to give Honourable Members a chance to look at the terms of the Fund and the way in which it was set up and so on, instead of going the route of establishing a below-the-line account which we would not be able to debate inside of here, except one assumes during the Estimates and to have a full debate, the Honourable Members on that side said that we established a slush fund. I do not know that you would establish a slush fund in full public view, with legislation. They encouraged a misguided editorialist in the *Advocate* to follow the precepts which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas wrongly set before the House about the legal implications of establishing the Fund and gave the impression that it was an election fund for the Democratic Labour Party to throw money all over the place.

When the purposes of the Fund were set out, I made it clear- that the Fund would have to be audited as with any other Government Department and that in addition to that audit that the House would have to be given a report, not only on the accounts. *This is where* the Honourable Member for St. Peter has obviously not read the legislation carefully. Section 9 makes it clear as follows:

> "The Accountant Genes so prepare quarterly reports of the accounts a i economic activity of the Fund and shall deliver the report to the Minister of Finance not later than 21 days following the end of each quarter, and the Minister then lays that report in the House."

So that any expenditure which is undertaken by that Fund will be for the scrutiny of the house of Assembly at the end of each quarter. The Fund has in it, as I understand it, just over $5 million. It appears not as divestment under Financing, but I think it appears in the figure under "Other" – Domestic Financing. It has in it about $5 million right now and in a couple of days I will state the procedures which we will use.

Sir, I have made the point in this Chamber that it was the Honourable Members on that side who insisted that the Minister exercise control over the Fund. I was not asking for any control over the Fund. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South insisted that the Act be amended to give the Minister of Finance control over the Public Enterprise Investment Fund. My own view is that it would be a good idea to have some consultative body of the private and public sector to sit down and determine what kinds of investments the Fund should incur. I propose to do that and I will let them advise me and I will advise the Accountant General. But I do not want any access to any slush fund, according to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. Even though he has given me the access, I do not want it. I will do the job that I am required to do. So I want to make that point very clear. So there will be full accounting and the Honourable Member for St. Peter is misguided when he suggested that, when we privatise assets, we do not bring it before the House.

Sir, whenever there has been a Press Conference by the Minister of Finance, privatisation has been put on the agenda. I have indicated that Heywoods Hotel *was in the* process of being sold and that we have an offer from Barbados Shipping and Trading for $34 million, Do you want to know the net figure? In due course, when the liabilities have been fully determined particularly the Wyndham contract, you will get the net figure. Since you *have asked, I will very shortly lay a statement.*

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. ,Chairman, the kesolution by the Honourable Member for St. Peter was introduced on January 12, 1993 and seconded by me...sorry, I saw St. John. But I would have seconded it. I seconded it in spirit, Mr. Chairman --- and further consideration was postponed. The reason why I remember this is because I made copious notes which I have and was going to prepare a response in due course. I have riot done that yet but will do it.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No, I did not a, :use you of that. You said that it has not been debated and I am telling you that you debated that and you forgot that you debated it on January 12, 1993. But you said that you did not debate it. I am only correcting your reek $ lection

of events. It is $34 million for Heywoods. Heywoods is being sold to a Barbadian company. It may *be a consortium* but it is going to be a public company. We have insisted, contrary to what the Honourable Member for Christ Church West said not only with respect to Heywoods, that they have to make available to the public $4 million shares within 18 months which is after the capital investment takes place. There will be public elicited shares and I hope with no restrictions. It is a condition of the sale.

Furthermore, it is totally untrue when the Honourable Member for Christ Church West said that no provision has been made for the workers. With the Arawak sale, we insisted that 20 per cent of the shares be made available to the workers within 18 months. With respect to Pine Hill Dairy, we insisted that 20 per cent of the shares be made available to the workers. In fact, the workers took up, as I recall, 80 per cent of the shares that were sold.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misrepresenting my speech. I went out of my way to mention specifically the BET sale and the Barbados Telephone Company sale. I also said that in the existing sale including Arawak that there was no immediate sale to workers. I said that there is a provision in the future for a sale back.
2.30 p.m.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, his recollection of what he said and mine .....

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He said in no sale has provision been made for the workers. Provision has been made in all of the sales, except BET and the Flour Mill, for the workers and provision will continue to be made. I am going to get to the other,issues, particularly the ones raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, but *the* only person in Barbados who believes that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West honestly believes that Barbadians want a bigger say in this economy is him. He has been a Director of the same public company which is purchasing Heywoods.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Who is he?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He has been a Director of the Barbados Mutual.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:.Who is he?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West. There is no Director of any of those Boards who has ever publicly said, even when in the heat of the debate he was being attacked, that he has ever taken any position on behalf of people owning more shares in any of those companies.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member must....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two Honourable Members are on their feet. On what has the Honourable Member risen?

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misrepresenting my position. He has not been in here long enough, he is still a little green around the ears and that may explain why he has not read a lot. I challenged his leader, the Rt. Hon. Errol Barrow, that if he was so serious on social democracy to bring a Resolution in order to acquire the assets of B.S. & T. and I would .....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: *The* Honourable Member will find that in the record.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member may have to come back. I have already given you two minutes to wrap up which you used up.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: It is a public company, Sir.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I do not know what the Honourable Member for Christ Church West .....

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member who just spoke, I submit, misled this House. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West knows that his leader, Tom Adams, pointed out that his stay on the Board of Mutual did not operate at any time to the benefit of a single black person in Barbados.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, not only did the Rt. Hon. Tom Adams not say that, but the Honourable Member is good at manufacturing things that the records do not bear out.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will give the Honourable Member for St. John one minute to wrap it.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: My last comment is this, that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West remembers everything that everybody said. He remembers what he told the former Honourable Member for St. John but he does not remember the Honourable Member for St. John's reply: that he is the only person in Barbados who preaches democratic socialism and practises conservatism. That was the reply to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is the end of the matter.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: And that is part of the public record.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is again -misrepresenting the record.

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Hilary Beckles alone,

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member again is misleading this House about the records of the House. The then Honourable Member, who subsequently became a Right Honourable Member, never responded other than to say that when he is ready he will do what he wants in his time and nobody can tell him. You must go and read the debate.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: None of that is germane to the Head under discussion. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, since there are so many statements being attributed to persons not currently in the House, and the accuracy of which depends upon memory, and memory as sieve-like as that of the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, I would prefer to rely on documentation to support my memory and to ask a response from the Honourable Minister of Finance.

In 1986 I remembered the Democratic Labour Party promising to recover for consumers of electricity in Barbados $39 million from the Light and Power. I am a consumer in two places, my house and my Chambers, and I have not got back any of this money. It is all related to the energy policy of the Democratic Labour Party. I thought it was my memory, and I have found support for my memory on page 7 of the Democratic Labour Party Manifesto of 1986:

> "A DLP Government *will* immediately enter into discussions with the Barbados Light and Power Company to agree on arrangements for the disbursement of the $39 million to Government and consumers, in such a way as to ensure that the cash flow position of the Company remains healthy."

I am only asking for the status of this promise, because at the back the present Minister of Finance.....

Hon. B. M. TAM' rose.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the Honourable Member will give way, Sir, I can say of my own knowledge that so soon as the then Minister of Finance became Minister of Finance he did enter into discussions with the Barbados Light and Power.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not going to behave like I am in court, but I would ask him for particulars; time, date, place, where, who was present, in support and all of that. If his Government did enter into negotiations, I want to know, since he has gone in 1987, what is the status of those negotiations now. I want to know this from the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, since he was one who signed the pledge at the back of the Manifesto. All of them who ran signed a pledge. It is a serious matter, Sir, because here is a document purporting to represent Government policy and intentions on a specific manner that was contentious, and the Government at the time pledged itself to restore this money to Barbadians. Since then we have not had any answer or even report to Barbadians about the status of those negotiations. I am not asking the present Minister of Finance to commit himself on this, because he was not around at the time as a Member of Parliament, but since the Minister of Foreign Affairs has said there were negotiations, I would expect that before these Estimates conclude the Minister of Foreign Affairs will give the information to the Minister of Finance so that he can make a full statement to the House.

I am not joking. You come in here and make a lot of . glib statements. This is a serious place.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not talking about you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, but you must be addressing the Chair while you are on your feet.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am addressing my remarks through the Chair to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. That is the first one I want answered during these next few days. The second matter I wish to deal *with is a* matter that is of concern to all of the drivers of motor vehicles in this country. Because of the MOBIL monopoly, it would appear that there is. no institution of Government committed to monitoring the quality of product that is distributed by MOBIL. In 1990 or 1991 there was a lot of bad gas in this country that mashed up people's vehicles. MOBIL had to pay a lot of money to the owners of vehicular property in settlement of claims. More recently, towards the end of last year there was a quality of gas

that was again adversely affecting vehicles in this country. MOBIL passed it off as a matter of smell rather than a matter of inherent quality; but the significance about that and about the advertisement of MOBIL is that they purported, as a monopoly, to carry out their own investigation and to report to the public via a paid advertisement and it seems that there has been no independent body or organisation which checked the allegations of MOBIL to see if in . fact what they were saying is true.
2.40 p.m.

Many people including Members on this side suffered terribly. I have written on behalf of a number of clients and they have replied and said that they are not backing the claims, they are not paying out on the claims. Well, that is a matter that will have to be looked .at. We will have to look at the ramifications of proof of that by expert evidence and so on later on.

I do not believe it is good enough and I would wish to know to what extent the Barbados National Standards Institute, of its own motion, not waiting for MOBIL to publish anything... The BNSI should on its own motion, in my submission, have intervened once the public had complained and done an independent survey on behalf of all the consumers of the MOBIL gasolene. I'do not believe that has been done. If it has been done, I would be grateful for the information. I have seen nothing. I have not seen the agreement but I understand from my colleague on my left that as far as his recollection goes the agreement does contain some kind of clause providing for quality monitoring and so on.

I know that these are matters of concern to the man in the street and I am interested in him and all people who use vehicles in Barbados. I believe — I can only say believe — we have been shortchanged and taken for a ride by MOBIL.

Thirdly, 3 years ago I asked in here, Sir, for the first time that any Member has ever asked, for the introduction of unleaded gasoline in Barbados. I was given an assurance then by that side that they were working on negotiations with MOBIL and shortly we would have got unleaded gas. I have not been recipient of any unleaded gas in the last 3 years. I am hearing now that we will get it from April 1 this year. Well, anyhow, I will allow the Minister to make that announcement.

I think the public deserves to know what is the status_ of procedures in respect of the production of unleaded gas, having regard to the fact that Barbados is the highest taxed country per energy in the Caribbean region. I think the public had better be prepared to hear from Government, if Government is privy to the information, what is the likely cost per litre of this unleaded gas I am hearing may come later on this year. Those are matters of concern because the present quality of gas we have had for all the years has been destructive of the engines and the carburetors of most cars in Barbados, particularly some Japanese models and certainly the few American cars which are around the place. It is unfair on the consumer and MOBIL must be spoken to.

I know it is difficult for that side to speak frankly to MOBIL because we on this side understand MOBIL's contribution to that side..We know. But it will hang out in due course.

The fourth point I want to make in my intervention in this 15 minutes relates to the NPC workers. I am not going to comment on the case. I am going to just give some facts. The rules do not allow me to comment. Under the NPC Act, Cap. 280 of 1979 that corporation as a successor corporation, to the Natural Gas Corporation and by intervening legislation in 1982 Natural Gas Corporation (Transfer of Functions) took over all the fights- and obligations of the original Natural Gas Corporation which was set up by the Barbados Labour Party in 1951 and guaranteed that ' the workers of the former Natural Gas Corporation would have their pension rights secured.

When the NPC Act, Cap. 280 was established there was a specific provision in section 15 that casts a statutory duty on NPC to establish and maintain a pension scheme. For all the years, no pension scheme was established. But take the Annual Report of the NPC for 1990-91, the very last item on page 36 refers to the pension scheme and the workers at the NPC and Parliament to whom this report was tendered were told that:

> "The Corporation is currently in the process of introducing a non-contributory pension scheme for its employees. At the balance sheet date, it is estimated that the Corporation has unfunded past service liability under the proposed scheme amounted to approximately $2.0 million. An initial contribution rate of 13.4% has been recommended by the actuaries to ' fund future service liabilities and past service liability of all eligible members over the future life-time of initial membership."

So that the workers at the NPC were entitled legitimately and reasonably to expect that their pension rights would have been secured by the establishment of a pension scheme supported by actuarial proceeds. But in the meantime — and to that extent there has been in my view a breach of statutory duty to establish the pension scheme — the workers were not told by the Corporation what were the ramifications of the proposed sale. All they knew was that the Office of Privatisation and the Minister

responsible for same were saying that the NPC had to be sold by March 31st. They heard of negotiations with interested parties, non-Barbadian.

I would have thought that it was a grave dereliction on the part of those responsible for not being full and frank with the workers prior to negotiations. Without keeping the House delayed on this matter, Sir, I just want to say that I would have thought, having heard the Minister say that they are taking into account the interest of workers in these various sales in pursuance of privatization, that the workers would have been given a lot more information they do not have. It is significant that the three persons who went forward in the action on behalf of the 102 employees of the NPC, were the three senior managers except for Mr. King, the very General Manager. The next three were the ones. I am making a call today, Sir. I hope that those three persons who lent their names to the action on behalf of their colleagues high and low in the organisation, are not in any way victimised for the pursuit of their legal rights otherwise this place can get hot in due course.

2.50 p.m.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: Mr. Chairman, there are other aspects under Head 19 that we wish to address. I wish in particular to speak on the issue of the offshore industry and the provision which has been made in these Estimates for it.

Now, Sir, the Government has from time to time recently made statements to the effect that the offshore industry, together with tourism, offers the fastest area for growth and that the Government will be taking steps to promote the industry and to make sure that conditions exist for its rapid growth. I am going to say that the Government has had for a long time in its hand a report done, I believe it was by Marshallina, which charted for Government the way forward and showed the major areas in which change ought to be made if Barbados was to remain competitive with those other locations who are also looking to the international business sector to fuel the growth of their economy. It has taken the Government a very long time to bring to the House draft legislation which it has had in its possession for a considerable period of time. There are changes to be made to the Trust Law of Barbados, particularly the international aspects of Trust Law, in order to enable Barbados to attract various overseas interests who have to protect assets.

Now, Sir, the Belizian Government has probably placed on its statute book some two or three years ago an updated Trust Act which was reasonably well thought out. It has formed a model for several other countries.

The Cayman Islands has amended its Trust legislation. The Bahamas has done the same. The Barbados draft is now, I think, in its second draft. It has been circulated to a limited number of persons but it has not yet been brought before this House. As long ago as July last year I undertook to produce an article for the International Trust Encyclopedia and I cannot do it because the legislation is not here and I just do not want to forecast what is going to be in legislation. I have seen the draft legislation but the Journal did not wish to publish the Barbados position. We are one of the few countries about whom nothing is published in this respect because the change in the legislation has not come down.

Now, one of the areas that Marshallina recommended for change was limited partnerships. Once again I understand that some draft legislation is around but that too has taken a long time to reach the statute book or indeed to come before the House for debate and there are other areas that I need not advert to at the moment.

I have read the Minister's speech which he gave to a convention, I believe, in Canada that he attended in which he adverted to the fact that these changes were about to be made. What I am going to say to the Minister is this. We are lucky in Barbados in that the private sector, and in this regard it is the private professionals, the accountants and the lawyers have carried a significant part of the cost of publicising the offshore industry and the Government has not had to bear that cost. It seems to me that the mere setting up of the office with the limited resources available to it, is not what is required. I believe that department must go about recruiting on a full-time basis and for the future, not merely part-time consultancies but persons whose only tasks would be to ferret out and devise new plans and strategies and devices for keeping Barbados ahead of its competitors.

We have lost from the Legal Department a few people who had expertise in the drafting of double taxation agreements and the negotiation of such agreements. In past years we have had Mr. Lindsay Worrell. He was followed by Miss Yolande Bannister. But I am not aware of the Government making it possible for legal officers to do specialist courses in taxation and in particular in relation to the drafting of double taxation treaties.

I am aware that one person went on a course and is now doing most of the litigation in relation to taxation. But the Government needs a series of experts in this field. I am aware that the Government has followed the example set by past Governments and retained from time to time the services of Mr. Bruce Sagaris. I believe there is a case for creating a pool of expertise in this particular field as well as in the field of Corporate Law in so far as it has relevance to the international business companies sector and that must be within the very department, even if it is not in the Attorney General's Chambers – in fact, it

should be within the Department — and therefore will be able to interact with the Attorney General's Chambers but I am not satisfied at the pace at which .we have been pushing the offshore sector.

I want as well, Sir, to say that when it comes to dealing with the improvement in the other Government Departments that service the offshore' sector, there is a lot to be desired. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South can speak of his visit to the British Virgin Islands to observe what has been achieved in their Registry for the registration of companies and their approval. He can state as a fact that in the Virgin Islands, as in the Turks and Caicos Islands, the increase in the number of companies and persons registering in the offshore sector has been phenomenal as compared with the increase which was adverted to on page 218 of the most recent Development. Plan, and Barbados is lagging behind.
3.00 p.m.

The increase in the number of companies and persons registering in the offshore sector has been phenomenal as compared with the increase which is adverted to on page 218 of the most recent Development Plan. Barbados is lagging behind.

Only a few days ago the Cayman Islands reviewed downwards its charges in order to be in a competitive position in relation to the offshore sector. Although they are doing better than we are, they are very conscious again having revised their trust laws not too long ago, they are in the process again of revising their trust laws in order to be ahead. Just as Vanuatu is doing the same and other countries in the Pacific.

In fact if we want to have a model of how the offshore industry is managed, we should look at Cyprus to see how serious they are about the business, the amount of money and resources they are putting behind it and ,therefore are reaping the benefits as well. With all of the other things that Barbados can contribute good communications, salubrious climate, near to Canada and elsewhere the United States, we ought to put our house in order as quickly as possible if we are to reap the benefits from this growing but ever competitive sector.

I wish to sound a note of warning. We ought to be conscious of the fact that the developed countries who have been our main clients are now themselves getting into the . business as competitors. If you examine the legislation in places like Quebec you will see that they too are getting into the business of trying to keep at home investors and wooing other investors in order to organize their business within their own jurisdictions.

Secondly, in some developed countries both in Canada, in the United States and in the United Kingdom the legislative bodies have shown a tendency recently to be attacking jurisdictions to establish international business sectors as one of their main ways of getting foreign exchange from other countries.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has 2 minutes to conclude..

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: In the United Kingdom we have had a Bill before Parliament to prevent people from incorporating offshore. We have had an attack within the Canadian Parliament on the fact that we are rendering services here to Confederation Life and others through our information data servicing and we have had a similar response from one or two mavericks in the House of Representatives in the United States.

We must also be able to lobby and to explain that we are a jurisdiction not laundering money but above board and doing proper and international companies. It is true that the Minister of Finance and his predecessor have gone to a couple of Conferences. But the lobbying must be constant. It must not only be at that level. Our diplomatic missions must understand their true role in this respect.

The final point I want to make, Sir, because you said I have got 2 minutes — I am moving to another point — is that we have in the private sector itself to make sure that there is the continuing expertise in order to service this growing sector. I have a certain concern about the number of Conferences that I see being advertised, and inviting people to come and pay US$100, US$200 and US$300 with people who do not have any expertise in the field: Let us be very frank. There has to be some control over that.

I see a Conference now coming up on trust in which there are no lawyers speaking. All of a sudden the Accountants have become the legal -experts just as I see loss adjusters are taking over the legal field and given opinions. I cannot blame the lawyers for that because if we are going to blame the lawyers I am going to come down with a private Amendment to the Legal Profession Act in order to stop it from happening.

But what is liable to happen is that if we allow this to happen willy nilly we can find ourselves where Barbados' reputation starts going downwards. That is my fear. That is why I have raised the matter. It is not that I am accusing the Government of a dereliction of duty in this regard because I agree with the Minister's statement that I have just heard that the lawyers themselves must get up off their feet and make necessary recommendations and do various things. They have to do it. I have said so to the President of the Bar Association. But all I want to say is that the Government also has a regulatory role to ensure that is ' we are selling services that we are selling

genuine services at the best level available. I would have to join the debate again, Sir, on this matter.

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

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Once again the Honourable Member for Christ Church West made, in this area, a sound and intelligent contribution. But I think that the whole issue of the services sector, the offshore financial services sector is too important for the , future of the Barbadian economy for his points not to be underscored and for the point not to be made too that the last 8 years in this country have in many respects been wasted· years particularly in relation to the promotion of that sector. You would recall, Mr. Chairman, that it was the Barbados Labour Party Administration 1981 to 1986 that laid the regulatory framework for the takeoff of the offshore financial services sector in Barbados. We envisaged then that we would have attracted offshore banks, captive insurance companies and Barbadian flagships of convenience.

With respect to the shipping aspect nothing has been done since the early eighties. We have now circulated 3 weeks ago a large Shipping Bill which is intended, among other things, to address the aspect of the shipping sector.of .the offshore corporate and *financial* services sector that we have been talking about. When we got into the field in the early and mid-1980s we were already late. The heyday had passed ever since the 1960s. And yet there was an opportunity for new countries to get into the act and to make substantial headway. But having set up the modest regulatory framework in the early and mid-1980s the sector suffered from serious and vigorous Government leadership and it was left in the years following, almost exclusively to the private sector to do the running.

We are now for the first time establishing a unit within the structure of Government to co-ordinate the activities.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM:, It is a question of months old and you are now putting money for the second time in the Estimates, or the first time, to finance the unit. My point, Mr. Chairman, is that we lost the opportunity to make substantial headway over the last 7 to 8 years and we have been overtaken by many countries in the Pacific and Indian Ocean, in the wider Caribbean, in Latin America and in many other parts of the world.
3.10 p.m.

I was in Cyprus only a few months ago and among other things there was a session of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association devoted to the whole question of the Offshore Sector which has now become a feature of almost all small Commonwealth countries and I was surprised to learn even though I knew that great activity was going on in many of the countries that have come to areas since us, that in the last 10 years or thereabouts about 25 new countries in the Commonwealth have gone into this field and have gone past Barbados.

It turns out, Mr. " Chairman, that if you have a tradition of sound banking practice, you have good international telecommunications, you have good tourist facilities, you have an attractive climate and you have a stable political system, that you have the elements that make for attracting Offshore Financial Services. So that many countries qualify and the important thing is that once you get into the field you have always to look to prove your infrastructure and above all the point that has been made by my learned friend, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is so important.

A paper was presented by the Leader of Business in Jersey. Jersey as you know is one of the leaders in the field — Guernsey, Jersey and the Channel Islands — and he made the point that at least once a month, sometimes over a two, three-year period, every month an amendment is made to the regulatory framework. You have constantly to be looking at what is happening among your competitors and making sure that without damaging the integrity of your own system that you too keep abreast of the changes that are going on among your competitors.

In Barbados we have lagged behind. Apart from not making the changes with enough speed or at all, we still have not done enough to broaden our regulatory framework in the ways in which the Honourable Member who just spoke indicated — the law of Trusts, the law of Liberty Partnership and many other areas.

If the resources of Government is stretched, as indeed they might very well be, in terms of the specialists drafting services that are necessary in this area the point is, Mr. Chairman, that these facilities are available. They are available through the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation. They are available out there in the wider market place for a fee. They are available through the UNDP and there can be no excuse for the Government of Barbados over the last 8 years not paying more attention to the expansion of the regulatory framework and getting on with speed in addressing the amendments and the adaptations that are needed from time to time.

The Government is only paying lip service to the importance of the sector when they continue to indicate as they have now indicated in the most recent Development Plan 1993 — 2000 that the growth areas for the future

will be tourism and the international financial corporate services sector and yet they are doing so little to make sure that the infrastructure is strengthened and that the promotional efforts needed to attend that sector are launched and put in place.

It is good, Mr. Chairman, that in Barbados the private sector, particularly the professionals, the accountants and to a lesser extent the lawyers have been paying attention. But they have been paying attention largely out of self interest and understandably so. But if the Government sees it as a sector that has implications for the entire economy and can be the second prop of the economy for the future after tourism since they are planning for the continuing decline of manufacturing and non-sugar agriculture then it is the Government's responsibility to put effort, imagination and financial resources and organisation behind the sector and that has not been done.

It needed for a long time to be the responsibility of a particular Minister. The promotional efforts were scattered at one point. The Central Bank was playing its part in that regard. The Ministry of Finance was playing its part. IDC was making a contribution but there was no particular body that had definite and clear responsibility for the promotion of this sector and for the organisation of the effort forward.

Now that it is located in the Ministry of Finance it is a welcome step-that it is located somewhere but my point is that it is far too late in the day and that we have a lot of catching up to do. And we ought not to have found ourselves in that position because we were well poised ever since 1986 to make a substantial leap forward if only the Government had given the sector the attention which we all recognise on both sides of the House that it deserves.

I will make one or two other points, Mr. Chairman. The Immigration Department and its workings is important for the whole Offshore business sector, whether it is manufacturing, offshore manufacturing or offshore financial services. We have long recognised in Barbados that when once an individual or corporation was putting substantial investment into Barbados and attracting employed persons they had a right almost to have the right to live here and to supervise that business. In fact, in my days as Chairman of the Industrial Development Corporation we not only developed a formula as to how many people would be allowed to come in, in relation to a business but we also had set up a coordinating committee and among the institutions of the coordinating committee, was the Immigration Department and when, for example, the IDC, gave the stamp of approval to a businessman from abroad, he said, yes this is *a bona fide* business. We were thinking of locating at Newton and so on. It has this potential. The investment is so and so. They instantly recommended to the Immigration Department that the application for residence or for work permit as the case may be, should be approved.

It is my experience that a lot of applications are three months and more. I have known of cases of a year and more before the Immigration Office and there is no response with respect to the application for status in Barbados.

You do not begin to attract business, you are not serious, when in the important area of the status of the representative of the company we can have no determination as to whether the person will get resident status, work permit status for two years or 3 years as the case may be. It is a fact, Mr. Chairman, that we have lost business in Barbados because of the tardy way in which important Government institutions have responded with respect to offshore businesses. In St. Lucia, quite often you can get a response within 2 or 3 weeks to matters that take six months or more in Barbados. In the Virgin Islands, you can establish a company in 24 hours and sometimes less than that. But here in Barbados you cannot get a response from the Company Registry with respect to the name proposed sometimes in one year.
3.20 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the- Honourable Member conclude in one minute.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: These are facts and we have got to tell ourselves that the world does not owe us a living. People do not have to come to Barbados either for tourism or for overseas financial services or for anything. There are a lot of countries in the world that are doing what we are doing and many of them are doing it better. That message has to get through to the public bureaucracy and the private bureaucracy, and those who have the responsibility to lead have got to . make sure that we conduct our business with speed and efficiency if we are to realize the objectives that we have set ourselves.

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

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, there are a few concerns that I have relative to the National Insurance Department. Before doing so, I just would like to refer to the offshore business sector and the time that it takes for a business to be established. I think that, in dealing with this particular area of delays in the offshore business sector at the Registry, both sides of the House seem to talk about delays and we do not try to hit the nail so to speak at the real problem that is causing the delays within the Corporate Registry. If I may refer back to sometime last when we sought a mechanism to find a solution within the Chief Electrical Engineering Department to make redundant

the position of an individual who obviously was creating problems for many important concerns in this country, I believe the time has come when we stop beating around the bush and do something about the Corporate Registry. Because many of the delays which we have spoken about has a lot to do with the person who is in charge of the Corporate Registry and I think that we have stopped short in this Chamber of calling for the resignation, expulsion, transfer or whatever, of the person who is in charge of the Corporate Registry. I do not know if it has something to d0 with where a person comes from...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I believe the Honourable Member would be advised at this point to get back closer to the Head under discussion.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Sir, I am dealing with the item under discussion because we are dealing with delays in the offshore sector.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yet, I cannot allow you to develop a main speech on a Head that will come up subsequently.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I am making a point that, if it is necessary for us to introduce legislation to dismiss or to make redundant a person of a certain type of ilk from one department, the same should hold, in . another department. There should not be one set of rules for one type of person and another set of rules for a different type of person. I am saying that the problem within the Registry that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph referred to has a lot to do with the person who is in charge of the Corporate Registry.

Having made that point, there are just a few brief concerns I want to make relative to the National Insurance Department. The Unemployment Benefits Fund has generated a surplus for sometime. As a matter of fact, at the end of October 1993 the surplus of the Fund stood at $61 million partly due to the fact that the rate of contributions to the Fund far exceeded the benefits which were paid out. One wonders whatever were the reasons for the increase in the rate of contributions early in January and whether it is necessary for us to continue asking employees at a time when they are not sure if they will get back their increments and at a time when there is massive unemployment in this country to make the same rate of contributions as they are making now rather than to revert to the old system due to the fact that the Unemployment Benefits Fund is now in surplus. As a matter of fact, this Fund has been able to lend to the main NIS Fund to assist it in making its monthly commitments up to the end of December. I think that it is time that Government looks at not only returning the rate of contributions to its former state, but also to extend the time period for claims to be made to the Fund by the unemployed.

The Severance Fund has been in deficit for most of the time and at the end of October for the first time it showed a slight surplus. I would like to know from the Minister whether or not this surplus represented a real surplus in the sense that all claims were satisfied. I would like to know also from the Minister what is the position regarding I think 762 claims which were outstanding at the end of November and whether this is a deliberate case of delaying the access of these claims to the Tribunal in order to save having to make the payments or whether it is not a case of the pressure on the Tribunal. If it is a case of the pressure on the Tribunal, I would like to know if the time has not come for the increase of the Tribunal from 3, as there presently are, to 4.

The final point that I would like to make with respect to the National Insurance Department has something to do with what have commonly referred to as the Matthieson Affair. We on this side have made certain requests on Government relative to the fact that a Mr. Walter Matthieson has been allowed for some reason or other to leave the country.
3.30 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is well aware that you are not supposed to make mention of names in a specific sense without having given the Speaker notice of your intention so to do. Please do not go down that line.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, it is common knowledge.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is not common knowledge that you will continue in that vein. I am just putting you on the right track.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Minister of Finance gave the assurance a few weeks ago that he would give a report within two weeks relating to the huge debt that has accumulated within the National Insurance Department relating to persons who have left this country, in particular one individual whp was the subject of much discussion both in the Press and elsewhere within the past two weeks.

Certain remarks made by Mr. G. W. PAYNE were ordered by Mr. CHAIRMAN to be expunged from the record at this stage.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I think the Minister owes it to this House to let us know whether or not the National Insurance Department played any role in allowing anyone to leave this island owing a tremendous amount of money to the National Insurance Department. How was this debt actually accumulated?

I think it is a serious thing when we note that quite recently the National Insurance Department has taken — I would only call it the retrograde step for now – in publishing the names of persons who owed money to that Department, people who have owed as low as $25, in the newspaper, people who have bounced cheques to the Department, and one finds it strange that you could take this action against our own citizens and could allow someone to leave this country owing millions of dollars to a Government Department.

I will go further. I do not know what advice the National Insurance Department took before they published the names of those persons who actually owed money to it, but there are other ways and means within our present system for the collection of monies owed not only to a Government Department but to anyone. The courts are there and our court system is available to anyone in this country. In addition to that, if the National Insurance Department or any other Department, or any person for that matter, feels that the laws do not give them adequate protection, there are ways and means by which the proper recommendation could be made at the level of Government to have the laws amended.

I think that the Chairman of the National Insurance Board should in some way be censured for taking the measure to publish the names in this way. Certainly, we are at the stage where I would think we were moving away from that type of behaviour, and I am saying that any person who is ifi charge of any statutory corporation who would lend his name to this type of action does not deserve to be the head of any type of corporation or to be so placed in any other organisation. It means that very shortly the public will be seeing the names of persons, including the Members over there, who owe money.....

Asides.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, if this is allowed to continue persons who owe money to the Department of Inland Revenue will presently see their names in the newspapers. Persons who owe money to the big corporations in Bridgetown *will* presently see their names published in the newspapers and it is unfortunate that a Government in 1994 could allow this behaviour to continue.

Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to you.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON rose. Mr.

C. LeR. TROTMAN rose.

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

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I- am obliged to the Minister of Finance for giving way. I promise him I will not be too lengthy, but I do wish to make some observations which would be of concern, I believe, to every Honourable Member *in* this Chamber and which I think it is in our interest to have addressed as a matter of alacrity.

I refer to problems which are being had in the National Insurance Department, and though I understand the point that is being made by the Honourable Member for St. Andrew, I think we still have to recognise that some of the difficulties which I will address *in* a minute are difficulties which it is clear people are making no effort to come to grips with. I refer, for example, Mr. Chairman, to a situation which arises *in* this country by which employers, having taken workers' National Insurance contributions from their wages or their salaries, are refusing to lodge those payments with the National Insurance Office. The result very often is that when those workers make claims for one kind of benefit or another from the National Insurance Office, they find themselves significantly embarrassed and having to wait for weeks, and sometimes for months, before the National Insurance Office can take the argument that those workers have not in fact been at fault and that if there is a fault in the system the workers themselves should not be penalised.

It would seem to me, Mr. Chairman, that there may be some problem resulting from the fact that we are now into a National Insurance system where the employer makes a deduction but where the worker is unable on a week by week or month by month basis to have any record that he or she may keep to be that worker's passbook or that worker's insurance or that worker's assurance that the national contributions have been taken out but have at the same time been credited to the worker's benefit. The Government is advised, and very well-advised I would think, to look again at a system of treatment of National Insurance contributions by which the worker can be given that kind of passbook, or that kind of document, which would register the payments.

Another aspect of the problem I think we have to come to grips with, and I say this even though I recognise that there have been difficult times for businesses, is that a number of companies even though they have monies due and owing to National Insurance have found it possible to make other kinds of commitments to other kinds of areas where they have monies due and owing. And national insurance seems to be one of those areas where people are prepared to make their social contribution only if the Courts have determined and, in very many instances, even where the Court has determined that they should make the payment, one finds situations where they have still refused or found ways and means by which they can try to

avoid paying the national insurance contribution on behalf of the workers.
3.40 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I think that this is a very grave problem because it reflects adversely on the capacity of all the rest of us as taxpayers in this country to meet the social responsibility we have to people who get sick, who get maternity benefits, people who go off on old age pension and all those other social benefits which are covered by the National Insurance payments. It must be that the Government recognises this to be a problem and it is our wish that the Government will find a way to deal expeditiously and to deal in a way that there can no-longer be those loopholes allowing themselves to be used for abusing the workers' contributions and putting the social safety security net of the people of Barbados at risk by those kinds of behaviour.

Among the kinds of efforts – "subterfuge" I heard in some contexts – which one will find being exercised are the arrangements by which a company owing the Government of the country – and owing the people of the country, significant amounts of money out of the National Insurance arrangement, will then go into voluntary liquidation, will set up sometimes in the same building under a different name with the same management and .continue operations all over again to do the same thing all over again to the people of the country. The Government, so I understand, is unable to' address that matter by the present bit of legislation.

It seems quite necessary, Mr. Chairman, that the directors of those businesses have to be addressed by legislation and • to be made liable. It is furthermore reprehensible to find situations where people own business of those sorts and sometimes they are single owners or quite near single owners; to find the preposterous arrangement by which those owners of those businesses owing large sums of money to the National Insurance Office will themselves make a claim on the National Insurance Fund for severance payment and then will continue the company under a new name. Meanwhile the workers find themselves having: no recourse whatsoever. I think that this business of some of the so-called holding companies has to be addressed and addressed urgently and significantly.

I will recognise that there are certain holding companies in the country having assets and having a very legitimate role that they will play. But Mr. Chairman, it is clear that there are other establishments using the format of "holding companies" as a vehicle by which to escape their legal liabilities to the country and to the people of the country in one form or another. It is a scam which was used in a neighbouring West Indian Island particularly to do with the matter of severance payments and National Insurance commitment and' it seems to be the kind of arrangement which has come north to Barbados in recent times.

Mr. Chairman, I think that it is necessary for the Government and for the Minister of Finance to recognise these particular problems as they relate to the National Insurance Department. I think that because of this problem, which I am detailing at the moment, significant sums of money which would be due and owing to the National Insurance Department are not paid to the National Insurance Department and are the source of very great concern. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, in situations which have become very much a part of the public domain in recent debates and open discussions, it is true to say that another ruse is being used by some unscrupulous persons where they may set up management companies to manage the affairs of establishments and then, somewhere after the setting up of those management companies they endeavour to operate using a completely different name thereby confusing the workers regarding who is in fact the real employer. Very often having set up the management companies they find themselves very well placed where the management companies they have set up have no assets and therefore when you sue them you can obtain *nothing.*

It is part of the exercise that is being conducted *now,* and as the Member for St. James North referred to it, it is part of the difficulty which the National Insurance Board has had in recent times. This is part of the reason why it is necessary for the Minister of Finance, in conjunction with the Ministry of the Attorney General, to get the kind of legislation before this Honourable Chamber that can assure the social safety net of the people of this country, and make sure that our constituents and the people at large in this country are not taken for the level of rides that they have been taken for by the unscrupulous.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: *Mr. Chairman,* within the last 3 years or so I have encountered some situations which tend to undermine the smooth workings of the National Insurance Scheme. The last speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central indicated that there was this rather disturbing development *which* had been occurring where employers were withholding deductions from employees' pay packages supposedly for the purpose of passing over these deductions to the National Insurance Scheme and then when the situation arose where the employees submitted claims it would be discovered that no monies were paid in on behalf of these workers into the National Insurance Scheme.

This is a serious problem, Sir. Cap. 47 of the Laws of Barbados provides that in instances where money should have been submitted on behalf of employees and

the employees make claims and no monies would have been submitted on behalf of the employees that action should be taken where the particular victims of the fraud or victim of the circumstances by which the money was not paid in could claim the exact quantum from the employer as should have been paid in.

As far as I am aware, Mr. Chairman, very seldom does that provision go into force. The point I am making is that it has happened and a lot of people have come to me saying that they made claims, sometimes maternity claims. They were entitled to maternity benefits and when they filed their claims they were told that the money that was supposed to have been sent in on their behalf was never sent in and even when some action is taken behind the scenes to get the recalcitrant employer to pay in problems still result for the employees who are never given justice. I believe that some action must be taken to ensure that people who have just claims on the National Insurance Scheme Fund should always be given what is their due.

In addition, Sir, it seems to me that in instances where employees are salaried and where employees draw their monies from definite employers and when employers deduct and send in the money to the National Insurance Scheme that system tends to work like the PAYE system where the deduction at source ensures that the money goes in. But there are several people who work and who should be paying National Insurance to the National Insurance Scheme who get away. I believe, Sir, in fairness to the entire society and to those who pay National Insurance, some stern action should be taken to make sure that all those who ought to pay should pay.

I am aware that many inspectors within the National Insurance Scheme go around trying their utmost to ensure compliance with the law but what I am not certain about is whether the National Insurance Scheme is sufficiently equipped and manned with enough inspectors to police the system to ensure that all that should go into the National Insurance goes in. There is a category of workers in Barbados known as self-employed people who sometimes are slow in making their payments and who sometimes are unaware of their obligations. Very often the inspectors take years to communicate with these self-employed persons to let them know that there are in debt to the National Insurance system. Where a situation develops where the National Insurance Scheme is unable to draw in as much as it should, then the function of the Scheme would be severely undermined.
3.50 p.m.

The Honourable Member for St. Andrew made the point, or attempted to make the point, Mr. Chairman, that it has often happened that there are those who should make payment and sometimes the amount of money runs into thousands upon thousands of dollars. Where the community at large stands to benefit from the existence of the National Insurance Scheme, we should make sure that the MS Department gets in as much money as possible to be in a financial position to pay claims because, like any other insurance scheme, there will always be claims on the National Insurance Scheme. These claims must be satisfied out of the pool of monies that have been paid in. My suggestion is that the pool often does not flow and is not as full as it should be and the result is that it can sometimes put the National Insurance Scheme on a spot.

Now, in respect of unemployment benefits, Mr. Chairman, we have in Barbados a situation where people are entitled to unemployment benefits and are absolutely unsure as to how the system of unemployment benefits works. A lot of simple workers when entitled to unemployment benefits are not aware of their obligation, not only to apply but periodically to register again, and a lot of them lose their unemployment simply by not re-registering.

To put the point clear, Mr. Chairman, let us take a case of a young lady working in an industrial estate called X. X applies for unemployment benefits. The officer does not make it clear to her that every two weeks she should come back and re-register so as to remain entitled. The result is that she registers once, does not re-register periodically, and then she is told that her application for unemployment benefits cannot be approved. I believe there is a burden on the National Insurance Scheme to educate the people and certainly for the officers of the National Insurance Office who come across people applying for unemployment insurance benefits, to let people know precisely how the Unemployment Benefit Scheme works.

Now, in relation to severance, I thought I heard in an earlier speech on the floor of this Honourable House some reference to the fact that some employers make it difficult for the Severance Payments Scheme to work properly. As you well know, Mr. Chairman, if a worker is entitled to severance from an employer and the employer never pays, then the money is paid out of public funds in the National Insurance Scheme and it often happens that the public funds the MS are allocated to pay workers who are never given payment of severance by employers. The result is that after the workers get their money the Government finds it extremely hard to recover back from those employers. I believe something has to be done about this.

In addition, Sir, it is now 1994 and the three tribunals hearing severance cases are clothed heavily with work. The time has come when if a severance hearing takes 2, $2^{1}/2$ or 3 years, clearly if you assume that the tribunals work hard, which I believe they do, then the time must have come for an increase in the number of tribunals to clear the

large backlog of cases because persons entitled to severance made to wait for a year, 2 or 3 years who do not get a job in the interim whilst they are waiting, are going to suffer severe hardship. A result of that will be that the long wait might cause tremendous frustration and cause them to question the entire smooth workings of the system and will obviously work injustice.

I want to conclude, Mr. Chairman, on the question of awards in a particular area. I have seen a situation where a man 48 years old was badly injured and could not work again. The lump sum award given to this man was somewhere between $20 000 and $22 000. I believe where a person is permanently disabled, suffers a disability which would rule out his being unable to work again in the future, that such an award is low. Now, somebody might counter the argument and say he would still be getting periodic sums, but such sums are small. The lump sum itself is also small.

I am respectfully urging upon this Honourable House for the Honourable Minister of Finance to consider reviewing that area where there is permanent disability and where the rewards are now conservative and low with the view to. increasing it. Of course, that suggestion is made against the background of the earlier point that the National Insurance Scheme must go about bringing in as much as possible so as to enrich the quantum of money in the pool out of which awards have to be paid.

With these observations ' then, Mr. Chairman, I am deeply grateful to you for having accommodated me.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I wish to endorse - the remarks made by the last three Honourable Members who have spoken on the National Insurance Scheme. Social security is too important a matter for all Barbadians whether they are contributing or not contributing to the Social Security Scheme in this country. The Scheme at the moment pays contributory pensions and for those persons who do not qualify for a contributory pension, it pays a non-contributory pension, an issue which, no doubt, is still a sore issue with some people because the question arises whether it is not for the state to carry the cost of those persons who do not contribute to the Scheme rather than allowing the cost to be borne by those who are contributing but that is a question of probably looking at the financial position.

What I want to say to the Government is that the problems which have been outlined by the Honourable Members for St. Andrew, St. Michael Central and St. James North, are problems that the Government ought to have addressed a long time. I am aware of the fact that the Government, as part of the restructuring programme, has had a review mission looking at the functioning and the organization of the National Insurance Office and the National Insurance Scheme as a whole.

Indeed, towards the end of the past year, and indeed towards the end of last year, an officer from the bank, a Mr. Wayne Vroman, had been assigned by the World Bank to undertake that mission. I hope the Government will recognise that since thousands of Barbadians are contributing their funds, not the Government funds, to the Social Security Scheme, that the report of Mr. Vroman and the World Bank will be' published and made available to the House just as I would like to see the most recent actuarial study, or if one has not been done since I think one is now due to be done about how sound is the Scheme. 4.00 p.m.

I raise the point for this reason, Sir. Last year we went through a period where the monthly contributions to the National Insurance Scheme were not enough to pay the monthly benefits. This is a fact, Sir.

The Government had before it, for several months, a recommendation from the Board and from the experts that the Government should increase the level of contributions to the scheme. The Government took the deliberate, political decision...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: No, no, no. Just a minute. Just a minute. Wait. Listen to the argument. I am not tripping him up.... to delay the implementation of the increase, and it increased it in January until such time as the Government said it would have been able not to have political fall-out from that decision since the health levy and the employment levy would then have been reduced and people would not notice it as much. That is a fact.

What did they do in the meantime? In the meantime the Government took money — I think it was about $50 million or $30 million, I am not sure — from the Unemployment Fund and transferred it to the National Insurance Fund — that is a fact — to juggle the funds in order to give a certain amount of respectability to the funds. I do not believe that they should fool around with people's money in this way. I would tell you why, Sir; and it is most important. The Unemployment Fund has been running in surplus.

In October last year for instance it had about $58 million in surplus. That tells me one of two things, either we are paying too much into the Fund or, secondly, the Government made.a mistake when it reduced the qualifying period the length of time people would get unemployment benefits. It is a very serious thing because here are people who have been contributing or on whose behalf

contributions have been made to the Unemployment Fund. They find themselves outside of the working force, unemployed. In many families sometimes all the bread earners are out. They cannot get any more money from the Unemployment Fund but the Fund is heavily in surplus. What is more even when there was the Training Fund that too was not being used to retrain them. I do not believe that that is the right policy. I must therefore criticize – and this is a criticism I am making ; the position where Government reduced the period of time people could get Unemployment benefit. It is still accumulating surplus in that Fund pretty rapidly. The Minister could give us the up-to-date figures.

It is either having too high a levy or it is not paying out sufficient benefits. To me that is an embarrassing position for somebody in public life where we know that people are hurting in Barbados and where, if you are doing your work as an MP and you go around your constituency office and go through your constituency you know that the Social Security net has been so reduced that some people are still not able to send their children to school. Some weeks people have not got the money to afford proper meals. And yet, here you have a position where the Unemployment Fund continues to accumulate and accumulate and accumulate surplus. The Government's only use for it seems to me to move it into the National Insurance Fund. I am concerned about that, Sir.

I would like to see Mr: Bowman's Report and I would like to see the recent actuarial study so that we can place the National Insurance Fund on a sound and secure basis. I want to know how every investment is made and whether the investments are producing a proper return to secure people like the Honourable Member for St. George who had 4 months to go before he draws and the others who are going to come on stream in the future. It is most important. That is why I have never missed an opportunity to talk about the problems of the state of the National Insurance funds and what has been happening with them.

I have to talk about the Severance Payment Fund as well. A decision was taken to convert the • loan of $10 million to a grant at one stage. The Severance Payment Fund has started towards the end of last year to accumulate surplus. But I do not believe it is a genuine surplus. I do not believe it is a genuine surplus for the following reasons. If I am wrong the Minister can correct me.

(1) Because there was still a large number of unsatisfied severance claims that have not been adjudicated or dealt with by the Board. I want to know how many claims are outstanding.

(2) The Fund itself is indebted to the Treasury in respect of loans made and advanced to the funds previously. I want to know what the position on that is.

(3) The third point I want to make about the severance position relates to those people who cannot benefit from the Fund but who have to depend on Government tb pay their severance.

In the Estimates the Government has put aside this year, I am not sure how much money it is but on page 26 under Head 19, Subhead 9, subprogram 01 there is a vote of $13 million. But that is not only to pay severance. It includes a provision for payment of severance to former Government employees. It tells me that there is still a large number of Government employees who have been severed and who, after so many years – the Minister could give us the time lag – have still. not received their severance payments. I do not, believe that that is good enough.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: If I am not right the Minister could correct me. Or if the money is in... Page 26 and the Explanatory Note the other side. The Minister could look at it, Sir. If it is not right then what is the need to put in money here unless the Government intends to sever Government workers during the current financial year.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: That is what I am saying. There is still a large number of them that have remained unpaid.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: If the Honourable Member tells me that he is putting.money – we are voting $13 million, part of which and I am reading the Note for him:

"The target for 1994/95 is the prompt settlement of Retiring Benefits. Also includes provision for payment of severance to former government employees."

4.10 p.m.

There is also a new provision for payment to safeguard Government employees so I have to ask the Minister to check the number of Government employees who remain still unpaid and who have been severed and in what areas.

The other point that I have to make under this, Sir...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Two *minutes?* A couple of suggestions, Sir. The Honourable Members , who

have spoken have drawn attention to the fact that employees have been making payments into the Fund through their employers then to find that the funds have not gone into the National Insurance Board.

Now, I believe that the National Insurance Board has to take some criticism for this. They have a duty to have their inspectors on a monthly basis, if .not on a weekly basis, ensure that every employer makes the payment that has to be made to- that fund and if he does not make, or if the company does not make it, to prosecute. That is why I threatened the National Insurance Board during the past year on behalf of my constituents that I was going to sue them unless they paid in such circumstances and they paid.

I am giving gratuitous legal advice now. In any instances where this occurs the employee has a right to sue the Board and to recover because there is a part of negligence on the basis of the Board. It should have the number of officers who are policing the Act and seeing that the Act is properly looked after. But that, Sir, I am not condoning in any way those employers who collect the money and do not send it on. The legislation should be altered in two ways. First it should be made clear that money collected in those circumstances are trust funds just as the same way PAYE is a trust fund if you collect it and therefore if the company goes into liquidation or receivership, because of the trust nature of the fund, there is a priority given to recovery in those circumstances.

Secondly this has been done in all countries that I . know that have had this problem. So the Government has not got far to look for the precedent. What you do is you provide in the legislation that in circumstances such as those where companies in particular have refused to pay over the funds the Directors are personally liable.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: This is the last point, Sir. You alter the legislation in order to prevent people becoming directors of companies where those companies have been in previous default and they just turn around the door and set up another paper company. If there are problems it is not for want of a way to rectify the position and I am calling on the Government as a matter of urgency to deal with these problems because social security is dear to the heart of every Barbadian and no Barbadian is going to be satisfied that when he or she comes to the end of the day they find that the fund is in such a way that we have to depend on taxation in order to make up the deficit to meet the payments.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, the first point that I want to make relates to the question of liabilities of Directors and to say that we have had recommendations from the Board of the National Insurance and we certainly would be looking at those issues because it is clear that the present arrangements and enforcement is inadequate.

It is not inadequate simply because one person who made press headlines in Barbados owes money because there are other people who owe money and it is a tragedy that that person was not in some way apprehended but the point is that I undertook that the matter would be taken to Cabinet and it was taken. I never undertook to bring it to Parliament but if you are asking for a report to Parliament that can be done too. There is no secret. I said I would take it to Cabinet, not to Parliament so you obviously do not understand what I said and therefore do not give the impression that I undertook to bring it to Parliament because I did not give such an undertaking but if you wish me to give that undertaking that is not a big issue. The National Insurance Corporation is a public institution and it has a duty to be accountable and I do not think there is any Minister who would feel that unless it is privileged information that information should not be published. That is nothing to hide and you do not have to pretend over there or anywhere else that there is anything to hide about the Matthieson matter. The matter was before the courts. It is still before the courts.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member would recall that I cautioned the Honourable Member for St. Andrew and I am just cautioning you not to go ...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is why I am using it in that context. I am not calling the name of anybody. I talked about a matter and I meant the matter in its generic sense because it seems to have attracted that kind epithet.

The point that I am making though is that the matter was being pursued by both the Inland Revenue Department and the National Insurance Department. In fact orders had been made against the person which were subsequently revoked. Sir, there has been no negligence, in my view, on the part of the departments in seeking to recover the sums.

Now, the issue relating to deductions paid over, I feel very strongly about that as well and the National Insurance Department has to do what it is supposed to do to ensure that people who owe contributions and have deducted them on behalf of others pay those contributions and I will assist them in whatever way to bring the legislation or whatever other changes are .necessary to give effect to that.

Regarding the change in the NIS contribution and the unemployment contribution, let me start by saying that

every decision I make other than one which I make under a statute is a political decision. So to say that the Minister or the Government made a political decision I assume you mean that not as a criticism. But I also endorse that particular position for the simple reason that we did not wish to increase the overall contributions or have a net increase in contributions by employees to the various funds or whatever you wish to call them. Therefore we chose to wait.

Now in waiting of course you know when the next actuarial review is done one has therefore to anticipate that arising out of that actuarial review any decisions *which* should have been taken,- which were not taken with respect to the previous one, would be reflected in the overall state of the National Insurance Fund and we would have to bear those consequences. But we have to- understand that in. terms of the long-term viability of the National Insurance benefits as a whole, that that is something that we have to be prepared to pay for as Barbadians. We cannot have those levels of benefits without paying for them.

That brings me to the Severance Payments Scheme and I want to tell this Honourable House, Mr. Chairman that a report is being prepared. I am in favour of adjustments to the Severance Payments Scheme in Barbados. I have said so publicly and I will say so again and again. The Scheme as it exists is subversive both of private sector activity and it is subversive to the workers of Barbados because what they do is end up wanting to remain in a job at a level that is way below their competence simply because they are building up entitlement to severance, and that cannot be a sensible arrangement for any benefit scheme in the world. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in my view it is something that is going to need some attention and I hope that the report from the consultant will address that issue and that we can have some meaningful change in the Severance Scheme. Apart from that when people reach the age of 65 years, they are not entitled to severance. I feel there should be some other basis on which they could have some portable arrangement where at that age or even an earlier age they could be entitled to a lump sum for contributions made, even if not made by them. Anyway, we will wait and see the outcome of the consultant's report. So these things are being looked at.
4.20 p.m.

Now let me turn to the issue of the offshore sector. The speech by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is probably the most misguided presentation that I have heard so far in this Estimates debate. It is totally misguided. It is just precisely the point that we suffer from when we draw comparisons between Barbados as an offshore domicile and other countries which do not essentially compete with us in respect of the same kinds of products, the same regulatory framework and so on. I think that a comparison to BVI is the wrong kind of comparison to make.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is the point that the quality of our operations, particularly the IBC, - which are more labour intensive and they are not just registrations that we have. We have IBC's doing large volumes of business through this country and this is the kind of business that we want. We do not want high volume registrations and I do not feel that the sector should be taken in that direction where you are registering 2000...

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: On a point of order, Sir, if the Honourable Member will give way. The point of comparison that I made of BVI had to do with the speed of processing only. That is the only point that I was making.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Okay. Well, all right. If that is the view you take, I accept that. But to compare Barbados to Cayman Islands again, in my view, is a misguided comparison. I do not think that the)3arbadian sector is as backward as the Honourable Member feels. I think that there are a lot of things that we need to do that the establishment of the unit will be a considerable boon to the development of the sector. I also want to say that I do not feel that we need to shift resources to the unit such as to make the private sector in Barbados feel that they can now diminish their contribution. If .there is one sector in which we expect to pull their weight, it is in the offshore services and the international business sector. Now if we were about to put more money in the Unit, they would took at those figures and feel that they no longer have to make a contribution towards the sector. Therefore, I am concerned about that.

Now I do not hold a brief for the lawyers. In fact, I should blame the Honourable Member for St. Michael West for encouraging me to do law. There are only lawyers of integrity in here so far. But the point is, Mr. Chairman, that the lawyers as usual sat back. They allowed the accounting firms in Barbados to practice law. It is happening on . a regular basis and lawyers are in collusion with the accountants in this country, providing legal advice, doing registrations and so on. They are practicing law. I blame the lawyers for that and I *am not* accepting *any* brief from any insurance company which at the end of the day they are. holding themselves out on my behalf to be practicing law. If the lawyers would unite out there and stop acting like crabs in a barrel and bread and fish tubs or whatever you wish to call it...

A1ides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But the point I wish .to make, Mr. Chairman, is that the lawyers have permitted

to develop and it is something that the legal profession has to deal with. Not that I feel that the accountants are not making their contribution, because they are making a significant contribution in the offshore sector. In fact, if the accountants were not making their contribution, it is not to say that the lawyers would make it because many of them are very lazy and do not maintain the levels of administration and ,efficiency in' their office which the accountants have. What we need is more professional and better organised lawyers. I have seen the lawyers on the overseas promotions. They go to ,skylark. They do not do any promotion. They do not follow up. It is the accountants that do the work and waste a lot of the local resources, not the Government, because the Government of Barbados I must say is always lauded at the RIMS Conferences and the Foreign Sales Corporation Conferences for its promotions. I can say that they are outstanding which is a tribute to the private sector. But the lawyers do not really promote themselves effectively when they go on those conferences. As I said, they go and skylark and they get annoyed when other people as they say are hogging up all of the work in the offshore sector. That is true. When you look at it, you can count the people who do the work on two hands. There is no reason why they alone should be doing it, except that the others who are moaning and groaning about it will not themselves seek to put in place infrastructure in their offices to develop it

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I am talking, about the number of lawyers who are in this offshore business. I would like to address the fact that the Central Bank in its publications for some years has only given a small list of lawyers and I do not know how they have arrived at that. But that list was only meant to be representative of persons who were doing offshore work and I think it was unfair because it was not sufficiently comprehensive. Indeed, I think that it was unfair advertising.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: We will seek to have that addressed. To say that there is not serious Government leadership in the sector, that is a misguided statement. It is misguided because the mere establishment of the Unit and the other work that we have done in terms of promotions, which are done at the highest level, means that the Government demonstrates its commitment. Even if it is three years old, at least it is Government led in that regard. I do, not think that Barbados is lagging as seriously as Members suggest. I believe that there are opportunities for us to do a lot more and we will retain persons to speed the process. We have not lost that expertise. We have retained some of the people who previously were experienced to come and draft legislation.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No, I was always a convert but maybe other people did not have that view. But I am satisfied that this sector is going to continue to grow and develop.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now suspend until 5 o'clock p.m. today.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I second that, Sir.

The question that the House ,do now suspend until 5 o'clock p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

4.30 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. When the Suspension was taken this House was in Committee. To that it shall revert.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee is resumed.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, I want to turn the Committee's attention to sugar and I use as my starting point the provision of $8 031 000 provided under the Ministry of Finance, Item 316, • Grants to Public Institutions. The explanatory note opposite page 16 says that it is to make provision for assistance to the sugar industry. Whether it is by way of a subsidy, grant or otherwise I am not too certain.

I just would like to recall by way of introduction that when the Barbados Labour Party administration in the early 1980s saw it necessary and in the public interest to give support to the sugar industry by way of the Price Support Scheme, the initiative was bitterly and strenuously opposed in this House led then by the Opposition by the Shadow spokesman for the time for Finance who is no longer a Member of this House, but who is reduced to calling

into the radio stations in the country on a daily basis in order to give himself a public platform.

It was said openly then that it was not strange that the Barbados Labour Party Administration would be supporting the sugar industry but that no Democratic Labour Party Administration would do any such thing. The sugar industry would finance itself and there would be no public support under a Democratic Labour Party Administration. But that is nothing unusual in relation to the Democratic Labour Party. So often their words in Opposition have not matched their actions in Government' and this is just another of the graphic illustrations of that theme.

At the time when we did it, Mr. Chairman, the industry had lost some $40 million overnight, you will recall, because of the sharp rise in the U.S. dollar against the ECU's and because the Barbados dollar was tied to the U.S. dollar we suffered a dramatic loss. At that time too the price of sugar on the world market was very low. There was a sustained period in the 1980s when the price fell to a very low level and the industry itself was showing signs of becoming more and more uncompetitive with the tonnage per acre falling lower and lower from the high point of about 4 tonnes per acre in the 1950s. We were experiencing too outbreaks of the disease of the smut and the thrips so there was some evidence of physical decline in the industry. But even though the tonnage had fallen to 80 000 or thereabout at one point in the early 1980s, by 1986 we had still managed to get it right back up to $111 000 tonnes of sugar when we actually left office in 1986.

It is one of the saddest stories of modem Barbados that within 7 years we were to plummet, nothing short of that, from 111 000 tonnes in 1986 to less than 50 000 tonnes in 1992/93 and that perhaps for the first time in our history as a sugar producing country, we were to be importing sugar for domestic consumption now for the third year running and there is no hope in the foreseeable future that that will change particularly under the guidance being offered to the industry at present. It is a very damaging blow to the national psyche and the national pride that a country that has boasted for so many centuries of being on the frontier of the sugar culture and being able to produce sugar should be reduced to having to import sugar for domestic consumption and having to import molasses too in order to sustain the rum industry which has for centuries been a by-product of the sugar industry.

We continue to get blows to our national pride in relation to sugar because when Booker Tate was asked to come to virtually run the Barbados Sugar Industry, when people world wide used to look to Barbados for centuries as a place with the skill and personnel to assist countries all over the world in sugar, when we have to ask Booker Tate to come here to take over the management and the direction of our sugar industry, we have fallen on sad days indeed.

I want the Minister of Finance, and that does not say anything for the Minister of Agriculture because there has been *too long a tendency in* this country – I brought it to a dramatic end when I became Minister of Agriculture but I said there would be no agriculture under me with the Ministry of Finance being in charge, as has happened for so many years prior to nay time. If you are to be in control you have to dictate and call the shots. The late Tom Adams recognised that as soon as I made the point. You have to insist on that otherwise you are only half of a Minister.

The point I am making though, Mr. Chairman, is that I want to know how long Booker Tate will be here running the sugar industry? How long is that contract for? How much money is Booker Tate being paid for their role? I want to know too what aspects of the Booker Tate report will . be implemented and which aspects will not be implemented?

You will recall, Mr. Chairman, that in the Booker Tate Report they recommended the closure of Bulkeley and the reliance on Andrews Factory situated in St. Joseph and Portvale in St. James. All those who are familiar with the road system in Barbados, the water system and the ageing capacity of Andrews were quick to make the point that to allow Andrews to survive and be responsible along with Portvale for the grinding of sugar in Barbados does not seem to be a wise decision at all.

Is Bulkeley going to be closed? What is the cost of having to rely on Andrews? What will it do, given the closure of Foursquare in recent years and Carrington, to the small farmers in the south and the middle of Barbados? Can the road system in that part of Barbados accommodate Andrews as the second factory in Barbados? Can the water supply in Barbados which currently is in peril allow us to be dependent on Andrews as the second factory in Barbados given the amount of water that is needed to support sugar grinding activity? But more than that, Mr. Chairman, the Booker Tate Report made it clear that they could only guarantee successful rehabilitation of the Barbados Sugar Industry if there was devaluation. That is a fact which not many people seem to remember.

5.10 p.m.

I want to know whether in bringing them on board they have made it clear that that is for them the major factor that will determine successful rehabilitation and whether the Barbados Government is implicitly saying that along the way we will change the exchange rate so as to assist the sector. More than that, Mr. Chairman, is the question of land use policy in relation to agriculture generally and in relation to sugar. I know the Minister

has been making statements at the recent Meeting of the Sugar Technologists Association towards the end of last year to the effect that there will be a new land use policy in that agricultural land will, in my words, not his, be sacrosanct hereafter.

I am afraid that your administration is far too late. - The alienation of good agricultural land, sugar lands in *particular, which has* taken place under successive Democratic Labour Party Administrations in this country *is* one of the scandals of this century. You can take it from me that all the land speculators in this country rejoice as soon as there is a Democratic Labour Party Administration in office. I do not have time in this debate to go through the number of plantations from St. Lucy back to Christ Church which have come out of agriculture because there was an open door. As soon as the Democratic Labour Party is in office with respect to land speculators, you can always get a change of use to move from agriculture to something else. You cannot be serious about trying to maintain sugar and through sugar non-sugar I will return to that in a moment — unless you have a land use policy that says in effect the Cottage Plantation which is in the heart of the sugar belt of this country cannot and will not be given permission for housing purposes.

You have some of the choicest agricultural lands in St. John where subdivision took place. Cottage is the finest and the worst example of the alienation of our agricultural land by Democratic Labour Party Administrations. Wakefield is a bad example but they tell me that to get groundsill foundation in some of the Cottage land they had to go to 20 feet. That tells the story. When you have to dig 20 feet in agricultural land to get to foundation that tells you the quality 'of the land you are talking about. It is not 6 feet of topsoil or 6 inches to get to foundation. I agree that Wakefield in St. John remains another bad example of the further alienation.

As part of the decline of the sugar sector has been the fall-out of the small farmer. Ten years ago the small farmer was producing about 12% to 15% of the sugar in Barbados. That was the contribution which the small farmer, defined as a man who produced under 100 tonnes of raw cane, was making. Today the small farmers' contribution is about 6 per cent. In 8 years, 1986-1994 that has been the slide. Unless there is a new deal given to the small farmer for the future, by the turn of the century there will be no small farmer production of sugar in this country.

Small farmers have become watchmen, security guards and they are doing all sorts of things today other than paying attention to the land because it has` become downright unprofitable for them and the feeling is abroad that the signal from the Government for the sugar industry is unclear. The feeling is abroad out there – it is a perception – that - the Democratic Labour Party Administration is not serious about sugar. Whether that dates back to the cane-blade speech or otherwise I don't know but that is the perception abroad.

I have to make the point which was made though not explained in the Development Plan that over the planned period 1993-2000 it is expected that non-sugar production will decline. But that is not to happen because given that non-sugar rotates around sugar — I will not be long on that I am only making...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a reference.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: ... that too is bound to be in trouble once sugar production falls to the level where it is today. It is when we produced 200 000 tonnes of sugar that we had the highest and largest output of non-sugar. The more sugar you produce, the more non-sugar you will produce because of the symbiotic relationship between sugar and non-sugar. I don't want to get into non-sugar. that strictly belongs to agriculture and we will deal with that.

A call was made recently by the leader of the Barbados Agricultural Society for the Government to give a clear signal with respect to sugar, what they are doing, what is going to be the target for the future. Are we going to be aiming at 75 000 or 80 000 tonnes? How many acres of agricultural land are we going to be putting in sugar? When will we reach the point where we will be able to rely on Barbadian sugar for domestic consumption again? They are the sorts of questions that need to be answered. If people are to feel that the Government is serious about the support and its- leadership in the area of sugar, those questions have to be answered with clarity and conviction.

I have no brief for the plantation, the leaders of the sugar industry coming from the private sector. In my time, Mr. Chairman, I formed the impression that they were largely speaking a group of men who had lost their way and who were dealing with an industry the future of which they insufficiently understood. I think that both the Barbados Labour Party Administration and the Democratic Labour Party Administration fell down in the sense that they did not use their support in various forms of the industry as a lever to insist on more radical reform, particularly at the management level of the sugar industry.

The sugar-industry must move from being run by a plantocracy to being used by a meritocracy. We need modem professional managers in the sugar industry. Men must not run the sugar industry because of the accident of their birth and the accident of their inheritance. That is no basis for running a modem sugar industry. The sugar

industry must be run in the future by men who qualify on the basis of merit, skills and ability to run it.

CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Until we move to that point, we will continue to experience difficulties in the sugar industry of this country.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Chairman, I am constrained to respond to a number of issues which normally I would have dealt with under Head 25, Ministry of Agriculture, relating to the sugar sector but seeing that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has initiated debate,

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Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me just say to the Honourable Member that the debate that was permitted . by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph was in the context of they.. 'h a t 1 am saying to you is that it is *in* the context of giants to institutions. What I *do not want* you to do is have a broad ranging agricultural input at this point.

. D. W. BOWEN: The least you could do, Mr. 'hai~an is give me the *opportunity to...*

*CHA*IR*MAN:* Go ahead.

~$, D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Chairman, this is the third *c onset ut i'we year* that the Honourable Member for St. has regurgitated, the same issues on...

.. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member was given ample permission to speak without interruption.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN:...the question of the sugar industry It is known that the demise of the sugar industry was as a result of private sector operations and had nothing *to do with* the Democratic Labour Party. That must be said.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Despite ongoing preferential price, despite price support and despite the whole question of various forms of debt relief the sugar industry still went

Therefore this Government had to take drastic do something to recover the industry. The, only ea. lg that could have. been done was to undertake a ve restructuring programme, based on the fact that we :Ave a guaranteed market, based on the fact that we are not for domestic purposes and based on the fact that aye: ;arced and highlighted 30 000 acres for sugar cane production we undertook this restructuring programme. That is how Booker Tate happened to be in Barbados. Before I deal with the subsidy, Mr. Chairman, I think you are going to give me permission to respond specifically to some of the points that were made. The question of agricultural lands that were used for other purposes that will be debated tomorrow. I will bring the records and I will show which land was cut up under the Democratic Labour Party and which land was cut up under the Barbados Labour Party. That will be shown tomorrow. You know that I deal with statistics. I do not deal with just vague statements that . are thrown out for public consumption. I will bring it tomorrow.

Aside.

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

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Chairman it is clear notwithstanding what has been the contribution or lack of it by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph that the BAMC which is the company charged with the responsibility of overseeing the revitalization of the sugar sector that BAMC would have to be given finance at least in the short and medium term for the sugar sector. That is where the $8 million comes in. The $8 million is for field and factory work. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, so committed is this Government to the whole question of the revitalization of the sugar industry that we were also earmarked in the Estimates under agriculture $1.8 million for the non-indebted plantations and for the small farmers to ensure that they are part of it.

Again, when I come to debate the matter under the Head of the Ministry of Agriculture I will show what contribution the Barbados Agricultural and Development and Marketing Corporation is making to the whole thrust in the revitalization process.

Let me give you some figures, Mr. Chairman, relating to what has to happen given the fact that over the past several years the contribution of sugar to the Gross National Product has been declining.

BAMC is expected to spend some $.9 million over the next 5 years on cane production field cost. It is expected to buy some $226 million in cane from outside the plantations as small farmers. It plans to invest over $2 million in capital land reforming for mechanization increases. This is what we have planned. We plan to suspend at least $9 million over the period on the non-indebted plantations and as' support to the small farmers and to that end $1.8 million is allocated in the Estimates under the Ministry of Agriculture. We plan to invest in the next 5 years over $11 million in ,field

machinery purchased and to spend some $9 million in new factory investments. That is what we are going to do with the factories at Andrews and Portvale. That is what is planned.

With respect to the contract, the Honourable Member raised the issue of the length of the contract with Booker Tate. The contract with Booker Tate is for 5 years in the first instance. Our forecast is that at the end of 5 years the industry should be self-sustaining.

Mr. Chairman, I thought it necessary to respond to these matters which, as I say, come up over and over again. Mr. Chairman, you would not permit me to do this but I could tell you, I could take you aside and give you all the issues that' the Honourable Member for St. Joseph raised on agriculture, in the same way that I could carry you outside and tell you the issues that the Honourable Member for St. Peter raised on finance. The same story year in, year out. All it does is create confusion in the minds of the public.

It is clear that during the restructuring process we are going to have to continue for some time with the importation of sugar. But hopefully this is not going to go on very much longer, another 2 years or so. I take the point about the question of non-sugar agriculture. It is probably the only valid point that the Honourable Member made. The question that there is a positive relationship between the level of production of sugar cane and the level of production of non sugar agriculture. Non-sugar agriculture despite the decline – I am not going too far, Mr. Chairman – in sugar and despite the fact that it was plummeted to an all time low by the private sector and despite all the mouthings of certain people in the BAS and so on non-sugar agriculture has held its own and has grown substantially in some areas. I will deal with that at length when we come to speak on agriculture.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not like to intervene in these debates but I find it very difficult to listen to the various effusions of the other side in relation to the private sector. On the one hand we had the Minister of Finance in the course of his general speech speak of the fact that Barbadians must understand that the private sector is going to be the instrument to drive this economy forward. On the other hand we hear the Minister of Agriculture now saying that the evidence is clear that it is the private sector that drove the sugar industry down. On the third hand we have those as saying that the crisis in the Government is a resurrection of the planter class.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Let us make up in our minds, I just want us to make up in our minds what message we are sending out there. You cannot on the one hand...

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Leave them *Sir.*

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I have some order.

5.30 p.m.

The truth of the matter, Sir, is that they are speaking with forked tongues. At this time of the afternoon, Sir, one of the greatest by-products of the sugar industry sometimes has .... and we must be careful, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, our position is that the Government has reversed itself on this matter totally and absolutely The Government is ashamed of the fact that under its administration, since 1986 that the national product in the form of sugar and its by-products has plummeted from somewhere in the vicinity of 112 000 or 114 000 tonnes down to a matter of 45 000 to 50 000.

Now, Sir, I would be very glad if we are able at least to meet our quota commitments because I know as we all know that Barbados is short of foreign exchange and It has been repeatedly pointed out by *this side that sugar is one* of the means that we can get the greatest b s) it from expenditure of local dollars to earn foreign e c

Now I hear ' a lot of talk about we say so too but that does not prevent the Government that says so from ` on°g and borrowing money in foreign exchange in oiler to finance the existing crop, whereas if they had used: l y pan money they would not have to pay interest en Dreg n exchange. Do not let us talk about this matter because there are a lot of things that are said but obviously pax *:lo n of* understand the - inner workings of these dings_ The Government was forced to borrow foreign exchange from a Dutch bank to finance the purchase of cane from cane farmers in Barbados. You have to pay an intetesit rate at that and you have to pay that interest, not in Barbadian dollars, you have to pay it *in US dollars. Whereas if you* had used the Central Bank ...

This is one time where it pays you to print m one v You know why? Because you are printing Barbados i ail] s and you are getting two sets of profits, the Central Bank and your profits. Then when you finance the arhadian cane farmers they are being paid in Barbados dollars and when you sell the end product you get US dollars so the Barbadian dollar gets the maximum utilisation of the foreign exchange earning. But do not bother. It will not be long before they.would not have to make those nevisions: So let us get ahead, Sir. I do not want to intervw ;e in this, Sir. I wish the sugar industry well.

The Honourable Member will gain by it, S i if Barbados is not able to afford a Mitstart oeca

Agriculture he will not, have any work. So he had better hope that agriculture prospers because otherwise the axe which has come on so many other people will fall on him. So the Honourable Member had better hope and better pray that agriculture succeeds because it is a Ministry that I know is under the microscope for the cut. The Honourable Member does not know but the truth of the matter is this that the Honourable Minister of Finance is going to recommend sooner or later to the Prime Minister that in an effort to save money, and he has already said he has got to save money, he is going to say, We have cut all at the bottom. We have to start from the top. There is *no* more scope Prime Minister for us to cut down below, we have to look at the top. Let us look at the redundant Ministries.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Anyway this grant is for the sugar industry.

Hon. H. B. St: JOHN: The Ministry of Agriculture is going to be one of the first ones, Sir.

Now, Sir, I would hope that by tomorrow we will have, when we are debating agriculture, a sight of a very important report. I was just dealing with it because we are dealing with the subsidy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are dealing with the subsidy to the sugar industry. I do not want to engender a . full debate on agriculture under the Ministry of Finance.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is a very important report because it shows ... Even the Minister had to agree that there is a connection. Everybody knows there is a connection between the sugar industry and non-sugar. You could never pay for the cost of the weedicides and pesticides that you would need to import in Barbados if you did not use cane as a crop to prevent the weeds from growing.

The Honourable Member, Sir, should really try and review the records in the Ministry because he would understand that it was the Honourable Member for St. Philip North and his Government that came in here and said that Barbados could have 11 000 acres of cotton. You had better review the record in the industry. But not like this afternoon.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want you to come back to finance.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, what I really want to get at is this $8 million. Is this going to be a contribution, as I understand it, to the capitalisation of equity capital or loan capital to the Barbados Agricultural Management Company? Is this the part of the capitalisation of it?

Barbados Agricultural Management Company is a logical successor to the reorganisation that took place in the sugar industry with BSIL. What has happened was that they should have gone further with their reorganisation that the late E. R. L. Ward was aware of and provided services for the industry. Everybody knows that in Barbados the units of ownership of land are small for a sugar producing country. In other countries of the world, people talk about doing 12 000, 14 000, 15 000, 20 000 acres of sugar where you get the benefits of machinery being brought to bear. You cannot have that.

People talk a lot of foolishness about plantocracy and all of that. People who own 200 and 300 acres of land are nothing but small farmers in many countries of the world. Booker Tate itself said so and they needed a minimum of *12 000 acres in order to* get the economics or the economies of scale in relation to the bringing of machinery and things like that. But the most significant part of the reorganisation is not even so much the utilisation of the indebted estates but it is the integration of that management with the factory management. That is the significant part and we would like to know a bit more about that because although I am quite familiar with the lease *that relates to* the indebted estates and the BAMC – I have said that in *here* repeatedly – I am not familiar with respect to the lease that relates to the factory end. And I also know that there are still a couple of outstanding problems in relation to the non-indebted estates. So these are matters that we have to deal with. But this $8 million is it, going to go by a loan, gift, whatever? The note does not tell us. The note is not very full on that and I want to deal with that, Sir. I have no difficulty. I am very proud of my background, exceedingly proud of it. It has never given me any cause for concern. I am equally as proud as the former Member for St. John. The only thing is that he never used to like to proclaim his except to me. I would proclaim mine in public.

5.40 p.m.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I must say that the tenor of the contribution of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South in relation to this issue of the sugar industry and the restructuring of it has changed considerably. Only two weeks ago in here he pooh-poohed the entire restructuring and gave the impression that it was a complete sham, and that all kinds of people were owed money, that it was a joke business, and up to now this has not been finished, and all kinds of things have not happened. He got on so that you could not believe it. Now today the impression that I got from what he said here today is that by and large the things that have been done are okay. There is nothing wrong with them, but it is now that we have to go further and do some other things unrelated. to the issue of the leases. It is not a big thing of the lease between the Government and BSIL. It is not a major issue. It can be made .a document of the House and

the Honourable Member knows that he can see it. Because the parties to the various leases have relied on his legal advice from time to time and nobody would seek to exclude him. He said that he is proud of his background and he has a right to be. He is probably the most knowledgeable person in here on the sugar industry. He is entitled therefore to make a contribution and nobody would stop him from doing that;

Mr. Chairman, it is for this reason that he had the opportunity to put all that talent and ability that he possesses in that area in restructuring the sugar industry and he did not put one foot forward. He did not have the courage of all the conviction that he now has to restructure the sugar industry in Barbados and that is lamentable. Instead of talking as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph does about the levels of production, we could produce 300,000 tonnes of sugar tomorrow... hypothetically. But if one does not put in place the kind of financial policies and legal framework and an understanding such that the restructuring of the sugar industry can be run on an efficient basis, then we are not going anywhere. It has to be something that is going to be sustainable.

Mr. Chairman, it shocks me because this is the second time that this patent nonsense about the money from ING is being raised in here as if that is some kind of financial crime. There can be no net loss in foreign exchange. If we borrow 12 million pound sterling from ING which by the way is the savings of other people being risked in the sugar industry in Barbados, this is opposed to the savings of Barbadians which the Labour Party threw away $200 million out of the BNB and the taxpayers still have to pay that back with interest. So right now we are able to attract the savings of some other people to invest in our sugar industry to take a risk on us and, to be confident that we can give them some kind of return on it, what the Labour Party is telling us is that instead of that we should continue to take up the resources of the Central Bank and the Barbados National Bank, which is guaranteed by the taxpayers of Barbados, and throw more of those resources into the sugar industry at a higher interest rate. That idea of paying interest to an overseas bank for an investment on $36 million prop financing for about six months at 2 per cent above LIBOR. But he tells me that that is a net loss in foreign exchange. Check the rate of interest if you know so much about it. I have already asked the Honourable Member to check it. It cannot be a net loss if you are borrowing 12 million pound sterling and earning 12 million pound sterling. You can calculate it at 2 per cent above LIBOR. That could never calculate or add up to the $200 million which we had to look for in the space of a short period of time to practically — (Well, I cannot say write off the sugar industry debt.) — but transfer it to the BS&T and pay interest cost at 4'/z per cent. That is monumental incompetence.

Sir, I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. This is the first sugar crop in 300 years that has been produced by Barbadians who, in my view, finally represent the viewpoints of the average citizens in this country and not a cartel. Through the Barbados Agricultural Management Company, they put the sugar industry out to international tender. This means that; if you had the ability, you and your friends overseas or friends in Barbados could have tendered. I hear the former Central Bank Governor who has decided obviously to become an economic nuisance outside of Barbados talking foolishness about how we brought Booker Tate here. We did not bring anybody here. We put it out to international tender. We gave everybody the opportunity to tender for the sugar industry and two entities tendered — Booker Tate and some other entity. When they looked at the arrangements, Booker Tate was offered the management contract. They do not own the sugar industry in Barbados. They are simply managing the sugar industry. They have five principals here with various levels of expertise. They employ Barbadians and Barbadians are their immediate supervisors. The company is owned by the Barbados Government and will eventually be owned by the citizenry of this country when in due course it is privatised and shares are made available to the public. It is owned by the Barbados Government. The Government is the only shareholder. It owns both the ACT and the BAMC. It is a registered company of which the shareholder is the Crown. The Crown is appointed the directors and they are running the sugar sector.

Other people can come from outside of Barbados as far away as Holland. People can come from London and see what progress that we have made in the sugar industry who agree to help finance the sugar crop and yet in Barbados and some outside of Barbados, because I have just mentioned one of them, some seem to feel that it is their duty to make it appear that the restructuring progress is a complete sham or joke and that we are scraping all over the place to seek financing for the sugar sector. As far 'as I am concerned, Mr. Chairman, it is calculated to disparage the efforts of competent Barbadians. That is what the Labour Party is up to disparaging the efforts of competent Barbadians, because the decision in relation to restructuring is not exclusively a political decision. Instead of sitting down on the sugar industry and allowing it to run up considerable debts year after year and ' talking about sugar production is high. It is the story of the Barbados Labour Party. Now I don't want to harp on that but I am asking you, as I have asked you before, to be considerate enough to look at the issue dispassionately and seek to critique them not on some silly, empty criticism but on the basis of some kind of solid analysis. The speech of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph — it is quite true that it is the same speech he has made time and time again in here. He keeps telling us that we have to go to the public on the issue, meanwhile the restructing is almost

complete, all the issues that he would go to the public on according to him had already been dealt with. 5.50 p.m.

Some consensus was reached and now, as I understand it, the Government is providing an incentive scheme for the non-indebted plantations, as they call them. But they are really not non-indebted, those that are not indebted to the BNB. In addition to that, the companies are operational. Financing has been secured and they anticipate that the crop levels will improve this year and we should be able hopefully to meet our quotas next year.

But none of that can be described as an achievement according to the Barbados Labour Party. I am disappointed and I am pleased in one sense that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has not repeated some of the criticisms which were clearly misguided that he has used on previous occasions. This particular provision is for the capitalisation of the BAMC to provide capital resources for the sugar factory and for the other operations of the BAMC which will include the tractors and the other equipment together with the modernisation or upgrading of the sugar factories. It therefore constitutes a grant to the BAMC the financing of which comes from the Caribbean Development Bank which has agreed to finance the capital outlays of the Barbados Agricultural Management Company.

Again I believe that the fact of the CDB even acknowledging that the financial rate of return in the sugar sector is very low but that the economic rate of return is high, the fact that they have agreed to risk their resources in a venture such as this, is a clear indication of the confidence which the Caribbean Development Bank, a triple A institution has in the economy of Barbados and in the possibility for the development of the sugar industry. Those are things that should be lauded. You don't have to laud me. You can laud the people who were able to put together the technical work to ensure that the plan to restructure the sugar industry was a successful plan. That is important.

If we cannot take stock of those kinds of things and if you feel that we should continue to put at risk the public's money through the BNB, if you feel we should continue to issue bonds every now and again when the sugar industry runs up massive debts, if you continue to feel that we should put at risk the resources of Barbadians through the Central Bank via the sugar discount line, if you feel we should put at risk the future of the Barbados economy by keeping the sugar industry in the hands of those who cannot even manage the plantations which they forebears have lived on from time eternal, then something has to be wrong with the kind of planning which the Barbados Labour Party contributes to its own so-called success.

I don't support those viewpoints, Mr. Chairman, and I feel we have made a tremendous effort in this area to ensure that the sugar industry is successfully restructured. A lot of hard work has gone into it and I will leave the Honourable Member for Christ Church South now to return to do what he wanted to do from the beginning but forgot and he can do it now.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Now, Sir, the arrogance that emanates from the Honourable Member is something that people should take note of but I leave it to the people on the other side to deal with that. I know they will deal with that because already they are dealing with one and they will deal with him in due course.The position is that the Honourable Member constantly distorts my position in this area. I have repeatedly pointed out that as long ago as 1985, and if the Honourable Member will check the records the Honourable Member will see that in my capacity of Minister of Finance in 1985 I wrote my opinion to the Directors of, the Barbados National Bank saying that the Directors of the Barbados National Bank must immediately, as a matter of urgency, formulate 'a policy to ensure 'that agriculture owners who were indebted to them put forward schemes to recover the indebtedness, including the suggestion of merging that land into a single entity, ,because in my opinion in 1985 the future pattern of the unit of production had to change.

Now, Sir, the position is very clear. In 1986 the Barbados Labour Party left office. For almost 10 years the Honourable Member's political party was in, office and it took them from 1986 until 1992 before they took action. Obviously, the debt profile of the industry changed dramatically in that period of 1986 to 1992. So you can put that in your pipe and smoke it, Sir.

The truth of the matter is that the debt of $200 million that was incurred in the industry, the greatest amount of that debt, was incurred under the Democratic Labour Party Administration.

Asides.

HQn. H. B. St. JOHN: From 1986-1992. Don't tell me that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member hold on a minute, please. I have spoken already about loud asides across the table. I don't want to speak of it again. Will Honourable Members recognise that the Standing Orders have to be obeyed?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: There are some of us who can give but cannot take too. That is the truth of the matter.

The second point I want to show which displays a level of lack of understanding of finance that I

find amazing is that the Honourable Member is still going to get up in here and say that you are putting the Central Bank and the taxpayers' money at risk by borrowing interim finance to finance by way of working capital the purchase of cane for a crop for which you have a certain market. It is a monumental lack of understanding that would lead one to the position where one does not understand and appreciate the fact that if you borrow foreign exchange you have to pay back interest in foreign exchange. If you borrow locally and you use that local money to create a crop to earn foreign exchange and you have to pay interest, you are still only paying interest in Barbadian dollars. He does not understand it at all. Therefore you are losing the amount of foreign exchange *pro tanto* with the amount of interest you are paying.

Sir, this is so elementary that only a twisted person would fail to realise that. The Honourable Member knows what I am saying is true.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He cannot call a Member of this House a "twisted person". It must be a term that is unparliamentary, Mr. Chairman. I am not going to attribute to it but it must be something that is unparliamentary. I am asking that it be withdrawn by the* Honourable Member.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I will withdraw that, Sir. I know the Honourable Member cannot take his blows. Only a mind that is untutored in the elementary art of understanding finance would come to that conclusion. I would appeal to the Honourable Member to go and take a few lessons in these matters. That is a first primer lesson* in profit and loss.

Now, Sir, I have never decried the efforts to restructure the sugar industry. As I have said, what has been done is something that as long ago as 1985 we in the Barbados Labour Party clearly understood had to be done in relation to the indebted estates. Now, I want the Honourable Member to deny this. The position is that the sugar that is being sold in Barbados when you get a crop for Barbadian consumption the price will still be the same as the price that has been fixed under the price support scheme because the essence of the economics of restructuring the industry in Barbados and price support is that the domestic consumers will continue to have to pay a higher price which will go to redeem the sugar bonds.

6.00 p.m.

The Honourable Member will know that there has been no change in that policy so you are following the policy of the Barbados Labour Party in respect of the domestic financing. We all know that one of the reasons for the Barbados Sugar Industry's position at the present moment is — and I congratulate the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central and his colleagues and predecessors. Whatever you may say of the sugar industry in Barbados, however badly run it was, the workers of Barbados got some 50% of whatever receipts came in the industry, the highest paid outside of Australia in the Commonwealth. Are you intending to chop that? Tell me. I want to know. Tell the public. I know you intend to cut it like you cut the Civil Service, like the Honourable Member got in here today and said that he is all in favour of chopping the severance pay. Go ahead. I know. Your aim and object is to destroy before you rebuild. You want it in your own image but you are going to destroy before you rebuild.

It is very, very serious because the sugar industry will not be profitable unless it reduces its cost. You can only reduce your cost if you increase your yields or you bring to bear on your other costs very great economies. That is known and the Booker Tate Report itself, as I have repeatedly pointed out in here says that unless there is a devaluation of the Barbados dollar the sugar industry will have to be subsidized. Now, I am not telling you that you should devalue. All I am telling you is that you have to face that reality and do not get up here and say that you did some great stroke by this reorganisation because the reorganisation was clearly envisaged in respect of the indebted estates.

In respect of the sugar factories that is a different matter. The closure of sugar factories has been something going along as a result of an agreement between the sugar industry and the workers for a long period of time. Obviously if you run down the production from 110 000 to 45 000 tonnes you will need less factories. In any event, the factory costs in Barbados are high so I do not have any worry about what the Honourable Member comes in here and says.

Now, Sir, there are still outstanding matters in relation to the measures. The reason why I did not mention them was since there were mentioned in here previously there have been communications. But when I said on the last occasion...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not want any friends. I got my fee for the work I did so what are you talking about? I have already said in here, and I want this to be clearly understood, because the Honourable Member is getting in here and telling the public of Barbados that they now own the sugar industry. He said that for the first time the entity, that will be producing sugar in Barbados...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. I made it clear that Booker Tate does not own the industry. I made it clear that Barbadians who do not look like the cartel are managing the sugar industry. I did not

say anything about owning it. I would have to know better than that, unlike you. You want to sabotage it.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Honourable Member has a fixation with how he looks. That is the problem. He has a fixation with looks. There used to be a little boy at Harrison College and this question was put to him once "Are you white or are you black?" He said: "I am neither" and the little boy said "you must be technicolour". That is his problem. He has a fixation...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order, please.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN:... with the looks. He is interested in the ethereal. He is interested that he can get on a political platform and say that the cartel that used to own it...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to have it clearly understood that the cartel still owns it and the cartel still has to receive rent for it so what are you telling me now?

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: My time is up. We will reserve the rest for Agriculture, Sir.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, just before you close the Head, earlier on the Honourable Member for St. Thomas did ask some questions and I would like to provide the information. I am advised by the Barbados National Standards Institute that four samples were collected by them and sent to Petro Trin in Trinidad and that all the standards were within the specified American Society For Testing of Materials, (ASTM) Standards for petroleum products and lubricants.

The Barbados National Standards Institution also had 11 samples tested in cooperation with Mobil with Mr. Ken Reeves from the Institution present and they also were within the specification of the ASTM. I hope this helps the Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I believe I should wind up this particular debate and thank Honourable Members.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before you wind up, any other Honourable Members want to speak because the Minister is winding up.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I just want to express my gratitude to Honourable Members who contributed to this particular debate. Perhaps I should begin at the end, Mr. Chairman, and say that...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I will not bother with that. I have a job to do which I will do and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South had the chance to do his and he did it so I will do mine and he is not going to stop me by trying to sidetrack me and no Prime Minister is not going to write a letter to anybody under my responsibility saying that they did more damage than a hurricane and find me still sitting down in a Cabinet supine...

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, Sir. I hope he will be man enough to ensure that when it happens, if it does happen, that he will still be there, and the man will still be there despite the damage he did.

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I understand there are people who say they did not come in here in a boxcart. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South must understand that as confident, supremely as he is, not only about his background but about who he is and his role in politics, there are people over here who feel equally as confident and I am one. If I were not in here I would not feel that I have to walk around on the streets in Barbados with my tail between my legs.

A year ago when this sugar sector was going through turmoil, when the Barbados Workers' Union people were trying to salvage it on this same sugar industry, joined by opportunists from the Barbados Labour Party, including the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, opportunists from other political parties, leaders of political parties jumping up and down at the sugar factories...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: ... people jumping up and down all over the place and also moderators on call-in programmes trying to substitute their brilliance for the contribution which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South rightly attributed to the Barbados Workers' Union.

6.10 p.m.

t11 kinds of people were scrambling to supplant the Barbados Workers' Union and see if they could lick up the sugar sector in this country. At the end of the day the solid...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I cannot describe it as dispassion because a workers' union should never be described as dispassionate. But the sensible solidity of the Barbados Workers' Union, its General Secretary, the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central, and his ability to sit down with the Government and agree that the restructuring was important are things that should be praised.

I only want to say, Mr. Chairman, that just like in 1991 we had a scenario where everybody felt that the sugar industry was going to collapse and the parties were able to get together, put their heads together and find a solution. I have never accused the Honourable Member for Christ Church South of sabotage. But they had people walking all over Barbados come telling me that he is sabotaging the sugar sector because he is working for some white people and he does not want to sign the lease and he is defending them and so on. I used to say cud dear, you have to give him a chance. He is only being paid a fee as he was for BARTEL, and he can choose which side he wants to be on. He can choose to work with the planters, he can choose to work for the Telephone Company. He can sit on Boards if he wishes or he can choose to go into the factory yard like the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central or the leader of the grassroots faction of the Barbados Labour Party the Honourable Member for St. George South, they went to the factory yard to help sensitize the workers, erroneously so, about what the issues were relating to the sugar industry. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South must make his choices like me. Regrettably he has always found, in the sugar industry, that the side of the privileged is the better side to be on. I cannot fault him for that. That is a choice that again, the people have to make a determination on.

But it will never be said of me nor anybody on this side — just as you cannot identify any of us sitting on the Board tf Cave Shepherd and BS&T and Mutual and so on. None of us — that given a choice between going in the factory yard or sitting down at Warrens in the smoke filled rooms, that I would choose Warrens. I would prefer the factory yard. That is a political test because a man cannot have 2 skins. He cannot have a skin which he puts on for the board room and then a hat and cape with some old pants which he puts on the next day. I have one skin and I would like the public of Barbados to judge me as a whole person, not as 6 people. Not as one time I am working for this interest and the next time I am helping out another interest. I would like them to judge me on that solid record. As foolish a point as it may sound.

I therefore defended the Member for Christ Church South and *will* continue to defend him because I believe that though he was misguided that he meant well. He meant well in helping us to restore the sugar sector as far as we have been able to restructure it so far. That is all I can really say in response to his criticism.

With respect to the other contributions on the finance matters I can assure Honourable Members that we will continue diligently with respect to the offshore sector to give it the profile which they say they need and they are right about some aspects of that. With respect to • their concerns on the National Insurance that we will ensure that the defaulters and the people who have ridden on the backs of workers particularly those who have carried out those criminal acts which the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central brought to our attention will be brought to justice and legislation will be brought to deal with those kinds of situations. That with respect to the MOBIL Agreement I have promised to bring that Agreement to the House, it will be laid here in draft so, that Members can comment on it before it is signed and that you will have an opportunity, Mr. Chairman, along with other Members to give your views on that matter.

I think those were the principal issues which arose in this debate and with gratitude to those who contributed, I beg to move that Head 19 stand part.

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

The question that Head 19, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 25 — MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FISHERIES, AS AMENDED — $25 578 323

Head 25 was called — Ministry of Agriculture, Food Qnd Fisheries, as amended — $25 578 323. ,

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, occasions such as this gives one the opportunity to reflect and review on the work and the operations of one's Ministry and also to look forward to the plans which are in the pipeline for the ensuing year and indeed beyond.

In introducing this Head, I plan...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: ...to deal *with a* number of specific issues some of which have been raised in the public domain and in a number of cases have been

misrepresented. As I say this provides the unique opportunity for clarification.

I would start on an issue which - the Honourable Member for St. Joseph touched on briefly in relation to the Government's land use policy. Over and over again we stated Government's land use policy in this Honourable House, Mr. Chairman, and if I can by way of encapsulation Speak to the issue again, let me say, that the Ministry has recommended to the Cabinet and to the appropriate Ministries and we reached agreement in principle that the lands for agricultural purposes should be placed into 2 categories. Category 1 is for lands which would be retained in their present size without any subdivision. In these cases no change of use would be permitted. It might be instructive for that side to check the records for the past 2 years to see if any land under the Ministry of Agriculture, any agricultural land was subdivided for any other purposes. It might be useful to check and see if any has happened. Certainly it has not happened under me.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I am accounting for my stewardship. In category 2, Mr. Chairman would be found those farms which have been previously subdivided into smaller holdings. There would be no further subdivision in these cases. We intend to retain a minimum lot size of 5 hectares of land where irrigation is possible and a minimum of 10 hectares for non-irrigable lands.

Mr. Speaker, if for no other reason but to write in the records of the House, the proposed allocation or distribution of the 45 000 acres of agricultural land which I have done before, but for these purposes I will do again, permit me so to do.

6.20 p.m.

(1) Sugar cane for harvesting 26 000 acres

(2) Plant canes 6 500 and this will be land where there is going to be crop rotation. That gives a total for sugar cane of 32 500.

(3) Cotton 2 000

(4) Cut flowers 500 acres

(5) Fruits 2 000 acres

(6) Vegetables 1 500, and

(7) Pasture for grazing livestock and so on 6 500 acres.

Added to that, Mr. Chairman, I have said previously that the Government proposes to use certain fiscal measures such as tax exemptions to propel and to promote its land use policy. But although we have entered into discussion at the Ministerial and Cabinet level that has not been finalised.

As I said, sugar, and I will deal with sugar separately, but sugar or the sugar industry will remain the major component of our agricultural reform. It would be the pivot around which all other crops would rotate and central to that statement, Mr. Chairman, is the issue of agricultural diversification. We in the Ministry of Agriculture have in place a strong diversification programme and the diversification programme has as one of its hallmarks the whole question of modernisation. Not necessarily modernisation through mechanisation but better use of modem technology.

We in the Ministry over the last year, Mr. Chairman, and we will continue, have taken steps to increase crop yields in a number of areas, to reduce pests and to reduce post harvest losses. Now by way' of digression this might be an opportune time to state that only on Tuesday, Mr. Chairman, I signed the regulations for the Praedial Larceny Act so this will now give teeth to the Praedial Larceny Act because the Regulations have . been signed. And as I challenged the Honourable Members who are the main spokesmen for that side — do not point at the Member for St. James North, he does not speak on agriculture. The Members for St. Joseph and for Christ Church South: I am going to stand and I am going to be judged on my record in the Ministry of Agriculture. I said less than a year ago that I would put in place measures to control stray animals and that has been done. You can go and speak to farmers in the Scotland District and they would tell you that the instance of crop damage has been drastically reduced.

Now, the same approach, Mr. Speaker will be taken with respect to the question of praedial larceny.

Mr. Speaker, if I might come back on track with respect to the work of the officers in the Ministry of Agriculture because unlike the other side, Mr. Chairman, I am not one to criticise for criticism sake, I believe that most of the officers in the Ministry are pulling their weight and I am seeing it in terms of a number factors and I will give you examples. For example with respect to the control of pests a lot of work has been done by the Entomological Department in respect of the control of the pink ball worm. A lot of work and research hours have been spent on that. A lot of work has been done on a number of new varieties of sweet potato material which was received from Taiwan. As a matter of fact 40 new varieties were received and they are now being tested and already we have reason to believe that the yields and the outlook are positive.

There are other areas which I could go into but I am going to give an overview and then probably respond to a number of questions.

On the last occasion I spoke, two weeks ago, Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and the major spokesman on agriculture challenged me to say what was being done at the BADMC. I told you I would give you chapter and verse when the Estimates come and I am ready to give you that information.

Now, 6½ months ago, by Act of Parliament, the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation was formed and it was formed to reorganise and to streamlihe the two entities especially as they related to marketing and production of produce. We are in the process of finalising our strategy with respect to land reform in the BADMC, sugar cane production and I am going to speak to each of these separately, cotton development, export production, agricultural services and development activities. But the key word with respect to the future operations of the BADMC would be viability.

Now with respect to the first issue, land reform, this is land reform within the BADMC. I spoke just now of the overall national reform policy but I am talking about land reform within the BADMC. You probably were not in' the Ministry of Agriculture long enough to recognise the difference between the two. Nonetheless, Mr. Chairman, we on this side have clearly enunciated a policy of making land available to landless farmers and it is in this context that I speak to the question of land reform along with making the land which falls under the BADMC more viable and we have already allocated BADMC land in a number of areas — Friendship in St. Lucy, some in the Pine — and we are in the process of looking at a number of other areas. As a matter of fact a Committee has been set up which looks at applications and we are now looking at allocating lands in the Bawden and River area.

With respect to bringing back more lands of the BADMC under sugar cane production we in the BADMC will play our part in the overall revitalisation thrust of the BADMC. And we intend to increase our acreage under cultivation. As a matter of fact; Mr. Chairman, it needs to be said that by next year the acreage will increase by over 100 per cent given the fact that Springhall Plantation alone would be producing over 300 acres of cane. This would be in respect of other plantations under the BADMC.
6.30 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, a lot of work has gone into cotton research because of our commitment to the development of an integrated cotton industry. Therefore, in these Estimates, provision has been made of $300,000 to the BADMC for the refurbishment of the Ginnery, because we recognize. that one of the main problems in the past was the question of seed germination. Money has been made available to refurbish the Ginnery.

The projection for the 1994/95 cotton crop is 450 to 500 acres of cotton. Contrary to a number of falsehoods which have been surfacing in the Press with respect to our Extension Services, the Ministry of Agriculture through the BADMC will continue as we' have done in the 1993 financial year to provide such services. *During* the 1993/94 period, officers from the BADMC and the Ministry visited 1 800 farms.. The records are there *and* for the first two months alone of 1994 we have provided Extension Services for 423 farms. The Motor and *Tractovation* Scheme which I must admit has its problems will continue. We have cultivated during the 1993 period some 2,680 acres, and 393 acres for the first two months of 1994.

With respect to the Export *Packaging* Unit of the BADMC, we would continue to increase the levels of exports. For instance, for 1993 alone in terms of pounds our exports totalled 768,070 pounds. This would relate to things like sweet potatoes, hot peppers, breadfruits, golden apples, *pumpkins* and so on. That is what is being done within the BADMC as a new entity. I must compliment the staff that we have achieved *some* success in the six and a half *months time. We have* been able to integrate and centralize the Accounting Division and this obviously lends for more and better accountability of the Accounts *Division. This also is true of* the Personnel Division. The streamlining and institutional strengthening, Mr. Chairman, will take some time. I do feel that six months is a short time in . which we can see the full effect of the merger of the BMC and the ADC. But I am confident that when I report next *year this time that* I would have much more information on the positive strides of the BADMC.

There are other matters on which I . would want to speak. For instance, the question of the EDF Livestock Project. When I spoke during the 1993/94 Estimates debate, I said that the Government was entering into an agreement with the European Community for funding to implement a livestock development project. Well, that project indeed started in May 1993. I do not care how old .it is. The fact of the matter is the question of delivering the goods.

Asides.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: It might be ten years. Well, ,I was there one year and the project has started. The project started in May and it is not my fault that it started under me.

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

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the EDF Project has started and I will take this opportunity to highlight some of the areas of the project. The project is targeted at improving research and extension services, improving marketing arrangements through the BADMC, BAS and ACTO, and the provision of credit.

Already we have started training programmes for butchers and other meat handlers,. not only in-house butchers at the BADMC but also butchers of the BAS and even a number of butchers around the supermarkets in the island.

The EDF Project would also provide a line of credit for the farmers and this line of credit would be to the tune of $4.5 million. It has been set up at the Central Bank for lending to livestock farmers through the commercial banks. This also needs to be said that we are also providing grant funds to the tune of over $300,000 for the renovation and the refurbishment of the Old Plantation House at Greenlands because we are now centralizing the services of the Central Livestock Station. We are hopeful that within the next year that all of the operations at the Central Livestock Station will be moved to Greenlands.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN I know that I am not to respond to Asides, Mr. Chairman, but I am .beginning to suspect that the same problems that the Honourable Member for St.'Joseph had in the Ministry of Agriculture I am not having because every issue I raise he says it cannot work. He seems to be a prophet of doom. Things that are happening and that are on stream already he is telling me they cannot work.
6.40 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am not clairvoyant. You might have spoken to him privately.

Hon. D. W., BOWEN: Perhaps. To my mind, Mr. Chairman, if there is one aspect of the EDF project that I would like reported far and wide is the impact it is going to have on the Barbados Agricultural Society. In this regard, a grant of $450 000 is being made to the BAS for on-lending to small farmers as low income producers who may be unable to satisfy the stringent requirements at the commercial banks. That is by the way. Also on order, Mr. Chairman, for the BAS is $175 000 worth of refrigeration and butcher shop equipment for its retail outlet.

So when we see these editorials which try to drive a wedge between the Ministry of Agriculture and the BAS over the reduction of a subvention I can bring information to show that it is more than made up for in other areas. We started some time ago. The Democratic Labour Party said in its 1986 manifesto that it would make available to the BAS certain sums of money. Between 1976 and 1986 the BAS received $12000 or $1 000 — my memory slips me. I can check the figures. I will tell you. $1 000 a year as a subvention. Between 1976 and 1986 that was what was given to the BAS: You cannot refute that and the Democratic Labour Party manifesto said that we would provide a meaningful subvention to the BAS and we gave the BAS $250 000 as a subvention. Because of the structural adjustment program that figure has been reduced. In 1993-94 financial year the figure was reduced to $40 000 but $40 000 compared is no comparison to the $1 000 or the $12 000 which they used to receive under the Barbados Labour Party.

The cut-flower horticulture programme, Mr. Chairman, to move is on stream. During the horticultural programme in the Ministry of Agriculture our present export of flowers is in the vicinity of $200 000 a year which is a start. We obviously have to start somewhere: With respect to the orchid project, some $14 000 orchid plants were imported and distributed to 15 growers during the period 1993 to 1994 and as far as the anthurium project is concerned 30 000 plants were distributed among 15 persons in varying amounts of 500 to 4 500 plants during that same period 1993-94.

The tissue culture laboratory is well on stream and it should be commissioned, I am told, in June. Again this is another aspect of the Ministry's operations which had been hanging for some time but it will be commissioned and will be on stream by mid-year. Obviously the main purpose of this is to reduce the foreign exchange required for persons planting material.

If I may turn to the question of fisheries, we have carried out extensive repairs to the landing site at Oistins. I had a meeting with the fishery people at Oistins and they gave me a list of issues that they wanted addressed and all were addressed.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: That is the only issue and we would never be able to address the ice because of the number of ice boats. The Government would never be able to provide enough ice to service ice boats whether it is in Bridgetown or whether it is in Oistins. The problem with the ice is that the cost of the ice from Government is ⁄, the cost from the private sector and the boatmen would prefer to line up and wait 4-7 days to get the ice at reduced rates rather than spend $300 or $400 more and make 2 or 3 more trips a year.

We have issued tenders for the provision and held other discussions for the provision of ice making facilities but no award has yet been made. We have negotiated with the 2 persons who have tendered and we have not come to an agreement.

Development t Tent Bay. I1now this is a sore point. I have had a site visit with the representative for St. Joseph with respect to the fishing facilities at Tent Bay and sooner or later a decision is going to have to be made bearing in mind Government's proposals for Consett Bay in respect of Tent Bay.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: To be honest with you there is not much choice. The choice is whether for the few fishermen remaining at Tent Bay we are going to spend half a million dollars to upgrade the facilities when we recognise the rough conditions down there, the slipway. You put up a slipway and it is washed away. We are going to put up basic amenities like toilet facilities in this period but a definitive decision would be taken on Tent Bay during the 1994-95 financial year as a fish landing site.

We are also going to take a definitive position during the year on the fishing facilities for the fisherfolk in the North. The issues relating to the North are the best site or location and the cost that we would have to incur based on the chosen site.

I will now touch, Mr. Chairman, on the area of markets. As you know, this was one of the areas that gained a lot of publicity and rightfully so over the past several months. There has been ongoing dialogue between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Public Works over the issue of street vending, vending on Swan Street, vending in front of Julie'N, on the ABC Highway and the whole host of itinerant vending which has sprung up over the country and which to our mind is not a bad thing because the Government has declared a policy of self-help and self-employment, but it has to be operated under clearly defined regulations and guidelines. It has to be operated under clearly defined regulations and guidelines and that is what is happening now.
6.50 p.m.

. I must say that $1 million has been made available in this year's Estimates for the refurbishing of the Cheapside Market. This would go a long way in alleviating the burden on the highways. Already we have marked out areas in the forecourt of the Cheapside and the Fairchild Street Markets. We had originally looked at a certain part of Independence Square and we have not totally dispensed with this idea but we have not, at the same time, taken a decision on it.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I will show you. I will find the $1 million for the Honourable Member for the City.

But with these introductory remarks, I beg to move that Head 25 stand part.

Hon. W. 0. FRANKLIN: I beg to second that.

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. J. 0. TUDOR, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour, Mr. SPEAKER, and asked for leave to sit again and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to move, Sir, that this sitting be now suspended until 7.45 p.m.

Hon. W. 0. FRANKLIN: I beg to second that.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 7.45 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.
7.00 p.m.

RESUMPTION

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

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Committee is resumed.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chaitman, smarting and labouring under some apparent notion of seniority, perhaps because of being in close proximity to the Honourable Member for Christ Church East and the. Honourable Member for St. Michael East two ministerial neophytes the Honourable Minister of Agriculture delivered himself of a speech in which he indicated that he was going to give a proper and accurate record of his stewardship. When one listened carefully to find out what this stewardship was all about and of what this stewardship comprised, one heard the Honourable Minister say, I have controlled stray animals. That came through as the principal achievement of the Minister during his period of stewardship as Minister of Agriculture. That came through as the primary plank on which . the Honourable Minister of Agriculture is

prepared to stand as he addresses this Committee on the question of the events within his Ministry.

He spoke of plans to diversify, of plans to increase yields, of land for landless farmers. I must lament the fact that it was too vague and this Committee is still crying out for particulars and specifics on the plans for diversification, tho steps to increase yields and the proposals for land for landless farmers.

But you will forgive me, Mr. Chairman, if I begin at this point to look at a question of dire concern to the farming community in Barbados. I turn to the question of taxes and duties on factor inputs in agriculture. Farmer upon farmer in Barbados will tell you that the Ministry of Agriculture has supervised a regime of duties and taxes on basic factor inputs for agricultural equipment and for the agricultural sector.

I want to caution, Mr. Chairman, that since agriculture is a productive sector the continuation of a regime of duties on raw materials is undesirable. Somebody might say duties and taxes are justified in that they add to the public revenue. But since agriculture is a productive sector duties and taxes on agricultural raw materials and inputs represent a substantial disincentive to proper production in the agricultural sector. We have already seen what a high regime. of taxes and duties can do. for manufacturing. We have a situation, Mr. Chairman, where farmers are lamenting that we are still experiencing high duties and taxation on basic inputs.

I want the authorities concerned to look at the question of where duties whether stamp duties, consumption duties, customs duties, whatever duties there are on agricultural goods, to be removed. At the same time it would be unrealistic for me to speak to that particular question without urging the general need for tax reform.

It is our policy on this side that the productive sectors whether tourism, whether manufacturing, whether agriculture have borne too high a burden in relation to paying taxes over a period of time. We believe that these productive sectors must be given the appropriate tax relief so as to urge on and encourage production.

I am not so naive as to think, Mr. Chairman, that we can remove taxes willy nilly and be irresponsible in the amount of taxes. But we need a comprehensive tax regime that would isolate all the productive sectors including agriculture and look to where tax relief can be given in respect of these productive sectors and then operate a general regime of taxes that would bear that in mind and then address the whole question of to what extent Government should urge incentives by way of soft taxation in the agricultural sector, Sir.

I want too although the Honourable Minister said that the extension services in agriculture will continue, I want to urge, Mr. Chairman, that too many persons whose livelihood depends on agriculture have come to the view that the extension services, as delivered right now, can be improved upon. We have a lot of farmers particularly small farmers who might very well at this time be benefitting somewhat from these extension services. But the farmers themselves are saying that the delivery of extension services is not as good as it could be. We heard the Honourable Minister talk about the situation with the ploughs and he did in fact hint in a very soft voice that the situation with the shortage of ploughs or the problem with ploughs is an area of concern.

Apart from that we cannot in 1994 have small farmers in particular using old fashioned methods of production, wasteful methods of production, methods that are not ecologically sound, methods where their own efficiency is not at an optimum and where, generally speaking, we are not permitting them to play their true part in this island's economy.

I listened too with interest, Mr. Chairman, to the fact that the Honourable Minister said that a subvention of $450 000 would be passed to the Barbados Agricultural Society for the benefit of small farmers. If 5 000 small farmers are being targeted for such assistance, that is $90 per farmer, per annum or $8 per month. If there are 3 000 small farmers to benefit from the scheme a mere $150 per annum.

Any subvention to an agricultural community which is fairly numerous must be meaningful and must be so designed as to get the people to produce as best as they can. I have been told that these farmers are private sector persons and as such have some responsibility to help themselves. But at the same time, even though it is true that a private businessman, a private entrepreneur should gain as much as possible to be self-sufficient. The question is that agriculture is an enterprise prone to severe gluts and shortages, prone to severe risks and uncertainties and a subvention of $90 per annum for a small farmer is grossly inadequate.

I want now to turn in this particular intervention – I believe I have at least two more minutes tonight if you permit me possibly to continue tomorrow – I want to turn to the question of marketing and the question of Barbados' public markets. Barbadian citizens are ashamed at the condition of the markets at Cheapside, Fairchild Street, of the Speightstown market, at Eagle Hall market, the mini-market at Weston if I can call it that. All the public markets in Barbados are in dire need and crying out to be properly maintained. I have heard nothing, by way of a ministerial pronouncement on how these public markets would be improved on, would be properly maintained and made to play their part in the livelihood of our people.

I want at this point to be addressing the question of sugar but I want to look at the question of fisheries. I have heard the Minister say that no amount of ice will ever suffice for the service of ice boats at Oistin.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation what I did state was that the Government would not be in a position ever to provide the amount of ice necessary to service the existing fleet of ice boats.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, I put the point one way and the Minister put it in another way and made the same conclusion.

I want too at this point, Mr. Chairman, to ask the Minister to what degree is the Ministry aware of the numbers of persons in Barbados engaged in commercial fishing? To what extent those persons who are engaged in commercial fishing are given proper fishing extension. services, are encouraged to modernise their fishing operations, are given incentives by Government to improve on how they operate?
7.55 p.m.

Our concern on this side, Mr. Chairman, is that in a modern era too many of our fishermen still use old fashioned outdated methods, too many of them, despite the important role that they are playing in the economy of Barbados, virtually risk their lives through unsafe fishing methods and sometimes craft and boats that are not really. fit for a modern age. And I am asking what is the Ministry of Agriculture doing by way of encouraging these fishermen to do better.

In respect of cotton, I notice that the Honourable Minister said that 2000 acres will be reserved for cotton. I would want to ask the Minister what is the projected yield *in toto* for cotton and what benefits the production of cotton would be bringing to Barbados. 2000 acres, yes, but we are, still curious to know precisely what there is to Barbados in cotton especially since Members of that side have over and over again shown some very keen interest in seeing cotton as a viable earner of foreign exchange.

Briefly, Mr. Chairman, I would want the Honourable Minister to explain to this committee what financial benefits for the current financial year April 1st 1994 to March 31, 1995, will Barbados be deriving under the ECC/LOME arrangements and if Barbados is to be given any soft loan or soft grants by way of finance to the agricultural sector for the next financial year, for what purposes these moneys would be put.

Mr. Chairman, we would have heard, not only on this occasion, but on previous occasions that the Government would have had plans for the development of Skeete's Bay, Consett Bay, Three Houses, Tent Bay and we also heard about a proposed abattoir. We heard the Minister earlier tonight indicated that facilities are going to be introduced to train and develop butchers and he seemed to suggest, Mr. Chairman, that a number of butchers across the wider spectrum were supposed to be given training and were supposed to be embraced by the Ministry of Agriculture for the purposes of improving their efficiency. But tell us, Mr. Minister what about the Abattoir? Its plans have been on the drawing board for some considerable time now. We have seen nothing in the way of plans going ahead and going properly on stream to actually bring the Abattoir and we want to know how much longer should Barbadians be expected to wait for this Abattoir.

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

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Similarly, I believe Skeete's Bay, Consett's Bay, Tent Bay and Three Houses are to be beneficiaries of financing through the EEC/LOME arrangements and I would want the Honourable Minister to tell this Honourable Committee precisely when will the plans for these entities I just mentioned materialise.

I would not at this time, Mr. Chairman, commence my contribution . on sugar but hopefully in the next intervention later on I shall be directing my attention on that particular area of economic activity within the Ministry of Agriculture.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, Sir, a former Member of this House, Mr. Lionel Craigg, made popular an expression which is often heard now in Barbadian politics, the old notion of cold soup warmed up. I thought that best describes the speech made by the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, after all he reminded us of the EDF livestock project which was under contemplation and certainly in the planning stage for more than 10 years. He reminded us too of a cut flower programme which went back more than 10 years and which is still only earning $200 000 a year and similarly the orchard and the agricultural laboratory project, all of which have been under discussion for 10 years and more and which is still on the ground floor and has not got beyond that point even now.

I, Mr. Chairman, wish to raise at the outset some. larger issues than agriculture. The Ministry of Agriculture and its projects are still consuming some $30 million a year and more. And I think we must really ask ourselves the question whether we are getting value for money and whether too we ought not to think of new ways, perhaps involving more of the private sector, or more of

the regional institutions in some of the work that the Ministry has traditionally done.

Everywhere it is conceded that one of the greatest wastages of public money and even private too, in some instances, has to do with research. Not that research and development is not important in underpinning advances in agriculture and many other areas but it is very difficult to measure and supervise and make accountable research work. A researcher can always claim that his project is taking long to mature and under that guise a lot of money and- a lot of time will be wasted and it is very difficult to measure and control and monitor research work.

It seems to me that we have developed a research bureaucracy in the Ministry of Agriculture – a lot of people who are doing research in a whole set of areas and I am not sure that we are getting any significant returns from that work. When the Honourable Minister was reduced he tells us that a lot of research work continues to go on in sweet potato I seem to recognise that the whole problem of the scarbee still has not been licked.

My point is that it is an area in which the private sector ought to be encouraged to take an interest and the services ought to be sold to the farming community and to all those who have an interest.

I am concerned too that we spend a lot of money at the regional level in support of CARDI and many of the countries in the Eastern Caribbean really have no research bureaucracy within their Ministries of Agriculture. From time to time particular problems are identified and they give that responsibility to CARDI and the research agency at the regional level has got the responsibility of trying to find the problems for the benefit of the farmer in the field which should be identified by the Ministries working in close collaboration and conjunction with the farmers.

I am wondering whether we cannot without doing any damage to ourselves, significantly reduce our research bureaucracy and call upon CARDI to do an increasing share of that research work in so far as we may identify problems from time to time. I think too, we- need to find creative and imaginative ways of involving the private sector and ensuring that this research bureaucracy which has become almost a permanent feature of the Ministry of Agriculture, which *work* is so hard to measure, and which consumes so much money, we ought to ensure that it does not continue to grow and just grow out of hand.
8.05 p.m.

Sir, if I may move on, I am concerned about the land use policy which the Minister defined for the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation where the suggestion seems to be that a lot of those plantations will be subdivided and given to some of the small farmers.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Well, I am glad to know that I have correctly represented what you have indicated. I found when I was in the Ministry, and I do not know if this is still the experience, that even though there were so-called radical commentators in Barbados who often made the point that the Government of the day, whether DLP or BLP, ought to have a land reform policy in which there is a distribution of land to small farmers, there was in truth and in fact no demand' for any such land. The Ministry made very heroic attempts to try to develop a list of those persons who might be interested in agricultural activity but for one reason or other are without land.

When the St. Lucy project came on stream, we had great difficulty of getting people with a farming background and genuine farming interest to come forward. There was just not that demand for land such as the radical commentators would lead us to believe existed. It seems to me that that would represent, even if the demands were there, a very serious departure . from the traditionally conceived role of the BADC plantations. It was felt that the Government had a responsibility to set the lead in pioneering certain crops and in demonstrating to the farming community how some crops can be made to grow successfully and profitably.

In addition, over the years the BADC's lands made a substantial contribution to sugar production in Barbados. In fact, with the assistance of my friend, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, my attention was attracted to the production statistics in 1991.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman. The statistics to which I was attracted really dealt with the overall total productions. My memory seems to be, and the Honourable Minister may correct me, that over 46,000 tonnes of cane were grown on BADC lands in 1986 and that that tonnage has today fallen below ten thousand. In 8 years we have gone from 46,000 to below 10,000.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am hearing the Honourable Minister said that it was $25 million in price support, but that is not what it cost in 1986. There has been a serious decline in management standards at the BADC since 1986 and I think that BADC still has a role to play in setting the lead and teaching farmers how a lot of non-sugar crops may successfully be grown. I think that the Minister has a gap in his presentation when he leads us to believe • that BADC lands will be redistributed to

small farmers while he has conceded *sotto voce* only one or two plantations can be used to that effect. What therefore will the others be used for?

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: On a point of elucidation, Sir. What I said was that in the. land reform programme we were presently looking at the possibility of making some of these lands available to landless farmers. We had started by looking at the Bawden-River Plantation without taking any definitive position. I do not want to give you the . impression that here we have seven plantations in our possession and we have already dispensed with three, and with two or three to come.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am indebted to the Minister for his intervention, Sir, but he still does not elucidate with respect to the issue which I am raising. What will the other estates not used for land redistribution be used for? I think that it is a question which we all want to know the answer to.

Now I . want to turn to cotton. I think that we have wasted.precious years in Barbados since 1986 until now on this whole question of cotton production. Prior to 1986, it was accepted wisdom that we had to get the production back up on the ground before we could move to the stage of milling and weaving. Came along one Richie Haynes. He was supposed to be the great bright man of the DLP and he led the country to believe that the Democratic Labour Party and their unthinking Members on that side that you could move to spinning and weaving of cotton before you produced cotton to be spun and to be woven. It made no sense and that policy continued for many years and that is how we got into CARSICOT and the great scandal that resulted from that with the loss of enthusiasm of the farmers. We must return to basics and to common sense. Before we get into this highfaluted talk of spinning and weaving cotton, we must first produce it.

Therefore, it means that we need to get our production levels up to 500 to 1000 acres and that is where. the emphasis should be. I hope that the Minister will assure us that they have abandoned all these highfaluted ideas of having a spinning and weaving plant in Barbados when in truth and in fact we have not got 500 acres up to now. As I go around the country, I get the impression that there is still uncertainty and a lack of enthusiasm among the farmers who may be interested in cotton production.

Mr. Chairman, two or three very significant things happened between 1986 and now. Prior to 1986, the farmers were getting Bds.$9.00 per pound for lint or U.S $4.50 paid by the Japanese. We had not left office 4 weeks when the Japanese came to Barbados and forced the new. Minister, a new boy in every respect, to accept half of that as the price. That was the first thing. There was such a dramatic decline in the price available to the farmers which immediately caused a significant drop out.

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

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Then we had other problems down the road that climaxed with CARSICOT. But I think that there is -a fundamental problem which the Minister has got to address for all of us who are interested in the revival of cotton. Barbados had not up until the early 1980's produced cotton for many years and the Barbadian farmers had lost the cotton culture. There are not a lot of people in Barbados left who know about the details and the difficulties of producing cotton and I have seen no seriousness ever being made to ensure that that cotton culture is brought back to Barbados. We have lost it virtually and you cannot point with confidence to a dozen farmers around who still know and know well how to produce cotton. It seems to me that we have to begin with a technical input. We have to find the people around, outside of Barbados perhaps, who know about cotton production and let them work with the farmers. We have to restore the culture and get the production up before we get into the highfaluted talk of spinning and weaving.
8.15 p.m.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr Chairman, if I could respond to some of the queries and issues raised by the 2 Honourable speakers on the other side.

With respect to the Honourable Member for St. James North who said that I was basing my representation on the proposal to make land available to landless farmers. What had happened up to this stage is that we have allocated 25 acres of land .at Friendship. We have allocated 4 acres of land in the Pine, an amount which I will research overnight ,at Spring Hall and Greenland. So we have done allocations at those 4 areas.

The Honourable Member also spoke of the lack of taxes and concessions especially on inputs into agriculture. Mr. Chairman, I must enumerate the various taxes and concessions which farmers still enjoy within the Ministry of Agriculture. There is a 50% waiver on imputs for export manufacture just as it is with the manufacturers. There is a 50% concession to the fishing industry on equipment, a number of accessories. There are concessions on vehicles to farmers which are still in place.

Asides.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Irrigation materials. There is also a. 50% rebate on materials for irrigation purposes.

So all the concessions which were in place before are still in place. I am not sure how much further we can go at this stage but all attempts will be made to make the life of the farming community less burdensome. I cannot say any more at this stage.

The Honourable Member also spoke on the question of outmoded and outdated fishing equipment and fishing techniques. With the coming on stream in October 1993, Mr. Chairman, of the new Fisheries Act, particular attention has been paid to the management of the industry and specifically to the whole question of safety at sea. The Ministry is ensuring now that boats before they go to sea undergo the necessary inspection before the relevant certificate is issued. Fishermen are also required to have licences and this means that both the boats and the fishermen are subject to the scrutiny of the fisheries officer or a coast guard officer either on land or on sea.

These factors are aimed to reduce incidence of boats going adrift. It is still early because as I said the Act was only proclaimed in October 1993 but I believe we should be able to see the benefits of these measures during the 1994-95 year and certainly during this fishing season. Of course I will keep this Honourable Chamber posted on the outcome of this matter.

The Honourable Member also raised the question of cotton and what is the yield. The average yield is about 300 lbs of lint per acre. About 12 000 lbs of seed cotton per acre. That is what we are getting this year. That is why I say things are on the up. If you get 280 somewhere and 120 somewhere you still get 300 overall. That is the average.

Unfortunately, I am in no better position to speak on the question of the abattoir. We have not made the sort of progress that I had envisaged. The funding agency, the European Investment Bank has asked continuously for information which we have provided and we are hopeful. If that does not come through, another way *will* have to be found because the Ministry recognises that the present abattoir facilities are far from satisfactory so we are on all fours on this issue. It might become necessary to speak to other funding agencies because of the importance and priority that we are attaching to the question. We are also exploring those possibilities.

Now, if I may respond to some of the queries of the Honourable Member for St. Joseph. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph spoke to the question of research in the Ministry and he likened the existing arrangement unto a research bureaucracy. I am not that pessimistic. I think, Mr. Chairman, that a lot of work has been done on research within the Ministry that can_ stand the test of time and that can be held up to public scrutiny and therefore it is incumbent upon me to give you the information.

There is ongoing research in a number of areas – yam, pawpaw mango and breadfruit, plantain, banana, cotton as you know, vegetables and potatoes. The crop protection unit of the Ministry in association with CARDI and the University ' of the West Indies and indeed, the University of Reading have continued to look for ways and means to control anthracnose and disease in yams and they are also identified the problems of the onion blast disease. These are areas where we can see positive results coming out of the research efforts of the Ministry.

I also can report, Mr. Chairman, that white fly damage has been brought under control as a result of the applied research in our plant protection section on the Encarsia insect and we have used a combination of chemicals and we have been able to bring this under control.
8.25 p.m.

Cotton Production: The Honourable Member also spoke at length on the question of cotton production. As I have said before, Mr. Chairman, there is great scope for cotton as an earner of foreign exchange. As you know, we have an arrangement with the Japanese in terms of their purchasing the- cotton produced by Barbados. I take the point with respect to how fast we should proceed and I think that during the 1993/94 cotton year 630 acres were under cotton production. I suspect that as a result of the bad experience in the 1992/93 year, because of poor seed germination that the...

Aside.

Hon. W. D. BOWEN: We had better seed germination in 1993/94, which is this year, but I am saying that because of the bad experience in the 1992/93 year, the farmers probably proceeded with a certain ' amount of caution.

Aside.

Hen. W. D. BOWEN: Yes. We have the seed technology here and we have already refurbished a room, air-conditioned it and we have everything on stream. Again, we are on the up in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, these are the issues which have been raised. With respect to Consett Bay and Skeetes Bay, we have plans for the improvement. I know that it can be said that these plans were on the drawing board for a long time. The funding agency as identified is the European Development Fund and the project was submitted since September 1992. We are still presently awaiting a

response after we have sent additional information which the EDF requested with respect to the Consett Bay and Skeetes Bay fish landing sites.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I would like to join the debate to try to focus on what I regard as one of the real areas of economic crisis and it has to do with the pattern of a capital expenditure in the agricultural sector over the course of the last 10 years more particularly so the pattern and the composition of capital expenditure in agriculture in the course of the last three years.

Now, there can be no doubt, Mr. Chairman, that there has been a steady decline in the performance of the agricultural sector in this country accompanied by a degree of instability in our rural society that has made Barbados a poorer country, in my judgement. And this, in a large respect, has to do with the fact that whereas capital investment in the development of the agricultural sector hitherto was treated as a national priority, in recent times there has been a massive deterioration in Government's commitment to support capital formation in the rural society.

Now, Sir, the evidence in this particular matter is striking. If you were to take the pattern of capital expenditure in agriculture between 1983 and 1993 one would come face to face with a disturbing trend. Nineteen eighty-three was supposed to be a bad year but yet $7.3 million was found to invest in capital projects in agriculture. In 1984 that rose to $16 million. In 1985 it rose to $19.4 million and 1986 to $20.3 million. Those were the days when we used to have investment in the National Fruit Orchard projects, the projects at the level of Integrated Rural Development that have led to sustain increases in the level of non-sugar production in the country. That pattern reflected a steady increase in the level of capital expenditure in agriculture so necessary to support the rural society.

Since 1986, Sir, we have had a downward plunge in nominal terms before one makes adjustments for changes in real terms. As such a society that was spending as much as $20 million in capital investment to boost agricultural productivity by 1989 found itself spending $14 million, in 1991 – $8 million, in 1992 – $5 million and 1993 – $5.8 million. The notion that this Government is committed to boosting agricultural productivity, Sir, is shown to be pure lip service if the evidence in support of the boost of agricultural productivity is in any way to be based on Government's commitment to spending to develop the agricultural infrastructure and on projects that can expand sugar and non-sugar production.

I think it is a disgrace particularly that the response to the economic crisis in this country since 1990 has taken the form of a drastic deterioration in the allocation for capital projects in agriculture. I must stress that point because I was in the Ministry of Finance as a technician in 1982 when a set of circumstances similar, not dissimilar, to that which presented themselves in 1991 obtained. That was the year that we chose to bring to bear in agriculture a series of incentives and other stimuli on the understanding that if other parts of the national economy had to be reduced because of the foreign exchange constraint, the effort should have been taken to push agriculture and investment by the state in non-sugar agriculture. I therefore have to call attention to the fact that this situation is totally unsatisfactory.

If Barbados is to rebuild its agricultural sector, and I represent a rural constituency, I insist that this country will never be stable unless we rebuild our agricultural sector. We cannot rebuild our agricultural sector by spending $5 million a year on the development of the resources of agriculture in this society. It is a shame. I do not believe, obviously, that we are going to go back to the days of the mid-1980s when we used to spend $20 million a year on agricultural projects but certainly the society will languish as long as this low level of commitment reflects itself. It is not just a low level of commitment, Sir. It is unstable.

Now, Sir, I say that because I want to begin to focus on the specific Heads themselves. There is a Head here called "Subsidies" which will illustrate dramatically the point I am at pains to bring to Government's attention. It is not just a question of the amount that you spend, but the consistency of Government's action obviously sends signals to farmers and could either build or destroy confidence in the sector. We have a pattern of commitment on the part of Government to incentives and subsidies to the agricultural sector which tells a very disturbing tale. You had about $2 million, and I had better get the facts because I do not want to speak inaccurately. Let us take the pattern over the course of the last three years.

8.35 p.m.

The year before the election $2.15 million in incentives and subsidies were granted to agriculture. In the election year $8.2 million. The year after election 1991-92 $1.4 million in incentives and subsidies. Last year no money was spent or allocated by Government to agricultural incentives and agricultural subsidies. This year you have $1.8 million. You have an unstable pattern of expenditure on this most critical area which suggests that the Government is asking the farmers of this country to operate within the context of stop go kind of policy. I believe, Mr. Chairman that it behoves the Government to develop, articulate and implement a consistent policy in relation to the provision of agricultural incentives and subsidies.

We had a situation here, in recent times, I think it was in the Budget of 1989 when a broad commitment was given, on the part of the Government, to allow a whole range of agricultural subsidies and incentives. Because of poor administration at the level of the Ministry of .Agriculture, that system was abused. Rather than reform the system the Government decided to throw out the baby with the bath water. In fact I remember asking a parliamentary question in this House about the extent of the incentive granted and the Prime Minister was so confused that he told the House that the incentive cost the Treasury $69 million when, in fact, on reflection we were told later that it cost $6.9 million.

I am saying all of that to come to the basic point Mr. Chairman. I believe that this economy is not going to make any serious dent on the problem of unemployment until we get it firing on all cylinders. I believe, Mr. Chairman, that we are not going' to deal with the problem of rural unemployment in the absence of a strong agricultural sector. I feel that we can only get back a strong agricultural sector when a larger amount of the total capital vote is devoted to imaginative, productivity-generating projects in the agricultural sector and in the rural society as a whole becomes again an integral and essential part of Government capital programming. It distresses me on behalf of the people of St. Peter to see the low level of commitment that Government is giving to measures that can boost agriculture.

When I -peruse the capital investments that the Government proposes to undertake I am disheartened by the fact that a large number of them have been on the books for many years. And if I am to take the notes at their word, very little progress is being made; because year after year funds are being sought from this Parliament to support consultancy services for things like the Three Houses Springs, the abattoir and so on and so forth.

I think that the time has come when these projects must be concluded and a new project cycle must begin, in agriculture, that seriously begins to address itself to the questions as to how are we going to rebuild the rural society. My colleague from the North Eastern side of Barbados, I am sure, will press strongly the case for the Scotland District not to be abandoned.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Not you. You might have long standing ancestral links to the Barbados Labour Party but you surely are not a Member of the Party.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Not you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I suggest to the Honourable Member, continue to address the Chair.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I listened to the Minister of Finance for the whole day in silence. He is a disturbing...

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I said who represents the North Eastern Constituency. I am speaking about the Scotland District. Your knowledge of geography is as troublesome to the House as your knowledge of Finance.

Asides.

Mr. 0 . S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, can I proceed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think you should.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, to the point. The books' of the Ministry of Agriculture needs to be cleared of the trifling little capital projects that, in my judgement, Sir, are only tangentially important when one considers the scope of the task that has to be undertaken to rebuild the agricultural sector in this society.

I would like to see projects of the scale and projects of the conception of those of the mid-1980s.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I cannot help but hearing because I am hearing a voice that sounds very much like a voice of somebody called Paula interrupting the House all the time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get back on track.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: He has now fled, Sir. This is a serious debate. The whole rural society of Barbados is under threat. We have people on the other side playing the fool.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has 2 minutes in which to conclude.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am going to finish in 2 minutes by drawing attention to the conflict in Government policy as reflected in the contribution of the ADC. I must remind the Minister of Agriculture that when the legislation was brought to the House to amalgamate the BMC and the ADC it was stated, as a matter of Government policy, that the amalgamation of the ADC and the BMC would lead to a situation where the public purse would no longer be required to support the ADC.

We have recently been called upon to support a supplementary for ADC and were then given the assurance that that supplementary was intended to clear all of the arrears outstanding on behalf of ADC. The case that was put in support of the amalgamation of the ADC/BMC was that the amalgamation of the 2 institutions will lead to a situation where the public ,. purse would no longer be required to subsidize ADC.

If the Government has backed off the. policy that was announced with so much fanfare six months ago I want the Government to state it. But the Barbados Labour Party is not going to support the Government if it makes a grand announcement that there will be no more subsidies hereafter for the ADC and come in the next financial year and ask us to support them by way of a grant.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The Honourable Member unwittingly is misleading the House. I challenge him to get the records to show where I ever said or any Member of this side ever said that the amalgamation of the BADC and the BMC would lead immediately to the Government not coming to Parliament for a transfer. It is over simplistic to believe that, in one fell swoop, in 6 months' time that could be the situation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member's time has expired. I will give you one minute more.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, if it was an over simplification the over simplification was on Government's side because the rationale that was argued by Government when that Bill was presented to this House was that the amalgamation of the two institutions would lead to a situation in which there would be no more subsidies required for ADC. I made a point of it. In fact I went so far as to say that it disappointed me that the bill for the amalgamation was not supported by a financial plan that would allow the House to be sure that what the Government was stating, by way of grand policy would in fact be effectuated. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, every time the House is asked hereinafter to subsidise the ADC we will have to question them and bring to Government's attention that this is precisely in conflict with the argument that was put when the ADC was being amalgamated with the BMC.
8.45 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has now expired.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: If the ADC stands in need of additional subsidies, Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to look at those subsidies on their own merit but this Government has to stop making grand announcements which it cannot support.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I shall return if necessary.

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

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I was very pleased when the Honourable Minister who introduced this Head gave us to understand that things are on the up and that the level of land being brought under cultivation in agriculture has increased and that there were therefore the possibilities for improvement.

I would think though that in the circumstances he might wish to explain to us what is the relevance and the comment of page 184 of the Development Plan where it addresses the matter of land use. If I may be permitted to quote from that Sir, it says under land use that there has been an increase and growing demand for land for non-agricultural purposes. It goes on to say the acreage of idle land has increased, especially in the Scotland District, owing to the problems of praedial larceny, stray livestock, and the difficulties experienced in the sugar industry. So that it seems to me that there has to be some kind of rationalisation between the positions which are being set out in one document and those being set out in the other. If one is to be able to get the true picture of where agriculture is going and where we can expect this very important aspect of our development to take us, I believe that this matter will have to be clarified.

Regarding the matter of the land use policy itself I was pleased to see that the Government was prepared to take on board many of the suggestions which were put to it by letter more than a year ago by the Barbados Workers' Union, and I have been pleased to note that in regard to the taking of those things into consideration that we have recognised that the extension services for example which had either started to disappear or were in the process of going away that they will not any longer disappear but will become part of the very necessary functions to assist small fanners in this country.

I do not believe that we can escape as a Government, whichever is the Government, the responsibility of assisting small farmers with things like getting their lands ploughed and in some cases, even with reaping, because it will not be possible for small farmers to get the machinery to use which might be required in the circumstances. Added to that the advice which may be necessary, especially in the cultivation of things like fruit and vegetables, this would be something in which the extension services of the Government might be required.

I also have been of the view for quite some time that in as much as the Barbados Agricultural Society has been mapping out for itself a certain culture and a certain area of expertise in that discipline it might be useful for the Government to see whether it is not possible to use what facilities are in fact available and to build on them, rather than to have contradictory and contesting agencies which might be utilising resources in economies which are not economies for efficiency.

Mr. Chairman, regarding the matter of the land use policy further, I would think that we need as well to realise that, to a very great extent, part of the problem of farmers and particularly of smaller farmers who will not have the finances to help themselves, part of the problem that they are going to be faced with, is the problem of irrigation especially as increasingly it appears as though our rainfall levels are reducing year after year and it becomes a very important thing for Governments to be able to assist in the matter of the sinking of wells.

In fact we at Mangrove would love to have some 64 acres or so given over to agricultural projects to help those persons who have lost their jobs. But part of the problem has to do with getting the water up to the surface in those areas and it might be useful if Government were able to make a definitive statement and point the way to areas where people might be able to get assistance, perhaps from LOME funding which may be available or perhaps from Government's own subsidization of such projects so that the people who really are willing to use the land and put it back under cultivation might have up front serious assistance in an area which is quite critical.

Indeed there is another very urgent issue, the reason why this has to be addressed is the fact, and it is a fact, that the pipe water which we now have, is in such scarce supply. It is therefore necessary that as much as is possible, we were able to bring up water to the surface which might be possible for persons to use much in the same way as they are able to use water from the St. Patrick's area which goes into special production for people who are in farming.

Beyond the matter, Mr. Chairman, of having water brought to the surface, I think it would also be very important and quite desirable if there were a greater sense of urgency in the approach which we brought to capturing water when the rain in fact does fall. We have not ourselves got to the stage where, as the people in Bermuda do, we try to capture it off the roof tops but it might be useful in the future. I know we are talking about agriculture, Sir, but this is a parallel point I am making. It might be useful, if in the future when houses are being constructed, part of the building ordinance would demand that there were provisions made for capturing water as the rain falls into some catchment area so that people would be able to use that water for their immediate purposes around their households.

I wish to go beyond that to make the point that although we have been losing water, and I am talking about the levels of rainfall gradually over time... (And I think all of us in here, with few exceptions, will remember the fifties when we used to have what the Geography books would call rainfall in the region of 60 inches per" year where we used to have streams and in one or two cases rivers where we could even fish and certainly families used to use the rivers for other purposes, sometime for swimming and sometimes for washing. Now you only have the river beds and no water whatsoever.) But there are times in the year, Mr. Chairman, when there are good rainfalls and those rains go directly from the centres of the rainfall straight into the sea because no effort has been made over all the years to provide any catchment for it. There must be a very serious effort made from a sense of urgency to dam our streams and to provide a capture of that water so that it may be used to prevent the loss of the little rainfall which we have.

Mauritius which is a country just four times bigger than Barbados but which like ourselves depends very extensively on sugar cane and on tourism has been able to recognise the importance of that and they, and many other countries too, have been able to use that particular facility so even though you do not get more rainfall you get more utilisation of the rain that falls. And I think it is very important for us to realise that we' are losing a race and that if we do not move quickly enough, we are going to find ourselves unable to bring our land under cultivation, because it is one thing to plough that land, but it is something else to make it productive. If we do not move towards damming and towards ensuring that persons are able by their culture and behaviour to provide for water around their houses, then we are going to have a very real problem in our agricultural programme.
8.55 p.m.

I wish to make one other point, Mr. Chairman, and it is with the restructuring taking place in agriculture and in particularly in sugar. Government again has to look at the human resources who have worked and who are working in the sugar industry. The Honourable Member for St. Peter has made the point quite well regarding the relevance and importance of the rural population and the need for our agricultural programme to take care of those rural unemployed. But I want to take that position a little further and to make this submission, Mr. Chairman, that particularly in the sugar industry the life of that industry has depended very much, and is today depending very much on persons who are above 50 years old. The programme which has been set out by the Booker Tate Report, .and which seems to be the programme that we

are going to be moving towards, is a programme which may and will in. fact be restricted in some senses because there is going to be a reduction in the number of factories. There will be attempts made to bring smaller plantations together into amalgams of some form or another for greater efficiencies. I believe that arising out of this there will be an effort made to retire persons who are over 65 years.

Sir, we have been calling before now for a regime which the Government will introduce either in conjunction with the sugar industry or as a Governmeni itself, where it is recognised that these persons do not work in the conventional sense towards the age of 65. Indeed, in some factories and some plantations, it is not unusual to have persons who are over 80 years of age still at work. I wish to repeat the call that I have put in writing before now and which consistently my organisation has put to the Government and the sugar producers that, in the situation where those persons who are over 65 years are going to be displaced, Government introduce a special regime for compensation for them since they along with their families have contributed for so many years with so much energies in keeping the industry alive. There must be some means by which we can extend some form of *ex* gratia payment, since we will not be able to call it a legal severance payment, to those persons above and beyond $7.00 per week which the Provident Fund would provide for people . who are in the sugar industry.

We think that if this were done it would act as a boost for those people who are interested in remaining in sugar, but at the same time it would indicate that we have given respect for that industry which has been at the very base of our development. We are' appreciative of the work that the industry has done and beyond that, Sir, we are appreciative of the work which the people who have contributed their lives to that industry have given. If those people are over the age of 65 years were put out of the industry tomorrow, they would have no means whatsoever of sustenance. Therefore, this present Government, or whatever follows it, will have to take the responsibility for those people in the sugar industry. If the Minister responds to nothing else, Mr. Chairman, I would wish to have him respond to that and to give us certain assurance that the Government will want to take care of those workers in the sugar industry.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I just want to deal with two points. Obviously, in this debate, I will have to intervene on the question of markets. I am only going to confine myself to Oistins. I want to know why is it that the Government seems dedicated to the viewpoint that it cannot provide enough refrigerated and ice-making capacity to ensure that that wastage of fuel which arises from iceboats in the Oistins area having to go to Bridgetown to travel back pass Oistins before going to the fishing banks. There are people in private enterprise who are willing to accept the challenge of persuading the fishing boat owners in Oistins that it is better for them to pick up their ice at the Oistins Pier and notwithstanding the fact that there are people who have manifested an interest, notwithstanding that the Government itself advertised for tenders and received tenders, but Government refuses to award a tender. The Minister in here confirmed that tonight in his speech that the Government has still not made the decision. Now tell me why is that? There must be something strange that the Government wants to penalize the people in Christ Church. You are not penalizing me. I think that you may be penalizing the Honourable Member for Christ Church East more than me. So I would like to know why do we not have a tender? I would like to know. I do not want any answer. I want to hear that the tender has been awarded or that the Government is going to bring ice up here. I am tired of hearing answers. I want to see the ice up there because the people harass me all the time about it. They do not understand how it is possible that they hear people come up there and canvass and beg them to buy ice from them. That is what goes on. People come and tell them that they are going to put a ice machine. I want to hear it.

Now the second point, Sir, is another equally important point. I am glad to see that the Fishing Industry Act is modernized. I am glad to see that. I hope that the Government appreciates the point that I made in here before that you are saying that you have brought in the new Act and that you have higher standards in relation to the criteria that boats before they are put to sea have to meet. I all agree with that. But I want you to understand that the Government cannot provide enough inspectors from within its Department to inspect all of the boats that need inspection within the time span that they have to be inspected. I drew that to the Honourable Member's attention in here already that there is a classic case in which the insurance company of the fishing boats actually hired an inspector as a pre-condition of taking on the boats, hot from the Government Department, who had the qualifications of one of the well known classification societies. After the inspector provided the certificate and after the insurance company received the premium, damage occurred to the boat and when the insurance company came to pay the insurance, the company is saying that the boat was put to sea without the certificate of the Government Fisheries Office. Now I want that clarified. When you investigated, it was discovered that the law says that all fishing boats have to have an inspection by a certain date in the year. I think it is the end of September or October. And if you go to the Fisheries Department and ask for a date for inspection the Fisheries Department tells you that you cannot get a date other than the anniversary of your last inspection because it does not have enough officers to inspect all the boats. The Act says that you have to have it by that particular date but everybody knows that you

haul up boats between July and September. That has been going on for all the years because that is the hurricane season.
9.05 p.m.

You cannot get enough inspectors. There are 2 inspectors, I believe, in the department to do all of the boats between July and September. That is a fact. Now the solution, to that is either you change that or you are going to say that in addition to the Government's inspector that you would approve other people as inspectors. I find this very difficult. All the big insurance companies in the world have members who are recognised because of the fact that they have qualifications from the societies.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Why are you trying to discredit your former colleague? What kind of man are you? Have pity on the man in his hour of need!

The position is, Sir, I invite the Minister to look at the problem because it is a real problem. You have to give approval to a variety of people other than your own inspectors. I have been around here long enough to know that there used to have it in the Prerogative Societies Act that only certain people could be auditors and they ran into the same problems. You have to widen the scope. Do the same thing with this. There are. creditable people out there who are qualified to do the job, who do the job now for the insurance companies. I want you to get that clear. I am not going to go over the debate, Sir, because I think the strictures and the criticisms that have been levelled on the Honourable Member are sufficient so far. I am going to have a little pity on him and I don't want him to have to leave here tonight in a worst mood than he is in, Sir.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, markets have an important social and economic impact everywhere in the world, not only in Barbados. Why is it that this Democratic Labour Party Government cannot seem to bring the whole question of markets and street vending to any decent adequate resolution in Barbados? Mr. Chairman, in the Estimates – at page 54, for the benefit of the Minster, we see that the sum of just over $1 072 103 has been allocated for Structures. The explanatory note tells us that this is to provide to do several things. It is to provide for conversion of refrigeration system, ice plant conversion, improvements to Cheapside and Fairchild Street Markets, cold storage and offal room, security fence at Oistins, relocating, gutting and filleting troughs and sinks.

Now, Mr. Chairman, Sir, when he spoke earlier, the Minister said that $1 million had been allocated for refurbishment at Cheapside. This is the only reference that I can find to Cheapside and any monies voted for its refurbishment. There is no way that $1 072 103 will do what has to be done at Fairchild Street and at Cheapside. In the first instance, both markets need new roofs. There goes the $1 million. I don't know how it is going to do all of these things.

I also looked at the Development Plan at page 267 just to make sure whether or not this was the beginning of a plan for a phased upgrading of the markets but the Plan does not tell you so. At page 267, Item 4, Capital Projects: Cheapside Market, I don't see anything voted or planned to be voted, planned expenditure for 1994-95, and I looked at Fairchild Street Market and I don't see anything planned to be expended on that market in 1994-95 nor in 1995-96 nor in 1996-97.That is the Development Plan.

Mr. Chairman, Members over the other side can make jokes but the fact is, as I said when I began, that markets have social and economic impact. Over 35 000 people are unemployed in Barbados tonight, courtesy of the Democratic Labour Party; and there is the possibility and the potential for employment for people in street vending. We have seen how it has mushroomed around here. The Government is incapable of finding a solution for this.

Now, I have to say, Sir, that the street vendors have taken some advice and for those who are interested enough to observe, they will see that the street vendors now have very attractive carts and barrels, many of which are mobile and can safely be hooked onto the back of a vehicle and taken away in the evening and brought back in , the morning. Many of them have the whole business of the old problem of garbage disposal under control. The fact is, Sir, that these vendors need the support of the Government. They need to have public conveniences well located for them and for the public generally as well.

The 2 markets in Barbados at either end of Bridgetown were *planned to be modernised by the Barbados Labour Party. The Democratic Labour Party saw fit in 1986 to put the red pencil through those plans. Cheapside Market, in what we call downtown, was going to be an integral part of a lot of development that was going to take place in that part of Bridgetown. All of the extension of the Carlisle Bay Development Plan that would have gone down Hincks Street, the restoration of Marshall Hall — these are tourist attractions, street markets are tourist attractions everywhere in the world. Farmers' markets are now attractions where tourists go. It would have been nice if by now tourists could have been coming up, particularly those who come on the cruise ships, to Cheapside and be able to- wander into Cheapside Market and perhaps even further afield into Suttle Street and buy their fresh cinnamon and see what cloves look like and what tropical vegetables look like in their natural habitat.

Petticoat Lane Market, Notting Hill Market, what used to be Covent Garden in London, Les Halles in Paris, all of these are well known as tourist attractions, the Castries covered market, the open air market in Roseau, Dominica, inundated with tourists, both long-term and cruise ship passengers. For some benighted reason, this Government cannot see the importance of refurbishing the markets.

Of course, the first call on the markets has to be the domestic population.
9.15 p.m.

All the talk that is being made of non-sugar agriculture where do people put their produce out for sale? The Barbados Labour Party has a long, old position of decentralizing those marketing services into the communities. All those people who live on the West Coast would find that Speightstown was a place where they could go with a food market where there was fish, meat, vegetables and fruit. The truth is that there again the vendors have done everything in their power to upgrade their product. The Government has done nothing to assist.

The Fairchild Street bus stand, otherwise known as Johnson International, was part and parcel of that urban renewal. But when you look at Fairchild Street Market next to the Fairchild Street Bus Stand, it is disgraceful. It is a public health hazard. Sewage is running raw in the gutters. It was planned to be a natural adjunct to the Bus Stand just as Cheapside would have been a natural adjunct to the Bus Stand at that end of Bridgetown and people would do their fruit, vegetable and meat shopping, get into the bus and go along about their business. All of that is part and parcel of the planning for the Barbados Labour Party.

But you see, Mr. Chairman, this is also part and parcel of the general decline in the provision of services that we have seen in the last seven years under the Democratic Labour Party. We have come to a place in-Barbados now where in 1994 under the Democratic Labour Party people have to go back to the standpipe to get water and yet the Minister of Finance stood up in he..; when he introduced these Estimates and talked about services and expansion of services and all the services that they were going to do. What services? When we get to Education to debate in here we *will* hear about decline in services. When we get to the Health Services we will hear about decline in services. There is nothing to talk about housing because there is not even a vote for housing. To get back to the market, Sir, it is all, as I said, part and parcel of the general state of decline of services in this country. It speaks to the contempt in which this Democratic Labour Party Government holds ordinary Barbadians.

Mr. Chairman, I grew up in Black Rock, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West likes to point out. I never came across him in my wondering, thank the Lord, but I grew up in Black Rock. When I was a child Eagle Hall Market was a hub. I will have to speak on behalf of Eagle Hall. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West does not speak for it. As I said, Sir, we both grew up in Black Rock, thank the Lord I never came across him in my wondering but when I was a child, what you see at Eagle Hall now sometimes on a Sunday morning used to be common place seven days a week. It was a wonderful market and it still has that potential but the Government does not care. The floors are broken.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: But it was strategically located by the Barbados Labour Party precisely for that reason. The floors are broken. The counter tops on which people are supposed to display their produce are caked with dirt. The roof also needs replacing. It is perfectly dreadful. On a Sunday morning, even now, you can still see where the potential and the demand for a market service at Eagle Hall still exists. Speightstown, Oistins, they were beautiful.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, declined under the Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Mr. Chairman, as I said in an earlier remark the . Honourable Minister for Agriculture...

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: ... spoke only of the $1 million for Cheapside. I think that Barbadians deserve to know what exactly are this Government's plans, the Development Plan notwithstanding. What exactly are this Government's plans for both the Cheapside and the Fairchild Street food markets. I cannot believe that as the Development Plan would lead me to believe, that way into 1997 it is planned that nothing should happen at Fairchild Street. Fairchild Street deserves to be closed out by the Public Health Inspectors. The fact is that nowadays there is more trade going on outside in the yard of the market and the parking lot of the market than goes on under the cover in the market. There are both rat kingdoms. The fact is that there is no place coming from the Democratic Labour Party for any urban, suburban or rural renewal in this country.

We are watching institutions that we grew up with, that we depended upon slide into a very dissatisfactory stage and I think that we deserve to have some further comment from the Minister on this. I notice that

in subsequent contributions he has not spoken to it but I really want to hear something. The people in the City of Bridgetown if they want a pepper they have to go into the market to buy it. It is not like somebody who lives in St. Peter who has a pepper tree outside where they can go and pick. If you want a lime or anything in the City you have to go and buy it so the markets are integral to the life of people who live in the inner city.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And your time has expired.

Miss B. A. MILLER: It is for that reason if no other people really deserve a better break than they are getting now. Thank you, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I did not intend to get into this debate but let the record not be spoiled by any utterances by anybody who wishes to speak for Eagle Hall. If the Honourable Member is suffering the pangs of the legal representative of the vendors going about and looking after the interests of the people in the City which she refuses to look after, then she must not draw on that as any trigger to interfere with the peaceful, loving people of Eagle Hall. Leave Eagle Hall alone.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No. The people in Eagle Hall were kept in darkness when the Barbados Labour Party was in power and put not a single service in any area surrounding Eagle Hall for all the time they were in power because they had a Democratic Labour Party representative. Let no one make any errors about Eagle Hall. It does not need you. However, if the Honourable Member was paying attention to ordinary information on an ordinary day, she would have seen that there were tenders put out for a massive road improvement programme surrounding the entire area of St. Michael and she would have known, as the representative who represent constituencies contiguous with Eagle Hall, that the reason why the Eagle Hall Market has not been included in the programming which appears under the Ministry of Agriculture is because it forms a substantive part of the massive improvements which will occur and which the Honourable Member, if she was paying attention to her constituency, would have been seized of. Because the Chief Technical Director went to the trouble of getting the Honourable Member and walking her through some unfamiliar territory to wit Passage Road.
9.25 p.m.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is speaking to roads. I am not talking about people selling in roads. People deserve proper market facilities. Come out of the road and get into the market.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I know it is late, Sir, and the Honourable Member does not cerebrate very well after a certain hour. But the reason I am discussing the project is because, included in the project, is a massive development for Eagle Hall corner.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order, please.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It does include the acquisition of the property surrounding the market and the development surrounding the entire area. The project calls for it. Indeed I give the Honourable Member the assurance that the market will bear the same...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The major? Is there somebody called the major? I have never heard about that. Is he a major in the army? Is he in the Salvation Army?

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAM: I am asking. I know that you know about the Salvation Army.

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

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will not tolerate these loud asides across the Chamber.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the Honourable Member's grandmother were a captain in the Salvation Army, would she not know about the Salvation Army. If the Honourable Member had joined the Salvation Army she would have had a little more discipline. What she requires is discipline. You should have joined the Salvation Army.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member address the Chair. How come the Honourable Member for St. Peter does not understand when the Honourable Member for the City strays into the market at Eagle Hall but is now concerned about my discussing Reid Street.

Aside:

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He wants me to go to the St. Joseph Hospital. There are no markets in the St. Joseph Hospital.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You see that, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: When we come to Health we will discuss how they just did a hip replacement at the St. Joseph Hospital. We will discuss that when we come to Health, Sir.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You are thinking about this Head but not here. Every time she sees me that is the only thing she thinks about, my head.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I merely wanted to establish that the market at Eagle Hall is going to be part of the massive programme of development for the entire area and therefore I wish the Record to be straight about why Eagle Hall has not been included in the amounts in the Ministry of Agriculture. I am going to sit down and then get back up, Sir.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until Friday, March 18, 1994 at 10.00 a.m.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly at 9.31 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. When the suspension was taken...

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Just before we proceed I would wish to draw Your Honour's attention the fact that my attention was drawn this morning by two telephone calls to the editorial of the Barbados *Advocate* of Friday March 18, 1994 and in one of those telephone calls the view expressed by the caller was that I should not have allowed this matter to have proceeded as presiding officer.

Having read the editorial myself I feel obliged, Sir, to draw it to your attention that I am seriously offended by what I interpret it to be saying and I would wish to ask Your Honour to bring this matter to the attention of the Committee of Privilege. I feel very distressed about it and I should have to do whatever is necessary to bring it to the attention of those persons.

Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has brought to the notice of the House a comment which he considers a breach of the privilege of this House. As is customary with matters of this sort it is generally referred to the Committee of Privilege for its consideration. I think, in the circumstances, it would be better referred to the Committee in order that the matter be dealt with in the normal manner. So it is my decision to allow it to go before the Privileges Committee of this House.

RESUMPTION

The House is resumed.

When the suspension was taken the House was in Committee to that it should revert.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee is resumed.

HEAD 25 — MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FISHERIES (resumed)

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Chairman, before the suspension was taken last night a number of issues and queries were raised by Members of the Other Side and in winding up the debate under Head 25, I intend to furnish Honourable Members on both sides with information on the questions raised.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South raised the question of the Fisheries Division seeking outside assistance with respect to the inspection of boats. I would like to suggest, Mr. Chairman, that whereas under the old Act all 700 odd boats had to be inspected in the 30 days in the month of September. With the coming on stream of the new Fisheries Act the licence is spread over one year from the date of issue.

In other words, Mr. Chairman, the officers in the Fisheries Division now have one year within which to do the inspections so the problem would not really arise and they would not be, to my mind, any necessity for outside help.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South also raised the question of the award of tender for the provision of ice in Oistins. Let me say, Mr. Chairman, that I am going to take a personal hand in this matter and hopefully within the shortest possible time we would get this matter resolved. The issue to my mind seems to be the haggling over the level of concessions that should be granted to the supplier and I hope that we could resolve this matter as soon as possible.

This morning too, Mr. Chairman, I heard a news report which, if taken by itself, seemed to suggest that I said or I am saying that there are too many ice boats in Barbados. To the that is ludicrous. I would like the fleet to double tomorrow. What I did say is that with so many iceboats it would be impossible for Government to provide ice for them but I want to make it abundantly clear that we do not put any cap on the number of ice boats or day boats that could be registered and therefore I thought that I would seek this medium to make that clarification.

The Honourable Member for St. James North raised the question of training for fishermen. Now, if he would check in his constituency at Reeves Bay he would see the work that the Ministry of Agriculture or the Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Agriculture has been doing in this regard. We have trained fishermen from Reeves Bay in the use of safety equipment, in navigation techniques, in seamanship and in fisheries management. This ,is part of our ongoing training programme in the Fisheries Division but it must be said; Mr. Chairman, that the training could only take place in the off-season and that would be done again in 1994.

He also made a call for the introduction of new fishing techniques. Again, Mr. Chairman, I must state that we have been at the vanguard in the Ministry of Agriculture for the introduction of new techniques into the fishing industry and if I could cite an example, the issue of long liners comes to mind right away. This is now the fastest growing area of investment in the fishing industry. I have no doubt that it will grow even faster in the immediate future.

The Honourable Member for the City raised the question of markets and the allocation of $1.073 million for structures under the appropriate Head. Whereas a large portion of this money, at least $900 000 will be allocated to the Cheapside Market, Mr. Chairman, it must be said that the other items listed in the Notes for this Head are minor in comparison because these items are minor – the fence at Oistins and so on. I believe the just over $100 000 remaining would cover most of these items.

It must also be said that under the same Head we would find a figure of $400 000 for professional services and this relates also to the tenders and consultation fees at Cheapside. So when we are talking about the allocation for the Cheapside Market we must not only talk about the $1 million or the $900 000 that we propose to spend out of the $1.073 million but we must also speak of the $400 000 under Profession Services.
10.10 a.m.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter spoke about the need to get certain projects off the ground which were in the pipeline for a long time. I am pleased to report, Mr. Chairman, that a number of these projects are indeed off the ground. For example, the Three Houses Spring Project is now off the ground and it is now in progress. Tracks have been cut and the first phase is expected to finish in June. As soon as the first phase is finished, we will immediately commence the second phase. This irrigation project will cover 30 farmers and 90 acres of land.

The Sanford East Project is also on the way. This will provide irrigation for 30 farmers covering 60 acres and tracks again are being laid. This must be seen in conjunction with the Rural Development Project which is still alive in Sanford South.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael Central also spoke to the question of the provision of irrigation. The two projects that I have alluded to coupled with ongoing irrigation concessions to farmers satisfies my mind, Mr. Chairman, that the Ministry of Agriculture is doing all within its power - to bring irrigation to the farmers in Barbados. The Honourable Member for St. Peter also spoke about the declining allocation under Capital Expenditure to the Ministry of Agriculture. I want to submit, and he probably will not agree, that I do not think that it has to be the quantum that should be the only compelling factor in this regard. Once the Ministry is satisfied that the rate at which this money is injected is commensurate with how the sector can absorb it, then I believe that we are on track.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I think, too, that the Honourabld Member is aware that we have had some hiccups with two projects, the Consett Bay Project and the abattoir. If any of these come on stream as we expect in the 1994/95 period, this would boost the overall capital inflows to agriculture.

The Honourable Member also raised queries over the future of the Scotland District. As I said yesterday, we have released land in the Scotland District for production to private individual farmers from that area and we have other applications in process. It is my forecast, Mr. Chairman, that as soon as cultivation starts in that area

the demand is going to very great for the remaining land. When one considers that the EDF Livestock Project is well on stream, again this is going to ensure that the lands in the Scotland District are fully utilized. It must be said that the Scotland District would remain to some extent our major fruit producing area and our major pasture land.

I do not know, Mr. Chairman, if there are any other issues. We dealt with the whole question of the research that is being done within the Ministry in a number of areas. We spoke of the developmental work that is still being undertaken by the BADMC since the merger has taken place and that will continue to take place.

With these explanations, Mr. Chairman, I now move that Head 25 as amended stand part.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does the Honourable Member for St. Andrew who is on his feet want to make a contribution?

The question is that Head 25 as amended stand part. My understanding is that the Minister was winding up in that speech.

The question that Head 25 as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 28 — AS AMENDED — MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS – $29 327 453

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, Head 28 – Ministry of Home Affairs is that part of the Estimates that provides for a number of critical services — Immigration Department, Police Force, Fire Service, Traffic Wardens Division and other entities whose operations have a bearing on law and order and the preservation of social stability in the country. In dealing with this matter on behalf of the Opposition, Sir, I do believe that I have the responsibility to draw the House's attention to the fact that this year these Estimates contemplate a cut in the allocation for the Royal Barbados Police Force. If I may give the numbers, Sir, last year's Estimates made provision for $35 million in financing for General Police Services. It is envisaged that that provision is to be cut down to $34.4 million.

Sir, as I understand Government's policy, the intention is that there should be an expansion in the Police Services to be provided to the country in view of the need to arrest the problems surrounding the escalation of crime against visitors in the country and in the light of the need to create an environment across the country as a whole in which the citizenry of Barbados can feel comfortable in their homes at all times. The allocation however that is provided in this year's Estimates would suggest that the Government of Barbados expects the Police Force to provide an expanded police service on the basis of a reduced allocation. What is instructive, Sir, are the areas in which the reduction in the allocation takes place. The reduction in the allocation takes place in Personal Emoluments which will suggest that, far from meeting the request- for additional policing, Government wants to cut down on staff, and an additional cut is in relation to the purchase of vehicles. Whereas last year $900 000 was provided for this particular matter this year the police can only get $300 000. Also, Sir, the operating expenses of the Police, to the extent that they are to remain constant in dollar terms, obviously added to the decline when one has made adjustment for the fact that prices would rise.

In last year's Estimates the allocation for the maintenance of property was $1.2 million. This year $1.2 million – and we know that there are a large number of police stations in Barbados, not the least District E, that continues to experience considerable maintenance problems. In relation to operation expenses the amount stays fixed at $1.6 million.
10.20 a.m.

Now, Mr. Chairman, Sir, we have from time to time heard the Government put the case that it is always possible to get more for less; but that has yet to be justified in terms of actual delivery of services on the ground. I feel strongly and keenly the need to enquire of Government and of the relevant Minister how the Government proposes to expand the police presence in the country, as we all desire, in the context of a shrinking allocation for this purpose.

I do not like to carry debates upon the basis of what is reported in the Press, because what is reported in the Press needs not reconcile with what is true and faithful nor necessarily an accurate representation of what the speaker said. But I seem to recall recently, Mr. Chairman, that a Minister, I think the *Minster of* Finance, in addressing the Police Association referred to the fact that it would take as much as $50 millon to adequately meet the needs of the `Police Force as compared to $35 million. That is what they would like to get. That is why I say, Sir, I am very cautious about making this point and- I speak subject to correction. But surely, if the Government knows that the requirements of satisfactorily meeting the needs of the police force are as much as $50 millon what we are here called upon to agree to is obviously a financial policy that is running in the wrong direction. I certainly must press the Government to speak in a forthcoming manner on the extent to which its present financial policy is addressing the real needs of the citizens of. Barbados.

I don't think that anybody in this House would dispute that there is a need for an expanded police service in the country. The reality is that the growth of our tourism industry, and more particularly the growth of the

cruise ship business, have created all kinds of demands on the already straitened circumstances of the Police Force. We will find a fairly considerable difficulty in agreeing to Estimates that have at their core the whittling down of resources made available to the Royal Barbados Police Force.

Sir, this Head also makes provision for an allocation to the Immigration Department and I think that it is an open secret that members on this side have been, to say the least, unhappy with the manner in which the management functions have been undertaken in the Immigration Department.

We understand that management changes are soon to be put in place or made necessary by the departure from office of the Chief Immigration Officer and I would use this opportunity to serve notice that the Barbados Labour Party would be even more unhappy if an arrangement to perpetuate the existing unsatisfactory management arrangements was to be put in place at the Immigration Department.

Generally speaking, Sir, this Ministry of Home Affairs has such a range of institutions, the functions of which bear upon the stability of Barbados, that we must be sure this year that sufficient and adequate provision is made in these Estimates to ensure that the functions and the responsibilities that . the general society and the Government want these institutions to carry are supported by the commitment and resources; and I would want to say that at the outset. I will return if necessary.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, let me say that there is no intention whatsoever to reduce the strength of the Police Force. If anything, the strength of the Police Force has always got to be looked at with a view to improving it. The present establishment of the Force is 1 250 persons. The actual strength of the Force to date is 1 227. During 1992, for instance, 59 persons were recruited. In 1993, 27 constables graduated from the Regional Police Training School and were enlisted in the Force. 18 recruits are currently undergoing training at the Training School and there are presently 7 vacancies spread over the rank of inspector, sergeant and constable.

Now the Special Constabulary, you will recall, Mr. Chairman, was introduced into the Force and this was intended to assist the Police Force in dealing with the problems of increasing lawlessness and crime. The present complement of the Special Constabulary is 100 persons. On completion of their training the Special Constabulary is intended to undertake routine patrol duties, control duties or crime prevention patrols, alone or in company with regular police officers.' Once there are special safeguards in place the special constables will also participate in special crime control operations.

So I would like to give the House the assurance that in relation to the establishment of the Police Force there is clearly no intention of reducing that amount.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I want to deal with the issue of the police. Normally this is not an area that I become involved in, but I just want to say that I had the responsibility for administering this matter insofar as it consists of Establishment on more than one occasion. I believe that the record will indicate that full and ample hearing was given to the Commissioner at that time in his quest for additional manpower and the establishment was approved.

As I understand it, there is still the outstanding issue since that period of time of the Commissioner requesting additional personnel and that issue has not yet been satisfactorily resolved. I want a clear indication from the Government as to its position. Does it agree with the Commissioner that he is in need of more manpower or does it not agree? The public feels that it is entitled to a free and frank statement on this matter.

I am very pleased to see and I want to make it abundantly clear that the Special Constabulary... I believe there is a distinction not yet very clear, but clear to me, between the Police Force, the Special Constabulary and the Special Constable. There are 3 categories of people.

Now, I have seen evidence in my own area of the work of the special constabulary. It appears to me that they are working in the area of patrols, beach patrols and things like that. I think that it is clear to all and sundry that their presence in that area is having a beneficial effect. Now, I would like to know whether sufficient time has elapsed for Government to tell us whether, having regard to the experience of the work carried out by this special constabulary, it is not in a position to tell us in a definitive manner, whether any decision that is taken by the Government would be more in line with the expansion of this area as opposed to the expansion of the traditional police establishment.

It is my view, Sir, that the pattern of crime in Barbados is changing. We are going to see, whether we like it or not, an increase in sophisticated crime, not in the traditional sense of murder, rape and those kinds of things. You are going to see an increase in white collar crime. One of the things that this community is not going to be satisfied with is that every resource is not made available to the Force to deal with this sophisticated crime. White collar crime is going to increase in Barbados. We

have already had instances recently of events taking place in this area and the public being very dissatisfied with the fact that the alleged perpetrators have been able to slip the jurisdiction of Barbados seemingly with no hope of their being brought back to face justice.

I was privileged once to witness a situation in Barbados in which a person from the United States was charged with fraud. The judge sentenced this particular person to a period of time which permitted the person immediately after the judge rose to leave because the judge took into account the fact that the person did not get bail for a long period of time. Now, rightly or wrongly, Sir, the interpretation of the people involved at that time in the jury was that the judge had given this person special treatment. And you know, Sir, no other person who was brought before that jury was convicted in that Assizes!

It just shows you the Barbadian psyche. Barbadians have a psyche of fairplay. Barbadians have a sense or feeling that nobody should be above the law, politicians or anybody. Citizens that come from abroad, whatever their hue, cry, colour, Barbadians feel that if there are in Barbados they should be subject to law. Therefore when you have white collar crime on the increase and the alleged perpetrators of this crime happening to be people from abroad or people of a particular social background Barbadians are not going to take lightly to the fact that they seem to be able to slip the jurisdiction.

Now, it seems to me that we are fast approaching the area where our fraud squad needs beefing up. This is a very specialised area. The people who study these matters will know that the kind of intellectual discipline that you have to bring to-a job in this area is completely different to the type of intellectual discipline that you have to bring to other police work. The Government has to make use of a wide range of professional services.

Now, it is known that in other jurisdictions there are people who specialise in what they call forensic accounting. The police forces in other countries have to set up a special unit, a serious fraud office, backed with special powers to deal with these matters. I am not sure whether this is not one of the areas in which there is scope for special collaborative effort right through the Caribbean, not only this area but also the question of importation and exportation of drugs. There is no question about it.

As long ago as 1985 or 1986 — I was only re-reading it the other day — in the predecessor conference to this one, it was clearly envisaged by us, the Barbados Labour Party, and put in a speech too, that the way how we saw things happening in the future of the Caribbean drugs importation/exportation and detection was going to be of such an important nature that we felt then that that was an area for intense regional collaboration. As a matter of fact, we put forward the suggestion that there should be a special intelligence unit which would operate like any other intelligence service which would provide information to all of the police forces but not necessarily provide people who would be activists in following through the information. You would be creating a special core of people who would help us.

Now, there is no doubt at all in my mind that just as the criminals know no national boundaries in the perpetration of these criminal activities, so must the forces of law and order be organised to ensure that cross-the-border criminal activity is nipped in the bud by their being aware of the perpetrators of it, and by subsequently getting those people before the Courts of law in the areas over which they have jurisdiction. This is a very important area.

We must look now, Sir, at our efforts in this direction. Those are 2 important areas because they are impinging on stability, political stability, economic stability. Barbados must never be'a place where people feel that they can come from abroad and operate fraudulent schemes or illegal import/export activities with impunity. This must never be. It must never adjust as we are supposed to be a sophisticated service area that can provide legal accounting, auditing, medical, dental and a whole host of professional services so too we must be skilled enough in our intelligence and in our detection and execution of these activities. We must do it otherwise the whole of our administration will come into disrepute. We know what is happening near us in the rest of the Caribbean. We know the reputation that some Governments have earned for themselves. Thank God no Barbados Government is viewed in that light.
10.40 a.m.

We also know what is taking place next door to us in Trinidad and Tobago and the new developments there with respect to efforts to frustrate the normal activity of arrest and trial of criminals involved in the. drug trade. It is a very serious thing we are talking about. We are talking about a situation in which it is alleged that the situation has got so out of hand that witnesses are liquidated so that they cannot give evidence. These are very serious things. Special rules are being suggested to deal with that situation. That is an emergency situation. This is an area for high collaborative effort and I can clearly see that special treaty arrangemer_t will have to be made.

We are going to have to change completely our ideas as to how we detect and try these people. I believe myself that it might well be that we will reach the stage its which, if we want to get a fair trial, we will have to pass laws allowing people who are tried with certain offences to

be tried in countries outside of their national borders. It is one of the problems that we in the Caribbean will have to face. In other words, reality is catching up with the Caribbean again and we must have a good look at our collaboration efforts in security, crime detection and in the administration of criminal law. I have no qualms about it. I am all in favour of an effort being made in this direction because criminals have no national boundaries.

On the coast where I live, Sir, the South Coast, within the-recent past; the last two or three years, all the tim'e you are hearing about people being arrested for alleged offences that took place on the high seas between Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados. If they can get power boats, if they can do all of these things, we are in the net too and now is the time to act. We have to act early. I do not want to see Barbados as a place in which it is alleged that the situation occurs that if you are a witness to any of these events you get liquidated. I do not want to see that at all. The message must be sent out early and clearly that that is not to exist in Barbados and we will devise any kind of scheme that is consistent with our constitutional provisions to ensure that these people do not operate above the law.

Those are two very important areas. I believe that in the future...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I just want to raise tvvo points here. The first one deals with the Central Emergency Relief Organisation. Now, it is true that some effort has been made to improve the role of the Central Emergency Relief Organisation but I think we have to be realistic that although educational programmes have been organised and everything is done to alert people in times of disaster, yet one very crucial area has been overlooked.

In times of hurricane, Mr. Chairman, persons who would have to seek hurricane shelter do so with the expectation that the hurricane shelters are safe, or at least safer than the homes from which they come. I am not at all satisfied that some of the emergency shelters in Barbados are fit to be used as hurricane shelters. This is a very serious situation. I would expect the Government to take some initiative and allocate some funds whereby these shelters could at least be made safer t[g]ian what they are at the moment.

One shelter comes to mind, Mr. Chairman, that one at Wilkie Cumberbatch School. I am beginning to wonder 1i we can take CERO seriously when all the windows to the eastern side, the windward side of that school are all missing; yet it is a hurricane shelter. The louvre windows that were there, some of them that remain are shaky. I am saying this is very serious because in case people go there to shelter the high winds could easily snap the glasses and cause injury to those persons who are seeking shelter in these emergency, shelters. In other words, you are compounding a problem. Imagine someone leaving home safe without an injury only to sustain an injury inside a hurricane shelter! This is a very serious thing.

We all know that it is not possible for houses • or homes to be built according to certain specific standards as set down by the building code, that is standards that will withstand certain wind force. Since we know that there are a number of chattel houses that cannot — even some of the stone built houses would not be able to withstand it — it is absolutely necessary that if Government is thinking in terms of providing shelter that they would have at least buildings that are safe and structurally sound. I find it rather strange, and I am calling on the Government to look at this particular aspect.

Later in the yea, a couple of months from now, we will be going into t9.4. hurricane season and what has not caught as has not . cd us. I am very concerned about this particul v ecause persons who seek shelter at that particulars the Wilkie Cumberbatch School, will find that there n ticient lighting, not even a street light outside of thes . What happens if they were asked to evacuate their houses and seek shelter, how are they going to see? How [e]x t h e y going to see to find the shelter? There is not a light. I think that these are things that CERO should look at. These are very valid points. I do not want them to be swept under the carpet. There is nothing CERO or any official can tell me that will satisfy me. They are leaving the people at the mercy of some of the dangers. That is what I fear. It is all right for some of us who have structurally built houses that can withstand winds of somewhere of 100 odd kilometers per hour. I am worried about the majority of Barbadians whose chattel houses and some of the concrete structures that were not built to withstand it. Some of them are built with slabs. We know that those slabs were not built to withstand wind force of some 100 kilometers an hour. I want the Government to understand that this is serious. Because even some of these shelters are in low lying areas and are prone to flooding.
10.50 a.m.

What sort of policy are you going to tell me you are carrying out when these shelters are located in flood areas? Winds and rain prevail in times of hurricane. You could very well have rain n [L] a in g floods before the heavy winds. If the area is prone to flooding how are they going to get into the hurricane shelters. I can 'go as far as St. Peter to the Alexandra school. Has anyone gone there and seen the school when there is no real flood? It is very difficult to gain access to that school. It is all flooded around.

Let us be serious. Do not come telling me that hurricane preparedness or disaster preparedness just means lip service. But having a staff, educational programmes, telecommunication, all that stuff. But you are not paying some attention to the shelters which is very, very important in this area. I am only asking the Government to consider this. I want them to look at the Wilkie Cumberbatch School. If the Home \ffairs Ministry cannot do it, I want the Ministry of Education to understand that is an untenable situation either for children or persons who are seeking protection in times of a hurricane. This is serious, Mr. Chairman.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. 0. 'BRADSHAW: All I am saying is that that school, in its present state, is not fit to be a hurricane shelter. I am making that statement without any fear of contradiction from anybody from either side.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I wonder when the Honourable Member last saw the school? The school has been fixed, all the toilet facilities have been fixed, the windows have been fixed by Oran. I could state that as a matter of fact.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: I am aware that some, remedial work has been done to the school. I am telling you what I know is used. The entire school is not used as a hurricane shelter. I know the school better than anybody else.

Mr. Chairman, there is another point I wish to make. Some time ago the Barbados Labour Party in its Manifesto considered building a police station in the Wildey area. After a study it was recommended that because of the density of population that it was necessary to have at least a small police station. We have got the Fort George area which is fast developing. We have got an expansion of the Haggatt Hall area. There is going to be a golf course at Upton. What I am saying is that the area is developing rapidly. Boarded Hall police station takes too long to respond to calls even when they are in areas within a small radius of the police station.

You either place at the disposal of the police force additional men to respond including equipment, vehicles or you can build an additional facility and have it manned so that you would be able to spread the work. The Government might say it in defence that you may over populate the police station under present accommodation with an extra 10 or 12 persons. I have no quarrel with that. The Government should know that.

I believe that there is a valid case to be made out for a police station in Wildey and surrounding area. Do not tell me that you are going down in Thorpes where you have a housing area and problems and you could put a police station down there for people and you are going to tell me that I am asking for a police station in an area where people suffer the same fate and there is concern that there could be crime, the spread of drugs and other criminal activities are evident in the area and you are going to ignore that. I am going to make a repeated call today to have Government consider erecting a police station in that area. I have a duty to call for it. The Barbados Labour Party promised them one. I am asking why the Government has not explained why they are not putting one there and why no improvement has been made in the area.

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

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: It is all right. I am hearing of police stations going other places. I can understand that. But I represent St. Michael South East and I have a duty to put a case for them and I am putting it here. You can go into St. Matthias and build a Magistrates Court. I say I want some police protection for my people too.

Asides.

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

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I hope that the Minister of Home Affairs understands that I am serious about this. I will be raising this matter time and time again with my constituents. They have expressed their concern to me, particularly in the Fort George area and in the Upton area, in Wildey Heights and in Wildey Gardens the people are concerned about the spread of crime in that area. I therefore have a duty to raise this with the Government. I hope the Government will take the points I am making on these very important issues. They affect people. I am a people's representative and I am going to raise them.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I hope the Honourable Member who has just spoken is not complaining about the fact that there is a police station in Haynesville. That is the one, Mr. Chairman, as you recall which was put there because the building for the police was being constructed in Holetown. The police were moved into that area. It has also provided accommodation for the police on a temporary basis from St. Thomas. I think I made the point in here last week, when commenting on the fact that the Ministry of Home Affairs was looking at the Cane Garden area for the possible location of a police centre for policing that area of St. Thomas and St. Michael which is close by. One clearly has to look at the movement of population in the country. The population of

Barbados is not remaining static. You are getting developments all over the place, populations are growing in certain areas and diminishing in others and, certainly, as populations move from time to time the whole system of the location of institutions and services to serve those populations has to be looked at and, from time to time, be rationalized. So the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, East has called for a Police Station in Wildey. That is a growing area yes, but obviously it is 'something which those who administer these areas have to take on board and look at and determine, in the final analysis what are the best locations for the services which are needed to serve the people of Barbados.
11.00 a.m.

I am coming to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South but I thought I would have dealt with some of the issues raised by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East just as they were fresh in my mind. I am sure that during the luncheon interval he would perhaps take a look at the Wilkie Cumberbatch School to see if the comments which he just made in relation to that issue are really sustainable after a site visit.

Now I turn, Mr. Chairman, to some of the comments addressed by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South; The Honourable Member spoke in terms of the growing sophistication of crime and the problems ,which that kind of sophistication was posing for the region and for the law enforcement officials in the region. We all know that the criminals are becoming more and more sophisticated. That is a premise with which we all agree. We know that police forces obviously have to become more and more sophisticated in order to deal with the growing sophistication of the criminals.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South called for a high level of cooperation among the countries of the region in dealing with this problem of trans-border criminal activity. I think it is fair to say, Mr. Chairman, that there is, even at this time, a fairly substantial level and a high degree of cooperation among the countries of the Caribbean region and outside in dealing with this problem of trans-border criminal activity. Some of the legislative framework which has been put in place does facilitate that kind of cooperation.

In the past week there has been a series of workshops held in Barbados by the University of the West Indies in cooperation with the Caribbean Justice Improvement Project, training police prosecutors and public prosecutors in the problems of prosecuting drug offences.

Only this morning there has been a workshop started by the University of the West Indies in cooperation with the United Nations Drug Control Programme to train Magistrates and Prosecutors in the whole process of dealing with drug offences. The whole object of that programme is to sensitise them to the many problems which exist in this area and these programmes, those sponsored by the University in consultation with the Caribbean Justice Improvement Project and the United Nations Drug Control Programme will do just.that.

The programmes are ,not only for Barbados but are programmes *which* cater for judicial officers at the Magisterial level and prosecutors throughout the region. So that at that level also you are having a certain degree of cooperation and collaboration with a view to getting a coordinated and collaborative effort in dealing with the problem which is a problem for all of us.

Now the Honourable Member for Christ Church South also talked in terms of the need to have police officers specially trained in certain specialist areas — the need *for* forensic accounting and that kind of thing.

I am sure the Ministry of Home Affairs is currently examining issues of this kind, the question of establishing a serious fraud office to deal with the problems of serious fraud. In some countries there is a big corpus of legislation providing for the setting up of serious fraud offices and *for* the effective administering *of* serious fraud offices and providing for the specialist training which is needed *for* police officers in this very specialist area.

So that one recognises the need for the kind of specialist training of which the Honourable Member has spoken. Let me give the House the assurance that this is a matter which the Ministry of Home Affairs has already taken on board and is already making an analysis of.

Other questions raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South related to the special constabulary. I think he posed the question as to whether Government had in fact made up its mind on whether any expansion of the force would be in the. area of expanding the regular corp of police officers or whether any expansion would be in the area of the,special constabulary.

I think this is a matter which the Ministry of Home Affairs continues to keep in view with a view to determining what is the best way of providing for the numbers that are needed effectively to police this country.

One has to recognise that questions in relation to the optimum level of police officers who are necessary effectively to police any country *will* always be a problem. There *wilt* always be differences of opinion as to what, in any particular set of circumstances, is the optimum number of police officers effectively to police a country. But it is also equally important to note that with the growing

level of criminal activity it is almost impossible to say, I suggest, Mr. Chairman, what is an optimum level. You can hazard a guess at what is a reasonable level but remember that unless you have a police state you really cannot have enough policemen to deal with all the crime that there is in a country. You cannot really have enough policemen to deal with every single problem -of criminal activity that occurs in a country. ,

Take the problem of praedial larceny, for instance, where there can be a lot of that committed during the course of the night in areas out in the country where the crops grow. The police are obviously taken up with the problem of policing the urban and the metropolitan areas dealing with the many problems which exist in those areas. Experience has shown in fact that when the police direct their attention and focus to one particular area, criminal activity, and I am talking about routine criminal activity, invariably tends to move to another area. So that the police are always in the game of catching up with the criminals so to speak.
11.10 a.m.

The St. Lawrence Gap area, for instance, from time to time is reputed to be an area where a lot of drug offenders operate. Sometimes the Police move in there and clean up the area and there is a very good record of success in policing the area. But the moment that is done the criminal activity of the same kind moves to another area. So that the Police is in the process of chasing them and cleaning up some other area. Once they divert forces into another area then you have the problem of the criminal moving somewhere else and perpetrating their criminal activity. Ideally, one may say that what we need is sufficient policemen in order to police all the troubled spots in the country at one time in order to deal with that problem. But I think one also has to recognise that the problem of policing, as with the problem in any other service being provided by and for the country, has always got to be dealt with in the context reasonably of what the country is able to afford from time to time. I give the assurance that within the limits of what we can afford we will try our best to ensure that as much attention as possible is paid to ensuring that the Police Force is properly and adequately equipped to do the work which it is required to do.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister should conclude in two minutes.

Hon. M. A. KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas caught my eye.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I *will* be spending some considerable time on this Head. I wish to start first with Programme 2 — National Emergency Preparedness. The first comment that I wish to make in respect of this programme is that it seems to us on this side that the number of staff who are expected properly to deliver the services under CERO is not an optimum number of staff. There is a need for the expansion of this Department, there is the need for additional equipment, and there is the need for the coordination of the cleaning up staff to permit the coordination of the various functions. There are about three members of 'staff assigned to this Department and to a large extent there is reliance on the protective services to provide support and backup facilities.

Now the question of emergency preparedness is not only of national concern, but it is a matter of regional concern and it is a matter which has international implications particularly because having regard to the disasters from hurricanes in the region. When I say the region, I go as far as Miami. The consequence of these disasters has been a response by insurance companies and re-insurers to increase the cost of insurance to house owners and property owners in the region. So that emergency preparedness is in my submission a matter that has taken on a completely different character from its nature by even 5 or 10 years ago. But it is something that must now be addressed in a very sophisticated way. I know that regionally there is a Disaster Preparedness Coordination facility and Barbados is apart of CEDERO.

I am asking that Government in its planning should bear all of these considerations in mind and equip, organize and staff the local component of CEDERO in such a way as not only to be able to give adequate and quick response in the event of a disaster but also to harmonize properly with our brethren in the region. Specifically in relation to disasters in Barbados, we are concerned about the state of emergency shelters in Barbados particularly schools.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I gather that someone spoke on that already. I will not repeat it. then. But I am not sure if my colleague called for a proper survey to be done in relation to emergency shelters. Having done the survey, surely the next step would be to repair and fit up in a state of readiness. If that is not part of Government's current planning, I would suggest that it ought to be.

Sir, I turn next to Programme 4 — Immigration Regulatory Services. I have to say, Sir, that the recent decision by Government to extend the period of service of the current Chief Immigration Officer is a matter that causes the gravest possible concern. I am conscious of what I am saying. I am conscious of the presence of the person, but I have a duty. The morale in the Immigration Department is at an all time low. It is in a terrible

state. One of the precepts of efficiency must surely be proper inter-personal relationships, proper man management and personnel management relationships and above there must be a contented staff. If your staff is not contented, you cannot expect the productivity that is desired. I speak from personal experience having been chairman of three statutory boards in my time – National Housing Corporation, CBC and the National Sports Council. I was conscious in heading those three corporations that the first requirement was to ensure that the staff of those Departments were reasonably satisfied and reasonably happy. in their work environment. Members on that side have placed on the public record for which I am thankful my contribution as Chairman of those boards and the reputation that I left. The Honourable Member for St. Michael Central is reminding me that he on behalf of the Barbados Workers' Union paid tribute to my management of those three boards between 1976 and. 1985. I say that only to emphasize that if your staff are not happy you are not going to get cooperation. The staff of the Immigration Department are not happy with the present management of the Immigration Department.
11.20 a. m.

I am not speaking, and I must not be taken to be speaking pejoratively of the Head. I know her. I respect her. We get on well. She is most responsive to me and if I have a problem and I ask, she is always ready to give. But it seems that relationships have broken down within that department. Only this week or maybe last Friday -- I suspect it was Monday – the Head quite properly told the staff that notwithstanding that her time for retirement was March 22nd, she will be staying on and I had terrible phone calls as the Shadow Minister responsible for this Department since then, from people in and outside of Immigration complaining about the matter.

The argument runs this way. Everybody else when he or she has reached the age of compulsory retirement has had to go and . we are setting a precedent now where persons, notwithstanding the attainment of compulsory retirement age, are being kept on. I only ask Government to look at this matter carefully because I can see the situation where other Heads or other persons who reach compulsory retirement age in the public service and are due to go on a particular day will say, " I'm not going. I'm holding on. I'm standing here for another month. How are you going to get me out? Because you allowed So and So to do it."

There is a precedent that is being established in this particular case which I think is unfortunate and can lead to bad consequences. I would be grateful to hear from the Minister responsible what are the special circumstances that have prompted this very unusual feature in the Public Service.

The second comment on the Immigration Department relates to the time for processing work permits for people in the offshore sector. The Minister of Finance is on record as having said that these should be processed in about 2 weeks. That is a hope that was not based on reality but the experience of persons operating in the offshore sector. I don't do much of it. I have done about 1 or 2 offshore companies but the accountants and the lawyers who specialise in that area tell me that. it takes up to 3 months sometimes to get approval for the work permit. In the meantime, the persons from overseas who are managing these offshore operations may have come here and are in a state of indecision, limbo, flux not knowing what is going to happen and there is nothing that you as their lawyer or accountant can do to advise them.

I think that we have to devise a strategy and a method for speeding up the process in that I am told that years ago when we were attracting business through the IDC and developing the industrial sector through the IDC that there was a kind of understanding between departments that once the IDC had processed the particular application and found it to be in order, subject of course to the ultimate reservation of a right to investigate for security purposes, the application of a particular person was approved and done through the IDC and fed through the system.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the Member will give way for a moment.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Except he has 2 minutes to conclude.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is the only way to help him with a point. What in fact they had was a broad policy understanding that each company that was brought into the country had a right to have at least one person looking after their operation so that policy dovetailed so that the one person unless they had some security difficulty got the work permit without difficulty.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I understand the point the Honourable Minister made and clearly we would have to concede in the argument that in those days there was not the quantity of applications as there is now. Perhaps we have to look at a mechanism of creating a little department within the department specially organised to deal with these matters with a matter of speed and efficiency. I have no doubt that part of the reason for the delay is volume and we have to look at a mechanism of reducing the delay and coping with the volume.

There is no time for me to get on to the other areas. I will let other persons intervene and then I will pick up on police services.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: I want to respond mainly to some of the comments made by members on the other side and I believe that the first thing I want to look at is the question of Immigration. Of course, in the position as I am now, I would not have known of the information just given; but one of the problems facing the Immigration Department is the fact that the salary scale is too low and in order to recruit the right type of person — I am not saying that this is the reason otherwise but I would think that when I was there one of the things that should have been done and I guess it is being done now is to look at the salary scale to recruit the right type of person. I think it is S5. In my view, it should be S2 because the job calls for a person who is an attorney-at-law or with such qualifications. To a large extent when once you become the Head of the Immigration Department the chance of moving back over to the General Service are virtually nil so nobody wants to go there if he or she feels that they have no chance of being the Permanent Secretary or the Deputy Permanent Secretary in the general service. This could be one of the reasons.

I am not the Minister responsible but I have always been concerned. When there was reclassification, somehow Immigration was left out. I do not know but I guess the Minister responsible might be able to say why the extension has been approved. I do know that there was an, advertisement in the Press for people to apply for the post, 6 or 7 months ago. Again probably the people who applied were not suitable. I do not know.

As far as the work permits are concerned I always got the impression that the problems which had surfaced before are no longer. I believe the Department got together with the accountants and lawyers and some system was developed to make sure that the time period would be shortened. As far as Immigration goes, I think the Member for St. Thomas mentioned the question of security as well and I believe that that too could be a problem. Sometimes, as you know, when people apply for work permits they do not use the correct procedure. You have to put it in the Press that.no suitable person applied. When I was there I had suggested that all the applications should be sent to the Immigration Department as well because sometimes people advertise and then write the Immigration Department and say there is no suitable person but the Immigration Department does not get the applications so they are left in a bind. The procedure probably could be at fault for the delays. But I am happy to say that the period of delay has been reduced considerably, from what I understand.

Those are the 2 points I want to make about the Immigration Department.

As far as CERO is concerned, I would agree that there is need for more staff but we have to understand that CERO seems to be the coordinating department for all the other departments – Public Works, Agriculture, Education. When something happens – the Police and Fire Service – the Heads of these departments have to come together. One of the problems that CERO faces is that after a disaster a lot of heads are not so keen to come anymore. The interest wanes as time elapses.

Another problem is the private sector and it is a concern which I express all the time, especially the hotel belt. They don't seem to think that if a hurricane were to hit Barbados that the hotels will be affected. They must themselves make a greater input into what the Government should do with their guests. I have always said that probably 2 or 3 of the better schools could be looked at. We have Queens College there and they can go and fit it out as a temporary hotel, knowing that in the west coast if there is a hurricane there will be a tidal wave and they will have to move out. So they have to look at these things.

The private sector are the people who give the most trouble as far as disaster preparedness' is concerned. I don't think — at least up to when I was there and I spent 2 years there – that we have had a meeting with the hotel sector. This is sad, bearing in mind that you have a capacity of 15 000 at the height of the season. They don't seem to think that they could be affected.

As far as the shelters are concerned, I know that about 1991-92 the Ministry did have a survey carried out by the Association of Engineers looking at all the shelters. They reported mainly on Government buildings and I believe they were to go back and look at churches which are not owned by Government. And we can see their state.

I would just like to add that you cannot be fully prepared for a hurricane. You never know the ferocity of the hurricane. You can only make temporary preparations plus the fact that people have to understand that the shelters are mainly for after the event. You do not move out people before because if the shelter comes down and you have 2500 people in it, 2500 might be injured. If 2 houses come down, 10 might be injured. This is a practical situation. You do not move people before the hurricane. You move"them after. It does not make sense moving them before. Only if a lot of rain is anticipated and it is a low lying area which might flood, then you move out those people but to move out people before the hurricane does not make much sense.

As far as the question of the Police Force is concerned, let me say that we in Barbados have a very good security service, the police, prison, fire service and defence force. We should never forget that. I have always said that I believe that the police are starved for

men having worked therefor 2 years I am still convinced that the Police Force needs about 200 more men. We tend to forget that every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday that we have about 6 000 or 7 000 more people on the Island who are going all over the place, not like Barbadians staying at home, and the police must protect them.

'I think that the question of equipment is one which must be looked at. The question of computers and proper communication sets must be taken care of. That would make the work of the policeman much easier. We are living in a different age now where you can get Australia by fax, even though it is 14 hours ahead of us, at the same time if you stay up at night. So we have to be in that age and I am afraid that we are not moving there as swiftly as I would like.

The accommodation for all the security services is one which needs special attention. It is true that the Task Force is having a building being erected. There is the Holetown Complex and there is a mechanical workshop under construction, but by and large the out stations — District F, Districts C, B, Crab Hill, Belleplaine and indeed Central itself are in a very deplorable state of repair and it is to the policemen's credit that they can still tolerate that. I have said so as a Minister and I am saying so as a Backbencher. I am not therefore knocking anybody, any particular Minister. These are the facts. Therefore the Ministry should get some more money to spend. Policemen by and large spend- more than 8 hours a day at the station and I believe they should be made as comfortable as possible.

I believe that in terms of the station for St. Michael South East they could easily close Worthings Police Station and relocate it at the Pine. I don't think it is more than 3 miles between Hastings and Oistins. There is no need for Worthings. All you have to do is put extra men at Hastings and move Worthings to the Pine. District A services the Pine and it is too far from the Pine. District A also services down to the University Drive. Sell Worthing and take the money and build a station at the Pine. As a matter of fact, let me say this. There is no need to build a station at the Pine. The Pine Plantation House, the huge complex there is up for grabs and *it* can be converted. It would not take more than $500 000 to do it. Opposite the Pre-vocational Centre, that huge yard with buildings and everything. There are very few people in there. That could easily be converted into a beautiful police station. It has everything. You could even have horses up there as well. It has the stables. If you looked around there there are enough buildings. You could sell Worthings, sell the yard at District D and you get District D police station as well. The money is available. Sell the property and get the places.

My point is that the police should get better accommodation. The reason why there is a station at Holders Hill is because, as the Attorney General said, in building Holetown Police Station there was a need to have accommodation for them and since then District D had to be abandoned because it was so bad and the Police Officers moved to Holders Hill. I sincerely hope that when District D is built that Holders Hill remains there because that station can take care of the area between Holders Hill and St. Stephens. That would be a good coverage. Also because we have a housing area at Haynesville they could also look after that. I believe as well that we must compliment the Commissioner of Police for the community posts. The community posts have done a fantastic job in trying to guide the youngsters in the correct path. I believe that if we look at Silver Hill and Deacons Farm, Haynesville and Orleans, if the police could get another 12 community posts you would see a turn-around in the attitudes of a lot of young people because whether we want to believe it or not in those areas in which we have a community police post the police are looked upon as big brothers. Areas in which people were criminally bent, today the police are advising youngsters to go to school, having classes in the police community posts rather than the youngsters running wild.

I think it was a good move when the police went that way and I sincerely hope that of the 200 men, if they get them, that they can have another 12 or so community posts. Eden Lodge is crying out for them. Brittons Hill, the Pine. Most of the housing areas are crying out for them. To my mind, prevention is better than cure any day of the week. It is pointless waiting until a fellow gets into trouble then to have all the rehabilitation at the prison which does not work. Not only that, you have also the stigma which is attached to it so that I think the Police really do need better equipment and better buildings. The Ministry is doing the best it can with the limited resources. A lot of work has been done at District "C" and District ';B" but when one goes into Central Police Station in what used to be the headquarters, one is appalled that people could even attempt to work in such conditions. I hope that in the next financial year, quite frankly, ...
11.40 a.m.

Aside:

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: Yes. They have moved over. We were able to get the Barbados National Bank building and move the Commissioner of Police over in better conditions but at the same time I do not want to fool anybody that the old dilapidated building is not being used by senior officers as well. I hope that something would be done in the very near future to repair it.

Mr. Chairman, those are my contributions for the time being. I will come back from time to time because I did have responsibility for the Police and the security

services during the last year and also Education. I think that I am under an obligation to respond to the comments made by Members on the other side.

Thank you,

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member's speech was quite remarkable. For one who has just left the Cabinet he is complaining about the run-down nature of Central Police Station. He has been a Member of the policy formulation body under the Constitution for the last 8 years and even though he may not have had responsibility for the Police Department for those 8 years, what he has just uttered is a confession of an inability to get anything done for the Police in relation to the improvement of Central Police Station.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am not blaming you. I am blaming the one who is up at Ilaro Court and would not come in here.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. The reason why Police Headquarters was moved to the Barbados National Bank was for the specific purpose of getting something done there. We could not do anything there due to over 15 years of neglect.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas just before the point of order made the comment, words as I heard them, that he was speaking about the one up there who is at Ilaro Court and would not come in here. I believe those remarks, however jocular they may have been said, ought to be struck from the record. It is well known. It is public record...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will change the word from "won't" to "can't". The point I was making was that that was a malfunction of the Ministry of Finance in not providing the funds to enable successive Ministers responsible for the Police to upgrade the Police headquarters at Central. Now we know that the old National Bank building has been used. The suggestion came from this side last year or year before last, but that can only house part of the staff who used to operate in Central. There are still people in Central.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not tell me "No". The criminal statistics that they sent to me day before yesterday I had to send my messenger there, they tell him turn left by the two cannons and go in there and ask.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But he would not know where to find Inspector Robinson's office. What I am saying is that we moved out some of the officers and put them in better accommodation but we have still left the bulk of those people who have to operate in Central in the old dilapidated building and we need to do something urgently to restore it. It is an important building. It is an historic building and we have to restore that building to some semblance of respectability. I am not asking Government in tight financial times now to try and build a new building. They cannot do it. I am not being unreasonable but I am saying look at your priorities. Be careful that you are not seen to have moved out the big popes and put them in commodious conditions and left the others down there to languish otherwise that in itself over time will contribute to low morale.

I would wish to hear from the Minister in the light of...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Deputy Prime Minister, poor fellow, has had an operation and I do not think we have been charitable enough, any of us, to put it in the record that we hope that he is convalescing well and will soon return to his substantive duties. I believe he has about 4 or 6 weeks' leave. My advice to him would be to take 4 months or 6 months rather than let all the confusion that is going on in there give him stomach troubles and hurt him.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to mention a couple of things about Immigration that I did not have time to deal with just now and to find out if the situation is now rectified. This is not any rumour. This is not even a phone call. This is the Auditor General's Report that was laid in here on Tuesday for the year 1993. The Auditor General has reported as follows:

> "1. In relation to Immigration the inventory of Government property was not kept up-to-date."

This next one causes me grave concern.

> "The stock records of passports was not properly maintained. The main stock of passports are kept at a location not under the control of the Chief Immigration Officer and a record of the number of passports held at that location was not available".

Do you understand how serious this is? I *will* read it again, the Auditor General's Report for 1993 laid in here on Tuesday at page 59.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He has not said where they are being kept. I am quoting from the Report. This is the Auditor General of Barbados. This is not me. He has a constitutional position and he reports.

> "The inventory of Government property was not kept up-to-date.
>
> The stock records of passports were not properly maintained. The main stock of passports are kept at a location not under the control of the Chief Immigration -Officer and a record of the number of passports held at that location was not available."

Now, he obviously knows where the location is because he says "a record of the number of passports held at that location was not available" having previously said they were kept at a location not under the control of the Chief Immigration Officer. Now that is a serious weakness.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not know the details and I would not want to go into the details in a public debate because these are matters that have implications for national security and I am not going to say anything more on it. But I would ask that whoever are the persons responsible to pay attention to this page of the Auditor-General's Report and make sure that his concerns are satisfied and, indeed, that the concerns of the public are satisfied to the extent that we know people have been able in the last year – they have been slipping out of Barbados before – but high profile people have been able to get out of Barbados in the last year after depositing their passports with the Courts. The Passports are still there in the Registry and people have gone. Check your paper today you will see another bird has flown.
11.50 a.m.

Aside.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: A stock and issue register of Local Purchase Orders was not kept. I am not concerned too much with the little financial arrangements and vote book and all of that. I was concerned about the security aspect of the stock of passports because there was a time, some years ago, under this present Government when Passports were found in the hands of all kinds of non Barbadians overseas. We know that the New York office, headed by Mr. Glasgow, carried out investigations and so on. There is a weakness in the system and it seems that people have been able, too easily, to obtain Barbados passports and there has to be a tightening up. So much for Immigration.

Let me deal with the' Prison now, Sir, and come back to police services later on. The Auditor-General's Report at page 58 for last year also put some blows in the Prison department:

> "There were several payments made without relevant contracts. The salaries account at the bank"

hear this:

> "was not reconciled. No inventory of Government property was maintained. Statements supporting claims for travelling allowances were not attached to some vouchers."

That is dangerous:

> "There is a need for segregation of duties to prevent one officer from having responsibility for all aspects of accounting transaction."

I think that these comments of the Auditor-General are matters of serious concern. We are going back into the old problem that we had – I am not talking about the St. Joseph Hospital any more – but the same problem of work being awarded without contractual documents is turning up in relation to the prison. Payments are being made and no contracts are there to support them. Page 58.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If it is happening everywhere it is not right. We have to do something about cleaning it up. The salaries account at the *bank not* reconciled and no inventory of Government property maintained but where there is clear danger is in the comment that statements supporting claims for travelling allowances were not attached to some vouchers. That could admit of all kinds of fraud. And fraud has gone up in Barbados in the last couple of years and I will give you the figures later on this morning. But there is now a clear trend that' white collar crime is relentlessly increasing in Barbados. That may be a consequence of the hard times that people are experiencing. But there is that clear trend, Sir.

I note that in Government's Development Plan for the next 7 years even though we know that the prison is over-populated, I do not see any provision for any work to be done at the prison. On page 262 of the Development Plan they tend to spend in terms of capital $500 000 this year, $650 000 next year, $350 000 in 1996-97 and nothing between 1997 and 2 000. In 3 years you are going to spend about $3 million. But the last part of this Century nothing will be spent on the prison. There are comments which make that plan non-sensical when you read the narrative in relation to the prison, as set out in the Development Plan. It seems to-me that there is no harmonization of thought

or policy between the Development Plan and the figures set out in the Development Plan and the figures in the Estimates over time, Sir.

The same ,thing applies also to the corrective and rehabilitative services...

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: One minute, Sir. All right. I will have to finish this by saying that I noticed that this year they are going to spend $200 000 at Dodds shortly to refurbish particularly the kitchen area and other areas at Dodds.

But, once again, on page 262 of the Development Plan there is really – I see that Mr. Robinson, the Principal of the school said this morning that they are spending $200 000 at Dodds. But I look in this document here for the period 1993-2000 and the only year in which provision is made to spend money at Dodds is the year 2 000 when they are going to spend $450 000. Otherwise there are a whole lot of blanks here from fiscal year 1993-94 right down to fiscal year 1998-99. There is not a cent provided for in here. This is something tendered in here for us, to rely on to give us an idea of where Government is going, in .the future and how they intend to finance capital, how they intend to spend capital to do necessary works in the future. It is not making sense.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I just want to deal with one aspect of what has gone before and that is the impression which I believe may have gone out that the Royal Barbados Police has not had any assistance by way of their operations over the last year.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No, no. I am not saying that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas said that. The Honourable Member for St. James South said that the Royal Barbados Police Force needs another 200 men. I presume he means men and women.

The point is that when we start to discuss the needs of our law enforcement agencies in terms of numbers, it can be very misleading for the population as a whole. I do not intend to get involved with the numbers games but I just want to remind this Committee that just a couple weeks ago, we passed supplementary amounts in here, of a substantial nature, to provide for 100 Special Constables to make them available. It is my understanding that they have been made available or are in the process of being made available to supplement and assist the police in the carrying out of their duties.

Secondly I want to deal with the question of accommodation. The question of accommodation for the police in Barbados is a question that has been dogging political discussions *for the last 30 years in this country. I* want to remind Honourable Members that we have moved a long way from the time when the police used to have chinks in their cots in Central Police Station.

It is important that the young people coming up in this country understand how far we have moved from those days to the point now where the accommodation in the police force generally speaking is reasonable. 'Yes, it is true that there are some areas that cry out for change. That is why this Government at a time when we were not under financial constraints undertook the renovations and construction at Holetown. Those renovations and that construction ran into difficulty as is well known and it became necessary to slow down the work. But even in the face of the present difficulty we have resumed the work at Holetown and it is my understanding that it will not be long before that work is completed. If you add to that the renovations which were done at Holder's Hill which the Honourable Member spoke about, it means *that the school* that was converted at Holder's Hill, as I understand it, is a fit and proper station. So that *when* Holetown is completed the North would have had the upgrading which was in the works for some considerable time. It does not mean that District E would not require some renovations. It does not mean that Central itself will not require some renovations but it has to be remembered that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central had come to the House with a projection of the building of a complete court complex at the corner of Country Road but again because of the economic situation that is one of the projects which was pulled back.

12.00 p.m.

So the whole question of what to do with the area around the Central Police Station which embraces on its eastern side the courts, what to do with the property next door to it, all of that has to do with fundamental decisions about *what* one does with the entire area and therefore the spending *which is* done at Central is unlikely to be massive spending. Until the *whole question of our ability to* settle the construction of a court and a police college and all of those things, until these matters are settled it is going to be very difficult not to fall prey to some of the fairly facile and glib statements that can be made about accommodation.

As I understand it a valid and valuable attempt has been made to improve the quality of accommodation. The abandonment of the station at District D was one such decision and the provision for a new station to take account of the area going East from Haynesville, into St.

Thomas and that part of St. Michael which Your Honour represents is now a matter for decision making.

I think, Sir, that if one travels or if one reads widely newspapers from around the rest of the world one will see that in almost every major city or community in the world this issue of having enough police officers to properly regulate the criminal activity is an issue. It is an issue in Britain. It is an issue in New York City. It is an issue in Denver, Colorado. It is an issue in Russia. It is an issue in Japan. There are 'never enough numbers in the eyes of the law enforcement authorities to take account of the criminal activity in a particular country.

I recall, Sir, a raging debate that lasted over 4 years in Britain in which Mr. Howard, before him the present Chancellor, before him one other Minister, all Ministers of Home Affairs, having gone through all kinds studies and examinations of the policing needs of their country, having to come to different conclusions, some of them being the complete opposite to that position they had taken only 3 to 4 years before.

Recently in England the question of community policing was pitted against concepts which, as you will remember, Sir, before she left the Government Margaret Thatcher had a completely opposite view.

Now, Sir, there is a Barbadian who is the highest ranking police officer in the London Police Force with whom I had a discussion last year on the question of policing; and he was indicating to me that in the area for which he has responsibility, that is, Brixton, which is the tightest, toughest policing area of inner London, he has in real terms one third of the numbers per capita which we have; and he was not saying that negatively in terms of Barbados or he was not seeking to make an invidious comparison. He was just saying it as a fact that the system of policing which his Division has been allowed to use, has worked to the best use of the resources made available.

I have had discussion with the present Commissioner of Police. I have read where he has spoken on this and we have had discussion from time to time, not officially, because it does not fall within my ambit of responsibility, but anyone who is intelligent and who is interested in the legal system will have discussions about these kinds of things from time to time. I know that community policing was introduced in Barbados and it has been successful.

The point I really want to make, Mr. Chairman, is that generally speaking the resources made available to the police have been used in Barbados and the police force can be proud of the fact that it has managed to take hold of crime in the country and get it to start moving downward.

But within a few weeks, as I think the Attorney General said, within a few weeks of being successful in one area there is usually or there can be an outburst of need for more policing in another area. The fact is though that the Police Force is competing with the rest of the other social services and the rest of the other services that are needed in the country.

Now an additional 200, I assume the Honourable Member does not mean 200 in addition to the 100 special force because if that is what he means ... That is what he said, but if we look at the Estimates .... We would have to make a decision because the Minister of Finance would be able to tell you that there cannot be any more taxation. There is nowhere to get the funds from so you have to divide the funds for running the services as best you can. I am sure the Minister of Education and the Minister of Health would have some things to say and had some things to say about what they need to provide services of a certain quality.

I have something to say about what the Ministry' of Foreign Affairs would require to do the duties that must be done outside of Barbados for Barbados. When all is put into the cohoblopot you have to make priorities. And while it is true that if we were in the best of times we could probably afford to employ more people in more specific areas of the Government it would be irresponsible of the Government, and I would say of this Committee, if in making criticisms we did not recognise the inherent facts of our situation.

I believe that the Honourable Member, when he functioned as the Minister responsible for the Police, tried valiantly and succeeded in helping to make the resources available stretch as far as possible. I believe the present Minister of Home Affairs is doing similarly. But if I recall, he did say that it would be difficult to provide the optimum number of police officers that would be required. I am entering the debate therefore, Sir, to bring a sense of balance to those who might hear what we are saying. I cannot risk to say those who might read because if anyone seeks to observe what one of the major newspapers does with what comes out of here, as the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition said, you cannot always reconcile what appears in the newspaper with the true facts that occurred. So for those who can hear, we wish to be certain that the balance is there and that there is no feeling that one of the reasons why crime is on the rampage or in this or that position is because the Government will not make resources available. I would say that all the Ministers responsible for the Police have tried valiantly and have been successful to some degree in 'making sure that they get the maximum of resources available for us by the Royal Barbados Police Force. I would make bold to say that, when we attempted to join some of the resources

from the Defence Force with the Royal Barbados Police Force, there was another debate which ensued. Fortunately, the Government took its position and the result of that has been some clear benefit to the community as a whole. We cannot all agree with each decision that is made. I have a position on human rights of the people in Barbados which does not necessarily coincide with the position of every single member in this Honourable Committee. But I also have a responsibility as the Minister of the Crown to recognize that you cannot get blood out of stone. Until we have more corpuscles, if I may carry the analogy a little further, we have to settle for the amount of blood that we can get. There will be no more taxes that I can agree to.
12.10 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is a policy statement. That is to be said by the Minister of Finance. It is no secret. Where are we going to draw the taxes from? The Honourable Members on the other side would be the first to come in here and crucify the Government if we said that we want to collect some more money and I would help them too generally speaking. But we have to be realistic and I believe that my colleague if he were here would say so that there is a limit to how much we can put in any one sector. That is all that I wish to say, Sir.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, there are a couple of comments which I think that I need to make in response to some that have been made before. Let me first of all deal with the question just briefly and finally of the question of numbers in the Police Force which I made mention of earlier. In the United States today, for instance, you hear the President talking in terms of putting a whole lot more of policemen on the streets to deal with the problems of escalating crime in the United States of America. Against that, you hear a multitude of criticism on the other side saying that that is not going to solve the problem.

I just make that point to indicate invariably you get both sides of the argument as to what is best in any set of circumstances. On this point, Sir, let me say for the benefit of the Committee that a Deputy Commissioner of Police of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has in fact been provided by the Government of Canada to conduct an examination of the Royal Barbados Police Force and all of its activities. He will be looking at among other things the numbers in the Royal Barbados Police Force. He will be looking at the question of deployment of staff and Government should soon have the benefit of his advice in determining the numbers which are required. The offer has been made by the Government of Canada and the analysis is being done. Sir, I have the view too that one cannot really objectively tell what is the optimum level. But in the final analysis it will have to depend on what the country can bear.

Regarding the comments by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in relation to the Immigration Department, just let me make the point about the post of Chief Immigration Officer. I do not want to comment too much on personnel matters in the Public Service which after all is not, as I perceive it, a matter on which I should pronounce in too much depth. But the post of Chief Immigration Officer and Deputy Chief Immigration Officer have been advertised and the time for applications has been closed. The Service Commission, as I understand it, is examining the applications and the retention of the Chief Immigration Officer beyond the time of her retirement will clearly not be a protracted one. The view was taken apparently that it was in the best interest of the Department to retain the services of the Chief Immigration Officer to make sure that a smooth transition took place.

Let me just make some comments in relation to hurricane shelters. This issue has been raised by a number of speakers. Mr. Chairman, hurricane shelters broadly speaking have been divided into three categories. I think the Honourable Member for St. James South had made the point that you do not use hurricane shelters before the disaster but they are only available at the time after the disaster has actually occurred. There are, in fact, three categories of hurricane shelters which are as follows:

Category (1) to be used prior to the disaster,

Category (2) relates to those shelters serviceable after the disaster has taken place,

Category (3) those which have become unavailable for use because they may be in a flood area or because of the state of disrepair in which they are as a result of the disaster they have been found not to be useful.

Annual surveys are in fact conducted by the appropriate Ministry, which I believe is the Ministry of Education, in relation to those shelters which are schools and the shelter list is updated prior to the official beginning of all hurricane seasons.

Two engineering surveys were conducted by the Barbados Association of Engineers and the reports of these professional associations have influenced the compilation of the hurricane shelter lists. Training programmes are also conducted in Shelter Management in order to develop a cadre of official shelter wardens and volunteers. In addition to all of this, public awareness programmes have

been carried out by CERO and by the Government Information Service emphasizing the need for the construction of hurricane resistent buildings including private homes in an effort to reduce the vulnerability of housing and shelters generally to disasters.

Having said all of that, Mr. Chairman, one recognizes the need constantly to keep the state and condition of hurricane shelters under review and to :acknowledge that there may not always be from time to time in the best possible condition. I say take a look at Wilkie Cumberbatch during-the lunch period and after lunch come back and tell me what the position is.
12.20 p.m.

In relation to the allegation about the condition of Central Police Station and the fact that some police officers have been moved into the building on the other side of James Street, the intention was that a part of the Police Force would be moved out of Central Headquarters into the building on James Street and that in the meantime restoration work would be done on the Central Police Headquarters in the areas out of which the officers were moved. When that restoration work had been completed and the offices were back in shape, those officers who had moved over into James Street would move back over, another set of officers would move in and restoration work done in relation to additional offices at Central Headquarters. So that in the fullness of time, by the movement of officers back and forth and moving some out so as to allow work to be done in Headquarters, a complete restoration job would be done on the Central Police Headquarters. That was the logic behind the whole programme adopting this course of action.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, when I was last on my feet I was dealing with the Industrial Schools and pointing out that apart from $305 000 against the item Structures for this year, in subsequent years to the year 2000 there is no provision for Capital Expenditure, according to the Development Plan, which says that Government does not intend to spend any money by way of Capital on the industrial Schools between this year and the year 2000, according to the Development Plan.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have to take it seriously. I cannot believe that people will produce documents, when we start to use them, when we start to analyse them, when we start to be critical of them they ask if we are going to take them seriously. It is like two Manifestos — 1986 and 1991 — that have been repudiated in here by Members on that side. After a time, "Oh, don't worry with that. You took that seriously?" But a lot of people out there got fooled by it and gave us this kind of confused Government that we have now.

In relation to Probation, we talk about alternatives to imprisonment. I have to take part in a seminar tomorrow at Dover Convention Centre with some UN body on drugs. We are looking at alternatives to imprisonment. We have to look at alternatives to imprisonment in Barbados. I have led a debate in here, and elsewhere, now for about five to six years on the need for a new penal system and I am not . speaking again on it. I will' not have time today to develop it, but clearly because of the problems of over population at the Prison, because of the constraints of space, because the remand system puts pressure on the Prison, we have to look for alternatives to imprisonment.

The Probation Department, which is expected to play a role, not only for Assizes but throughout the year, to help keep people out of prison, to help set them on proper paths of rehabilitation, is not given a cent in the Development Plan for the probation services until the year 2000. All of them up there would have passed on by then. On page 262 $450 000 in the year 2000, and you talk about planning. What kind of planning is this? Bare blanks.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. *SIMMONS: How do you mean get back to the Estimates? The Estimates have to be read in a context, and when we are talking about Capital Expenditure we have to look at Government's plans for future development to see if you have any vision. You neither have vision nor action.

Sir, a couple more questions. I think this will be my last intervention before lunch. Briefly I am going to run through, without any necessary connection between what I say in terms of a theme.

` The Process Serving Department. I think all of us in the law were embarrassed last year at an expose in the Advocate of conditions in the Process Serving Department, ' not physical conditions, but an unnatural user of the premises, if I may borrow the language of Rylands and Fletcher. I think the word has now been accepted, because Oliver Jackman used it in his column on Sunday, a "bariffle" of whiskey bottles and rum bottles in the Process Serving Department, in the Chief Marshal's Office.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not know who drank them. I cannot believe that one man' could have drunk so many. They had the photograph in the Advocate newspaper showing the bottles, it is nothing coming from the figment of my imagination. It is a fact. There is no way that

that should have been allowed to happen, there is no way that it should be allowed to continue, and I want to hear from the Government. I have not even said that anybody drank liquor, all I am talking about is the untidiness of having these hundreds of bottles there in a Government Department that is an essential arm of the administration of justice in this country. I want to hear from the Minister what has been done. ,

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You are holding on? Hold some lashes too. If you are holding on, hold some lashes and hold some answers. I want to know what has been done by way of investigating that.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not ask what?

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He does not seem to have any sense of propriety now since he has gone to the front, or of what should be tidy. I am only asking that the Department should appear tidy at all times. It is a disgraceful thing, Sir. I want something done about that, Sir. When it appeared I would have expected an immediate investigation by the relevant Department.

Let us get back to the Police, Sir. I want to make a few and brief comments about the police. 12.30 p.m.

First of all, I draw the attention of the police to page 56 of the Auditor General's Report. They are as delinquent as the rest-of them.

> " Appropriation and revenue accounts were not submitted for audit. Amounts shown as excess expenditure for these subprograms ... were obtained from the records of the Accountant General."

Now the police must know that they have to set examples too of compliance. They want the public to comply with their orders and directions and they must comply too. Appropriation and revenue accounts must be submitted. It is not good enough.

> "An audit of the accounting records of the Police Department revealed:
>
> Absence of local purchase orders and supporting documents for several payments, some of substantial value."

It is not good enough. It admits of the possibility of fraud even in the Police Department.

> "Pay vouchers in respect of travelling allowances did not have appropriate travelling claims attached."

It could provide for white collar crime also within the Police Department.

> "Certain pay vouchers and pay sheets are not available for audit examination."
>
> "No formal record of stores were maintained."
>
> "There was no internal control and poor document security in the Department."

Now, that poor document security is as a direct result of the kind of conditions that the police have to work under in Central, not the new place, because they had no space. They were not given enough filing cabinets and you go in there to do disciplinary matters and you are butting about between files and cabinets and things all over the place. That is not good enough for a department that...

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No. I have not been in there for years. The exhibit room they tell me is in a state. The thing needs to be properly organised and Government has to release some funds to do this.

I am not going to get into the argument as to what is the optimum number of policemen for the Force. Last year the Commissioner invited the Barbados Labour Party, the parliamentary Opposition, to meet with him .and senior members of the Force to discuss the problems of the Force, his plans for the future development of the Force and the problems that were bedevilling the Force.

I want to say publicly for the avoidance of doubt that we came to a happy accommodation and an understanding of the problems. Whereas prior to that meeting it was the view of this Party that the claims and the demands for increased personnel were perhaps more emotional than rational, after that meeting we accepted that the pressures put on the Police Force necessitated an increase in numbers and we are pleased to support more men and women for the Force, assuming that there will be proper deployment.

As the Honourable Member for St. James South indicated in his contribution this morning, there is

great strain put on the Force because of the development of the cruise ship business and the number of people coming through on a weekly basis. There are about 7 000 additional people in Barbados during that time and there was a need for an increase in personnel and we have supported that and he has got more men.

The problem of response is a public complaint. The response time by the Force is always under scrutiny. That is occasioned by an inadequacy of personnel at times and unavailability, certainly of vehicles and equipment. But there you have a problem. The Force may have 200 or 300 vehicles. I am not sure of the precise number but the life of police vehicles cannot be- very long because of the very nature of the work that they have to do. We understand that from time to time there has to be some re-capitalisation in that area. What I would like to hear from the Attorney General is to what extent the police have been able within the past year to better man the police stations and provide enough equipment to be able to make ready and rapid responses to public calls.

Members will remember that about 2 to 3 years ago I raised in here the situation at times at night in Barbados there were only 84 policemen throughout the whole of Barbados to police Barbados. That could not have been denied- because it was on documentation straight from inside the Force. That situation I believe has improved. I am not going to ask the Attorney General now to disclose the figure of coverage because again these are matters of sensitive security and you would not want the criminal to become too aware. But I am asking, if he is in a position to tell us, for example whereas District C sometime year before last never had vehicles at night, before they moved down to Holders Hill, whether the situation has improved now and whether all stations are able to have vehicles.

Finally, Sir, in relation to the management of the Force now, this is an area where Government and the Force and the relevant union have to get together. I have said in here several times that I feel that the Government, the Police Association and the Management of the Force should consult more to understand at an informal level what is happening. But there will be a time in the foreseeable future when several of the senior managers in the Force will retire and we have to look at the training and the upgrading of other persons in the Force.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the Honourable Member likely to complete in 3 minutes? The time has expired.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS; Yes, Sir. I am concerned, Sir, that a number of persons in the Force have been trained in the field of and I am not sure that the best use is being .made of them. In 1986, in the manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party, we had proposed to have legally trained persons prosecuting in the magistrate courts. There is a vast area in the Force where legally trained persons could provide useful services to the Force, not only in research and planning, but also in supervision of statements used for paper committals and so on.

It is the only suggestion I am going to make today, As I said, I am not speaking on any new policy in this debate. But I would make one suggestion today, Sir. I would wish to see consideration given to the treatment of the attorneys-at-law within the Police Force on a basis different from the ordinary policemen of equivalent rank. In other words, I am thinking of a kind of stream where these professionals can put their expertise to particular use, can put their training to use for the benefit not only of the public but also for the improvement of the Force. There will come a time when in the whole Public Service we may have to give consideration to a cadet scheme where persons with qualifications...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But in terms of the Police Force I submit that there is a role for these persons to play otherwise. What you will find is that over time after they have served the period of the Bar, having had their professional training, they are going to withdraw from the Force and go into private practice or move out of the Force and you will lose them. I think we have to think of planning for a better professionalisation of the Force in every area, not only in strict policing but in areas where services are adjunct to the police function.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, before the Minister replies, I would like to draw the Minister's attention again to the large number of derelict vehicles in the court yard of District A. It is a fact also that at police stations around Barbados there are animals that have to be fed by the taxpayers because of the antiquated provision of the Police Act. There is nothing at all to prevent the Government by a simple amendment to the Police Act to permit a video of any item at all that is being kept for the purpose of being used as an exhibit. It is a waste of time.

I know people whose clothes are still in police custody allegedly — I don't believe that you will be able to find them. They are probably eaten up now by insects, human or otherwise — that have been found on people who have broken and entered. Three to four years have passed. I know somebody who worked there for 3 years and left Barbados and the other day he wrote and asked me whether I thought he could write the Commissioner of Police to ask for a return of his clothes. This is a scandal. This is what brings all of us into disrepute. Why are we so blind, indifferent to the developments that are taking place in every part - of the world? In every other part of the

world now they use a video to keep these exhibits. We have cows up there, one giving calf and all that kind of thing going along and a big policeman walking about saying it is his pet. The Government has to feed it. We are really ridiculous. It is a real ridiculous waste of manpower. It is indicative of the lack...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Well, you know the Auditor General says that no account is kept. Sir, we really must approach the management of the Police Force with a little bit more sophistication. The vehicles in the courtyard are all rusted out. Motorcycles, bicycles, cars, mini-mokes, all of these things there. It is really terrible. Why don't we do something about it? ' We are in a position to do something about it. I am not going to talk about the marshal in here. When we come to the next Head we will deal with the marshal because when I am finished with that, all of us will have to decide in our minds whether the position in Barbados dealing with discipline of officers is workable or not.

I have. personal experience of a lawyer trying to get a marshal at 3.30 in the afternoon and ringing there and a marshal telling us that, "You can't get anything. Skipper, up here the liquor is flowing all around." I know that. I can speak and testify to that because the person who made the call could not believe and he put me to the phone and I heard the man saying, "You know it is 3.30 Friday evening and you know what is happening up here." Now we would know about that.
12.45 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, some comment has to be made about the fact that the Development Plan does not contain any indication of money to be spent in the years immediately before the change of the century. I suppose one ought to recognise that the statements *in* a Development *Plan* are indicative statements. They just indicate in a general way the monies which are to be spent but they depend, in a large measure, on the state of the economy from time to time. If the economic situation improves so rapidly there is nothing to prevent allocation of sums of money for development purposes in areas where they may not necessarily be allocations in the Development Plan, but what is there is a broad indicator as to the direction in which the Government proposes to go.

The money indicated in the Development Plan then is not the only money being spent on Dodds. In fact, it has been drawn to my attention that a sum of $750 000 is provided under the Ministry's main maintenance vote and some of this is very likely to be spent on the improvement of Dodds in the course of this year.

Now, in relation to the Police, and the Prisons as well, the absence of capital provision does not necessarily mean that no money is going to be spent in any particular year. In fact, substantial sums are spent under the Ministry's maintenance vote from time to time. In this year's Estimates the sum of $750 000 is provided which will be spent on departments. This is part of the money to be spent on departments under the Ministry's control. One has to recognise, of course, that in relation to monies being spent on the Prison, a lot of the work in that area, I believe, is done by the prisoners, and the money for labour tends to go quite a long way in that regard.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas has made some comments on the state of the accounting in the Police Department and he has referred to the Report of the Auditor General and the comments of the Auditor General on that. I suppose one does admit that the quality of the accounts does leave a lot to be desired and is a matter of concern. The Ministry of Home Affairs, which is the Ministry responsible for the Police, has been looking into the matter, is in discussion with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry responsible for the Civil Service with a view to ensuring that appropriate supervisory staff is provided for and is put in position to assist in the proper management of the Police accounts.

Attention is also being given, of course, to having an appropriate accounts manual of procedures provided as a guide for the Accounts staff in the Police Department. So that the issue of the inadequacy of the accounting in the Police Department is one which the Ministry is looking at and attempts are being made to provide the appropriate resolution to that problem.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The question that Head 28, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the sitting be suspended until 2.00 p.m.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Committee of Supply is resumed.

HEAD 29 — DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS — $72 121

Head 29 — Director of Public Prosecutions — $72 121 was called.

Hon. M. A. KING: I beg to move, Sir, that Head 29 stand part.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I beg to second that, Sir, and reserve my right to speak.

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

HEAD 30 — ATTORNEY-GENERAL — $4 249 281 — (as amended).

Hon. M. A. KING: I beg to move that Head 30, as amended, stand part, Mr. Chairman.

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

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

HEAD 34 — MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE - $124 782 000

HEAD 34 — Ministry of Education and Culture — $124 782 000 — was called.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move that Head 34 stand part.

Hon. M. A. KING: 1 beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, there are a number of observations I would want to make in relation to Head 34, Ministry of Education and' Culture.

I, was looking recently at the Government Development Plan, 1993-2000 and it is very instructive as to what has been achieved and what has not been achieved in education within the last few years. I would want, first of all, Sir, to start from the position that all Governments in Barbados in the last...I am saying, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would start with the position that has been adopted by Governments in the last 30 or 40 years in this country and the relation of education to development...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. George South is permitted to address the Chamber.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I would try not to be distracted any more, Sir. The Estimates of Expenditure as we see are laid in Parliament suggest that nothing has changed in relation to the educational planning in this country. The Estimates represent nothing but a maintenance of the status quo.

We would have thought that at a time when all the signs point to education as being a vital and important part of national reconstruction that the Estimates of Expenditure would have showed a new slant in the priorities of this Ministry. We are at a period when it is generally accepted that the future of Barbados will rely, to a very large extent on the development of knowledge based industries, when we expect education to be in the forefront of change. In other words, Mr. Chairman, Sir, education should be acting as a catalyst and it should be a change agent rather than following patterns that develop. Things are happening at a very rapid rate in terms of development in every aspect of our national and human life and education has an important role in meeting that challenge.

What we were saying by the introduction or non introduction of this particular Head by the substantive Minister of Education is that the Government is not paying the kind of importance to education as it should be.

We have listened over the last few months at what is being touted as educational reform. The Ministry of Education has put as the paramount instrument for reform 'what is classified as partial zoning, that is, it relates to the transfer of children from primary school to secondary school. This is all that I have heard in the last year in relation to educational reform.

There is something called the National Council on Curriculum Development. That Council has been inactive for at least the last 4 years. I am submitting that the development of new curricula in the school system is vital to meet the needs of the changing society in which we are living. I want ...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Stop heckling me.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just let me remind Honourable Members that a Member given permission to speak should be heard in silence.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Sir, let them keep giving trouble. I will get on to him in a moment. I wanted the former Minister of Education, the Honourable Member for St. James South because much of my notes point to the conflict between what the former Minister.of Education has articulated, as policy, in the Ministry and what other people such as the Right Honourable Prime Minister have been articulating as policy. I want to deal with those differences. But I will make a subsequent number of interventions in this debate and I do not want to deal with that at this stage.

I was making the point, Sir, of the relevance of education to development. I was making the point that at a period when it was necessary, in view of international competitiveness in many areas of our national life, that the Government would have been concerned about the development also of the curriculum development in the schools which must bear a relevance to what is happening now.

There is a Report just issued the National Advisory Commission on Education which has criticised, in large measure, the idleness or the inactivity of the Government in facing head-on a number of the needs that the education system requires. We have to ask the questions as NACE, as they call it: What are we educating for? What are we teaching? How are we teaching and to what end? These are the questions fundamentally that are raised by the Commission.

I would want to deal with them under a number of areas. I am going to deal first of all, Sir, with teacher education and training. I am going to deal with the physical and other resources in the educational system.

Aside.

Mr. -L. R. TULL: I am going to deal also *with...*

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, can I be protected from...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order, please. Let the Honourable Member proceed. 2.10 p.m.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in relation to what they are teaching the question arises over and over again that all the people who, are looking closely at the educational system whether the type of things they are teaching in schools in Barbados are the things that are required for development and it comes from the stage of the primary right through to secondary to the tertiary level.

We * have a situation, Sir, where we talk about teaching where we have, according to conservative estimates, 25% of all the children who go through the primary system at the end of it cannot read and write. But what we are having in the primary system is a lot of attention being paid to the children at the higher level of academic ability to meet the demands of the Common Entrance Examination. In other words in the primary school system the teacher resources are put in large measure to prepare the primary children for transfer into secondary schools. The result, Sir, is that a number of the children of lower intelligence levels are ignored in the system with the result that we are having as much as 25% of the children who leave primary schools going to secondary *schools who* are incapable of making themselves properly understood to write it and who have extreme difficulty in 'understanding basic written texts.

Also, Mr. Speaker, Sir, as you move into *the* secondary system we have a structure of education delivery that is suited also for the children who are brighter to the neglect of those who are not so bright and the system continues in its present form despite a lot of effort made by those who are thinking about it for reform and this is where the question of zoning comes in, Sir.

At the moment the system is one that allows the children of higher academic achievement to go to a number of choice secondary schools and schools like the St. George Secondary School and West St. Joseph School and St. Lucy Secondary School, to give but three examples, are given children to work with, if I may put it in those terms, that are hardly able to do more than write their names and recognise the alphabet in large numbers. But what we have in the secondary school system, Sir, is a continuation of a general literary education that has been the traditional education in secondary schools from time immemorial in Barbados. It creates a lot of problems because the children in the schools of lower achievement can gain nothing from that kind of education. They are not equipped to do it and all the problems we are seeing emanating out of the school system, like truancy and indiscipline are aided by things like boredom, Sir, are standard *in* at least 40% of secondary schools in Barbados.

Now this is a question that has been raised on a number of occasions and the Government finds itself incapable of making any hard decisions in this area. In recent times we have heard the Government talk about the introduction of a partial zonal system. That means, as I understand it from what I have read in the newspaper,

Sir, that the four sixth form secondary schools will continue to be available to parents for free choices and the remaining 18 or 16 secondary schools are put into a zonal system where 4 or 5 of those schools are allocated at various parts of the island.

When that was given the support of many agents in the educational sector including the Barbados Secondary Teachers Union, the Barbados Union of Teachers, the Association of Principals of Secondary Schools, something that calls itself the educational forum and the National Parent Teachers Association. When all of these have given their support to this partial zoning proposal put up by Government the Government has unceremoniously dumped the proposal by saying it is still under active consideration and that the people in the Ministry are still looking at it. So this is another area in which the Government has flattered to deceive.

The new Minister of Education, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, who has started off initially by showing that he has very little grasp of these affairs, makes one pronouncement so far on educational policy and that relates to the travel on mini buses and ZR vans and in so doing has criticised the Minister who is sitting next to him, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East who is responsible for that policy. But getting back to that matter, Sir, the Government must make a decision as to how they will regulate the transfer of students from the primary to secondary system, and must, Mr. Chairman, in my submission also deal with the question of what is taught in schools.

There used to be, Sir, something called composite schools and senior schools where the children who, at the age of 11 who were proved to be not ready yet to go into secondary schools will remain in those senior schools and composite schools to benefit from remedial education. The Government has taken the extremely strange decision of shutting down the composite schools and the senior schools and are shuttling these children who can hardly read or write into a secondary system.

Now, Mr. Chairman, these are some of the questions that we need to have addressed. The question of non teaching staff in the school, the non teaching specialists, the psychologist and the people who are dealing with the special education needs, the guidance counsellors and the rest of them, the ratio of them to the teaching staff is an appallingly low one because we have in the system a number of problems both at the primary/secondary level that must be addressed by professionals who are not teachers.

Now, for a long time these recommendations have been made. I see they are repeated again by the Commission on Education and they have also been recommended in a plethora of reports over the last 20 years or so but none of these things have been met and I am referring only to what appears in the New Development Plan. They have admitted, Sir, that they have not gone anywhere towards meeting those special needs for children who have real problems — psychological and other problems both in the primary and secondary level.

When you look at the Estimates, Sir, you would have expected to see a healthy increase at this time of expenditure for special education and equally you were expecting to find a healthy increase in the vote in the primary and secondary level for the specific purpose of dealing with these problems relating to the slower children in the schools and those with special problems. What do we find, Sir? A cut in the vote in relation to the areas where the demand for that service is greatest.

We have, Mr. Chairman, Sir, also the additional problem where `the Erdiston College ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Obviously the Honourable Member is having difficulty ...

Mr. L. R. TULL: We have the additional problem where Erdiston College that was to have provided the training for more teachers in sp'ecial education has suffered a major cut in the resources made available for that institution, so you have problems with children in areas like dyslexia and you do not have people for at least one for the primary schools to deal with that particular problem. All the indications, from the reports from the school psychologist who is attached to the Ministry of Education and from the reports of the children from the Learning Centre where a few of the children's problems are referred from time to time to those who manage that institution, are that these are problems that can easily be corrected if the Government will make the resources available to the educational system at an early stage. Erdiston College, as I said, was providing a lot of training for teachers in these special areas. What has happened is that all of the teachers in the primary and secondary schools have been trained already. They have gone to the stage where they have trained all the backlog of teachers in the primary and secondary schools.
2.20 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will give the Honourable Member three minutes more.

Mr. L. R. TULL: It was expected, Sir, that now that Erdiston has fulfilled the role of training all of the primary and secondary school teachers in general teacher methods that it would have been bending its attention towards training in-specialist areas. It is at this point that

the Government chooses to cut back on the resources made available to the Erdiston College for that purpose.

In the last few minutes before I make the second intervention, Sir, in relation to the physical resources in the primary schools, we saw recently the interesting case of parents at the Ebenezer Primary School in St. Philip bringing people's power to bear on Government decision making in relation to the physical facilities at Ebenezer. I saw on television only two nights ago that the Ebenezer School has had an entirely new set-up because of that pressure. I want to deal in my next intervention about this whole problem of the physical plant of primary schools in Barbados in relation to the Buildings Department of the Ministry of Education and the scandalous circumstances that obtain at the Ministry in relation to that Department.

I am going to give up at this stage, Sir, and I am going to come back after two sentences in relation to that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Education caught my eye.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. George South started out by speaking about something called a Government Hotel Plan. Did you not? I wrote down what the Honourable Member said. I believe that the Honourable Member started to talk about the hotel industry and training people in the hotel industry and spoke specifically about the lack of training through the Community College.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misrepresenting what I said. I made no reference of any hotel plan. I made no reference to any hospitality industry. I made no reference to the training of people at the Community College. I have not mentioned the words Community College.

Aside. .

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: I merely gave way to let the Honourable Member make a point. I was under the impression, Mr. Chairman, that the Honourable Member said that the Government was doing nothing in respect to training people to work in the hospitality industry which is an important industry.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would suspect that we should not make an issue of that. He has denied starting that way, so let us move on.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Clearly, the Honourable Member never understood what he was saying himself.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I made no reference at any point that had anything to do with any hospitality school or hotel school. The Honourable Member was making so much noise and misbehaving himself that he could not hear what I was saying.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. Can I implore Honourable Members to recognize that we are in a serious debate and that we must conduct it at the highest level?

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, I believe that the Honourable Member will come back to the hospitality institute at another time. I will not at this time, and anybody else can if they want to, speak towards a policy of zoning.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: All right, I am really trying very, very desperately to bring some sense of balance to this debate.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: The Honourable Member also spoke about the Government's lack of teacher training in respect of specialist areas for students who are in trouble or having educational problems. We cannot agree on that. Last year some 20 teachers were trained overseas alone in the following areas: Early Childhood Education, Special Education Needs, Counselling and Psychology, Reading Education for Dyslexia, Geography, Agriculture and the Creative Arts. That is an ongoing programme. I opened a workshop on Monday for not only Barbados but the Caribbean in which there is an ongoing programme now started in the primary schools for remedial work. It was already done in the secondary schools over the last 2 or 3 years with UNESCO, OAS and the Ministry of Education and Culture; So extensive work has been done in the area of remedial work for primary and secondary school children.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me advise the Honourable Member to address the Chair and do not pay any attention to the asides.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, only this week I opened a workshop to deal with remedial works for teachers in that area. I am saying that from overseas leave alone in excess of 20 teachers were trained to look at the same problems that the Honourable Member was talking about.

He also spoke about the Government closing out composite schools and incorporating the children in the normal secondary schools and at the same time he wants to see a separate vote for the remedial work. Obviously, Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member would have to focus

on the overall vote for the secondary schools to incorporate that remedial work which is being done for the benefit of the children. I am saying that there are ongoing programmes in the Ministry of Education and Culture to remedy these defects and to remedy these problems. Even though it is a problem, I do not see that as an issue worth labouring.

The question of transportation of children to and from schools, that obviously will present problems. We are fully aware. of the difficulties of the Transport Board. We also are fully aware of the fact that the minibuses and ZR vans are now incorporated with the transport system of Barbados. But I have no doubt that over time, through discussions with the Minister of Transport and Works we will be able to work out a mechanism in which the majority of children travelling to and from school will be encouraged in the strongest possible terms to take the public transport by way of the Transport Board buses. But it is a very difficult matter.
2.30 p.m.

I believe that the day we get up and, say, make it compulsory that children must travel on Transport Board buses we are going to get into areas of their constitutional rights and a lot of other problems. I agree that it is a matter that has to be dealt with and I give the Committee the assurance that it will be dealt with in the shortest possible time. I have already started discussions with my honourable friend in that regard, so the Honourable Member is not to delude himself that nothing is happening. Things are happening.

The physical conditions at the primary schools. I will be the first to admit, Mr. Chairman, that a lot of primary schools in Barbados had terrible conditions. From the time I was at school they had terrible conditions. A lot of work has been going on over the last three to four years in this regard and there is a continuing programme of repairs. In fact, Sir, right now we are looking at a new approach to it. I do not know what the Honourable Member is going to say about the Buildings Section. When he says it I will respond when that comes up.

The question about Ebenezer. I grew up not far from Ebenezer and I know of the conditions at Ebenezer, and there were bad conditions like there are bad conditions at other primary schools. I have also asked recently that the schools be prioritised in terms of how quickly we will get to repair them, and that will be done. There is a continuing programme in the Ministry for the repairs, and the repairs will be done based on the availability of funds. What is happening now is that MTW is in fact doing the work on the schools through an arrangement with the Ministry of Education and Culture and they are doing a very good job. We have no difficulty or problem with that arrangement to date. The Ministry will however be exploring other ways of speeding up the work, because it is not just a question of doing the work, it is a question of assessing the work to be done, valuing the work to be done, reporting to the Ministry, having competent people to do it and having competent checks and balances to make sure that what we pay for is actually done. So far I have no complaint on the type of work which has been going on with the personnel from MTW in terms of school repairs. All of the schools cannot be repaired at the same time, but there is a continuing programme of repairs and the schools will be repaired. Again, I give the Committee that assurance.

I note, Sir, that the Honourable Member for St. George South never spoke about the good work that was done by his neighbour, the Honourable Member for St. George North, in terms of the building of the new schools, or for the work done by my predecessor, the Honourable Member for St. James South, in terms of the number of new schools which were built. He never mentioned that, so there is no credit given for anything. Nor did he mention, Mr. Chairman, the fact that only last week in this House we passed a Resolution to acquire land in St. Lucy to build another primary school, and construction is about to be started on another in St. Philip.

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

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: The new Beulah Primary School in St. Philip and the St. Clement's Primary in St. Lucy. Then there are two others to start in January, 1995. Construction of the school in St. Christopher is to commence in January of 1995.

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: I do not care what they are from. The fact is that the new schools are replacing old schools, and that, I understand, is a cause for concern. He is concerned that the schools are old, dilapidated and being a health threat to children. I agree that some of them are like that and new ones are being built. I have to give credit where it is due, to the last two Honourable Members I spoke about. I will reply in the fullness of time to other matters.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, just let me set the record straight with the World Bank school building project. What is happening in St. Lucy, what is to happen at St. Christopher, that goes back to my time. That is seven years ago. The Honourable Member for St. George South negotiated the First World Bank Project and I negotiated the Second, and they are still working in the Second. But that is not what I have risen to speak on.

I have risen, Mr. Chairman, because it seems to me that we now have in the Ministry of Education its St. Joseph Hospital counterpart in the form of the new headquarters building for the Ministry of Education which is being constructed on the old Queen's College site at Constitution Road. That building is in a state of disrepair, it is in a very unsightly and unsanitary condition, it is the most untidy sight in Barbados, it is a building which has had two roofs put on it. They put on one roof and then put another roof on top of that, and this is another St. Joseph Hospital where it goes on and on. It is like a bottomless pit and every year we are voting money.

Mr. Chairman, in 1991-92 for the Ministry of Education Headquarters actual expenditure for structures was $4 million, professional services, just over a quarter of a million dollars, $252 000. In 1992-93 on structures we spent $1.494 million and professional services, almost $25 000, $24 748. In 1993-94 $1.7 million on structures, $25 000 on professional services. In these Estimates we see estimated for 1994-95 $825 343 and for professional services $33 913.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The Honourable Member started her contribution by saying that this is just like the St. Joseph Hospital and it is a scandal. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. As far as I know, the matter with the St. Joseph Hospital led to a no-confidence motion being brought in a Member. No such thing happened here and I am asking the Honourable Member to withdraw all those remarks. There is no similarity and I am saying that the Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Ministry of Education and Culture stands away from all of that, Mr. Chairman, and I am asking the Honourable Member to withdraw those remarks.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I understand what the Honourable Member is saying.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: On a point of order. I would like to know the references made by the Member for the City, if she is referring to page 89, Subprogram 03, New Ministry Headquarters, because the figure of $1 million spent ....

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: No, I am just asking if you

–

are referring to them?

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Thank you. I will come back.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I am in the process of pointing out the similarity between the St. Joseph Hospital project and the new Ministry of Education Headquarters.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What I would honestly suggest is that the St. Joseph Hospital as an entity has nothing to do with the Head of Education, and to try to relate some similarity is not going to get us on with the debate. Let us deal with the Education Head.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am pointing out that they are similar in that they are bottomless pits into which we continue to pour money.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Do not let us dwell on it.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. Since I had the responsibility during that time period, and if the Honourable Member would be fair to what she reads on page 89, she would see that actual expenditure was zero. I happen to know that no money was spent during the last year.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I am reading from the Government's Estimates of Expenditure for 1993-94. I gave all of the years. I did not draw this figure out of my head.

2.40 p.m.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is not my fault if members on the other side do not know how to read their own Estimates. This year the Ministry of Education appears as Ministry of Education and Culture. I only read one set of figures from page 89. Mr. Chairman, I read 4 sets of figures. I have read from 91-92, 92-93, 93-94, 94-95 and they will not be disputed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are in Committee of Supply and each Honourable Member has the facility to speak at a given time.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the fact is that it cannot be denied that these large sums of money have been spent on the Ministry of Education Headquarters which is still in a great state of unfinishedness today.

Now, I would invite the attention of the House to page 260. I wish the Minister of Education would pay attention. Page 260 of the Development Plan, Table 23, Ministry of Education, Item 2, New Headquarters Building, you will see the planned expenditure for the fiscal year 1993-94 – no figure; planned expenditure for 1994-95 – no figure; for 1995-1996 – no figure; for 1996-97 – no figure; from 1997-1998 – no figure. Then we see a figure of $4 million for 1998-99.

Now, the explanatory notes in this year's Estimates say that the functions of the relevant subprogram are to

> "meet the costs of on-going site security and other expenses and to pay outstanding fees to Consultants..."

So that is what Professional Services mean.

> "... for the construction of a new Ministry of Education Headquarters Building at the old Queen's College site.'"

Mr. Chairman, the Minister has to explain to Barbadians how from 1991-92, $4 million was spent; 1992-93 – $1.5 million; 1993-94 – $1.7 million and this year estimated $875 000 on a new Headquarters Building for the Ministry of Education which still does not have windows, doors and cannot be inhabited by anybody and they are coming this year for nearly $1 million again just for site security.

building are alike. Years and years we are paying money for on site security.

No, the outstanding fees are for professional services, boy. $33,913 – I beg your pardon. The Honourable Member...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, it really is not parliamentary for any Honourable Member to refer even in the heat of argument to any other Member as "boy". The matter should not only be withdrawn. It should not form any part of the records.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a moment.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I apologise to the Honourable Member.

the Honourable Minister to do is to explain to us on this side

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Okay, because if you are addressing the Chair then I will have to take objections to those remarks. So I don't want any asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: You cannot take any objections. I withdrew it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am only saying to the Honourable Member that I am not accepting any comparison between St. Joseph Hospital and the new educational bloc.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member for the City please hold on a minute._ I am not entertaining

Now, Mr. Chairman, the point I am making is this. The similarity between the new Ministry of Education Headquarters and the St. Joseph Hospital is that year after year money is being put in and yet we cannot see the new Headquarters. I am now dismayed when I look at the Development Plan to see that it is not planned to do anything to these Headquarters until 1998-99, which means that for every financial year between now and then we are going to be expected to continue to vote money for ongoing site security and other expenses to pay outstanding fees to consultants.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, a point of elucidation. I am sure the Honourable Member is totally aware that no Minister in any particular Ministry, if the funds are not there for the structure, can then spend the money on the structure and the building can be completed. It is known that no structural work went on on the building in the last few years. Everybody in the country knows that. Before you say anything else, the same thing happened at St. Thomas. It is not that any money was being paid for building that did not take place. Let us deal with it as it is.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would more consider that as a point of order rather than a point of elucidation.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, that is the point I am making. The new Ministry of Education Headquarters distinguished itself in the company of the St. Joseph Hospital to be a Government project into which every year this Parliament is asked to vote a large sum of money to take care of security. These 2 capital projects are distinguished by how much money we pay for nothing to happen year after year. The St. Joseph Hospital and the new Ministry of Education

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me just say to the Honourable Member that I do not wish the St. Joseph Hospital to form any substantive part of this particular Head.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am making a comparison analysis between the two.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Well, please, having done so, do not go down that road again.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Well, I have to because I have difficulty with the other side understanding. What I am asking and the rest of Barbados, exactly what is the position going to be with that building. $800 000.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: On a point of order. The Honourable Member again is trying to mislead the Honourable . House. An unfinished building cannot be compared with a building which is finished and in operation with...

any comparison between the St. Joseph Hospital and the new Education bloc. It just cannot happen under this Head.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is the one who mentioned the St. Joseph Hospital.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have stated that I do not want to hear anything more abc ut that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr.Chairman, Sir, the lower playing field at the old Queen's College building has long now been given over to part of a minibus stand at River Road. Now, I want the Minister to explain to us on this side and to all of us in Barbados exactly how long, because I see that according to the Development Plan in the year 1999 – 2000 they are planning to spend another $3.5 million on this new headquarters building. By that time it will be an old headquarters building. I want the Minister to tell us what is the overall projected cost of the new Ministry of Education Headquarters, how long it is going to take before we will have finished building it and in what year of our Lord – not in this century, obviously in the 21st century – is it proposed that the Ministry of Education will take up residence there.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I also want an explanation as to why on site security will cost in the region of $1 million. I want to know why on site 'security is costing this kind of money. A large chunk of that property has been given over to the minibus stand. Why is it costing so much money? Why every year are we continuing to have to vote money for professional services for necessities even when no works are going on?

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is only one presiding officer in the committee.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I want to look at the subprogram 02: Primary and Composite Schools, Subprogram Statement:

> "The functions of this subprogram are to meet all operating expenses for Primary and Composite Education.
>
> Also includes provision for the maintenance of . buildings, furniture and equipment, termite treatment to buildings, the upkeep of grounds."

Mr. Chairman, I made a statement in here earlier today, and I was interrupted by a Member from the other side who contradicted me. I was a little embarrassed. I could not believe my ears. But you know I have a way of checking out things. When I said that no repairs were done, that there were some windows missing from the Wilkie Cumberbatch School the Honourable Member for St. James South got up and said that that was not so..I am going to repeat it here and now again and defy anybody in here to contradict me on that. I have been to the school. I left here and went to check it out. Don't take chances with me, you see. I went and checked and no work was done to the Wilkie Cumberbatch School. The work was done to the Pine Primary, not Wilkie Cumberbatch. So the ex-Minister does not seem to know what went on.

I am going to draw this to the attention of the new Minister of Education and I am going to make some demands on him. He will be driving in a very uncomfortable seat from here on. I am going to invite him to carry out a termite treatment at Wilkie Cumberbatch School. Two to three inches thick of termites, three feet long, exist in the staff room of Wilkie Cumberbatch School up to the last 20 minutes. I am inviting the Minister of Education — I wouldn't spray them because they have some mosquitoes over there too.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: On a point of order, I said at that time the windows had been completed and I have been still informed that the windows have been completed. I didn't speak about termites. I spoke about windows and I have just been informed again unless the windows have been broken since then.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I am going to refute that. I am going to tell the Member for St. James South it is not true. All the windows to the western side of Wilkie Cumberbatch School, are louvre windows. I went there. I walked through the school. Nothing was done at all. Nothing was done there, absolutely nothing was done. They were not broken. They were there when I left. I thought that because I was absent from the country for a couple of days that some work was done so therefore I had to go and check to see if something was done behind my back or during the last couple of days. It is a fact. No windows were replaced. What the Honourable Member should have said is that he invited quotations for windows but there has not been any replacement of the louvre windows, none at all.
2.55 p.m.

I will tell you what is even worse. I am going to tell you what is the situation ' there and I demand this Government to rectify it. You have to do it. I am not begging anybody now. What has happened is that the doors from the toilets of the children — it is a mixed school — have been taken off and young girls and boys have to go into the toilets, exposed to everybody. There are no doors at all on the toilets. As you go up the steps at Wilkie Cumberbatch School you find no doors. They are

exposed and the boys and girls sit down on the toilets and you can see them expose their person and you are telling me something? Mr. Chairman, it has to be done. I am not forcing this Government now to do it, it has to be done and I am going to say this now. Do not get up in here and object or criticize what I say. What I say is authentic.

What is even worse, the PTA of that school has gotten together, raised funds and helped repair the school. Some work was done by the PTA. The Ministry of Public Works - went there ' and started some work. They left the cardboard unpainted. The partitions to divide the classes are yet to be put up because most of them have broken down. That is a deplorable situation at Wilkie Cumberbatch School in my constituency, a distinguished school, named after a distinguished educator.

I am saying this. I do not want anyone to say in here because I know when people get up in here they say, well someone is saying an untruth or trying to impute something that is not true to my statements. I say I stand on my integrity and word on these things in here. I want to make this abundantly clear. What I am saying is that I Want the Ministry to address this problem immediately. Put on doors.

What is worse. You think that we should be seeing a situation where little children are drinking water from face basins in a toilet that is exposed? It is used for drinking water in the toilets which are exposed. You are telling me that is hygienic?

What is even worse — I am going to read them out for you. In a staff of over 20 you have 9 single chairs for 20 teachers. Nine chairs are in a little staff room, a little 2 x 4 room, for 20 teachers. I am calling on the Minister of Education to put chairs in there for the teachers. They also need a proper library. The library is located in the staff-room. That needs to be improved. I want the young people to have the benefit of proper facilities. I want the Government to understand this.

I read a statement attributed to the Minister of Public Works that shortly bus fares would go up, that it would go to Cabinet.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I have said that is the impression given. There is a possibility.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Even though he is not in his seat...

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

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: The Minister responsible for Public Works never said bus fares would go up. He never said that.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, parents have called me and told me that they fear that bus fares will be increased. I am going to say to the Minister, "You had better listen to some reason. Education without reason is nothing. You cannot lack the ability to reason." This Minister of Education must understand what an increase in bps fares mean to school children. It relates to them. Children travel from St. Lucy to Bridgetown to get their education.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: It is relevant. Do not tell me it is irrelevant. What I am saying is that some children in my constituency — I do not know about other constituencies --; can hardly afford to pay the money for school meals.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is why precisely I am trying to say too that it is not relevant because you cannot state whether there will be an increase or not and it does not come under the Head of Education any case.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, all due respect to you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You may have your concerns.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: A statement has been attributed to the Minister. He has not denied it, that shortly Cabinet will be called upon to examine the proposal to increase bus fares. I want the Minister to deny that. He must explain it. But I am saying that people out there are alarmed. That is what they are saying. '

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would only caution the Honourable Member to deal with the provision of this $124 million under the Head of Education. Do not let us speculate. .

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, with all due respect to you. I am not a speculator. I am telling you what I know. I am saying to you that if Government is contemplating any increase in bus fares, it should change its mind. I am calling on you, as I have called on you not to increase house rents, to do likewise now. Take heed of my warning to you. Any increase in bus fares must impact on the economic situation of parents and I am worried about that. It is all right for Honourable Members on that side to talk..I want them to understand the seriousness of it.

I have gotten that impression because parents have raised it with me. I am saying that if parents cannot now afford to pay for the school meals and some of them have kept their children at home because of their inability to get the money to pay for the school meals weekly, then I am saying that Government should never consider any proposal that is put forward by the Transport Study. All I am saying is that I hope the Government does not implement that so that it would impact adversely on the parents and the children. I am saying that.

In these harsh times you have to look and see how any measures such as these will impact on the children and the parents and I .am calling on the new Minister to understand that. So do not dismiss a call when I say "Watch it" because there are some statements which may be used and taken out of context. But whether they are taken out of context the Government has a duty to clarify them and leave little or no doubt in the minds of John Public. I want an unequivocal statement from the Government on this. They must understand the question of Protocol will be. one that I will advance. No increases because that will be part of the Protocol. I am saying that to the Government. I am not going to let you come in here and think that you can put me off my point. You cannot do that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member will conclude in one minute.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I am hearing the Minister of Education. I will tell you that it is better to have me on your side than be off your side. I want you to understand that. I am not easy. The Honourable Minister of Education can talk to anybody in here but when it comes to this Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, you have a hard nut to crack. He is like granite. I do not buckle easily.
3.05 p.m.

When you think I am sleeping I am only waiting and thinking to come back for you.

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, what I have said...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: I am saying that I have a duty to put a case and I am hoping that the Minister understands, quite clearly, what I am getting at. Do not pay lip service.

The children at Wilkie Cumberbatch School are operating in very poor, deplorable conditions. I am asking the Minister to respond almost immediately,

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: And if that is done, Mr. Chairman, I would be satisfied.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I want, Mr. Chairman, to make some reference to the maintenance of...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I wish to remind Members of Standing Order 33(6) and it reads thus:

> "A Member while present in the House during a debate must maintain silence, except when called to speak by the Chair."

There is obviously some concern for the interruptions that we are getting. I do not want to speak about it again.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I notice that in the Estimates there is a provision under primary and composite schools $700 000 for structures and under the Explanatory Notes it says that the provision is required to meet the cost of maintenance of buildings, furniture and insurance. Also major renovations and repairs to schools and it includes also the upgrading of the Ellerton Special Unit and the Charles F. Broomes Special Unit. I understand, Mr. Chairman, that there are 116 primary schools in Barbados, give or take 1 or 2 because of the new school building programme and the...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I understand that they are less than 100. But something in that region.

The figure of $700 000 represents a figure of about $6 000 to $7 000 for each primary school for maintenance during the coming academic year. There is no doubt at all that a lot of the physical plant of primary schools in Barbados is below standard. I said in an earlier intervention that the Ebenezer High School was one that highlighted for Barbadians the state of a number of primary schools in Barbados.

I can rattle off at least 2 dozen that are in an extremely poor state of repair. The figure of $700 000 is merely scratching the surface. It is in this context also that I would like to make a few observations for the building section in the Ministry of Education.

The word out of Jemmott's Lane is that the building section of the Ministry has been sidelined in recent

months. I understand further that the Cabinet took a decision to disband the building section. Since then the Ministry has been making other arrangements for the maintenance of school buildings, school plant generally and that, in the meantime, the personnel of the building section remained in place. In other words they are being paid for doing nothing. This is particularly disgraceful in view of the fact that the Ministry of Education is under-financed at this period but money is being wasted in the building section.

I would like the Government to tell us, the Minister of Education who knows so much in 2 weeks, the junior Minister of Education who knows so much in 2 weeks, I would like the Honourable Member for Christ Church East to make a clear and definitive statement about the status of the building section in the Ministry of Education. Because if he does not, I will . be prompted to make my own recommendations to the Leader of the Public Accounts Committee to carry out investigation into the building section so that Barbadians can feel that money is not being wasted in the Ministry of Education in the way in which they are hearing it in the highways and byways of this country.

The Minister of Education has to understand that you do not trifle with these matters. These are matters of some seriousness and you should pay some attention to them. I know for a fact, since I served as Minister of Education at one point, that inside the building section of the Ministry of Education those who recommended were those who benefitted. Contracts were given. Those who made the recommendations for the expenditure of money for maintenance of school buildings in Barbados were those, in many cases, who were the beneficiaries of the contracts that were granted.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Honourable Member for St. James South knows of what I speak.

It would be useful if the new Minister who is still wet behind the ears would benefit from the experience of those who have been there before him and stop putting his foot in his mouth every time he opens it. I am very serious about this.

I understand that in this building section that a number of contracts given to small contracting companies in Barbados, a number of those contracts when put against the evaluation in the Ministry of Transport and Public Works — because I understand that the Ministry of Transport and Public Works are now carrying out the work of the building section of the Ministry of Education and that the figure of the Quantity Surveyor, or whoever in the Ministry of Transport and Public Works plus the people in the Ministry now who are dealing with it – the figures that they are giving for the cost of a job is a minor fraction of what the Ministry was -paying under the old arrangement.

If the Minister of Education finds comfort in this kind of information, let him just wallow in his own ignorance, But he will be called to account sooner or later about it. I want, Mr. Chairman, Sir, to. do a remarkable thing which is to applaud the Honourable Member for St. James South who, obviously, shows greater wisdom in these things than his successor to have jerk loose this unusual practice...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL:...and make sure that a Ministry that badly needs money for other priorities do not have money going down that particular drain.

I want also, Mr. Chairman, to make reference to this business of the unfinished buildings. Again we have a lot of asides coming across from the uninitiated in areas or major importance in relation to proper public financing and the use of public resources. We have the unfinished Ministry of Education Headquarters at the old Queen's College site building.

As the Honourable Member for St. George North, who was Minister of Education for a number of years, had said earlier there has been no construction on that site since late 1991. I think that is when it was. In the meantime the Government has spent in excess of $8 million on that site with nothing to show for it. A lot of money is being voted in these Estimates as it has in the past for what is called on site security. We have under sub-program 3 this new Ministry Headquarters. The functions of the subprogram are to meet the cost of ongoing site security and other expenses and to pay outstanding fees to consultants for the construction of a new Ministry of Headquarters Building at the old Queen's College site. The figure stated here is $825 343, exclusive of professional fees. This tells me, Mr. Chairman, that the Government is spending over $800 000 to contractors for that building for their inactivity. Not $800 000 for work that they are carrying out but they are paying them over $800 000 for the year for doing nothing on the site over on Constitution Road.

3.15 p.m.

Now these things must cause us a great deal of concern because when I made an early intervention I adverted, Mr. Chairman, to the fact that they were some very pressing needs in education and two of them I singled out were for more training to be done for persons in specialist fields.

Now the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, the new Minister who prefers to rush in before he

knows what is going on, gets up and says, "what am I talking about there are 20 areas of training overseas in the last year" and he mentions a number of them. I think he mentioned even geography as one of them. I do not know what that has to do with specialist education.

If you have 100 primary schools and 20 secondary schools I believe you would have a population roughly now of 24 000 children in the secondary schools. This is in the area where we need a lot of attention for remedial work. In the primary school system we need a lot of effort and resources placed for preventative problems and also remedial work because we cannot find any comfort in this country in the fact that about one out of four children who go to primary school finish up not being able to read and write. And it is no comfort in the fact that a number of children go to school from the age of 5 to 16 and at the end of it cannot read.

It is obvious, Mr. Chairman, to any thinking person that we have to apply more resources to deal with this epidemic of failure. Something is wrong somewhere and the usual class room teachers say it is not a problem that they can deal with because it needs special training to deal with these mental and psychological handicaps that are causing this failure in the system. So $825 000 to pay watchmen and contractors of the building at Constitution Road and also paying almost a similar amount for the St. Thomas one. For the St. Thomas one they are paying under Programme 4 – $190 000.

I do not believe that is right, Sir. They do not have it broken down but I believe, Sir, from last year's Estimates and what is contained that there are hundreds of thousands of dollars that are being paid to keep the St. Thomas project alive and alive does not mean that anything is happening in terms of further construction or preparation of the half finished buildings for school but it means paying watchmen and paying people to prevent others from carrying away the building materials from the site at the St. Thomas school. But we have got to do something about these things. We cannot spend almost $1\frac{1}{2}$ million to look after half finished buildings and to make sure that the weeds do not grow too high in them when there are so many other pressing needs in education.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East who spoke before me raised the question of fees for school children. I do not know to what extent the fees for school children have been raised for travelling on the Transport Board buses but in the last two years there are three other areas where additional imposts or costs to parents have been inflicted. One is in relation to school meals.

The school meals system had become an entirely free system for a number of years and there was a re-imposition of the payment for school meals at a time when it was most difficult to pay. In other words as soon as there were very difficult times, economically, in Barbados and there were a lot of layoffs and joblessness and so on it was at that period the Government inflicted payment for school meals. I also understood, Sir, that they have raised the cost of the textbook loan scheme for students. I have heard that. I do not know whether that is in fact correct and if I am corrected when someone gets up subsequently I accept that. I understand, Sir.

We have also, Mr. Chairman, the lack of adequate textbooks in primary schools and we are having the alarming phenomena of little children being given long book lists to take home for their parents to buy books, sometimes in some schools in excess of $200. Now, it cannot be right when we are having these difficulties with teaching and learning in the Primary schools and the alarming amount of children who are obviously not picking up in their class rooms for whatever reason, that you should now be imposing on the parents of' children in primary schools the high cost of providing books when all the evidence shows, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that a number of them do not ever get the books because their parents cannot afford them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude in one minute.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Are we moving away, Mr. Chairman, Sir, from the concept of education as a free . social service and the responsibility of Government to educate and train its citizens for the development, not only of the citizens themselves but for the development of the country as a whole. It would look so, Sir, because the increasing amount of financial demands being made on parents to pay for what was formerly free in our system can lead us to no other conclusion than that the Government has now decided to move away from the position stated by successive Governments over the last 40 or 50 years, that is, that every child in this country has a basic right to education without direct cost to individual parents.
3.25 p.m.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: First of all, I want to look at this question of maintenance for schools and to state that it is a fact that the Government took a decision to disband the building section of the Ministry of Education because it was inefficient and ineffective. The Ministry of the Civil Service has placed members of that staff into other Ministries because they are artisans and some of them who are there are still being used by the Ministry to effect repairs in the areas in which they can work. We have found in the Ministry of Education that in discussions with the MTW that we can get a programme going which will assist the Ministry of Education in stretching the money

because the Ministry of Communication and Works pays their staff normal wages and the Ministry of Education pays for the material. If we accept the labour which is about 45 per cent of the cost of building and repairs, you can see that any money which the Ministry of Education gets for the repair of buildings can go twice the distance as if we had to go out for tender.

Let me say that one of the major problems facing primary schools with their toilet facilities is that a lot of the primary schools are old church buildings, and we should appreciate the problem. In particular, the Honourable Member for St. George South mentioned Ebenezer. You might recall that about 2 or 3 years ago Ebenezer had a lot of work done to it. But St. Philip has a peculiar problem of termites. When we went back to Ebenezer, it was realised that the termites had attacked again. I must say that the Ministry of Public Works has done a fantastic job and has brought it back to a reasonable standard. It has always been the case in primary schools and secondary schools too that PTAs play a significant role in either upgrading the facility by way of repairs or by putting in hard courts, *et cetera* and there is nothing new under this administration to see the PTAs doing their best. If we have free secondary schools in this country, I think the parents owe a duty to their children to demonstrate to them that they have an interest in their education. If they do it by putting in hard courts or fixing the toilets or by putting in a walkway, they should do it.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, let me say this. In the Ministry of Education along with the unions, the MTW and the PTAs, we have been visiting all the schools in this country. The reason for the Ministry doing that was to sit down with the partners, so to speak, and to determine the order of priority to repair schools. I believe that is the best way of doing it so that everybody will know when their school is to be repaired. Eventually, my understanding is that they would put the school buildings on a list and year by year it will just come up and it would be seen which schools are to be repaired and how much money is to be spent on the particular schools. That is an easy way of doing it and I do not see anything wrong with that. The PTAs and the unions are happy with that arrangement and I believe that it will continue.

The toilets in the older schools, which I call the open system toilets where there is no separation, have been there from time immemorial. So I do not want people to jump up and keep a lot of noise to make one believe that it only started yesterday or 18 years ago. That has been so from the time that I was going to school. We are only trying to make sure that children have their privacy. But we cannot . go to. all of the schools at the same time and make sure that there is privacy at every school. But it is being done in a systematic way and I believe that if it continues that by 1995 all schools will have individual cubicles for their children.

Regarding the question of the text books, I am saying now that it was a mistake on the part of the Barbados Labour Party Administration to give people free uniforms when they go to secondary schools because that removed from the Ministry of Education at least $600,000 per year. I believe that the Ministry of Education has made a decision to stop the free uniforms except where people request them. In other words, I do not see why a QC's child should be given $100 to buy uniforms or that the child of the man who sells uniforms should be given $100 to buy uniforms when we know that those persons can buy books and uniforms. What is happening is that those who want uniforms will make a request for them. The uniforms are given on transfer to secondary schools.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Just for the sake of the record, I want it clearly understood that the notation "QC" is an honour. It is not an indication of opulence. It is only an honour, Sir. It is only ornamental and nothing more.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: Sir, I believe that there are about 4,800 children who transfer to secondary school and given $100 per child, that is about $480,000 or even more. It is estimated that $100,000 will be required still to give to persons who really need them. So that $380,000 or $400,000 will be used now to put books in the schools.

I know too that as far as textbooks are concerned that the principals of the primary schools had a meeting to make sure that they determine the textbooks which they will put into the primary schools. There was or is this belief among some teachers that they should issue a list of textbooks to every child and very often the list varies from school to school. So they too have been getting together to regularize the list even to send into the Ministry to show what monies they want to buy textbooks. I am talking about primary schools.

I believe that people should contribute to school meals. I think that in Barbados too many things are free and people do not appreciate them. Again, if you are so needy and you cannot pay it, make some effort to show that you cannot pay it. The problem with Barbados is that we have got about four generations of people who feel that they should always hold out their hands and that is bad psychology. Okay, if you need it and you see that you cannot pay, then ask for assistance. But at the same time those people who are saying that they cannot pay for school meals are wearing $250 shoes to school. Watch them. That sort of attitude must be stopped. Even when they have started to work, they feel that they do not need to work because everything was given free from the age of nought to 20 years. Somewhere it has to be stopped.

Sir, I agree with free secondary education. Do not think that I do not believe it. But at the same time things must be monitored and reviewed to see the weaknesses in the system. One of the weaknesses in the system was the free uniforms and transfer for everybody while some children could not buy books. Now I believe that I understood the Honourable Member for St. George South was speaking about training *in specialist fields. Although he did not name the fields, I think that I had better try to interpret what he was saying. I believe that he was talking about remedial education. My understanding is that every primary school has one or two teachers trained in that afea. But the problem with education, as I see it, is that every child who goes to primary school can transfer to a secondary school because there are enough places between the public and private schools for them to transfer. To me, that is wrong because every child that goes to a primary school cannot cope with the curriculum of the secondary schools.
3.35 p.m.

I know the Ministry is looking at ways and means of how to deal with that in order that those children too would be able to develop their full potential, but you cannot expect a . child who is age 13 chronologically but intellectually three years old, to benefit under the present system. He goes to a primary school, he goes to fourth standard, he gets 5 in the transfer examination, but because there is a place he is transferred to a secondary school. It is frustrating the child. The child knows he cannot cope. Because a child is intellectually backward does not mean that he does not understand what is going on, so therefore the Ministry of Education is trying to develop a system to assist those children.

The other thing which comes to mind is this. You will find that in most countries, and Barbados is not unlike most countries, the majority of people who teach in Special Education, children with learning disabilities, are not qualified. The reason for this is that when they become qualified they want to teach other children, so that area is always left behind, although you need a lot of effort for that. That is a problem which I am not sure how the education system will deal with it. You find that a lot of people who are teaching in the Special Education schools like Erdiston, Ellerton, the Pre-Vocational Centre, are not qualified, and the reason they are not qualified is because when they get qualified they move on to another system, because they think they can do better.

Another thing is that the prospect for promotion in that system, if they remain there, is so small that they cannot get promoted, but we must still try. Let me say this, Mr. Chairman, that in other specialist areas, e.g. early childhood education is an area which I believe is a specialist area but a lot of people are being trained in that area and one of the things which Erdiston will be doing, with its new mandate, is to be offering a B.Ed. in early childhood education and primary education.

One last point I want to make. I think one of the problems in Special Education too is the question of TECH-VOC. Unfortunately, in Barbados, and as I understand in the West Indies, there is very little scope for people in the area of TECH-VOC to have training to degree level. Therefore, the most we do is to send them overseas, which is very expensive, and you can only send one a year or one every two years, and those who want to go up the ladder have to change from TECH-VOC and go to do a degree in some other area – history, *et cetera* – in order to get promotion, because in the system you can only be promoted if you have your degree. It is hoped that between the Community College and Erdiston in the future a degree programme will be put in place for these people who are in TECH-VOC.

I hope I have cleared up some of the misunderstandings which might have arisen on the other side. Finally, I do not think I mentioned bus fares, but I can state categorically that bus fares for school children will not go up. What we are trying to do in the zoning system is that people will not have to pay two bus fares, but they will have to pay one.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful to the Honourable Member who has just spoken for getting up and supporting me in many of the things I said earlier and which the new Minister of Education wanted to quarrel with. That represents nothing more than a quarrel between the former Minister and the present Minister and I do not know why they are getting me involved.

I raised the question of the adequacy of specialist teachers for Special Education and from all the knowledge and information I have there is still a lot more to be done. I raised the point in my first intervention and was met with a hostility of a counter opinion by someone who knows absolutely nothing about these things, that is, the new Minister of Education, so I am grateful that" the Honourable Member for St. James South has been able to put that in the proper perspective.

There was also the question raised earlier, and I will make only a couple of sentences about it, Sir, because I have a number of things to say. I made the point in my earlier intervention that the phasing out of the senior schools and composite schools, in my view, is a mistake, because what it is in effect doing is taking children at the age of 11 who can hardly read or write and moving them on to a secondary school situation rather than keeping them in an area where they can correct the reading and writing. Again, I - had the Honourable Member for Christ

Church East, the Minister of Education, who got up and spoke without knowledge and I am glad that the Honourable Member for St. James South has now reinforced the position I had taken. But there are one or two other things that merit some attention at this stage, Sir.

The Government of Barbados had set aside money for something called an Institute for Democracy at the Barbados Community College. Up to • recently I was particularly critical of the Government for seeing the Institute of Democracy at the Community College as a priority for spending in these difficult times, but I have changed my mind on that, Sir. If ever the Government needed an Institute for Democracy it is now, and the person who put up the proposal, came up with the funding and keeps showing an interest in it almost on a daily basis is the Right Honourable Prime Minister. I could not understand why he was pushing for this Institute for Democracy. The Prime .Minister is prescient, because we need it badly, because all the underpinnings of our democratic institutions are at the moment taking a savage pounding by the Government. I want to see that the Minister of Finance who walked out of the, House immediately as I began to make this point, I am sorry he has left, because I would like to see an increased vote for the Institute. It would assist the members of the Government to understand some of the rudiments of democratic traditions and practice and make it easier for them to resolve some of the difficulties they have been having from last weekend onwards up to now and cannot get worked out. I am converted now, Mr. Chairman, to the need for the Institute and would like to see an increase in the funding for it.

I have not said a single word about the Community College Hospitality Institute, which the Honourable Member sought to put in my mouth. I had not said a word. The Community College Hospitality project, which is a project being funded by the European Development Fund, is I understand on stream, but from what I have been hearing in recent times we seem to be desperately short of the planning for a structure of staffing to make the Institute one that goes beyond what was nothing more than a hotel school up to now.
3.45 p.m.

Someone recently was speaking about one and I was being told that the concern of the people who are the current staff of the Hotel School — that is what it used to be called — are not taken into consideration by the Government so far. This is a bit unfortunate because if we are to accept that tourism is the area of economic activity on which any short term growth is to take place in the economy of Barbados, if we cannot have...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: ... Then, Mr. Chairman, we cannot proceed with any group of people in that sector being unhappy and uncomfortable with any of the medium or long term planning.

There are one or two other things I want to mention quickly. I would like the Minister of Education to tell us clearly and unequivocally whether the Government is committed to the policy of zoning or not. I have heard the Minister say an alarming thing in his intervention earlier that he does not propose to say anything about it at this time. Can you imagine a debate on the Estimates of Expenditure and the most current and critical issue in his Ministry is the question of zoning and he gets up and volunteers to this Parliament that he has no intention of saying anything about it at this time? He should not be paid at the end of the month. All of Barbados is concerned about what is the Government's policy in relation to this.

The Common Entrance Examination is shortly to come up and the Minister does not say anything. We have the Honourable Member for St.James South, who was the Minister before him, a few minutes ago making reference to the question of zoning and how it would minimise the expenditure of parents for transportation cost. As he put it, Sir, they can take one bus instead of two. Which of course does not make any sense anyway, because if you live in the Christ Church part of St. George and you have to go to the St. George Secondary School you have to take 2 buses anyway; but that is not the intent of what the Honourable Member would say.

I am a little bit concerned about persons who get up and demonstrate and beat their breasts and say they are proud that they are part of a take-away government, a government that takes all the things that the citizens of this country are accustomed to. They want to stop uniforms. Anybody who is representing persons as a constituency representative would know that there are a number of parents all across Barbados who find it difficult to send their children to school nowadays because they do not have clothes to give the children to wear to school. It is also a fact that the Ministry of Finance has cut the vote to the welfare service and to the national assistance services. So even if they have not been given the money for the uniforms through the Ministry of Education and they could go to the local National Assistance Board or the welfare office and get assistance, you would say well, they are not getting it from the Government in the right hand but they are getting it in the left.

It is common knowledge, Sir, that those offices are telling people routinely, "Why are you coming here? You know that the Government has not given us any money." I do not understand why they want to take away all the time. There are children in this country who go to

sleep hungry at night. If any member of the Government is in any doubt about that, they are welcome to go with me through St. George when we leave here at night. We are hearing the Honourable Member for St. James South get in here and say that. people should pay for their school meals and everything else, as though he does not understand the difficulty that a number of parents are experiencing in the country at this time. There are households in Barbados where nobody at all is working and 6, 7 and 8 people live in those houses. I am hearing an Honourable Member get up in here knocking an argument that at this time you should really not ask to pay for school meals because things are brown.

Now I hear also the argument about the reintroduction of self destroying humiliating welfareism, that children must go to school and stick out their hands and say they can't make it, "Help me."

We have fought in this country — I thought that the other side was part of that struggle — to bring an end permanently to the kind of institutionalised welfarism that used to obtain in this country at one time. Now we are hearing it start all over again, creating in school a first class and a second class section, like British Airways. That is what they are asking for.

I want, Sir, to deal quickly with the question of the University. The Government is voting $26 million to the University for this year. That figure is about $9 million below what the Government should be paying to the University of the West Indies. I mean its commitment to the University of the West Indies. When the Barbados Labour Party was the Government of this country, there was one country in the whole of the CARICOM region that always was current on its payments to the University of the West Indies, which was Barbados. Now we have a situation where they are giving $26 million and included in this $26 million... The whole $26 million is not a subvention to the University. Included in this $26 million is tuition fees, that the Government pays for Barbadian students, and economic costs. So the subvention proper to the University has been brutally cut. I want it to go forth loud and clear at this stage so that next year and the year after there shall be no doubt in Barbados at all as to what was coming.The Government of Barbados has engaged itself in discussions with the international agencies, the IMF and the rest of that gang and have agreed...

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: ... have agreed for something that is euphemistically called cost recovery. It means that the Government of Barbados has committed itself to the requirement that Barbadian students attending the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill from next year, 1995 will have to pay the fees and a major part of the economic cost. This troubles me, Sir, because this is all part of the developments we are seeing with the Government over there. What they are in fact saying is that people who want to study at Cave Hill now will have to find several thousands of dollars a year to go to Cave Hill. What will happen, Mr. Chairman, Sir...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member cannot set up a ... and then shoot it down, knowing full well that it will go forward as policy. The Honourable Member cannot discuss next year's Estimates out of today's Estimates, Sir. That is what he is doing saying that next year that is what is going to happen. He should say that that is what he believes; but he must not put it out as policy for the Government. That is simply not so.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West is totally incapable of instructing me how I should advance an argument. He is not so good at that. The fact is that the Government has agreed with the International Monetary Fund to embark on a program of cost recovery for tertiary education.
3.55 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And time has expired.

Mr. L. R. TULL: But, Sir, he got up and interrupted me.
Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just finish.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I will wind up on this. I will not be long. From next year students in Barbados will have to pay thousands of dollars to go to university and we will revert to a position in this country that only the children of the well-to-do and the better off will be able to go to university and that those who come from the lower socio-economic groupings will no longer be able to go to University because of the forbidding costs they will be required to pay to attend university in this country.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, this is a very serious note that the Honourable Member has just ended on. This Government has a record of entering into secret agreements and not disclosing the full impact of these agreements to Parliament. After all, few of us could forget how persistent we were in trying to find out about the agreement and trade liberalisation with the International Monetary Fund and how in this very Chamber repeatedly every attempt that we made was fobbed off by the Minister.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. Government has never entered into any agreement with the International Monetary Fund on trade liberalisation. That is misleading the House. It is not true.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: With the greatest respect to the Honourable Member I categorically state that as part of the arrangements with the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and others that the Government agreed to trade liberalisation. What foolishness you are telling me?

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. If he says the World Bank I would accept that but he must not mislead the House by saying the IMF and other institutions. There is only one institution. We are not in a World Bank Programme, therefore we do not have any agreement with the World Bank either, so there is no agreement with anybody for trade liberalisation except that the Government of Barbados is implementing it because they believe it is desirable.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman; is the Honourable Member telling us that he and his Government have imposed those wicked conditions on this country of their own volition? That is what the Honourable Member is saying that he is exposing all of us in this ' country to record unemployment caused by the policies which are well-known to be part and parcel of the IMF and World Bank conditions like education...

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is a point of order. Two Honourable Members are on their feet.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I wish to submit that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is violating the rule which calls for relevance. He cannot be discussing the economic issues of the IMF etc. under this Head. He is not tying it in. He is going on to make statements that are wild and irresponsible in relation to...

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, I Want the Honourable Minister of Education, and his predecessor, to tell this House clearly and distinctly, without any kind of prevarication, whether the Government has not been engaged in discussions out of which an agreement has been reached that the Government will indulge in a policy of cost recovery for tertiary education. We want to know because I have views on it. My views are very clear that before you are pursuing that policy one of the first things you are to do is to ensure that the management at the university is efficient and all the wastage that takes place up there is checked.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I have been trying to stay as much out of this...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, the relevance about any commitment with an agency for cost recovery that is a known commitment in terms of cost recovery. However, I happen to know that in my time the only commitment of which I am aware is that we are committed to continue to pay for the next triennium as usual and then any other negotiations will come after that. So I am aware of a commitment for the Government to support the University up to the next triennium. I think I said so in this Honourable House before.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Everybody knows that the world over universities have been under a microscope. Everybody knows that. I want to know what is the attitude of the Ministry of Education here to the fact that daily you see in the newspapers what appears to me to be nothing but blatant duplication of effort. The Extra-Mural Department has one course. The Community College has the same course and the private sector has the same course. What is the Government's view on these things? What effort is being made to ensure, for instance, that the programmes at the Community College harmonise with the Degree Programmes so that in Barbados there is integration of effort in this effort and not duplication.

I want to know about these things because, we depart under pressure into new areas and destroy. You know, one of the things that I find very difficult to understand about this Government is that they must destroy in order to build. That is their philosophy. You must destroy in order to build. You can have an Institute of Democracy.

I agree with the Honourable Member for St; George South that you should put money in here. But then you should abolish the Department of Politics at the University if you are going to have an Institution of Democracy at the Community College. At least you would be able to teach objectivity at the Community College whereas you have nothing but subjectivity up there.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Well you have great influence in the University. When you went up to the University Counsel Barbados had great prestige because Barbados used to pay. We were never a defaulter and could speak from a position of power and influence because they use to beg you to pay your money in advance so that the people in the rest of the University could get their money. There is a lot of wastage in Education.

I remember in the building programme everybody knew that there were scandals going around in the Building Department. People used to complain to the Ministry all the time about favouritism with a particular officer and in our time the officer was moved; but as soon as the Democratic Labour Party came back into power he was re-introduced into the position to continue to do what he was doing all along to the detriment of the people of Barbados and the Ministry of Education's money. Get your facts and see who were the building officers at that period of time. Everybody complained about it. But such is the system we have.

We are talking about chopping and cutting social services and interfering with innocent people when before our eyes we sit down and allow people to exploit the existing system to their personal benefit and we do nothing about it. Our institutions are in crisis. Far from moving him I hope the Honourable Member would be strong enough to put a commission of enquiry into it, a departmental enquiry first. Bring along the Police at the same time.

We now have another point here, Sir, because these are important points. Honourable Members have constantly been speaking about the situation with the waste of money that is going on for paying watchmen for these unbuilt schools. There has to be some decision taken if you are paying $300 000 or $400 000 a year for watchmen. You ought to know that $300 000 a year ought to be able to fund a capital loan of significant amount.
4.05 p.m.

How much will it cost to finish the school? Decide in your mind that these are acts of folly that you just cannot abandon at the present moment. Nobody is going to buy the old Queen's College. I pass there to go home and whenever I pass there on evenings I see a few orientals living there eating their beans. That is what we have. The site is being overgrown with more and more weeds. We must make up in our minds and decide in our minds that this was an act of folly. Let us finish it as a monument to Sandiford's folly.

Everybody knew that the Ministry of Education did not need any new headquarters. New headquarters what, when you have schools all over the place that need repairing. That could never have been a priority, except you are an ego maniac. You would repair the schools first. In the Twenty-first Century it might be a priority but it could not be a priority now.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, the Honourable Member himself signed a document for a new Ministry of Education Headquarters at Marine House. That same Honourable Member.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Honourable Member's reputation for grasping is such that I do not have to reply to that.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I happen to know for a fact that there was supposed to be a new Ministry of Education Headquarters at Marine House. The Honourable Member for the City is aware of that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, all I know...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what has the Honourable Member risen?

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. They are trying to drag me into it now. All I know about a new Headquarters for the Ministry of Education I have spoken about already today, $8 million plus already spent on old Queen's College and only rats living in it.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I am disappointed with the Honourable Member for the City.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what has the Honourable Member risen?

Hon. C. V. WALKER: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member earlier in this debate, Mr. Chairman, without reflecting stated that she was totally aware of the details of the education bank loan which included...

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I will bring the document within the hour.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I want you to bring it. What foolishness is the Honourable Member talking about? That is nonsense.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: My memory never fails me. The World Bank plan with greatest respect...

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

Hon.- H. B. St. JOHN: What point of order?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member says his memory has never failed him. It is failing him now, Sir, and he should acknowledge that he has reached the point where he cannot remember and should not be so vehement when he is making statements. The World Bank's arrangement...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You cannot make a speech.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the central theme of that World Bank loan that we were talking about was the modification of the educational curriculum and the building of new buildings to deliver the new type of education that we wanted. Wotton School in Christ Church...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Will you keep quiet for a minute? Will the Honourable Member keep quiet and let me be heard in silence? I can give you the sequence. A technological study had been commissioned by CIDA. I am absolutely positive on this.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Leave me alone let me give my speech. We had commissioned...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: ....a study on technical education right up into the Twenty-first Century. To this day, the Honourable Members on the other side, when the Democratic Labour Party came into power, the whole of that programme was varied to include Queen's College. That is why the Wotton School was postponed, that is why Sayers Court was delayed. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I say without any fear of contradiction...

Hon. C. V. WALKER: On a point of order. The memory is coming back to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South now because he has now accepted that there was variation. Yes there was variation from the Queen's College site. Yes there was variation from the skills centre site. I will come back and read the proper document, Sir.

Thank you.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: He can read what he likes from that. I am talking about the Agreement signed with the World Bank...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: You cannot catch me in anything.

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: No, no, no. I am not taking these interruptions lightly. All of these interruptions interfered with me. I was interrupted 4 times.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have already had your extra time.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: No, Sir, let me finish my point. I say without fear of contradiction that the World Bank loan that we were talking about had a school building programme and a programme for a new secondary school at Wotton, never one at St. Thomas, never, ever anything to do with new Headquarters for the Ministry of Education. As a matter of fact the Queen's College site was going tb be expanded for Queen's College. It is the Democratic Labour Party and the Prime Minister in his capacity of Minister of Education who wanted to saddle upon the people of this country a monument to the stupidity of how to waste public money. I challenge the Honourable Member for St. George North to bring the document and show, where I signed at any time, with the World Bank or any Minister of Education...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time. Your time has expired.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: ...when I was Prime Minister signed with the World Bank to build an educational Headquarters.

Certain remarks made by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN were ordered, by Mr. CHAIRMAN, to be expunged from the Record.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is there any other Honourable Member who wishes to make a contribution to this debate.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, I just want to reply to a couple things which were said earlier. The Honourable Member for St. George South might not be aware that, even now, there is close or closer collaboration with the University of the West Indies, Erdiston as well as the Community College concerning a rationalization of all the programmes offered at the 3 institutions. This is something that cannot happen overnight. It is ongoing and we are hoping, Sir, to have a fully rationalized approach to higher level education at least as far as Barbados is concerned in the very near future. It is nothing to jump up and get so emotional about. Likewise the obtuse talk

about education being a free social service and that it should be a basic right of all Barbadians to have an education without a direct cost to parents is very misguided. There has always been a direct cost to parents in the delivery of education in Barbados, even if it meant only paying petty fees you had to pull your pocket to get education. Going back to the time when people had to pay Vestry fees. There wa$ always a direct component in the context of "free education" in Barbados.

The Honourable Member for St. George South, always hyper emotional and provocative, and unnecessarily so on every single topic on earth wants everybody in Barbados to believe that all of a sudden there will be an immediate cut off of the Government providing uniforms for people and textbooks. I have never heard about these two things. If it is so it would be news to me. I am being as frank as I possibly can.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: On what now.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Honourable Member in his exuberance is misrepresenting what I said. I never said that the Government was cutting off immediately uniform grant. It was the Honourable Member for St. James South who said that it is his view that the Government should not continue to pay for uniforms.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: The Honourable Member for St. George South never said that. What he said was that the Government should not provide uniforms for people who can pay and he made the reference to QCs.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: I am not aware of any such move in the Ministry towards these things. It is again unfortunate that there is this creeping talk because one Honourable Member on this side stated what he believed but again we are hearing talk about welfarism. The very essence of what the country is now going through, structural adjustment, in itself challenges the very idea that you are seeming to rest your entire debate on, the whole idea of welfarism. If the Honourable Member can only contextualise education in the overall polity of Barbados he would know that he is not on any good footing whatsoever. The whole issue of welfarism, Mr. Chairman, is being challenged by the very essence of what the country is now going through, the fact that we are going through a programme of structural adjustment. If persons are prepared to contribute to the education of their children and from what I can see they are quite prepared to do that then such effort must be lauded.

4.15 p.m.

Almost every school in Barbados now has an active PTA which is prepared to pull its weight and I must confess that some of them go beyond their duty to ensure that their children are provided with a good and adequate framework at schools in which they are educated.

Mr. Chairman, let me deal with the University. It is my understanding, Sir, that the Government is committing $26 million to the University of the West Indies and we are short by $5 million which we are committed to pay by April. That being the case there is no problem with the funding as far as the university is concerned. It could well be that you remember big figures because there was wastage then but there might not be any wastage now. It could well be that. I think you should look down that road.

Another matter that I heard the Honourable Member for St. George South go on about is the question about the Ministry of Education as presently constituted being deliberately destructive as far as "relationships" with the social partners are concerned. There is nothing further from the truth.

I have said already, Sir, that I have no intention today of getting into debate on any big issues of policy as far as education is concerned and nobody can make me change my mind. I can afford to risk it but today is not the time. There is a time and a place for everything. I have said I do not intend, Sir, to discuss zoning at this point in time because everybody knows what my initial position is.

It was in all the newspapers, on all the radio stations et cetera that the Ministry of Education had taken a deliberate policy to postpone the whole idea of introducing any form of zoning for this academic year. So the children at primary' schools will do as they have been doing and proceed to enter secondary schools as they did for all the years in the past. So I do not see why I am being pressed to give a position on zoning today. I can but it is not my intention to do so. There is a time and a place for everything and the Opposition Members can say whatever they feel like. I am not doing it today. I will do it shortly.

Sir, the contact with what we call the social partners has not in any way been interrupted by me. And it is not my intention to interrupt it. I have no intention of doing that. I have made that plain already. From what I

gather out of the Ministry, 8 working groups were established and they were supposed to give preliminary reports to the Ministry today.

I want to satisfy the Honourable Member for St. George South because I worked as an Administrative Assistant in the Ministry under him some years ago so that is why he is picking at me all the time, Sir.

Aside.

Hon. T. C.' ESTWICK: Not from you. I could hot possibly learn anything from him, Sir, not from the Honourable Member. Eight working groups were set up with the social partners under these headings:

(1) Religious and moral education, including values education.

(2) Another group to look at pupil transportation.

(3) Safety and security.

(4) Sports and Games.

(5) Deviant behaviour, referral procedures and support systems.

(6) Health and nutrition.

(7) Relations with the world of work and living.

(8) The media.

All this indicates, Sir, that there has been ongoing contact between the Ministry of Education including the past Minister of Education and the present Minister of Education and what are now called the social partners. As I said there was supposed to be a preliminary report by today and we will be moving as swiftly as humanly possible to seek to remedy many of the ills presently plaguing the educational system in Barbados.

I do not know, Sir, that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said anything, other than he kept a lot of noise, that I can possibly reply to. I am not normally a loud and aggressive person, Sir, and I quite admire people who can behave in that manner.

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: I am not dealing with the policy of zoning at this point in time. There is a time for everything. In my initial remarks in this debate, Sir, I dealt with sthe problem in the building section of the Ministry of Education. It has been dealt with for the whole evening. I worked in the Ministry of Education as I said and the said person we are now hearing so much about operated under the Honourable Member for St. George South as a king pin and a maguffy and an untouchable. The Honourable Member for the City was also the Minister when I worked with the Ministry of Education and the said person operated as an untouchable in the Ministry of Education. I know what I am talking about. He is no longer there. .

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: I know, I moved on to higher education. You would not know.

As a matter of fact, Sir, I was at the Ministry for two years and I saw the Honourable Member for the City once. For two years I was in the Ministry of Education as an Administrative Assistant and I saw the Honourable Member for the City once. I heard her voice behaving badly and cursing the officers. I heard her cursing the officers many a day. They will never get that kind of treatment from me, Sir, nor did they receive it from the Honourable Member for St. James South.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let's get back to the Head.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir, the Honourable Member knows that he never heard me cursing in the Ministry of Education so I am not catching at that.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Let me give all Honourable Members, Mr. Chairman, the assurance that the physical plants as far as the schools are concerned will be dealt with systematically and professionally. Let me give them that assurance.

I will not, Sir, go back at all to dealing with the building section. I will give the Committee the assurance that the schools will be dealt with professionally and as speedily as humanly possible and as far as financial and other resources allow. I will give the Committee that assurance..

There is work going on at this present moment at St. Christopher Girls' School and a new school is supposed to start, from my understanding in January of 1995 and I look forward to that.
4.25 p.m.

Regarding the transportation .of children, I have already said that the Pupil Transportation Committee was supposed to report today on the pupil transportation and all of those aspects *will* be looked at. Preliminary discussions have already been had with the Minister of

Public Transport as regards the efficient movement of children to and from school in the present circumstances.

I will agree that unfortunately the whole issue of zoning impacts on transportation or vice versa. But I do not *think* that it is necessary for us to rush headlong into formulating policy decisions right away when they are far reaching social implications. In my own view, some aspects of the whole area of zoning were not stressed as much as *they* should have been and it is my intention to stress some of those to see if we can come up, with an even better package than was mooted about before.

Unless there are any other contributions, Sir, I propose to move that Head...

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the first remarks out of the mouth of the Minister in this particular contribution set out the difference in the philosophical position between that side and this side. The Minister seems to be agreeing with the position that the current economic problems and their discussions with the International Monetary Fund are already in the context of cutting back expenditure on social services. There should be no agreement by any Government of Barbados with anybody, local or international, on any agreement to cut back on social services particularly in education and health that we have worked so hard for over the years. They come now and tell us a lot of foolishness about the economic circumstances required to cut this, that and the other. I do not even want to hear it, Sir. We have worked too hard in this country to educate the people in this country and to provide a quality of education for which we have been proud over a long period of time. The Democratic Labour Party issued a shameful document three years ago in which they said that fully taxpayer funded secondary and university education and school meals, textbook scheme, Community College and substantial investments on scholarships for our sons and daughters will be provided and here is what they are saying now that most of these achievements were won in the face of hostility, some BLP and other elements in our society. Not only is it wicked, but it is dishonest. But that is what they are committed to. Now I am hearing that instead of a fully taxpayer funded secondary and tertiary education, school meals and so on that we have moved to a position in which that same Government is now today recommending that people pull their pockets and pay for these things that they have been getting for a long time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading this Committee. Where did the Government say what he just said about our making any policy decision? The policy that is outlined there is the policy of this Government and continues to be the policy of this Government. The Honourable Member himself is the only person in here who set up any policy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point is made.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Honourable Member for St. Michael West is enamored of his own voice. He never makes any point of substance. But this is a commitment made by the Democratic Labour Party and now they are talking glibly about cutting in areas like education and talking about why not pay for this, that and the other. That is the divergence of a philosophical position between that side and ours.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, in a way I feel a certain sympathy for the Honourable Member who is now the Minister of Education. I am not giving way to the sympathy but I feel it nonetheless. One gets the impression that the Minister has been sent to jettison many of the progressive policies of the former Minister.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: On a point of order, Sir. I was not sent by anybody anywhere. I was appointed as a Minister. I was not sent to do anything as if I am an agent of evil. I was not sent anywhere. I was appointed. Well, I do not know. I am at the sufferance.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Minister will recall that he was sent to a building down in the Port. The Ministry of Education is in Jemmotts Lane and he was sent to a building down in the Port Department looking over the Caribbean Sea with no staff and no funds, nothing. The Honourable Member takes exception to the fact that I said that it looks to some of us that he was sent to jettison the policies of his predecessor.

The Honourable Member for St. James South who was Minister of Education before him spoke with some feeling about a partial zoning policy. He opened up the debate with the members of the education industry and they came to a consensus, and he was pushing it. The Right Honourable Prime Minister went up to the ' graduation ceremony at the Community College and unceremoniously slapped down the policies of the former Minister of Education. Low and behold, Sir, the new Minister went in right after, and he said that he was not sent with any mandate or any mission, but the zoning is now on the back burner.

I want, Sir, very quickly to mention a few other things about this business of training. If the Minister would just listen and learn, it might help him in his Ministry. He spoke about this foolishness about they sent "X" number of people overseas to train to do something. Are we still a colonial country? We have a university here with a Department of Education and a Faculty of Education. We have Erdiston Teachers Training College. We are doing a lot of training also at the Barbados Community College in terms of training teachers in technical areas and so on

and you can still get a Minister in 1994 of our Lord getting up boasting about twenty people who went overseas to Britain to study. We believe, Sir, that you must train the trainers and use the facilities of Barbados for training the hundreds of people who have to be trained in the educational system. I cry shame on the Minister of Education who perhaps should be representing a new thinking and a new generation of politicians in Barbados who is beating his breast with satisfaction that 20 people have gone overseas to study. What is wrong with our institutions in Barbados? The cost of training the trainers and then using them to train the large number of people in Barbados who need training only is an infinitesimal amount of work required than sending people overseas.

I want to make another point, Sir, in relation to these school buildings. You cannot beg off. No child in Barbados has any right leaving home and going to his or her school to spend hours in a day in conditions that are worse than what that child left at home. No child should have to leave clean toilets and clean houses and so on to go into derelict buildings because children cannot learn in that environment. In fact, I must be fair, Sir. It was the Honourable Member for St. James South who talked about going around to visit all the schools in Barbados and I believe that the Honourable Member for St. James South when he was Minister used to do that.
4.35 p.m.

He perceived his job of Minister as one of superintendent of works. He believed that a Minister's job is to get in a motor car and drive around and visit every school and look at every faulty toilet and every leaky roof and that kind of thing. That is not the role of any Minister of Government, but hear what he said. They go around and they look and take an inventory of all the things they find wrong with the physical plant for schools in Barbados and then they go back to the Ministry and set up a list of priorities. Now what has that got to do with the Minister? Common sense tells those of us who are familiar with how these things are done that there is no way in which by occasional visits to schools you can determine their present needs. Indeed, the physical plant of many of the primary schools in Barbados is so old that something that appears to be all right on one day is a disaster the next. So you cannot arrange it in the way in which the Honourable Member for St. James South put it. It is an insult to the intelligence of those who are acquainted with these things to make these facile statements about something of such tremendous importance.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want also to deal with this pre-primary education. The Democratic Labour Party is a great one for making all kinds of fantastic promises to the people of this country when they want votes. When they want votes, they promise the moon and the stars. They said that they were going to enhance and expand the provision of pre-primary or nursery education for... Expand and extend, I believe. I am not talking from the page. This document hurts my eyes when I read it.

They said something about expanding and extending nursery education in Barbados and they said, particularly to help people of poor backgrounds to have their children of the ages 3 – 5 in an early school environment. The Development Plan that was laid in Parliament 2 weeks ago tells us that there are over 7000 children that fall in that age group – that document of iniquity – and that there are fewer of them now in the system than before. There are only 3700 of them in the nursery school situation.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it must be looked at in this context. From my recollection, the nursery schools in Barbados are the one at Erdiston, the one in Government Hill and the Charles F. Broome complex, the one in Eden Lodge. I understand, Sir, that in more recent times the Government has admitted a few at the school at Ellefton and a school at St. Stephens and somewhere else. Those are the 3 chief nursery schools. But Mr. Chairman, do you know what the situation is? If you go to any of those 3 establishments any morning you will find that over 90% of. the children are dropped off there in motor cars. I am not knocking the ownership of motor cars. Everybody should have one.

It tells me, Sir, that the target for those places is being ignored largely. Page 80 tells me. The children who most need to be put in that position of nursery or pre-school education, the children of the working poor, are the ones who are not getting it. The reason why they are the ones who need it more is because in the homes of middle and upper income people there are all the tools for learning early.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: They come up in an environment of books. They grow up in an environment of stimulating discussions. They are the children of parents who are well educated and so on. They themselves in their own home environment get as much of the stimuli that is required for children at that age to move them on into the primary schools. But the Government makes a big song and dance about nursery education...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: But don't fool the people. Now what they are doing is encouraging a number of primary schools to admit 3 year olds into the schools so that they can say, 'Look,...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has 1 minute.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I will tell you what is wrong with that, Sir. The nursery school system requires a better ratio of teacher per pupil because the children are very small and you need more teachers for pupils than for primary schools. The primary school system in Barbados is not structured to admit any pre-school children out of any private arrangement between their parents and their teachers. Even the toilets are not suitable in the primary schools for 3-year old children, because they might go right through.

Mr. Chairman, I am going to stop at this point since you have indicated that my time is up but there are several other areas that I would like to engage the Minister of Education in debate.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am sure that the Minister of Education will take no joy in the fact that I am now about to question him about Sherbourne.

Last year in the Estimates Debate it was under the Ministry of Housing. This year it is under the Ministry of Education and Culture. For your information, Mr. Minister, page 99 and page 143. In these Estimates, it shows in excess of $6.1 million for Sherbourne. Of course we still do not know what it is. We do not know if it is an examination centre, a music school or a conference centre. What we do know is that it is meant to house the upcoming Global Conference. Of the $6.1 million we see in these Estimates $5 million earmarked for structures.

I think at this time I am dealing with a new Minister and I am hoping now that I have new wine in a new bottle.

Asides.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I think it is time for us to know now what is the cost of the Sherbourne Centre to date and what is the projected overall cost of the Sherbourne Centre. I have spoken already in this debate and made the point that on the Ministry of Education building which is not due to be finished until the year 2000 – certainly not before – the Government has already on Structures in excess of $8 million and on Professional Fees over $336 000.

I also want to ask the Minister to address his mind to the St. Thomas Secondary School. The St. Thomas Secondary School for the information of the Minister is to be found at page 93. We are being asked to vote $300 000 for the St. Thomas Secondary School and we are told in the explanatory note that the functions of this subprogram are to meet the ongoing site security and other expenses for the construction of the St. Thomas Secondary School.
Another bottomless pit.
4.45 p.m.

We have been asked in this Parliament to vote money year after year for the St. Thomas Secondary School. Nobody can go to school there. We are entitled to know what the costs are to date on the St. Thomas Secondary School. We also want to know what are the projected overall costs of that school.

I further refer the Minister to the Development Plan 1993 to the year 2000, page 260, Ministry of Education. At Item 4 it says, "St. Thomas Secondary" and just like the new headquarters building at Item 2 you will see that all of the funding for it is local, no foreign funding component. When we look in the Development Plan at the St. Thomas Secondary School, we see that no expenditure is proposed for the year 1994/95, no expenditure proposed for the year 1995/96 and that $0.8 million is proposed for 1996/97, and it goes right down into 1998/99 – This is another year 2000 project – in which year you propose to spend $5.2 million.

Are we to understand, as we did, with the New Ministry Headquarters that we have to go on voting in the region of $300 000 a year and more for a project where no work will be done? Will the St. Thomas Secondary School distinguish itself like the Ministry's headquarters and the St. Joseph Hospital before it, as a project where we paid for years for no activity to take place, for no work to be done? We deserve an explanation. I have asked about the new Ministry building. I have not heard anything from the Minister on that yet but I want to hear about Sherbourne and the St. Thomas Secondary School costs up-to-date and overall projected cost.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, I do not think that there is any mystery with respect to the St. Thomas Secondary School. I think it has long been accepted that there is no funding available whether it be local or external to complete the building. I will be as honest with you as I can be and say that there is no money to complete the building and that is why funding of it is merely projected. These are not absolute figures. This is planned expenditure for fiscal years running down to 1996/97. We are now in 1994 so this is not a hard and fast plan.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir. This year we are being asked to vote $300 000. Is that really to pay watchmen?

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, in the Development Plan there is nothing hard and fast. I am quite certain that if funds become available work will restart at the St. Thomas Secondary School. There is concrete down there, yes, but the rule in respect of whether work is done or not done is not made in concrete. If funds become available we will start it back. The $300 000 at page 93 of the Estimates is explained in the Explanatory Notes. The functions of the subprogramme are tc meet the cost

of on-going site security and other expenses and to pay outstanding fees to consultants.

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir, please. In this subprogramme we see that professional services which are consultancy fees are estimated at $13 224. The structures are estimated at $286 000. Are you telling us that it is going to cost $286 000 to pay a watchman to watch the building? If there are other expenses we want to know what "other" means? What other expenses? If you do not know, you do not know. My taxes are paying for this.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: I agree. Mine too. I will assume, Mr. Chairman, that it took some work to get the building as we see it today and that debts were incurred by the Ministry of Education and Culture in respect of putting the building to the state in which it is in today and that this money is to settle some of those debts. That is the most I can tell you.

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: I can only assume that the "Other Expenses" mean that we have incurred debts. It could be to the contractor. It could be to the roof man. It could be anybody. I do not know.

Asides.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Well, if you know anybody who is doing it let me know because I do not know. Everybody knows that there is no money to complete the St. Thomas Secondary School.

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: To pay off old debts in respect of putting the School in the state it is in today.

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: The unfinished state that you say it is in.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member address the Chair, please?

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Yes. I will do that from now.

In respect of Sherbourne Centre, Sir, expenditure of $43 million is projected up until the end of March this year. Sherbourne Centre, from all instructions, is a building which is practically completed and my instructions are that we will meet the deadline as set by the participant bodies in the' hosting of the Conference. In fact, the West Wing, the wing nearest to Ilaro Court, that is for identification purposes, is to be handed over to the Government on Monday completed. Desks are in, lights are in, air-conditioning is working and in that Wing of the building all systems are on go. Work is still going on in the East Wing, that is the one nearest to the car park as well as the link block. That, we hope, will be completed in time for the Conference.

On a note that will make the Honourable Member for St. George South happy, the contract in respect of the provision of a cafeteria, restaurant and banquet services which is all encompassing, has been awarded to the BCC Hospitality Institute. The same people that you say are not being trained will now be getting an opportunity to put their very good training into practice. You see how it works out?

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: You said that the people were not being trained, that they throw food at people *and that* they throw away drinks in people's laps.

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Who got the transportation contract? It has been recommended to some people.

The $5 million that the Honourable Member for the City was asking about, that is included at item 623 works are ongoing...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the Honourable Member will give way, Mr. Chairman. If the Honourable Member will probably go beyond the next few minutes...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He really should not because that would be the extent of his contribution.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I only wanted to check, Sir.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: We should have no problem as far as Sherbourne Centre is concerned. It will be a complete, full, well-equipped building ready to be handed over to the UN at the appropriate and agreed time.
4.55 p.m.

In respect of pre-primary education there is a figure which is unknown to the Honourable Member for St. George South, some 4 622 students in Government primary schools and nursery schools between the ages of 3 and 5 in . addition to the schools which the Honourable Member

just called. That is why I am convinced that he does not go in his constituency. We have South District Primary School which is another nursery school - you did not know that - St. Mary's and St. Joseph Primary. There are specialist teachers as well as specialist education officers working with those institutions. We are on the way to providing a good product in that regard.

In respect to training, Sir, just before I sit, I started out by indicating... I shall break here momentarily, Sir.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Sitting be now suspended until twenty past five, Sir.

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

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

RESUMPTION

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

COMMI'1'1EE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Committee of Supply is resumed.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, I am shocked at the Honourable Member for St. George South's attack on the former Minister, the Honourable Member for St. James South. From what I remember no words were said in here to indicate that there was a hard and fast rule as regards school repairs. The former Minister said that the social partners along with the Ministry had gone out and established a priority listing in respect of which schools should be repaired and in what order. But I am certain allowance would be made for emergencies. There can be no hard and fast rules in that regard.

Why be critical of the Honourable Member for doing the site visits? I believe that any leader marshals his forces. If that is his way of giving encouragement or building up commitment and marshalling his forces and he goes out there and gives pep talks to the teachers and the other non-academic staff, ground staff, janitors, whatever have you, that is a plus in my view. I hope that r find the time to continue in that trend so that there is a bonding — I think one former Minister called it a holistic approach — to the education plan in Barbados.

I have said before and let me reiterate that in respect of training, I told the Honourable Member for St. George South, through you, of course, that only this week — and I found the note — there is an OAS basic education project going on in Barbados as we speak now. It deals with, as one of the principal objectives, identifying the learning problems of students with learning difficulties. I must mention this because the Honourable Member for St. George South was extremely concerned that the Ministry of Education and Culture was now doing absolutely nothing in respect of remedial work for problem children. There is also the programme called Students at Risk in which children who have problems be they domestically rooted or otherwise would get specialized treatment in areas of in school relationships, family life, substance abuse, personality, socio economic factors like income as well as those who cannot read or write, possibly deafness, dyslexia and other disorders, extending even to students for whom school work is difficult. There is an ongoing programme and the OAS multiple project is a project which is going on now at the Caribbee Hotel. It is not that we are sending out all of our students. He is now saying that we are still colonial. That is a teachers' workshop that is going on at this moment at the Caribbee Hotel in Barbados under the auspices of some members of the University, Dr. Newton in particular and other members assisted by UNESCO and the OAS. We are way ahead of the criticisms of the Honourable Member. I think that deals with training. I have already dealt with the nursing schools.

In respect of Sherbourne Centre I cannot, at this point in time, adequately give the Honourable Member for the City a complete or an absolute figure with respect to the final cost of Sherbourne Centre. It has not been made available to me. Likewise, Sir, the St. Thomas School. I am not aware of the cost to date as well. I am sorry. I will try and get it for you before we leave this Head. But I cannot give her with the utmost of respect a figure in respect of the final cost of the Sherbourne Centre at the present moment. Unless there is anything else I would...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I just wish to respond to a couple of points made by the Honourable Member for St. George South who made an input that was fairly broad.

I wish to deal particularly with the philosophical point which, although we are in Committee managed to

emerge on this Head. There was a very clear statement from him that there is a divide between that side and this side on education and he went on to identify that the vision in terms of our having made some decision of which he seems to be aware and the Minister himself is not aware and no Minister over here was aware that the people of Barbados and more particularly the deprived people of Barbados would be required to start paying for education or paying some part for their education.
5.25 p.m.

I believe it is important to re-establish for the record if nothing else that the Democratic Labour Party recognises, has adumbrated and believes and still holds to the philosophy that free education for all persons in Barbados who wish it and up to 16 even those who might not wish it constitutes a fundamental right, constitutes the basis of our approach to education.

I do not believe that that should be compromised with any utterance irrespective of whether it is an intellectual sleight of hand or whether it is an attempt to garner favour with a sector of the community. I wish to say that I would have a lot of difficulty participating in any decision which by whatever name called, whether it is cost recovery or some other name, which would see any fundamental change in the pattern of education which has emerged and which has been faithfully nurtured by both sides of this House over the last 25 years or more. I would have great difficulty participating in any decision that would seek to change that direction.

As a matter of fact there are many persons who write in this community and who have some influence or who believe they have some influence in the education field. I am not dealing with editorials written by my colleague from the City. I am not dealing with any editorials at all. I am dealing with those who write and influence education.

There has been in recent times a broad call from one of the apologists for the Barbados Labour Party for charging the students for tertiary education in this country. The most strident voice in this country for a charge on tertiary education has come from one of the major supporters and apologists for the Barbados Labour Party, Dr. Bowtie. There is no question in anybody's mind that he supports and defends and promulgates the policies of the Barbados Labour Party.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I cannot remember that time. I honestly can remember no time when he promulgated any policy for the DLP but that is not the issue and I am not getting involved in that. I cannot now remember any time ever when he said anything that even remotely represented DLP thought or any thought for that matter. But that is another matter. He has been promulgating to the world at large in his intellectual column in the newspaper that the people of Barbados .should start paying for tertiary education. It has always been interesting to me that those who wish to promulgate that particular point of view always seem to be people whose children's tertiary education has been completed. But it would be a very wrong thing for this country where the ratio of persons to university education is still .way below what it should be for us to go into any false sense of security to lead us into believing that only those who have the means ought to be exposed to tertiary education or any education.

As a matter of fact many, if not most, of the persons who have made substantial contributions to the development of this country are persons who would not have been in a position to make those contributions had they been called upon to pay for their education at all levels. And I hope that we will never reach the stage where we deprive those young people who even now may be in the lower echelons of the civil service from the opportunity' through work and study and leave and work to rise to the best levels of their potential. That is a fundamental bulwark of the stability of this country which ought not to be interfered with whether the direction comes from the IMF, the FMI or some other form of- advice to this country. We ought never to tamper with that very fundamental position which both political patties have sworn allegiance to over the years.

I have been very disappointed to see that the Honourable Member for St. George South who in matters of education has tended to be slightly conservative but none the less steady, moving into a position where he might seek to gain political points from using education as a point of debate. I hope that instead he is merely sounding a clarion call and not seeking cheap popularity when he raises that question.

I wish to state 'categorically that at no point has it been the intention of the Democratic Labour Party to change its philosophy on free education and it cannot be equated with any difficulty which might arise from our present economic circumstances. Indeed I wish to assure the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that his views and mine coincide on the question of the need for efficiency and the cutting out of waste. Before we come to any question of cost recovery, there must be cost containment first and it must be demonstrated that we have exhausted all possible avenues of cost containment before we consider any business of cost recovery.

Cost recovery for developing countries is a punishment; and it is a punishment too large for the people of Barbados to bear especially if it is applied to the

social services. If it is applied to education and if it is applied to health it always results in an attack on the vulnerable groups in the society. Always, every time it affects the vulnerable groups in the society.

Our vulnerable groups although we may score high on the international scale of human development we are still in a brittle situation where the sustainability of our development has not been established. We have only been making decisions for ourselves in the last 25 years or so as an independent country and maybe 25 years before that. But sustainable development for Barbados must include a rock-like stance on the question of education and other social services.

One has only to cast an eye on the developed countries like the United States and Britain and now in Europe where there are moving more swiftly than ever to a position where they eliminate the poor completely from any consideration and they use as an excuse the question of what they call efficiency.

One need only to look at the health and education position of the United States where in a land of great plenty there are still millions of people who are deprived of both education a!ld more particularly health care. And then when that is superimposed by a particular point of view on the application of laws one begins to see a continuation of the old nineteenth century concept of survival of the fittest. That has no place in a society of 166 square miles and a quarter of a million people. And I will never be a party to any cost recovery that will come down on the poor constituents of St. Michael West and the surrounding areas. So I wish the Honourable Members on that side — and I do not think it is necessary, but if necessary on this side too — to be aware that that is not a philosophy for which the Democratic Labour Party has ever been known and for which it will become known, not if I have anything to do with it. I am grateful to Your Honour.
5.35 p.m.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is interesting what the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has just said. I have seen in the Development Plan for 1993-2000 three areas of tertiary education and I will give you the pages one by one. At page 85 in relation to the Erdiston Teachers' Training College, it s .id:

> "During the Plan period, Erdiston Teachers' Training College will be restructured and mandated to deliver training programmes for the professional development of teachers and other persons interested in education and training. To this end the objectives will seek *inter* alia to establish a cost recovery mechanism for general education programmes."

This is talking about the Erdiston Teachers' Training College. Now explain to me what this means, Sir. It says that the Erdiston Teachers' Training College will be mandated to deliver training programmes to professional development of teachers, not lawyers, not accountants, not nut sellers but teachers and other persons interested in education and training. So the services will be delivered to people in education but the objectives will seek to establish a cost recovery mechanism for general education programmes. Now you can explain to me what that means.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West got up with his fine language as usual and talked about what his Government will do and would not do and all that kind of thing. He even had enough time to accuse me of conservatism in education. That was the first time that I ever heard that one. But explain to me what it means.

We also have on page 82 in the Development Plan in relation to the Barbados Community College the following:

> "In an attempt to address national, economic and social needs, the Barbados Community College will pursue the following objectives:
>
> (1) adopt further cost recovery measures,"...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the Honourable Member would give way for a moment. Now that I have seen the phrase on page 82 and on page 85, one of the things which the Community College and the new adapted Erdiston Teachers' Training College will be doing is making education in this institution available not only to Barbadians but to others from elsewhere who will in fact be able to pay the economic cost and recoveries will be in that. That is my understanding of this.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, that is true but that is my understanding. I can speak, for example, to the issue of seeking to get people from Martinique. I have been involved in getting people from Martinique to come to the Community College and getting PAHO to come from the Caribbean to the Community College, et cetera.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am a little disappointed at the purport of the intervention of the Honourable Member. What does this have to do with any people from Martinique or anywhere? At page 86, again it said: "implementing cost-recovery measures". There are three references to cost-recovery measures in education at tertiary institutions.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Who are we selling these services to? Well, I would wish that the Honourable Minister, instead of answering from a seated position, to get up and put into the record of this debate exactly what the Government means when it talks about cost recovery mechanisms at Erdiston Teachers' Training College, Barbados Community College and the University of the West Indies. I want him to put it on record what it means.

Now I want also at this point to raise the question in relation to the St. Leonard's School. The St. Leonard's School's situation has been with us for a while and I think it is a little bit unfair to continue this charade of cleansing the St. Leonard's School by going in on the odd occasion and doing scrubbing of the walls and whatever else is involved and we still have not heard with any degree of finality that there will not be recurring problems at that school. Now I know, and I am not going to be unreasonable in this, that there are probably about 2,000 students down there and that there is a reasonable time to make alternative provisions for resiting them. While we are waiting for these arrangements to be made, the health hazards to the teachers and students on that particular compound remain.

I would like to think, Sir, that the $1.2 million that is being - spent to pay watchmen at the complex on Constitution Road, the old Queen's College, and the money that is being spent for watchmen mainly on sight security at the St. Thomas complex could — (because the Government calls it a school, but that is their idea of what a school is. They call that the St. Thomas School consisting of unfinished buildings.) — in my view be spent towards completing the job at the St. Thomas compound so that the children at St. Leonard's can be moved over to the new facility there. I know that nobody is taking these things seriously because it is difficult to come up with a direct link between the illnesses that have been suffered over the past two or three years by people who are there and the environment which is difficult to tie it in. But we cannot take chances with the school children of Barbados and I am making a plea to the Government instead of wasting money that we be identifying in these Estimates in paying people in the Building Section who do not work that that kind of wasted money be diverted towards the completion of the compound in St. Thomas and relieve the children at St. Leonard's School of the burden that they have to undergo on a daily basis.

I want also in another area for the Minister to tell us of the future of Erdiston College. 5.45 p.m.

As I said earlier in the debate, Sir, the news that has come .to me tells me that practically all the teachers in the primary and secondary school system in Barbados are trained in what I call, I don't know what the specialists call it, in general teaching methods. There is a lot of training to be done in the area of specialist teacher training and I did read somewhere that that was part of the responsibility of a new Erdiston College Curriculum or Program. But it seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that from the numbers that are falling from the lips of the Minister during the course of this debate, of persons who are teachers who are trained are so slight that it would not be using up the full capacity of the resources of the Erdiston Teachers' Training College. I am asking the Minister to give us some idea before this debate is over as to what we can expect.

The point was made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South about the coordination of education in tertiary facilities, that is, the same Erdiston Teachers' Training College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, the Barbados Community College and the University. We have been talking for a long time. In fact I have talked about it *ad nauseam.* to use the local vernacular, until I am hoarse. A lot of money is wasted in the duplication and multiplication of resources where different institutions seem to be doing an overlap on what others are doing. I am satisfied that some progress is made in that direction to minimise that lack of coordination I am talking about; but not enough has been done and it is taking too long. These are things that have been talked about for many years. They are not new and it seems to me that there is a lack of pride on the part of the policy makers in the Government to bite the bullet and to make these -decisions even though some of the big wigs in some of those organisations will resent it. We have to make decisions in the overall interest of the people of Barbados. The same gentleman of whom the Honourable Member for St. Michael West spoke in derogatory terms not too long ago made a valid point for a number of years that the cost of ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is referring to a gentleman that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West spoke of in derogatory terms. Is that in the record?

Mr. L. R. TULL: Yes, Sir. He said "Dr. Bowtie". That is a slur. How come you can hear me and you do not hear him?

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: The Honourable Member made that reference to a gentleman who for years pointed out that the cost of doing what is called the NI program in Cave Hill was about 5 times more expensive than it was to do the program at the Community College. All the evidence points to the fact that the teaching at the Community College in that area was better than the teaching at the University.

The Government resolutely over a period of years refuses to do anything even though the cost of education has been escalating and we are talking about the establishment of priorities.

I want to raise another point and this is in relation to the Caribbean Examination Council which was started about 13 years ago — exams, I mean — at the level that was the equivalent of the Ordinary Level of the Oxford and Cambridge or London Examinations Council. It was thought at the time that there would be a movement towards the replacement of the Advanced Level Examination with a set of examinations organised and established by the Caribbean Examination Council. I haven't heard anything about it in recent years and I am wondering if the Minister would condescend to let this House know what is the position in relation to the substitution exams for Advanced Level for the Caribbean Examinations Council?

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I understand that in respect of the Caribbean Examinations Council that a number of problems have arisen in relation to cost. There is some doubt as to whether the cost of organising new exams for advanced level would be worth it at this time. I believe that there are other considerations. I really want this spelt out, because the same argument has been advanced to replace British examinations by local examinations, that is, that examination and school curricula should reflect to a very large extent indigenous values and so on. If that is a valid argument for `0' Level, by logical extension it is a valid argument for Advanced Level.

We have this hybrid situation where you do local examinations. I mean the Caribbean examinations — at age 15 then at age 17 you do British examinations and at age 18 you move back into the University of the West Indies and get into a program of education that is geared for Caribbean needs. It is about time, Sir, that the Ministry does something, or tells us something about this situation which is nothing more than an anomaly.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, by way of reply. With respect to the St. Leonard's School situation it has been a cause of great concern to the Ministry and is presently under review. There is a school of thought that one school should be closed do'vn c r moved out or there should be an amalgamation of L school to make it co-ed with a much reduced enrolment. The various positions, Sir, are being looked at and they will be fully examined . Again there will be discussions with the social partners, in particular the governing bodies of both schools as well as the teaching staff of those schools and then a decision will be made as to the future of the school, hopefully in the not too distant future. But the matter is receiving immediate consideration and will be dealt with in as short a time as possible.

The cost recovery issue. My understanding is that Erdiston... I think the Honourable Member for St. George South spoke about Erdiston and the Barbados Community College. He should know that the BCC already charges fees in respect of some evening courses so that in itself is no mystery. The question as to how you further and better rationalise those is not an introduction. It is something that has been ongoing for quite a while. So that is no innovation or no invention of the Government for the Honourable Member to make us believe that this Government is now charging people fees as of this year for educational programs at the SJPP and the Barbados Community College.

Erdiston. My instructions are that Erdiston charges fees for courses offered to private sector institutions. They do offer courses and they charge fees. The Honourable Member might not know these things, but it is not that this Government is now imposing them as of 1994-95 financial year. There is an ongoing consultancy through the World Bank to carry out a cost recovery survey at the tertiary level and this wili start in a little while.

The future of rdiston College is a matter under review and Erdiston itself will be restructured as of this year.
5.55 p.m.

The same issue which the Honourable Member raised earlier about the coordination of programmes within the BCC, Erdiston and the University will be addressed.

Erdiston will be offering an in-service and continuing education programme for the professional development of teachers and other persons interested in education and training. The in-service programme is currently being offered by the In-service Department of the. Faculty of Education, the University of the West Indies. That will be offered by Erdiston College with effect August 1, 1994. By September 1996, Erdiston ought to be in a position to offer the Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood and Primary Education and in Guidance Counselling. So we are actually upgrading the plant as well as upgrading the services offered which means that the members of the teaching fraternity in Barbados will obviously be in much closer contact with the programmes that are being offered by Erdiston Teachers' Training College.

There will also be a Teacher Resource Centre. This will offer training to untrained graduate teachers, educational administrators, trained teachers and teachers of adults.

I do not know if the Honourable Member would want to hear about what training programmes are planned for the 1994/95 period. The Diploma in Education for Secondary Graduates in some areas, the Certificate of Education Management, the In-Service Course for Untrained Teachers of Private Primary Schools leading to the Teacher's Certificate in Education and then there is a short refresher course in specified areas of need. These will be offered throughout the academic as well as during the Easter and summer vacations. The whole approach to Erdiston is being very much upgraded.

I would like also, Sir, to inform the committee and for the benefit of the Honourable Member for St. George South, that the training programmes currently being offered are, the Teachers' Advanced Professional Certificate in Early Childhood Education, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Health and Family Education, Information Technology, Modern Languages, Business Education, etc.

The Honourable Member also spoke about technical and vocational training.

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: In anticipation of that speech I would say that Erdiston has introduced a programme for teachers from the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic: Some teachers are being sent abroad for the technical aspects of the training but Erdiston has introduced a programme for the upgrading of the teaching skills of members of the SJPP staff. The Community College in conjunction with Erdiston, and the Polytechnic will be introducing the Bachelor of Education in Technical and Vocational studies in a short time. Much work is going on in these areas and I think a debt of gratitude is owed to the technical people from all the institutions as well as from the Ministry of Education who put the work in to coordinate such a venture. I think it augurs well for the future of education in that area in Barbados.

When I come to deal with the issue of zoning the Honourable Member will hear my views as regards technical and vocational training, arts and crafts, but in the fullness of time.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, you would not believe that all those pious platitudes about thanking people in the Ministry for the work they have done and so on, the people *in* the Ministry always work hard but it is the Government that does not take decisions so this question of thanking the staff, the staff is not in this now. It is the Government that refused to make decisions on a number of serious recommendations that have been made to them. Do not let the Minister get up, Mr. Chairman, and spout off as if all that he is saying is something new. The decision to start a Bachelor of Education Degree in Educational Management and Administration started when the Barbados Labour Party was the Government of this country so do not get on as if nothing happened and you talk as if all these are things you did. They are continuum. What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, in relation to much of what the Honourable Member is saying is that:there is not enough.I have heard the Honourable Member for St. James South say earlier in here today that you train people in areas of special education and then they come back with a degree, or whatever, and they ought to go into teaching children in the main stream so that you spend the money, you provide them with the skill and then it is not applied for the purpose for which it is intended.

I want the Minister to say more than what he is saying. I want the Minister to say that the needs in nursery education require that they have X number of specialists in the various areas, what the areas are, spell them out, tell me how many have been trained, when the others will be trained and over what period. I want to hear in primary, education where you are turning out nearly a quarter of the nation's children who cannot read and write, how °many special education teachers you have trained and are training and are ready and equipped to do the work in the schools. To tell me that there is a special education teacher, in fact, a remedial reading teacher in every school in Barbados is telling me a lot of foolishness because some schools have 800 and 900 children and one remedial teacher in a school of 800 to 900 children is a mere drop in the ocean. It is nothing to be proud about because it is not a new' problem. It is a problem that has been discussed with the people in the education business for a long time. I am not satisfied with anything the Minister has said in here today, or any Minister on the other side has said in recent times. Nothing has been said to satisfy me that the Government consider this a major problem that requires immediate attention and that the resources wherever they come from must be found to correct that problem.

When you turn children out of school in these large numbers who cannot read and *write* at 16 years old they have no self-esteem. They have no confidence and as a result they get involved in a lot of anti-social behaviour and instead of spending the money on probation services, prisons, police and law courts, it might be useful for the Government to start spending some of those millions to correct the problem at its source.

I understand, Sir, that again the Drug Education Programme, the Ministry of Education, because of lack of resources provided by Government, is only scratching the surface. Teachers in the schools have to be trained not only in the detection of illegal drugs and in detection of unlawful usage by school children, but they must also

be trained to deal with a school environment where drugs is becoming more and more of a problem.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am glad you are making a speech on it. Give me a copy of it. Give a copy to the Minister of Education because he does not know what it is all about. 6.05 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am seeing and those of us who go around the law courts on a daily basis see increasing numbers of children of school age who are ending up before the corrective services because of their involvement in illegal drugs. I do .not believe that the kind of sustained assault on this problem is reflected anywhere in the Ministry of Education vote might be reflected in the vote of the Police who go out there and arrest them and put them in cells and bring them before the court. I believe, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that this matter has to be dealt with as a problem at source and that preventative action be taken through education which is not strong enough in the schools because the Government will not provide the resources to the Ministry of Education to carry out this particular venture.

I want to ask finally about technical, vocational education. A number of studies have been done in this area and the Ministry of Education has no end of documents, reports, analysis on the question of technical and vocational education, how it should be restructured, incorporated in our educational system to make the maximum benefit of the changes that are occurring in the society.

There was the St. Clair College in Ontario who, a few years ago, sent a team down here and worked with people in education in the Ministry to work out what I consider a good Report. They worked out a good Report to tackle this problem. I have seen a number of Reports on education and some of them are not very sound, some of them with a lot of the old things put in new packages. But their Report was a sound and solid Report and they made a number of useful recommendations to the Government. The Government has, up to now, done very little about implementation of the major recommendations in that Report the TVET. They have a TVET now, Sir. What is this now? The TVET is the Technical and Vocational...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Perhaps the Minister could tell me about that. I am not up-to-date on this TVET. I know about TBET but I do not know about TVET. The Minister could perhaps tell us. I want to hear about it in the context of a shift in the education we deliver in schools away from the old time literary education, the whole classical education towards education for life and work. Because a lot of the children who are turned out of school who cannot read and cannot write and soon do not even have the benefit of a solid technical, vocational background in schools that they still have a half a chance of making themselves useful citizens.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, these are not new issues I am raising. I do not have any fund of knowledge that is not available many times over in the Ministry of Education and to the Government. But what I am asking for is for the Government to appreciate the urgency for action in this area, if we are to arrest the decline that is so obviously overcoming much of our young people.

I want to make one final point, Sir, because I am tired of this. If the Minister has not learned anything up to now, there is not much chance that he will.

How can the Government be reducing the number of teachers per student in the schools at a time when all the evidence suggests that they want a better ratio? That we are having more and more children in our schools who need more and more personal attention. At this stage the Government is reducing the number of teachers. The teacher/pupil ratio keeps falling year after year, after year.

Mr. Chairman, I.would stop at this point and ask the Honourable Minister not to be facetious, get up and answer some of the questions that I have raised so that at the end of it we could feel a little bit more comfortable with the one hundred and something million dollars that we are spending on education over the next 12 months.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to respond to my neighbour from St. George South in the area of technical education. There is a misconception in this country that in one area you would hear that nothing was done about technical education, in another area you heard that r- starting *with* members on the other side — I must say that there were a few hand held computers which the Honourable Minister who followed the Honourable Member for St. George South and the Honourable Member for the City introduced in a couple schools. They were hand held. .It was the first attempt at the introduction of computers in the schools. Following my involvement and an attempt to follow through in that area both of us, on both sides were accused of attempting to confuse the people's young children and make robots out of them because the whole community was ignorant at the time of the advancement of technology as we hear now. We hear everyone expounding the view that nothing can be done unless we have technical education. Mr. Chairman, I know that you, Sir, in your private business way back then were exposed to that technology. To the best of my knowledge I recall your being exposed to it in the early seventies.

I hold no briefs for anyone, but I think that I probably can speak without any contradiction in this country that I have been in it before anybody else who currently lives in this country. One can go to the library and check articles written as far back as 1963 explaining what the use of the technology of computers is all about. Be that as it may.

Aside.

Hon C. V. WALKER: I am and I hope you reach it. The question asked by my friend, the Honourable Member for St. George South. Yes. The training institutions, the tertiary institutions have been over the last 5, 6 years working towards the improvement and the introduction and the exposure to'whosoever may come in terms of courses at Erdiston, at the Community College and indeed at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic.

Indeed what is not generally known is that there is a group of teachers and technical people who are members of an association who deal with the computers at Erdiston College and who have their own computers at home, teachers who stay at home and access the bulletin board.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Yes. As a matter of fact I happen to have been involved in that group. Indeed I am a member of that group because I have been associated with trying to encourage the teachers to get knowledge in this country about technology. They sit at home and they access the bulletin board at Erdiston and do the work that they want to do whether or not they use a Hayes Modem or whatever they use. But they are doing their work. These are the teachers within the framework. During the time when I was there, I recall that I was able, during my tenure there, to ensure that every secondary school now has a computer network. We have discussed this in here. I asked, during my time again, that the community, the PTAs and what not assist the Government by enhancing and adding terminals to the various networks because everything we deal with has to do with a cost. I have had donations from various agencies, not to me personally, but to the Government but through me for the Barbados Community College, for Erdiston College and for the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic. I do not go around shouting left and right because it is not for me. I am speaking on behalf of the people in Barbados.

We have to understand clearly that the teachers are at a certain level. We now have acceptance. We know all of the rapid development in terms of the data entry people and the various companies I am dealing with, the various airlines who now do their data entry work here, somewhat similar to what you were involved in years ago, Mr. Chairman. I happen to know that.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael West wants a little credit. 6.15 p.m.

I will give him a little credit only to say that other people like us who were sitting in here when the Government of Barbados wanted to order its first system and the Honourable Member, I must say at that time he realised that he did not know even how to spell computer, but he sought out two Barbadians, another friend of mine who unfortunately has passed, when this Parliament had voted the funds to purchase the computer and they had no concept because in typical North American style they were sold on an issue in terms of a package that was not relevant.

Aside.

Hon. C. ' V. WALKER: No, I am giving the Parliament a real joke. The Parliament ordered this thing and it could not work. Anyhow, Mr. Chairman, he must get some credit for correcting that problem. I will only say, Mr. Chairman, that the Honourable Member for St. George South is correct. The techa-ical education, and I am not one who believes that we most say that this particular party started something- any' that' particular party started something because Government is a continuum and we better believe that. Al f us will be .gone, our children will have to deal with it and we will hear about it. It is a continuum. Yes, when you talk about us in here I could tell you a lot if you have the time to talk about proposals from us in here which were enhancements to those projects and there will continue to be enhancements to that project and all that has come thereafter. And I hope that we, as Members in here, after we, in our divide in terms of our differences realise that whenever you finish we still have to think in terms of what the future holds for the country and for the future students within this country. I am much obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: I have deliberately not intervened in the debate on education today because I think that my friend the Honourable Member for St. George South and the Honourable Member for the City my friend, more than adequately took care of the fledgling Minister of Education who obviously is still around his ears and his feet has not yet begun to have a steadiness that is required for such a weighty subject.

The Honourable Member for St. George North has taken the intervention of the Member for St. George South on technical education as limited to the introduction of computers . into our schools. But his intervention was

much wider than that. There is no doubt at all that technical education remains to a large extent the cinderella of education in this country. It has not received the status nor the impetus that is required if Barbados is to move rapidly into answering the needs at the work place and in many respects as well at an intellectual and philosophical basis the needs of our country.

I read with great interest the very analytical speech made by the Principal of the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic at the last graduation ceremony. I was not here, Sir, but I read his speech and I believe that he has made some very telling points which the country should sit up and notice.

The first point he made, Sir, is that the teacher in the technical and vocational field is not given the professional status and recognition that is due to him. That is a fact, Sir. I believe that the Government must reflect in its salaries, in its training approach and in its status and promotional areas that it is serious about giving the teacher of technical and vocational subjects the status that is demanded.

Secondly he makes the point, Sir, that there is a lot of confusion in the minds of people concerning where the subject should fit into the curriculum, whether it is at the tertiary level, the secondary level or the primary level. Again he is quite correct.

Thirdly he makes the point that the institutions themselves who cater in this field seem to have no regard to what is being provided at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic.

He also makes the point and I underscore this point, Sir, that there is a dire shortage of places within our educational system for the number of applicants for the subjects of vocational and technical training.

I have underscored that. I have spoken on that subject before. The figures bear out his criticism. I recognise that an effort is now being made to coordinate between the Barbados Community College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and Erdiston Teachers Training College to try to coordinate an effort towards technical education.

Let me give you what I believe, Mr. Chairman, is a philosophical reason for this. It is that Barbadians still do not accept the fact that a person who works with his hands and has his skills is equal to a person who works with his brain. In short, Sir, the labourer is the same as the doctor, the accountant, now the computer expert, or indeed the lawyer.

It is a class snobbery that one has found in this society. It is reflected, for instance, in the statements of the former Right Honourable Member for St. John that you would never see a carpenter's son become a Prime Minister of Barbados. It is reflected from that type of attitude. It might have been a casual remark. When he was alive I have taken it up with him so I am not saying anything behind the dead. It is reflected in that attitude because it is ingrained in most of us in this community, particularly of that generation, that there is a vast difference between the person who goes up to Oxford or Cambridge or now the University of the West Indies and the person who goes to a polytechnic and who is as skilled in my view and sometimes more skilled than the person who merely is on the intellectual level. We have to change that attitude in this country.

6.25 p.m.

I believe that whatever is the skill of a person and, if that person achieves excellence to the best of their ability in it, then they should be recognized not only in terms of words. They should be recognized in practical terms of payment as well. That is one of the reasons why I have always supported very strongly the efforts that have been made towards widening the curriculum and the opportunities for technical and vocational education in this country.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South spoke today about the role which the Barbados Labour Party had planned for the Deighton Griffith School. I believe that some of our schools must specialize at the technical level. For instance, the Garrison Secondary School which is in the constituency of the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South has an excellent reputation in the field of printing and in some of the other technical fields as well. I believe that there is no reason why our children who are going to Harrison College, Queen's College, St. Michael or St. Leonard's or whichever it is should not be able to shift and go where the specialist teachers are in the particular specialization which they want. I do not believe that all of our children must become academics. As a matter of fact, I think that there is going to be limited opportunity in Barbados in the 21st century for the people who are concentrating on merely academic subjects.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that education is more than the world of work. It is much more than that. But I think that we are getting it wrong in debasing those people who have their emphasis on skills, arts and craft and placing too much of our emphasis on those who are going the academic route. If there is one- plea that I am going to make when this Development Plan has to be taken over by the Barbados Labour Party because I do not think that this Government is going to be able to achieve it in the limited time still available to them, it is that we should begin to place more money behind this field.

I have always been a supporter of the efforts made by, for instance, the Barbados Workers' Union in order to upgrade the skills of their workers at their own cost very often. I am a supporter of employers having the foresight to put into their budgets money for improving the skills of people on the job. This is very, very necessary in this community and, therefore, I hope that when the Honourable Member for St. Peter becomes the next Prime Minister of this country...

Asides.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: If the Honourable Members on the front bench would do their job, it will not be too long either. But when he becomes the Prime Minister, I hope that he would take and I am sure he will take seriously the necessity to put more resources in this field.

Sir, I want to make a short statement on the computer programme about which the Honourable Member for St. George South spoke. I accept his *bona fide,* Sir, but he came under the cuts that have been institutionalized now in the Estimates and elsewhere in the financial workings of this country. When it came to computer education, he came under those cuts. At St. Matthias we had computers and some of them were donated by people. I do not want to even mention the Honourable Member. I do not like to pump myself, but some of them were donated. But what we could not get were teachers who were trained- in the field. I am talking about two years or three years the Government cut back the budget to the extent that that programme had at one stage to be run on a voluntary basis. I telephoned around in my constituency to find citizens who would lend their time to help teach the teachers how to operate and to teach computer education at the primary level. On Saturday and afternoons at the St. Matthias Primary School, you will find that this programme is continuing through the efforts of a few teachers and other citizens in the country.

I believe that the computer must now be accepted like everything else that has become everyday in our lives. Those of us of our generation, Mr. Chairman, may find it difficult although he was ahead in this respect, as I understand from the Honourable Member for St. George South, in the discipline of having to be retrained in knowing about computers. But we may not adapt as readily. The 3 or 5 year olds who are playing with the Super Nintendos or whatever they are using, are skilled in this field early and it is becoming easy for them to adapt to the world of computer and computer technology. Even those who are disabled and the mentally retarded children are able to take the discipline of the computer and work wonders. I think that Barbados, if we are looking for using knowledge base industry as one of the ways of improving our economic circumstances, must put on the training resources in order to have the humans that are available to carry out the job of change in our community.

I end by entering a plea, Sir, for upgrading the status of these teachers, rewarding them properly, making sure that they are as eligible as anyone else for promotion through the system which is not happening with them, making more places and more money available. The Government will want to know where it is going to get the resources from, because the Minister got up and said like all the Ministers that the Government will have within its plan if the financial circumstances will allow. The financial circumstances will allow if the Government will stop planning houses of madness.

The Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South came in here in 1988 with a plan to build the Sherbourne Centre at that stage as an examination centre. He said that was the primary aim and that it may cater for a limited amount of nonLconvention business but business in the nature of conventions. The debates .of this House will reflect that I challenged the Honourable Member then ana said to him: "Have you looked at cost overruns? What is going to be the total cost? How long is it going to take to finish this project?" This project was to have been finished for the CPA Meeting in 1989. He said that I had no belief in the skills of the Barbados artisans and workmen and that it is going to be acieved. I warned the Honourable Member that I knew enough about Building Law and Contract Practices that he is going to be establishing such a cost overrun that it will cost the taxpayers of this country too much. At the time his estimate was under $10 million. I think it stood then at $6 million or $7 million. Today the Honourable Member said that it has cost us to the end of March in this financial year $43 million. There is another $5 million in the Estimates. They have put in a few dollars for a manager and two technicians to run it for the whole year.

Now I believe that any right thinking person in this country must say to this Government that that is a colossal waste. We warned him that it was the wrong place to put the institution. I said that nobody begins planning unless you know what is going to be the total cost. Frankly, if the Government wants to know how to get cost effectiveness in the system, have proper plans before you go into foolishness like that. That is how we will be able to deal with the problems of Barbados and not by hifaluted words. The real people's problems, not the quick criticism of the Minister of Finance that he does not like poor people. We will stop with the foolish rhetoric that you get in the country about going back to the plantocracy, the aristocracy class and what not when people object on fundamental grounds to mismanagement of this economy and of the resources of the country.

6.35 p.m. .

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I make a very strong plea as we come to the closing of this debate on Education for us to reorient our thinking and to place our limited resources, admittedly limited resources, in the ways to achieve excellence within the system, to cut out waste and to prevent elitism from being triumphant again. Look around this House. I doubt whether there is one of us in here who has not been of fathers and grandfathers from the lower income group.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: It is only by education in the broad base sense and hard work that we are going to change our community into one based on meritocracy and achievement and excellence. That is the plea I made under this Head, Sir.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I want to say a word on Culture. The Estimates reflect that there is a vote of $1.2 million for promotion and development of cultural awareness. This figure includes a grant to the Landship, the Barbados Arts Council, Bim Magazine, the National Cultural Foundation, the Barbados National Trust, the Barbados Dance Theatre and other cultural organisations. It also includes the Churches. I mention all these institutions because the figure of $1.2 million divided over all these institutions represents nothing more than a mere bagatelle.

The Ministry of Culture started in 1977 and in 1978 the vote in the Ministry of Culture was higher than the vote today. Subsequent to the hosting of CARIFESTA in 1981 there was a lot of noise being made by members on the other side about the usefulness, or lack of it, of the expenditure on CARIFESTA. I felt vindicated when I heard a Minister of Culture very recently say that Crop Over activity generates about $60 million a year. It needs to be repeated, Sir. A Minister of Culture on that side, after belly aching for more than a decade on the spending and hosting of CARIFESTA in 1981, admits that Crop Over generates about $60 million in economic activity each year.

If you wanted a financial vindication on the hosting of CARIFESTA, *you have* got it. But, Mr. Chairman, I am not too concerned about the financial aspect in this particular contribution. I have always held the view, and I have stated on the Floor of this Parliament on many occasions, that the development of a nation or a people involves more than economic development, or development of the material aspect of their lives. That for a country, a people, to truly develop, a lot of attention has to be paid to those aspects of human endeavour that make for a refinement of the personalities of people and nations, and it is in this area that the Ministry of Culture, under the Barbados Labour Party, was a major instrument for a refining of that side of our nation to bring all in harmony so that we could advance in tandem.

A lot of things have happened since then, Sir. I said here last year during the debate on the Estimates that the Government.....

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: May, why don't you behave yourself?

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order, please.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Yes, but he does not learn. I am talking about refinement. A year ago in the debate on the Estimates, Sir, under the Head of Culture I said at that time that the Government was pulling the plug on the National Cultural Foundation and that it was slow-poisoning the Cultural Foundation. They did not have the courage to lock its head off, so they slow-poisoned it and they did it by carefully removing all the subventions they were giving it. During this past year the National Cultural Foundation was not receiving enough money from the Government even to pay the salaries of the officers who work there. I predicted that just what has happened now would happen. The National Cultural Foundation has now been destroyed by the Government, not only by starving it of funds but by allowing a number of decisions they have made to go into the public domain and then bobbed and weaved from the consequences of those statements. For instance, Sir, three Ministers of Culture successively in this Government have recommended that the National Cultural Foundation be restructured and a number of people sent home, and they recQmmended that the Director of Culture be given his walking papers. When I made an appeal to the Minister of Finance to make more funds available for the National Cultural Foundation, because of its pivotal role in the cultural festivals in this country, the Minister let it be known that the only additional money he was willing to make available to the National Cultural Foundation was money for severance. Hard on the heels of that statement they started sending home people from the National Cultural Foundation.

I am not going to spend a lot of time, Mr. Chairman, in getting into these shenanigans. What I do know, Sir, is that this country has benefitted in a very significant way from the pioneer role that the Barbados Labour Party in the period from 1976 to 1986. The last Minister of Culture,

the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, got in this Parliament recently and made the most scathing attack on the Government's cultural policy; an attack that was more scathing than has ever been made from this side.

I want to look at a few things that need to be looked at very carefully. The Crop Over Festival has developed into a major Caribbean Festival, not only a Barbados Festival. It is an international Festival.
6.45 p.m.

It brings to Barbados during the summer thousands of persons who keep the hotels open and remember that before the Festival had developed the way it had that hotels used to close down in the summer ostensibly for refurbishing. It has been a tremendous boost to tourism. There is no question at all about its importance in that area. We had also started to have the Esso Jazz Festival. That itself was beginning to bring a number of persons particularly from North America into Barbados and the Government has allowed that Festival to slip out of the hands of Barbados and into St. Lucia.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I really am not getting any protection from you. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West is making so much noise he is giving me a headache.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The real problem is that I am having the cross-talk from both sides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I was saying, Mr. Chairman, that Crop-Over has developed into an international Festival and all the benefits are now accruing from such a festival. We have also had the Jazz Festival that the Government, through its ineptness, has allowed to slip out of the hands of Barbados and sailed across the sea to St. Lucia.

We have also, Mr. Chairman, a programme that we started in the schools, and this is the part that I would like the Minister of Education to take note of — the process of teaching and learning can be made easier if there are certain tools used to assist it. One that was used back in the late 1970s and into the 1980s was the concept of theatre in education. A lot of children who cannot read and comprehend a textbook about the history of slavery can, in one hour in a schoolyard without any props get through theatre in education a grasp of the whole idea of the period of slavery and what it was.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order, please. Is the Honourable Member for St. George South still addressing the Chair?

Mr. L. R. TULL: Yes. Mr. Chairman, I was mentioning the concept of theatre in education as one of the concepts that makes for easier learning where children find difficulty in learning through reading. The cut in the vote ...

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: When I sit down I am going to be making bare noise, Sir. I give early warning.

Asides.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the cutting of the vote in Culture adversely affects a number of the important developments that have been made not only in cultural activity in Barbados but in the delivery of education in the schools. There was a time when the Honourable Minister that was asking a question earlier from his seat about the National Development *Scholarships* and the areas in which they are granted, and that they were only granted in areas of traditional academic subject, but that is not true. There was a time when National Development Scholarships were, offered in the Theatre Arts and in Music, many aspects of the arts. I do not know whether it is being continued. If it is being continued I applaud that because that is an area of our educational development that has been neglected for a very long time.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am glad to hear that they are still travelling in that area. But let me get back to the politics of this thing, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just in two minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Two minutes is enough time for the politics of it. The Government made a recommendation to chase away the Director of Culture. The Rt. Honourable Prime Minister, as is his wont, single-handedly pushed off the rest of the Cabinet and said it cannot work.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is misleading the House, Sir. The Honourable Member cannot make that statement about what happened in the Cabinet. The Honourable Member is not a member of the Cabinet. He cannot make that statement. He knows that. It is not true, Sir. I am stating that it is not true.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am not a member of the Cabinet, thank God. I would not want to be in that Cabinet because, among other things, that Cabinet has so many leaks that you hear everything that happens in a Cabinet meeting shortly after the meetings are held so if you want to know if I hear, yes I hear.

But it is a fact, Mr. Chairman, that three Ministers of Culture have recommended that in a restructuring they dismiss the Director of Culture. It is also a fact that the Prime Minister, as is his wont, singlehandedly stood up against the entire Cabinet and said it must not happen. Now I am not into the argument over whether you should send home anybody or not. That is not the point I am making. I really am in no position to judge ,whether the persons who work in the National Cultural Foundation are competent or otherwise so I am not making any argument in that respect.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: *On a* point of order, Sir. I am stating categorically that I have been in the Cabinet while three Ministers have been the Ministers of *Culture* and no three Ministers *sent any* recommendation to the Cabinet to dismiss the Director of Culture. I am stating that as a fact. I am stating it categorically. The Honourable Member is misleading the committee.

Mr. L. R. TULL: In a meeting of this House on March 1, 1994, the Honourable Member for *St. Lucy who* was Minister of Culture admitted what I have *said.* I wish the Honourable Member for St. Michael West would not keep jumping up and putting his foot in his mouth.

Hon. B. M. TAM; On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is saying *that* the Honourable Member for St. Lucy said *that* three *Cabinet* Ministers sent recommendations to the Cabinet? Is that what he is saying, Sir? The Honourable Member is not *in* his seat. I state as a Minister that it is not true and he is now saying that an empty chair said it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I really do *not* see where this is carrying the debate.

Mr. L. R. TULL: This is how the Honourable Member for St. Michael West feels about the Honourable Member for St. Lucy since he is no longer a Member of the Cabinet that is he only an empty seat.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Mr. L. R. TULL: My time is up, Sir, so be it. You can only make me *get up* again.

Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Chairman, I get very concerned when I hear, as I have done over the past few days, so much about the sending home of people and whether it is on one side or the other'side of the House, I think that we have to concern ourselves very much about these open statements about the termination of individuals especially since very often the statements have been forced to be made in circumstances where the individuals did not seem to have the opportunity to defend themselves. If the Government is under or in a position where there are contemplations of several such terminations as I have been hearing, then I would wish to serve notice that we would be in for a period of intense dislocation in this country. I mean industrial dislocation.

6.55 p.m.

I would be very pleased if the Minister of Labour would then wear his hat as a Shop Steward and come to the assistance of the workers of this country in circumstances where there was such an onslaught on the rights of individuals to employment and in the event where that employment is being threatened without the right to due process.

I rose though, Sir, to make one or two comments which are not necessarily related to that initial one. It relates particularly to the question of the treatment of other institutions and the benefits that they derive from the grant by the Government of some $850 000. Within that body that is covered on page 94 of the Estimates, one would find that the Barbados Workers' Union Labour College, the National Union of Public Workers and other organizations are mentioned. I would wish to use this occasion to ask the Government to take note of the fact that we are looking at this grant at a particular period in our plans for the redevelopment needs as a people.

The training which is being conducted at the Labour College of the BWU, and I venture to say at the training centre of the National Union of Public Workers is not training for shop stewards to teach persons how to get around being terminated, or how to handle a grievance. I think we have gone much beyond that these days and, to a very great extent, that that kind of training is done on an evening by evening basis where there is no need for grants.

We are in a situation where there is national *training* and 'national enlightenment and, furthermore, where there is training in new skills as a direct consequence of the severe stabilisation programme and the new structural adjustment programme which has been brought on in this country over the last 3 years or so. Within that arrangement for restructuring it has been the Government's stated position that persons would be retrained for new jobs and to be able to handle themselves and prepare themselves for a job market which no longer follows the previous structures.

I think it is fair to say that the Government has not been able adequately or sufficiently to address the required changes that have taken place and, quite naturally, even if Government could, we expect the employers should show their responsibility to train. And we believe that although the trained worker does not work for the trade

unions concerned, but works for an employer — we believe that the trade union, if it is a national organization, has to take the responsibility, I should add, to train the individual into new work attitudes, to train that person in the preparation that persons should have towards nation building and towards the changing of attitudes in nation building in the new society that has to be Barbados.

It is true that the worker has not himself or herself contributed to the present predicament in which we find ourselves but that predicament is with us and the worker very often has to become multi skilled. There have to be changes in the attitudes of workers towards pay structures, payments by results systems, attitudes to a number of situations which are related to the environment of the job. I do not think that the Government of the day should expect that that can be the total responsibility of the trade union movement, be it the one trade union or the other one. Nor do I believe that the employers should take it to be the responsibility of the trade union movement; but that we should all of us accept that it is the responsibility of the nation to have everybody who is in the world of work recognize that there must be new attitudes to work, if Barbados will become truly competitive and able to improve its place as a country which will take the forefront in the Caribbean and hold its own in the wider world.

In those circumstances I *would believe,* Sir, that the Government should recognize that what we are doing in the labour movement is carrying a very *significant* part of what is in fact the responsibility of the *Government* for training, especially training for those people who have become unemployed after the stabilisation programme.

We carry out training in significant areas for new skills particularly in the area of computer training and that is a very expensive exercise which I believe by *now* the Government should have become aware of. In fact a former Minister of Education has made it clear *sotto voce* that he himself has been aware of the tremendous work which we have done in that area and that he has increased the grant to the trade union movement. But he is not there now and I am not sure that there is the same level of recognition of that responsibility or the same level of contribution which is being made. I would wish to enter a particular plea either for the Government to recognize the need for us to continue that exercise and to help us to do it or if it does not want to go in that direction to take on its responsibility to train in this specific area.

We are, for example, very concerned now as a people in this matter of productivity improvements at the level of the work place. I have no quarrel with that, Mr. Chairman, as an argument. I believe that attitudes to work have got to be changed, and my organization also believes that. But I think that it is an uphill task, not beyond us, but one that we all have to work on and work on from the point of view of significant training in attitude, training in providing people as well with a new outlook on the world of work, one in which we might be able, if we try hard enough, to remove some of the basic suspicions which exist at the level of the work place between the worker at his plant or his machine and the employer in his office or the supervisor who may walk the line. Because of those existing suspicions, some of them of long standing, we have a particular difficulty in having people being able to accept new approaches to payment systems, to have people accept that, within an arrangement where any increased output takes place within the time and using the energies they previously used they can properly share and derive benefit from and that the country at large will also benefit: If there is going to be an effort made by the trade union movement to change those attitudes then there has got to be support for those efforts by the Government itself, particularly given the kinds of pressures that we are under as a people and as a country at this time. Whether the grant comes under the Ministry of Labour or under the Ministry of Education as it should be here I would believe that the Government would have to be able to recognize that people cannot suddenly and overnight be brought to the level of that attitudinal change. And because they cannot be brought overnight to that level of attudinal change they have to be taken through the process training and re-orientation necessary. This is an expensive exercise, but it is an exercise in which we ha got to put our greatest effort in the interest of the nation particularly those of our younger folk who are yet to enter the job market.

In that respect, Mr. Chairman, I think, as some of the colleagues who spoke before me have stated, that we have to move away, to a greater extent than we now do, in our focus from training or education purely in strictly academic lines. I am saying that not only have wT got to train for other things, as the Honourable Member for Christ Church West has stated quite well, but I am saying that, even as we ttain in the old disciplines, that part of the training and the education has to be conducted in an atmosphere in which we are teaching new values or revised values at the same time. Because unless we are able to get across to the individual that that person's level of academic excellence or level of technical excellence should not be seen as being a level of excellence for that individual by himself or herself but merely as a vehicle through which that person can improve the quality of life for others as well, then we would have advanced nothing within our society.

7.05 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, that individual at school who might be spoken to at that level cannot be expected to take that kind of advice and that kind of guidance seriously unless within the total community there is a recognition by the

school person that it is not a situation of do as I tell you and not do as you see me do.

I am making the point that we have at the level of senior persons in this community, and I do not refer only to Members in this Honourable Chamber, I am referring to grown-ups generally. We have as a whole and certainly in the field of work, we have to change our entire outlook to work and our entire outlook to matters of high levels of morality. And as the Member for Christ Church South said, speaking on another item, we have to concern ourselves that we do not begin to get so full of ourselves and thinking of crime only in terms of rapes and murders that we do not realise that the individual who goes and takes home a pencil every day from work is being no less dishonest than a person who goes to the bank and carries away large sums of money.

The level of ingenuity that comes about by believing that the world only revolves around ourselves is the level of thinking which would lead to tremendous distortions in the way our school people think and the way that our work people think and I would want, Mr. Chairman, to re-emphasise the point to the Ministry of Education, that in the training and in the specialised work that they are going to be providing for people in the institutions there must be some time given over to trying to build back into the community a set of values which are different from just the pure level of values that relate . to material things by themselves.

One last point I would wish to make, Sir, and that is that I share the concern of others who have themselves before me spoken about the matter of the future of tertiary education in this country. I know that there have been very many statements made and counter statements and denials but it seems to be fairly clear that we are moving towards a stage where tertiary education may in fact move outside of the scope of those who do not have the money to pay for it.

We have all been of the view that education is one of those significant things which brings us all to a common position of equality and equality in opportunity. If we move away, Mr. Chairman, from a position where the opportunity exists for us all to have a starting point that is equal, then we may have a difficulty down the road.

It seems to me that Government has got to be able to find a mechanism by which we may have to determine those levels of disciplines into which the University might not be able to overspread or over extend itself but at the same time we must not find ourselves in Barbados in a position where the children of the poor are unable to look forward to a university education as in fact many of us have been able to do coming out of the provision of the University of the West Indies. We would think, Sir, that maybe one of the ways by which we can do this is having efforts at streamlining the institutions.

The new Minister of Education — because I think we had about 3 speeches today from Ministers of Education — but we mean the current Minister of Education has indicated that he is moving towards the situation of greater rationalisation and coordination among the institutions..I would hope that that rationalisation and coordination could become so efficient that any wastages, which now take place, can be reduced and that the savings from greater efficiency can be better used for providing for the future of our tertiary education, thereby ensuring that Barbados still remains a socialist community in which the very poor have equality of opportunity before the law as others who are more wealthy.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, I rise to make one or two comments especially on the positions taken by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. I will start there and then I will conclude with the aspects of culture of which he spoke.

I agree with, by and large, most of what the Honourable Member said concerning the over-riding emphasis which this country has placed on pure academic achievement. I must confess that one of the reasons why there was no headlong rush into zoning was because I considered it necessary for some emphasis to be placed on the very things which the Honourable Member raised. To see if we could possibly have schools within the secondary sector specialising in certain areas, and the list I give is not exhaustive: information technology, agricultural sciences, technical studies, electronics, air conditioning, business education, commercial studies, music, commerce, interior decorating and designing, arts and craft.

I am including in that, Mr. Chairman, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic as well. I am one of the people who believe firmly that there is absolutely no reason why this educational system in Barbados today is not mature enough to accept that we could have Barbados Scholars in' the areas which I have just outlined not coming from the traditional academic institutions. I firmly believe that and no matter what enemies I cause in Barbados that is the line which I will be pursuing. I make that plain. In any event we started late and I see no reason why what we call newer secondary schools ...

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: At least my position would be known. Whether I get licked up or not, I do not care. Let me make that plain. I see no reason why, in what we

call newer secondary schools, on which we spend tons of money year after year, which are now being improved with all sorts of new structures in which teachers are well trained, have been effectively shut out • of higher achievement in education simply because they have not been specialising in pure academia.

I am from one of the old Grammar ,Schools but I do not regard it necessary to keep driving education down those lines. Not now, when we are about to enter a new century: We have to look at it again. We have to think about it again, and the society has to be mature enough to accept it and to accept that there is a level of human achievement which must be recognised, which must be accepted for what it is, and not necessarily in the areas of pure academia.

Of course I am not saying that persons who have a particular bent and a specialty in the areas which are not purely academic should not have a firm, strong academic basis and that is my position. I am not saying, Sir, that anybody or particular sector of the educational milieu will be discriminated against. That is not the point I am making. 7.15 p.m.

I am saying the reverse that whether or not a degree or an element of elitism should remain in education, but at least other persons not pursuing pure academics, must be given a fair chance to be recognized for their achievements in the areas outside of Maths and' English, and it is as simple as that. I think that the officers in the Ministry are quite aware of my position. So the Honourable Member for Christ Church West needs not fear that his words will fall on deaf ears because we are with him on that point.

The question of culture is a bit more troublesome. Not a bit more troublesome, it is troublesome and the Honourable Member for St.. Lucy already spoke on difficulties and problems which were experienced at the National Cultural Foundation. The Committee can have my assurance that those difficulties have been by and large settled. The NCF I would think is on a path of sustained development and a good Crop-Over will be had this year. We are in the process of having it completely reorganized and the Director and the members of the Board are hard at work. This is a newly constituted Board and it has been segmented into various committees which are hard at work to ensure that Barbadians, as was said by the Honourable Member for St. George South which was the only good point he made for the afternoon that we will not be a country of Philistines, will be able to appreciate the finer things of life like art, music and the theatre and matters of that type. We are well on the way, Sir. Fortunately, I have in my hand the proposal for the changes in the NCF but the programme for this year 1994/95 stretches some .28 pages. I really cannot and I do not think that you will permit me considering the time to dig into all of that right now.

One other aspect, Mr. Chairman, which I would like to stress is that we are going to move quickly to have this recommended and accepted that the Crop-Over Festival be declared a National Festival and that this society no longer sees it as something which belongs to the NCF.

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: You see, Sir, I am being asked certain questions which only shows me that the Honourable Member who asked those questions did not read his Estimates. If it was made a National Festival, the NCF would not find it necessary to budget for things like security forces from the Police and other areas. It matters because on the books of the NCF there are recurring costs to other Government institutions which means that we are in a deficit. We are always in debt to other institutions that belong to Government. We pay people. The Honourable Member should remember last week or week before that a supplementary was got in the tune of over $800,000 to clear debt belonging to the NCF. A large chunk of it involved the Police, Defence Force and other arms of the state. One good reason why we should move towards that is the elimination of that accounting procedure that the NCF is always in debt. The second point is that it would mean that institutions would not feel that they are contributing in terms of their annual contributions to the NCF that does not belong to them. There is no doubt in my mind or in the minds of any Honourable Members in this House that the NCF over the last 9 years or so h'as done a tremendous job in exposing and promoting culture in. Barbados. Many aspects of culture were thought of as dead, as I have never understood the game warn. I think the only person who may know anything about it is the Honourable Member for St. George North.

Aside.

'Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Sir, I understand that it is an ancient African game brought over by our ancestors which died out some years ago, except for a very few people in Speightstown and now it is revived. You may know "pitching and killer" but it is not the same thing.

The Festival is under the aegis of the NCF which is well known. Unfortunately, as was stated by Members on the other side, yes we did go through a bad patch and some festivals were lost to the NCF. But I have no doubt that we . will be making every effort to recover all of the lost ground and improve upon it.

One other aspect which is absolutely necessary at this point is that I think the artistes of all types have

now moved rapidly into the international arena of copyright law and protection of intellectual property. I think that the NCF is in the forefront of this as well as the organisation BAMSI of protecting the intellectual property rights of many artistes in this country if for no other reason that within the last dear or so I think much credit must flow to that organisation in that regard. It is also a very lucrative area of activity. The NCF has copyrighted its logos. It has copyrighted its special words and trademark. It has copyrighted words like "PIC' OF * THE CROP" and "KADOOMENT" which can be put on sale or leased for money.

The Honourable Member for St. George South need not worry. Yes, we are a bit strained for finance and funding. But I think that the newly constituted Board of the NCF as well as the newly organized management are in the process of completely reorienting their approaches to financial administration of the NCF and for the acquisition of financial support for the NCF. I have no doubt in my mind that Barbados will be exceedingly surprised and happy at the sort of Crop-Over celebration and festival which the NCF will be staging this year. There is no doubt in my mind that I will be let down. I will not be let down by the officers there, the Ministry, and the Board of the NCF.

Sir, as I said, there is a massive programme on and one of the first things which we are trying to do is to put culture back in the community centres and school pastures. We will do all we can to make sure that we go in St. George South. The Honourable Member needs help and we will do all that we can to help him out. I think there are plans already on. There was some talk about the use of the Sherbourne Centre. There are plans already afoot for cultural activity in that area. So I think, Sir, that there needs not to be any overwhelming cause for concern in that regard. After the Conference is finished, the Sherbourne Centre will be put to good use in spite of all that it has been called.
7.25 p.m.

I have said the cost as of March is $43 million. The Global Conference, the Heads of Governments Conference and other activities which are planned for the Centre will show us down the road whether or not the expenditure was justified, or whether or not the country can be proud of the fact that we have found it necessary to be "on display" before the eyes of the world. I do not understand how the Honourable Members of the Opposition would be asking us to display ourselves before the eyes of the world in circumstances and conditions which would make us the laughing stock of the international community. It may be just a touch of jealousy, but we will outlive that and put on a good show. They will all be invited to all the activities.

I beg to move that Head 34 stand part.

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

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until Monday, the 21st day of March 1994 at 10 o'clock in the morning.

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

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

RESUMPTION

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

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Education is not now in his place. I wish to indicate that on the basis of his having given the House the wrong information I would wish to have the Head of Education and Culture recommitted. In the course of receiving information from his officials, he gave the House the wrong information. When he comes, I would want to recommit the Head.

Head 20 – MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS – $3 574 232 AS AMENDED

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, this Head relates to the expenditure of the Ministry of Economic Affairs which is responsible for economic and social affairs and in particular with respect to the provision of expert policy and technical advice to the Minister of Economic Affairs and the Cabinet on matters relating to economic and social policy including monetary policy and economic planning; the detailed, preparation and careful monitoring of implementation of national economic plans and advising on the priority and viability of public investment projects and proposals; the efficient operation of certain

centrally administered, services, monitoring the central and overall economy, to promote and monitor all aspects of productivity growth and to develop methodology for maintaining productivity for the public and private sectors; and also to assist in the provision of technical assistance in respect of the devising of productivity related payment schemes.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to spend sometime this morning particularly in relation to the issue of productivity and the work of the Productivity Board which is very important to , the economic programme which this Government has opted to pursue, as part of its structural adjustment programme and also as part of the stabilization programme which was entered into with the assistance of the International Monetary Fund in 1991. In that regard I believe the House would be well informed if the opportunity was taken to enlighten it on the proposed work programme and budget of the National ' Productivity Board which has been established.

I believe that it is common knowledge that the National Productivity Board which is chaired by Dr. Andrew Downes consists of representatives of professional interests, the private and public sector — meaning the trade union movement, representatives of employers or private sector interest and in this case it is the Employers Confederation and the Barbados Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Economic Affairs. This Board was established during the course of the last calendar year. In fact, it was established on August 31, 1993 and the Act sets out the actual composition of the Board. It was established pursuant to the Protocol on prices and incomes and it was viewed by the social partners who negotiated that Protocol as being an important element of the administrative framework that was necessary to develop not only methodologies for the measurement of productivity in the work place both in public and private sector, but that it was also important to have institutionalized in Barbados a programme of productivity awareness which places the issue of productivity at the forefront of our economic development.

The reason for this is because we have opted, Mr. Chairman, under our stabilization programme and our structural adjustment programme to address the issue of productivity as an alternative to looking at other issues which, as a matter of consensus, the Barbadian population on both sides of the House has essentially said should not form part of our adjustment programme. So that the functions of this Board, which is essentially an autonomous consultative body, are to advise both the public and private sector on methodologies to measure productivity in the public and private sector and to provide technical advice and assistance towards devising productivity relating to the payment scheme; to make themselves available for consultation in any matter within its jurisdiction which may be brought before it by any fact finding or arbitration body; to assist in the development of improved methods of work organisation geared to enhance productivity levels in Barbados; to promote and monitor all aspects of productivity growth; to design, advise on and conduct suitable educational programmes intended to stimulate public awareness and understanding of the need to improve the quality of work performance nationally and also in the context of international trends and standards; to assist in creating a climate which would maximize the use of productivity gains in collective bargaining exercises; and to do other matters which under the Act the Board is empowered to do particularly in relation to the development of the other objectives.

The Board also has the power, Mr. Chairman, in the performance of its functions to request and collect relevant information relating to wages, salaries and other income and that powers derived from Section 6 of the Act under which it was established. The Board has been meeting and has devised a work programme for its activities and a budget and this work programme is essentially devised around two aspects of its work:

(1) in measuring and monitoring productivity; (2) in

educational and promotional programmes.

In respect of this, Sir, the Board has developed a work programme from April 1994 to March 1995 in essence to continue pursuing a structured and realistic approach to achieve the objectives of the Board. This programme has at its focus, Mr. Chairman, nine critical elements which are very important to the work of the Productivity Board and they are:

(1) the publication of a quarterly newsletter;

(2) the development of a documentation centre;

(3) a seminar programme;

(4) a school promotional programme;

(5) a business and workers award programme;

(6) a research programme;

(7) a staff training programme; (8) a short term

technical assistance programme.

Apart from that, Sir, the Board is going to encourage the attendance in overseas seminars and visits to other

National Productivity Boards and Centres both within and outside of the region.

The publication, Mr. Chairman, of the quarterly newsletter is very important and the Board sees this as providing both the public and private sector and actors both in the political, social and economic field with key information on prgductivity improvement issues as well as the ongoing activities which the Board undertakes. This newsletter will be published in the first quarter of the Board's activity and will be disseminated,to 1,000 persons in the first instance.

The Board also sees it as important, and so does the Government, to establish a documentation centre. Therefore, the Board at its new headquarters will establish a documentation centre which is now in its embryonic stage of development. As it stands in Barbados today, there is very limited material available relating to productivity. They can put together a relatively significant pool of resources to purchase this material and also to develop the information centre. This would be available to the public and the object of it would essentially be subscriptions to journals and periodicals as well as books and monographs together with special reports and then other related documentation which may be gathered from a variety of sources *which* may be relevant to the Productivity Board. 10.10 a.m.

With regard to the seminar programme, it is envisaged that during the 12-month period of the work programme six seminar workshops on various aspects of productivity management will be mounted. These activities will be developed and implemented with the assistance of consultants or facilitators who will be specialists in productivity management, and in order to ensure the successful implementation of this, component administrative arrangements will be made to ensure that the conference facilities and so on are made available to the participants, particularly the social partners, so that they can develop their own offshoot seminar workshop programmes focussing on their aspects and their particular concerns. All of this is reflected in the budget provided for under Head 20, which we are now debating. The Productivity Board Secretariat also sees it as important to conduct seminars and workshops with public sector officials from selected Government Departments to sensitise and educate them on productivity related issues.

Mr. Chairman, you will have noted that in my presentation at the beginning of this particular debate, I sought to highlight the importance of the measurement of productivity in the Public Service and suggested that the time had come, and I believe the Government is of that view and the other social partners by and large, that the payment of increased emoluments in one form or another should be tied, particularly in the Public Service, to productivity, and that schemes would have to be developed for the payment of increments on the basis of monitored and evaluated productivity. This is not as difficult an exercise as it appears.

When we were in our discussions, Mr. Chairman, the particular concern was that people felt that there were some aspects of Government operations for which productivity could not be measured because there certainly is no known criterion for measuring, for example, the work of police officers, firemen and persons providing essential services, the work of people in hospitals and this kind of thing. There was concern that in the attempt to develop strong productivity programmes in the Public Service, that persons whose peculiar function you could not apply general principles to would pose great difficulty. So we have to find a way, Mr. Chairman, to measure productivity in the public sector so that not only increments but other kinds of payments and rewards could be given to public sector officers for improvement in their work.

But it is also important, Mr. Chairman, that the schools and educational institutions in Barbados are aware of the importance of productivity, and the promotional drive which the Board will undertake is also geared at creating a sense of awareness, sensitising and educating Barbadians as a whole, what the long-term benefits of improved productivity will be. This has to take into consideration today's generation which becomes the work force of tomorrow, so that the issue of improved productivity should impinge on students and their associated peer groups and organisations and activities will be mounted to ensure that the above objectives are met. There will be 'undertaken an essay competition, special awards and other programmes in conjunction with the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation in relation to productivity in Barbados.

The Productivity Board also wishes to develop a business and workers award programme to single out employees and businesses which excel in the areas of productivity improvement, together with other ancillary activities, like the development of a logo competition. Mr. Chairman, of critical importance is the research programme which the Board wishes to undertake. Field research carried out to generate reliable information from primary as well as secondary sources is expected to be a key activity of the work of the Productivity- Board. This data collected, collated and analysed will then be factored into the decision making process of the Board so that the Board can arrive at appropriate and accurate productivity measurements, can develop unbiased reports in the area of gain sharing and productivity sharing schemes, alternative work organisations and public policy initiatives to enhance

productivity, and in addition to that, Mr. Chairman, research management systems in Barbados with a view to proposing policies and programmes for productivity enhancement.

This will be the focus of the research activities which the Board undertakes and it is projected that given the in-house resource of the small staff of the Secretariat of the National Productivity Board it would be cost effective to utilise the services of research persons on a consultancy basis outside of the Secretariat rather than recruit additional staff on a full time basis. So, that opportunity will be developed within the work programme of the Productivity Board to contract local consultants and, in some cases where that expertise is not available locally, international consultants, or regional consultants for that matter, to assist us in developing this research module for the work of the National Productivity Board.

The Board also anticipates undertaking staff training, overseas conferences and other related activities, and the cost of the work programme is $238 870, and if Members of the House wish a breakdown I will be quite happy to provide that.

I should mention, finally, on this matter, Mr. Chairman, that a national tripartite .conference on productivity was held in Barbados between February 24 and 26, the purpose of which was to bring the social partners together to confer and achieve consensus on the work which is.required in Barbados, not only of the Board but the country as a whole, to operationalise the improvement of productivity. Sixty three persons participated, 20 from the private sector, 21 from the trade union movement, 13 from the Public Service, with nine observers, by and large it was felt by 67% of the participants that this conference was a very useful exercise and was helpful to them in developing their conceptions of what productivity development was about in Barbados.

I wish now to move on, Mr. Chairman, to the issue of the Barbados Development Bank, because this is very important to the institutional reform which, though it forms part of the Inter-American Development Bank's ISL with Barbados. We have proceeded with a lot of these activities even in the absence of agreement with the institution. This is vet), important, Mr. Chairman, because during the course of this debate the impression was given that the Government had signed agreements with the World Bank, which is blatantly untrue, and that the Government had signed agreements with the Inter-American Development Bank or other financial institutions. Those project agreements which are on stream already by the World Bank and the IADB are the only agreements which have been signed, for which everyone knows the conditionality, but the structural adjustment loan is out of the window and I believe we have made that quite clear, both in this debate and previously. But Barbados certainly will not accept World Bank funds again for a long time on those terms, but with the IADB we are proceeding with the elements of the design of the ISL even though we have not yet signed on. Because we believe on this side, Mr. Chairman, that those reforms are necessary anyway, so that anybody who suggests that the Government is foisting reforms on people, which they have not even agreed to, is in fact contradicting the argument which they put before, which was that we were lying supine, prostrate, begging, scraping the bottom of the barrel and accepting anything with the international institutions were throwing at the Government in silence and with complicity in the so-called evil designs of the institutions. That is not so, Mr. Chairman, and I want to make that clear.

When I look at the Barbados Development Bank and the rationale for restructuring the Barbados Development Bank, it pains me, because in another debate in this House people were seeking to put forward the point of view about when the loss making loans and the non-performing portfolio of the institution was contracted. We did not make it an issue over here, but I am going to make the issue of the poor portfolio of the BDB clear to this House, because when I read the report it shocked me to discover that all of the hypocrisy which one hears in the public domain about former Governments being so prudent in the management of resources and all of the dishonesty, Mr. Chairman, which you hear in public forums and all the dishonesty which you hear in public fora from various individuals, suggesting that there was a level of public -management in this country which was so superior to that which obtains now, when I look at the Barbados Development Bank's portfolio – and I never looked at it in recent times – but I had a chance to look at it again because the argument was advanced relative to the Barbados National Bank and that most of the bad loans were contracted after 1986 which is also patently untrue. When I look on a current position which is at December 31, 1993 on the assets side, Mr. Chairman, a loan portfolio of $88 million representing just over 900 loan accounts, the portfolio is generally unhealthy, and that is a term of art referring to about 50% of non-performing loans according to the bank's definition. 75% of those non-performing loans relate to loans created between 1980 and 1986.
10.20 a.m.

I will sit down if somebody is trying to correct me on that. Sorry. I thought the Honourable Member for Christ Church South was correcting me on that, Mr. Chairman. I am not getting any corrections. I am shocked to hear that there are no corrections on this, because everytime...

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member has invited a correction. The correction I will give him

is to show how bad the economy is since 1986 that they cannot repay, and the second thing which it shows, which he knows, is that the Bank could not even disburse its clients now on time. The Honourable Member knows that the Bank is short of funds in the cycle and cannot even disburse to people on time. So I don't know what is the big fuss.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, the days of throwing away taxpayers' money in this country are over. I want to put that to the‘ Honourable Member for Christ Church West because... The days of throwing away taxpayers' money, even through political patronage or through other kinds of backdoor arrangements, are over. Pork-barrel activities using Government's...

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON:... and reducing them from triple A to triple C or triple B, licking the institutions up. Those days are over. So if the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is concerned about what the BDB can disburse, if they were able to collect from the 75% defaulters which the Barbados Labour Party saddled the Democratic Labour Party with they would be able to disburse money to all of the people and more who are presently facing the prospects of not having access to venture capital and other kinds of financing in these critical times. Those they lent the money to were never fit to be in business in the first place. I could list some of them. I want some of them to get up and start talking so I can list some.

Mr. Chairman, they are always walking around acting as though they can throw at this Government allegations of corruption and dishonesty and all kinds of things but they and their friends know better. It is just that we have been soft and charitable and decent, and the public life in this country under this Administration has not taken such a wicked turn as for me to go to a political meeting and call out the income tax defaulters in Barbados and all of the other things that went on in this country under the tyranny of the Barbados Labour Party between 1976 and 1986.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: If the Act stopped it, it didn't stop certain people from doing it and I challenge anybody to lock them up. If not, they should have been locked up a long time ago.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I want to make that point very clear, because the public of Barbados believe that because this Government has had to adopt a very prudent policy in restructuring the financial institutions that for some reason these lovely institutions which the Barbados Labour Party likes to take credit for developing, although they cannot really take much for the BDB, which they say, Mr. Chairman, they put in place the most creative policy for small business development and fisheries development in their time. That is what they say about the BDB but all of a sudden the impression is being given to this country that because we have to restructure these institutions that we are responsible for the state that those institutions are in.

We had to clear $60 million in arrears last year, repay all kinds of loans which were advanced on Letters of Credit under the Barbados Labour Party. Now we have to look in respect of the BDB for another set of money to do exactly the same thing that we did with the Barbados National Bank to clean up the mess which was left by the ineptitude of the Barbados Labour Party and some consequent bad decisions, but by and large the ineptitude of the Barbados Labour Party in running down those institutions.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, compare it to the BADC debt, Do you want me to give you a comparison? Your sabbatical from politics seems to have caused your brain to addle. You need to get back and don't humbug me who is doing a day's work for a day's pay. I come in here every Tuesday and I do the work I am paid to do. I am not larging off in an office somewhere and jumping in here once a year.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: On a point of order, Sir, if the Honourable Member continues to be personal I will have to tell him to stop practising law.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: To whom the cap fits let him wear it. I will now call him. I do not mind. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West's sabbatical from politics was well earned and I think he should extend it rather than getting on so indignant at what I have to say about the Barbados Labour Party. It is 'not his fault. He was a backbencher. He should let the others bear their chests for these blows but instead of that he is rushing in where angels fear to tread. Not a word from the Honourable Member for the City and I know she knows all about this. Not a word from the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and I know he knows more about this. But the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is jumping up and down like a Jack in the Box to defend policies he never had anything to with, which he never supported, and giving the impression...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has 2 minutes to conclude.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On Friday, Mr. Chairman, he had a lot to say. I heard him all from outside.

Asides.

. Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I agree with the former Rt. Honourable Member for St. John that there are some people in Barbados who could pass in front of me tomorrow and I would not recognise. them.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I can't lift his mind much higher than where it is, Mr. Chairman. I know I am in front and he would like to sit behind so he can sit right where he is and enjoy that level of debate.
10.30 a.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I am going to return to clear the air on the restructuring programme of the Barbados Development Bank shortly.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, it is interesting to hear the Honourable Member for St. John begin to give the litany of woes for the Barbados Development Bank because one of the major myths in this country which has -been perpetrated with the assistance of a newspaper column is that the Barbados Development Bank was run most efficiently during the period 1980 to 1986 especially. It is pathetic to examine the outstanding debts of the Development Bank. It is pathetic to know who the people are that owed the Development Bank.

Mr. Chairman, I was a consultant many years ago for a small company in Barbados,..

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Yes, Burger Bee. If you call the name I can call it. That small company tried very hard to struggle with making ends meet. It was during the time when a certain amount of pressure was on the country. Small businesses had a tremendous amount of difficulty. When the company first started they began to do well. And then we ran into recession. It is not known or well recalled that Barbados went into a deep recession right after 1981. In fact, the recession had started...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, it is the rest of the world when it is the Labour Party in office but it is centred around Barbados when the Democratic Labour Party is in office. The Democratic Labour Party is like one of those things where the rain only falls on the just but it does not fall on the unjust, or *vice* versa.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, another editorial would come out and say how lily white and pure she is, but they would not hear her language. But if she thinks she is going to sit in her seat and make those nasty remarks and not get some of the pie spilled over on her then it is her fault.

The point I am making, Sir, is that during the time — as for the editorial I am going to deal with that separately when we come back to Parliament. We have a Head to come back to, Parliament, and I will deal with the fleet-footed editorial writer. I am going to deal with him. I promise you faithfully I am going to deal with him. Well he is fleet-footed. He can get out of an editorial office faster than Jesse Owens. He makes Jesse Owens look like a long distance runner.

Mr. Chairman, during that time that small company made no effort to get money from the Development Bank because I foolishly believed that at that time the Development Bank was the Bank of last resort and really one ought not to be going to the Development Bank unless one had a project that was embryonic but had a lot of potential, or that one had reached the stage where one was in so much difficulty financially and yet one had a good business and therefore one could get the assistance of the Development Bank. Those were the days, Sir, when I believed the Development Bank was continuing the pattern that had been established by the Democratic Labour Party.

I was shocked when subsequently I returned to Government when I was required to have information about the debt portfolio of the Barbados Development Bank.

Decency demands that we do no not make certain statements in this House or elsewhere on information we know; but suffice it to say that when one examines who was able to get loans from the Development Bank during that period it is a travesty that persons who had no need – it is clear that they had no need – were able to get large sums of money from the Development Bank. I say that it was like a slush fund. I know there will be another column next Saturday or Sunday attacking poor, little me again but I am accustomed to that.

But, Sir, when one looks at the situation – I will tell you a story that was given to me on good legal authority. It is a' story which I have told outside of the House. I am not using the House for privilege. There was a man who had to sell a piece of equipment. There was another

man who wanted to buy the piece of equipment and the two of them started to have a discussion. At the time they were having the discussion the piece of equipment was valued at $8 000. One man said to the other "Why don't you make an application to the Development Bank for a loan to get the piece of equipment?" The man made the application to the Development Bank and if you check the records you will see that the `loan was for $16 000. Now, if those details need to be given, I will give them outside of the House to whomever wants them once somebody believes that it is necessary. But that information came to me from one of the legal advisors to the Development Bank. So it is not hearsay.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You can get up and attack anybody on anything. You have experience enough that you can attack anybody on anything. Fortunately when you get counter attacked you....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member please address the Chair.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for Christ Church West, one of the things I admire about him is that however nasty he is when he speaks outside of Parliament he can always accept a return. He does not run with snivel nose crying if you attack him; so he can attack me. He is a political person. I am one and when it is getting out of hand and he signals I will back off and *vice versa.* I can speak to that. Not like some other persons I know who like to throw stones and cannot receive when the stones...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well, I do not know. I do not see anybody behind there.

But, Mr. Chairman, the' Development Bank was designed, I think it was in 1972. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South was in the Senate when we did the debate up there. I believe that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, if he would look at that debate, would see that we had great hopes for the Barbados Development Bank. It was anticipated that it would continue to provide the impetus for a number of black Barbadians especially to get a peg up in the economic, affairs in this country. That is what it was designed for, when women like Baby Doots in Christ Church South would have been able to move from having one fishing boat to having many fishing boats. I am sure Your Honour knows the history of how the Development Bank would call on people like her to bring in security far and way beyond what was necessary in relation. to the loan which was being made. These kinds of...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am making the broad point that a Development Bank has no right behaving like a commercial bank. If you look at the losses in the Development Bank over the years, if those losses had occurred because prudent loans had been made to people with embryonic projects and they did not come through, that would be proper development strategy. It is proper development strategy for a country to invest in ideas. It is proper development strategy for a country to give the opportunity to those persons who have ideas and skills but may be short on capital to help in the wealth creation in the country.
10.40 a.m.

But in Barbados there is still a concept that the only kind of business that is worthwhile is buying and selling. Somebody must buy for 3 cents and sell for $1. and that is considered business.

I recall when I functioned as Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce in this country one of the things that I was particular about was seeking out ordinary, poor black people — I am not afraid to say that — who had ideas and concepts. If you go back and look at the industrial parks, if you look at the Grazettes Industrial Park, if you look at the Six Roads Industrial Park, if you look at the Harbour Industrial Park you would see that there were a number of people who started to become entrepreneurs and who started to become what might be called wealth creators. If you look now, Sir, most of them have disappeared from the scene.

Every time there is a depression we expect that some people would be at the margin and may even drop off. That is true. But there are some who ought to be propped up.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Precisely. When there is a recession the ones at the top are going to look to what they call downsizing. I understood it because you went in the Ministry after me and you knew that I understood and you understood it. I would say for the Honourable Member for Christ Church South he understood it. Of course he was chafing against a kind of difficulty which this debate does not require.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, you did. The Honourable Member had the same kind of difficulty that his colleagues from Christ Church West had, difficulty with the leadership. They had more difficulty with Tom Adams than anybody could ever have.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: On a point of order, Sir, I have never had any difficulty with any leadership of my Party, at any time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I can only conclude, Sir, that he has a new and different definition of difficulty. His definition of difficulty has now been elevated to the point where he would...I believe that Tom Adams never had him in a half Nelson physically. I believe so. If that is what he means then he never had any difficulty.

I am discussing the economic affairs. We are not going to be able to get out of the economic difficulties the country is in and indeed the region is in until we recognize that we have to have some indigenous input in the wealth creation of this country. The indigenous input must come not only from people becoming employees but from those persons who have an opportunity to become entrepreneurs.

Earlier this morning I was talking to a young man in Barbados who wishes to develop a project, the efficacy of which is, to me and I believe to anyone who understands economic affairs, straightforward. All he needs is some capitalization. It is a project which I have reason to believe that one of my colleagues the Minister of Trade and Industry may have had some acquaintance with. It is a project that would work towards securing motor vehicles in this country. The project is almost straightforward and all he needs is capitalization. It is now 2 years that he has been trying to convince a number of people in this country that he has a bankable, workable project.

There is another one, Sir. One who has been involved in the economic affairs of this country for the last 20 years. He unfortunately dabbled in politics for a little while and had to be sat down properly before he understood that his real role is in the entrepreneurial field. But he has in his hands at the moment a project which will see at least 200 people going to work. Let me put it this way, Sir. In another part of the world where a similar project has been implemented, in short order, there are already 200 people working. But it has taken 18 months for him to be able to get the necessary discussions with the commercial banks.

When one examines these 2 projects and when one knows of other areas where there are people in Barbados, even now that we art in difficult economic times, who have ideas for entrepreneurship in this country.

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

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is saying the National Bank. He knows the National Bank is strapped for capital. The National Bank cannot operate on ideas only. The National Bank has to have capital and I believe the Minister will speak to that in due course.

But what is required is that those who have to make decisions about these kinds of things be concerned not only with finance or the financial return but they ought to be able to look beyond the present and see what is going to happen when the project comes on stream.

I would submit that we have to get into the habit of matching, with these people others not necessarily from Barbados, if necessary bring in facilitators from outside of Barbados with technical assistance from the international agencies and put them in these embryonic industries so that they can get started. That is one of the ways in which we are going to be able to have a head start on the recovery which must come during the next 7 years.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just before the Honourable Member proceeds. It is necessary for me to remind Honourable Members of Standing Order 33.6 which says that:

> "A Member whilst present in the House during a debate must maintain silence except when called to speak by the Chair."

The Chair recognizes that colleagues on both sides of the House may wish to communicate *with* each other. But that level of communication must not be seen to be interrupting the debate. I would hate to have to refer to this for the rest of the day's sitting. The Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we fully understand the tactics of the Government in this debate and I am not going to speak very long.

It was very interesting that the Minister of Finance should seek to draw reference to the BDB as a success of the Democratic Labour Party. The Minister made reference to the- fact that a large number of loans contracted in

the period 1980 to 1986 were now non-performing loans and he sought to cast the aspersion that the fact that they had become non-performing loans had to do with the fact that there were loans granted to bad credit risks at the period when the loans were contracted.

The impression cast by the Minister of Finance is that 70% of the bad debt of the BDB was bad debt contracted under the Barbados Labour Party and that the loans were not performing because they were bad loans to begin with. It is important that we hear not only from the Minister of Finance but that we hear from the BDB itself. They publish Annual Reports and in their Annual Reports they speak to the question as to why their loans are performing or not performing. It is very interesting, Mr. Chairman, to hear what they had to say in their 23rd Annual Report for 1991-1992 at page 14. It said, Sir:

> "In the financial year under review management of the portfolio became more difficult as loan performance declined in the light of the restrictive credit policies, the general turn down in economic activity and the stabilisation measures."

This is the BDB's assessment. We agree that a number of loans are not performing very well. But the performance *of those loans* cannot be isolated from the economic conditions under which the people who contracted the loans as many as 13 years ago now have to operate. Conditions have changed.

The BDB was good enough to give an explanation as to why some of the loans are no longer performing. They said that performance declined in the light of the restrictive credit policies, the general downturn in economic activity and stabilisation measures. The Barbados Development Bank in the early 1980s...

Aside.

Mr. G. S. ARTHUR: In the opinion of the Bank.

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: If you were the bank would you say so too?
10.50 a.m.

Let us put it as bluntly as this, Sir, you have had businesses, if you are to believe the Minister of Finance, that were established as long ago as 1980. I would refuse to believe, Sir, that they would have continued in existence for 13 years purely as bad debt. They clearly could not have been bad debt for those 13 years. And the fact that they can be classed .as bad debts now clearly can be no reflection, as the Minister would have it, Sir, on the credit worthiness of the customers at the times when the loans were contracted. I am saying, Sir, that a sense of balance has to be brought to this debate, that to come to this House and spew out nonsense about how much of the loans are non-performing, without putting the performance of loans and business within the context of Government policies of today is, I believe, Sir, to misrepresent the situation grossly.

Sir, I do not want to go into the BDB. The Barbados Development Bank is an institution that since 1987 has been trading as a technically bankrupt institution. In 1987, Sir, the capital of the Bank was $21 million and accumulated deficit $18 million; the Bank was still relatively solvent. But thereafter the Bank has since in 1988/1989 traded as a technically bankrupt institution. And I am saying also, Sir, it also has intellectually bankrupt leadership. There is no economist in Barbados who ever has to read anything written by the Chairman of the BDB who is in any doubt that you are talking about intellectually backward bankrupt leadership, Sir.

All economists in Barbados are embarrassed when they read the nonsense that spews forth from the Chairman of the BDB. He says, for instance that if you were, for example, Mr. Chairman, to increase public servants wages by $3 million it would lead to loss of foreign exchange of $10 million. That kind of crazy economics you get from the Chairman of the BDB. When one reads, Sir, what comes from the pen of the Chairman of the BDB there can be no question as to why the Bank would find itself in these straightened conditions.

I say, Sir, that it is very unfortunate that a large number of the small hoteliers who were formed in this country in the late seventies and the early 1980s and whose existence has so diversified the tourism plant in Barbados as *tb now* enable us to speak in terms of year round tourism are now being treated as non-performers. I say it is very unfortunate that the creation of that class of hoteliers now has to be treated as bad business by the Government of Barbados. That is what the Minister of Finance is saying; that the extension of loans in the 1980s by the BDB to a lot of small hoteliers to put *in* plant to let Barbadians come to own hotel facilities in this country has now to be regarded as bad business by the Government of Barbados, disregarding the economic circumstances within which they had to function in the course of the last year because one of the successes of the BDB, Mr. Chairman, when you look at the portfolio that the Minister says is so contaminated, is that in the early 1980s the BDB helped to finance the creation of a lot of indigenous production capacity particularly in small manufacturing and the hotel industry. It is that small hotel capacity that has

been so instrumental as the Members on the other side should know in sustaining summer tourism.

I am ashamed to hear a Minister of Finance come to this House to lambaste the fact that funds were extended by the Barbados Development Bank to broaden the productive base of the country. He would do well to go and investigate the business conditions under which loans have become non-performing. That is what he should do.

He would do well to take stock of what is contained in the Bank's report itself which is drawing reference to the credit policies of his Government and the general economic down turn caused by his Government as factors that have caused those loans, in part, to become non-performing.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the BDB's performance has, in this House in the course of the last 10 years, come to be measured largely in terms of profit and loss accounting. The BDB in the process of its operations, Sir, has had to take risks. It has had to assume the responsibility of lending to small people in this country that other parts of the financial sector were unwilling to touch.

The fact that some of those loans are non-performing is not a reflection on the leadership of the BDB when the loans were extended. It is also reflection, as the BDB is trying to point out, on the business environment within which those small people are operating. And it is also a reflection upon the fact that we need, in this country, to substantially upgrade the management expertise of a lot of small people who get loans from these development institutions. But to come and cast the aspersion that the loan portfolio now is not performing as it should be performing because of Barbados Labour Party activities, Sir, is to miss the point.

The point is that those small people in business today, whose businesses were created as a result of loans 13 years ago, would by their very existence suggest that they were worthy of consideration for loans. What is necessary on the part of the BDB, Mr. Chairman, is to try to put in place a debt restructuring and debt rescheduling programme that can assist these small enterprises in coping with the very difficulties that its management refers to in this document. I will remind the Government again of the loan performance decline in the light of the restrictive credit policies, the general down turn in the economy and the stabilisation measures of Government, Sir. If there was not that set of business conditions, if *things were rosy* in the country and yet we nonetheless had non-performing loans at the BDB, the Minister's stricture would be well warranted. But in the context of a sharp and dangerous recession in the society the Minister must be in a position to know that it is the small people, who were the clients of the BDB, who have carried in large part the brunt of the recession.

Yes, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rather imagine because I have never had to approve a loan for the BDB and I have no interest in defending the matter. There must have been some loans, Sir, that on reflection were bad risks. And I 'am not defending anybody, Sir. I m sure since 1986 some loans have been extended that would have been bad risks too. And if we are going to call names, Sir, we will have to call names today. I am not frightened, Sir, and I know nobody is frightened on the other side either. There would also have been bad loans, Sir, made before 1976 of which the Government side should be well aware.

Mr. Chairman, when I picked up the Accountant General's Report and I see that things like the International Seafoods is still on the books of the Consolidated Fund, when I pick up the Accountant General's Report and I see that Carib West Airways is still on the books of Government I begin to wonder who is pure here.

Hon. B. M. TAUT: On a point of order, Sir. I would suggest the Honourable Member ought not to shift the debate because International Seafoods used to bring $7 million in foreign exchange into Barbados from the time it began until it went out of business year before. Carib West was an attempt to do something which this country still needs, the movement of goods out of Barbados. If it was not successful that is the whole point of what we were talking. It was something tried.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: If International Seafoods, which is a bad loan on the books of the Consolidated Fund after nearly 20 years, can be justified in terms.of the $7 million in foreign exchange it was supposed to have been bringing in, how much more must we justify the small hoteliers and othet small people who contribute hundreds of millions of dollars to foreign exchange to the country notwithstanding the fact that their balance sheets may be bad because they have had to face the severity of economic conditions facing the country;
11.00 a.m.

All I am telling the other side is that, if you want to start talking about bad debts and who created bad debts and so on, we need to open up the debate. Let us also talk about International Seafoods and why it should be on the books of the Accountant General now of $1.3 million and also Carib West and so on. All of these things were pre-1976. I have no brief to hold for any former chairman of the BD$ or anybody else. As I said, I have no doubt that there would have been some loans raised that were doubtful and risky as always. But there is no purity

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on that side where creating or supporting risky ventures are concerned, Sir, as I have no doubt that some of the loans which wu..,. have occurred under the BLP between 1976 and 1986 would have been risky too.

The Minister's statement was lacking in balance and sought to project a situation completely out of context and entirely cast the wrong impression. If it is the Government's intention to want to filibuster, .Sir, I believe that I have put the situation as clearly as I can.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: There is a lot of bad debts at the BDB and I say that a lot of the bad debts have been created by the bad economic conditions because a lot of small people have been forced to operate unprofitably because of the policy of this Government.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

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

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can we have some order?

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Chairman, I want to get into the debate at the level of the National Productivity Board and to seek some clarification from the Minister while at the same time make some recommendations and observations with respect to the efficient and effective functioning of the National Productivity Board.

Mr. Chairman, there is no denying the need for ongoing training of public officers with respect to the whole question of the measuring of productivity. For years it has been debated and it has been suggested that measurement of productivity in the Public Service in some areas, especially in the clerical and service areas, is almost impossible. But we only have to look, Mr. Chairman, to some European and Scandinavian countries where methods of measuring productivity have been instituted and I would hope that the National Productivity Board arm itself with as much information as possible on methods of measurement of productivity. I think that we have to move away from the old concept since new ethos in this regard has been ushered in and we have to move away from the concept of instruments in the Public Service as a right. People are going to have to be rewarded on the basis of meritocracy.

Going hand in hand, Mr. Chairman, with the whole question of productivity and rewards for work done is the question of performance appraisal. Again, this is an area which the Ministry of the Civil Service in collaboration with the National Productivity Board is going to have to take more than a passing interest in, because performance appraisal in the Public Service overtime has been used for several reasons. One that comes to mind, Mr. Chairman, relates to its use for promotional purposes but not in the conventional way. There are cases where Heads of Departments want to rid themselves of an officer. You can give that officer all "A's". You are sure to get rid of him and they get him out into some other stream. We cannot continue in that vain. As I said, the whole concept has been used for a myriad of reasons. The rating factors need to be looked at again.

Sir, the whole question of productivity has serious implications for recruitment in the Public Service. One must ask the question: Is the method of recruitment being used by Personnel Administration in consonance with 21st century human resource management practices? Is there enough career planning within the Public Service? What about transfers? Again, transfers within the Public Service have been used too often for punitive measures rather than to build career goals and to give workers a broader perspective of work within the Public Service.

These are issues, Mr. Chairman, that I am sure the Minister might want to address and would want to include in the terms of reference. I know they are in the terms of reference of the National Productivity Board but they need re-emphasizing. I will stop here at this stage, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I want to respond to some of these issues. I want to begin, Sir, by saying that I am quite surprised at the indignance of the Honourable Member for St. Peter in response to the few rem i rks that I made and he has totally missed the point that I was trying to make about the BDB. I noticed the people who responded about the BDB. It was not those who were in the Cabinet or knew about it. It is all kinds of part-time politicians and newcomers who take the full weight of the Labour Party's record on their shoulders and I have no problem with that. I suppose as a young politician that I have to do that sometimes too. But the Honourable Member for St. Peter surprised me, Mr. Chairman, in this debate because having gone on his toes like a ballerina on previous occasions in this House to say that we need a full national debate on productivity, I gave him the opening opportunity and he got up and said that was tactics and filibustering. Well, I can only assume that the Honourable Member is here simply to trade charges with Honourable Members on this side and he does not want to get to the seriousness of this debate. Because productivity is such a critical issue and I can quote

him probably from the top of my head. The issue of productivity is so central, Mr. Chairman, to the economic reform programme that Barbados needs to take it into the 21st century. Imagine I went home and prepared a presentation, Mr. Chairman, to give him the opportunity to address those issues which were so weighty in every Budget and which he said we are running from, which he said the Prime Minister does not want to debate and which everybody on this side is indifferent to. ,We give him the opportunity, Mr. Chairman, and he said that is tactics and filibustering.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two Honourable Members are on their feet. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is on a point of order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, if you will recall, you have allowed me to speak for 15 minutes. I have not said that I may not speak again in this debate. The charge that I am running from a debate is a charge that misleads the House and I really believe that, if the Member has nothing else to say, he should say nothing.

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Precisely. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, but I will not be sidetracked by that trivia myself. I want to say that the opportunity is provided, the full work programme of the Productivity Board. I remember when the Productivity Board Act was passed the Labour Party said in this House that they would go ahead with it for now but we must get back to this important issue, that it is so critical that we cannot avoid it. But as I say, Mr. Chairman, I cannot write his script for him, he has to write his own script. One thing about the Honourable Member for St. Peter — and the Right Honourable Member, the previous representative in this House for St. John, said so in debate — he has one speech written and no matter what subjects you talk on, he intends to read that particular speech and I disappointed him this morning by not giving him the chance to read the speech he prepared last night. I regret that, so I will deal with what I am supposed to deal with.

The issues which the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central raised with respect to productivity are very important and are things we have to examine as the programme of productivity measurements envelop Barbados, but it is critical and I agree with him. The issues relating to measurement of productivity growth in the public sector, the Civil Service, are vital. We need to get to that issue as a matter of urgency and we need to get there before we get to the measurement of productivity in some of the other areas, because I believe that over time the systems which can be developed to measure productivity in the private sector have by and large not evolved to the level that we require, but are evolving. But I do not think that any major effort has been made at all with respect to the measurement of productivity in the public sector. This matter needs attention, not only because of the issue and the way in which remuneration should be linked to productivity, but largely because the Government has to lead in these issues, apparently.

When I measure the level of Government's leadership in these things, every time Government takes the initiative it is said that the private sector responds, but that they cannot forge ahead on their own. We need them to do it with respect to the issue of measurement of productivity, but since they are probably going to wait on Government, then we need to ensure that Government itself proceeds seriously to determine how productivity is going to be measured in the public sector.

I want to turn to the BDB and I want to talk about the restructuring, but before I get there I want to say that it is passing strange, Mr. Chairman, that the Honourable Member for St. Peter should start a . speech by telling us that in 1987 the BDB was trading as a technically bankrupt institution, but later on he attributes the problems of the BDB, and says he agrees with a source which he identified, that it related to the economic conditions and stabilisation. I only have this to say on that point, Mr. Chairman, apart from the inconsistency of the argument and the difficulty in measuring it, because it simply does not make sense and would not make sense to anybody.

I want to know, first of all, if the BDB was technically bankrupt in 1987, it means it was nearly technically bankrupt in 1986 and nearly technically bankrupt in 1985. There is nothing that happened to the BDB in 1987 that was any different from what was happening in 1985. There was no sudden failure by persons who were lent money to pay it back, to the best of my knowledge, and he needs to trace the reason, but that is the thing he cahnot do. That is the problem with the Labour Party, that at no time were they seeking to put their finger on the real problem which these institutions were facing. Their idea of restructuring an institution, Mr. Chairman, is writing a letter to the Directors. I have come to that conclusion. Their idea of restructuring financial institutions in this country is writing a letter to the Board of Directors and telling them there is a problem which they want solved, but that does not achieve anything. The Honourable Members on that side should note that social engineering, or political or economic engineering requires the active pursuit of goals, and if you do not devise a restructuring programme for the BDB and can come in here as if

you are washed in the Blood of the Lamb and tell us that it was technically insolvent in 1987, but cannot even point to one single initiative which you would have taken had you been elected to office, God forbid, in 1986, then something has to, be wrong with the quality of the public performance of the Barbados Labour Party, and it is clear.

It should be a shameful act, Mr. Chairman, to come into this House and to say to this House that an institution over which you presided for ten years, one year after a Government changed was technically bankrupt and yet you cannot advance to this House one single argument in defence of the policy which you were then pursuing. Something has to be wrong. What level of public debate are we in? The Honourable Member for St. Peter gets upset and indignant. He feel slighted, he believes I am practising some kind of economic sleight-of-hand. He said it was technically bankrupt, I did not say it. I did not even think of that. He said it was technically bankrupt in 1987 but cannot advance a single argument. It is a shameful political act in my view for anybody to come in this House seeking to criticise and not even advance the slightest or evince the slightest interest in telling this House what was being done to avoid that bankruptcy.

It is the same thing with the Barbados National Bank. As ,far as you were concerned, business as usual should be the order of the day in Barbados, but that is not what this Government believes. You may try to paper over all of the bad policies which were pursued. That is your responsibility. If you wish to do that, you are entitled to do that. I never said that the entire BDB portfolio was contaminated in this or any other debate. I said that of 50% of the BDB's portfolio contaminated, 75% of the contaminated portfolio, which contaminated portfolio is 50%, consisted of loans contracted between 1980 and 1986. That is all I said, Mr. Chairman, and as I say, the Honourable Member seems to be thrown into a complete tailspin by that remark. He obviously knows more than I know about who the persons are who borrowed the money, but I have-never sought to find out and will never...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He could deal with me every Sunday. He does not depend on me to sell corned beef. He will still be selling corned beef whether you or I are on him, that is *why I* do not bother with him. That is the problem in Barbados, that people worry ' about people like that. I do not worry my head *with* him. He will still be selling corned beef and sardines under any Government in Barbados, because they know how to survive. The late Errol Barrow told you what you have to do with them. Anyway, that is a different story, but they know how to survive. I have nothing to say about that. The only person who believes in all the altruism of the Barbados Labour Party is the Honourable Member for St. Peter, but that is his job. He is now paid to lead them, to do all of that and to say all of those nice things, and I cannot, stop him from doing them, even though I will say that given the opportunity in this debate I would have addressed the serious issue of productivity and then sought to say what an alternative to the problem facing the BDB should be pursued. Anyway, he does not want to go that route, so I want to tell you what this Government has done regarding the restructuring of the BDB.

The main problems facing the Barbados Development Bank are the quality of its portfolio, the cost of servicing its current level of debts, the erosion of its equity by losses and the high level of its administrative expenses.
11.20 a.m.

I said Mr. Chairman, the current position at December 31, 1993 is that on the assets side the loan portfolio of $88 million representing just over 900 loan • accounts is generally unhealthy with 50% non-performing according to the Bank's definition.

I want to go on now to say that the relatively high indebtedness, having regard to its earning assets, the present debt liability is $86 million and it is made up as follows:

National Development Bonds — $44 million

External Funding Agency — $21 million

Short-term Borrowing,
including Central Bank
$10 million rollover — $21 million.

In addition to that equity, non-existent paid up capital has been eroded by cumulative deficit. That is the current position regarding the Barbados Development Bank.

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I can give the position relating to the bad debt and all of the other issues if you want me to do that. The issue is that it is a development bank and the Honourable Member for St. Peter obviously did not hear that I said that in the beginning. Anybody who understands what the role of a development bank is understands the kinds of risks that it undertakes. Therefore in that regard, Mr. Speaker, the philosophy of the Bank as a whole cannot be compared to the philosophy of commercial banks because they have a different

scenario altogether. So any comparison to Barclays Bank or comparison to any of those other institutions simply does not make sense. In keeping with this philosophy, the Bank finances very high risk projects in its quest to assist Government in the implementation of strategy to promote economic development.

' During the recession of the 1980's the Bank sought to cushion the economy from the worst effects of the recession by seeking to rehabilitate projects in difficulty through refinancing, rescheduling and the provision of technical assistance. The Bank tended to realise assets which had become marginal, held as security only after all effort to rehabilitate had proved futile, or only where it was clear that the client was not doing his best to service the loan.

You can see, Mr. Speaker, that once that is your philosophy and your outlook the Bank is bound to have problems. In addition to that, the Bank finances development activities with general resources which impacted heavily on its profit and loss accounts: So it was not perceived as a profit-making institution. Government was always in the position to underwrite its losses.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Hon. D. J. H. • THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I will get back to this.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I hope that when the Minister gets up on the next occasion that he will explain the micro-business window. I would expect an explanation of that, Sir, because that is one of the issues throughout the region which again a number of small people have been calling for. It is very important that we understand that the entrepreneurial spirit is available in Barbados. One has only to look at the number of people who have found innovative ways to earn a living over the last few years during the difficult times with layoffs.

I think the National Development Foundation which the Senator from The Other Place... That small beginning has had a tremendous effect on a number of small business people in this country and there are numbers of otherwise inconsequential activities which have been growing. I know my colleague the Minister of Trade will speak on this in broad terms but it is little known that Lottie's Jerk Seasoning and Lottie's Hot Sauce and various other condiments with the name Lottie's can now be found in far off lands, not only in the United States. I am told you can find it in Sweden. I certainly know that you can find it in Canada. It is available in England and almost everywhere you go people are asking and Caribbean people are asking if you can bring them some of Lottie's condiments.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Windmill got caught up in a little difficulty. It is the best pepper sauce in the world. You see, the point is that we can argue now about Ecaf about Windmill about Lottie's. Pepper sauce is something for which we should be doing more. There are a number of people who would wish to get into industries such as these who cannot because they do no'. have the capital. There is no point going into Barclays or Royal Bank no matter what kind of advertisements they put out. If you go down to have a discussion with' the people there they are interested in if you want to borrow money to buy a house. When you borrow money to buy a house they might say — I am not now saying that Barclays or anybody is doing this — when they tell you they are going to lend you the money and you think you are paying 4% or 5%, when you finish and they have worked out the details it is more like 18% or 19%. So they like to lend for mortgages to buy a piece of land. They are getting the money easy and they love to lend you to buy a piece of land and in fact they have convinced many Barbadians that you have to buy a piece of land if you are investing.

That is true in the first instance. Young people who are just about to go out into the world should probably try to stabilise themselves with a piece of land. I know my friend from St. Andrew will agree that real estate is the proper way forward when things are tight. Even so, in my constituency at the moment there-is a young woman, well she is not so young, who is interested in doing some work with African prints where she is going to be producing from African prints in a number of designs. Now the important thing here, Sir, is the design but she does not have the capital. I am unable to bring to bear any assistance for her in this regard but the Development Bank is going to have to have a window — and I am speaking here more as a constituency representative than as a Minister of the Crown — and other institutions will have to have windows where persons like her who may not have tht security to meet the very rigid requirements which are called for, can go.

Mr. Chairman, I don't wish to belabour the point and I don't know if we will get to the Honourable Minister's portfolio — I doubt we will get there — Trade, Industry and Commerce — and therefore I am going to make sure that I put this point in here.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, all of a sudden these champions of the small people, this hierarchy who for the last 20 months has been going around telling the country what is wrong with the economy, now ,we

start to discuss it they don't wish us to put the case to the people. They don't wish us to give information.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misrepresenting the Opposition's position on this side. He said earlier that when he opens the paper he only sees our faces in there so he has to get his face on page 3 and page 5. 'So he has to talk whether it is relevant or not.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: This record does not show that I said that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I just ruled that it is not a point of order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is no point of order but in any case the Honourable Member knows what he is talking about. He knows that the Barbados Labour Party has built-in protection when it comes to the Press. They get their columns in. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas wrote a letter to the Press. He writes it, say, this evening and it is published the next day. I have never seen anything like that in my life. He does not even belong to that faction of the Press. He said so in the letter.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Why are you dragging me into the debate by telling lies?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now, now, now.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He is not speaking the truth, Sir, and I should be able to say he is not speaking the truth. 11.30 a.m.

I wrote the letter on Thursday and sent it down to the *"Advocate"* by fax on Thursday. It came out on Sunday. They had Friday, Saturday and Sunday, three days. What is the big thing about that?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The big thing about that, Sir, is that I sent down one a month ago and it has not come out yet.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. It only means that it was not worthy of publication.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Nothing 'I say is worthy of publication, especially to the *"Advocate"* but that is another story. I do not think I would get anything published in the *"Advocate"* . As a matter of fact, I am told that while I was away there was a straw poll and I know someone who called in and 10 people gave one name so we understand where we are.

Anyhow, Sir, while I am on my feet I want to make mention of the whole question of productivity in Barbados. The whole question of productivity is still debated, certainly in the newspaper columns, in fairly sterile terms. There seems to be...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me have some order.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, the question of productivity is being debated in sterile terms. There are some aspects of productivity that are going to be very difficult of measurement if one applies it only to a specific set of actions; but *it* is still possible. For example, in the Ministries of the Government, how will the question of productivity be measured? Will it be measured by the number of files that are passed from one place to the other? Will it be measured by the amount of work that has been done by an individual? Or will it be measured by the achievement of goals?

I would like to suggest that there is need for a measurement of efficiency in the public sector as well. There is need for us to review entirely the system of reward in the public sector. I do not believe that the only way a person should be rewarded is to have been in a particular place for a very long time. I think that in Barbados it will not be long before we have to consider the system which is being applied in New Zealand, and to some extent in Great Britain, where it would be possible for a stenographic secretary to earn as much money as a Deputy Permanent Secretary depending on where the secretary was functioning and what kind of work she or he was doing.

I do not believe, that — and I am using Deputy Permanent Secretary only as an example — if you have someone who is trained in a particular field and that someone is performing effectively that that someone has to be moved from the position to another one in order to effect a proper remuneration. I will give an example, Sir. A person may be working in a Ministry, sent overseas for training, get the training and comes back. That person is unlikely in the system we have to remain in the original Ministry. So after two years of expenditure on a particular individual, it is entirely possible that within six weeks of that person returning to the Ministry he or she is off to some other Ministry to do something else. If you are going to be fair to the individual that must happen

because the individual cannot be kept from earning a higher level of remuneration because that individual's skills are required in Ministry A. The result is that unless we examine and reform the system to take - account of productivity in the public sector itself, we are going to continue to have a number of anomalies which exist in Barbados today and in the Caribbean generally.

I feel that it is about time within the public sector that we look at some of the reforms that have proved effective in other parts of the world. I cannot think of any reason why if a person has demonstrated a peculiarly high level of skill in a particular area that there ought not to be pensionable increments available to that person based on a set of criteria that had been laid out in the measurement of productivity. I believe it can be done and it ought to be done. Not that the whole system would be so structured but there would be that category of persons.

Take, for example, magistrates. A magistrate will never earn the same as a judge in our given system. I would humbly submit that in terms of productivity count that where a magistrate has demonstrated a high level of skill and has experience, that some consideration could be given, and I am using this as an example, to retaining the skills which that magistrate would have demonstrated by way of pecuniary reward at a level that is commensurate with when the person moves to the other level. In the present system, what would be required is for the persons to leave and go to the next position that would pay better. All of these are matters which would have to be considered by a productivity board.

I do not believe that a productivity board ought to be looking only at issues as they relate to specific questions. I believe that the National Productivity Board ought to be producing blue prints, if you will, that will allow Government and the private sector, the so-called social partners, to make informed decisions about where we go into the 21st Century because, make no mistake, unless Barbados becomes competitive at all levels, we will not be able to maintain the quality of life to which we have become accustomed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in two minutes.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Thank you. I want to repeat it because we have to become competitive at all levels. When we discus competition most people think about competition in the buying and selling or competition in exports. The fact is we have to be competitive in the administrative work which we do. We have human resources in Barbados which' are supposed to be our best resource. It should be our goal to train those human resources to the highest possible level in all fields so that we can export brain. That is what it really comes down to.

Sir, when we come to do Foreign Affairs you will see how we have been trying to affect this. We have already said to countries elsewhere that we would like to see the University and our other institutions producing work of a certain quality on demand from outside of Barbados. That is how we have started looking towards the 21st Century to earn foreign exchange and to earn our way into the world. If we do not perceive it that way we are going to continue to have sterile discussion.

I am not surprised that the Leader of the Opposition does not wish to engage in debate. He has a speech to make. He has it typed up and ready for the Budget debate so he cannot risk to discuss economic affairs in here today because if he does it means that when we come to the Budget he would have said it already.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Sir, in looking at the area of Economic Affairs, I want to start initially by looking at the essence of creation as stated by an .Honourable Member earlier and the issue of economic surplus. The development of a nation in the modem era is based on the activities of private enterprise primarily, and the activities of Government, but it is now current that Governments, especially in our part of the world, no longer play a massive role in economic activity. However, the role of Government has not been relegated merely to one of assistance and creating the environment for business activity, provision of laws, etc. and even in terms of Government protecting . smaller and weaker units of economic activity apparently that very essence of protection is now under serious threat and which is no longer to be encouraged. Of course, I disagree with that. I have made my position known already on that.

I believe that Government must necessarily at all times be in a position to take active steps to protect the weaker economic units in its society. In a society like Barbados of necessity the weaker economic units come from the – I do not want to be in any way be called or be considered negative to any particular class or whatever in our society – black masses of persons in Barbados.

If it is necessary that within the sea of competition these small units would be destroyed or swallowed up, I could see no difficulty in Government providing protection for these sinall units. I am not decrying competition. I am merely saying that it is impossible for a family operated business with three or four people without any access

to real capital to compete with a multinational corporation or with a conglomerate in Barbados that employs hundreds of people which has a mass capital base, and ready access to loan capital as well. I am saying it is the role and duty of Government to provide some sort of protection for that small unit.

One of these areas, Sir, I would suspect is the very reason why the Barbados Development Bank was set up. I have no problem with that. Risk is essential in the business arena. If you intend to start a business then you intend to take a risk, of necessity, generally you have to start with a debt. The BDB is set up with this in mind and we have had words about the National Development Foundation and other institutions of that type. The Honourable Minister will speak about these small business windows when he next rises.
11.40 a.m.

I think one of the biggest issues is that we have to get people to accept that if they are starting out in business there is no crime in incurring a debt to start with. Of course I agree also with the arguments that were advanced earlier that these debts must necessarily be paid back.

I am not going to get into who had money from the BDB and who now owes money to the BDB. That is a matter for those who possess this information to argue about. I am not going to argue about it. But what I am going to say is that if it is – and we are looking at hotels — that many of the hotels in this country who are presently indebted to the Barbados Development Bank are owned by small black people, are these singular units of activity, it is my belief that they should not be put on the market at this point in time.

I would agree with sentiments coming from across the divide that yes, we have to accept that within the area of structural adjustment unfortunately it would appear as if there has been a coalescing of wealth in the hands of few people. That may just be a natural consequence. The onus is therefore greater on Government — I use this term for want of any better – to redress that particular imbalance. If, Sir, it means – as an arrangement has been worked out for the sugar industry, even though I mig! t well disagree with it too – that there should be some debt rescheduling, that there be some arrangement made out where these hotels are not sold out and sold into to hands which are not Barbadian. These hotels could be put or managed by a locally based management company managed by Barbadians, and the skills of Barbadians employed, so that after they get back on their feet that some mechanism be worked out either that a reduced debt portfolio be then assumed by new owners to the BDB, or that they be turned over to the owners for them to continue their economic activity. I would have no difficulty with an approach based on either method.

I would therefore disagree with any approach that seeks to remove these units of economic activity out of the hands of the present owners. It is possible that try as they did they could not be successful. Because:

1. They had no further access to capital.

2. There was a deliberate dampening of economic activity. It was part of Government's policy to do so.

I think the onus is on Government to ensure that these units continue to live and continue to live without a change of ownership. I am saying this, Sir, on the premise and on the belief that these units are owned, by and large, by small persons, small units of economic activity negating the race factor out of it altogether.

If a rescue job has to be done and if a rescue package has to be put together for them, it should be done with the greatest amount of dispatch. In a nutshell, that is what I am saying. The creativity which is necessary, the innovation, the risk taking which is necessary in small units of activity have to be supported by Government's ability and Government's duty to provide the economic environment *in which* they must operate. Government must also provide the legal framework in which they must operate, Sir, and if necessary to provide them with some degree of protection in spite of all that could be said or would be said by international institutions.

We cannot, in this country, afford to permit small people to fall by the wayside without coming to their assistance as rapidly as possible. I am not in agreement and d0 not let it be said that my position is that people should get money from the BDB and not pay it back. That is not my argument. My argument is that if persons got money – and they were small people – to start a singular business and as things progress they ran into trouble, then the onus is on Government once it was determined that it was not a willful deliberate and malicious attempt on the people to get money for nothing, the onus is on Government, all things considered, to have a rescue package to aid these persons out. If they can do it for the sugar industry which were owned by the moguls and the maguffies they can do it for the small man. -I would be willing to lend my support at any time in a venture such as that.

I have already indicated the sort of venture that I would like to see put together to rescue the small hotels. I am not hypercritical of the BDB. I *would shower*

praises on the National Development Foundation for the amount of work that they have done in respect of small businesses.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West spoke about small business persons who make and/or prepare seasonings. I have seen great work done by locals, small people in arts and craft, handicraft and other activities of that 'type which are getting the full support from the National Development Foundation. I do believe, as I said earlier that the Minister when he gets up to explain the small business window will be going into greater details about the technical aspect of what would be required to receive loans, how this window would be set up, who would be benefitting from it, *et cetera, et cetera.* All in all, Sir, I would very much like:

1. For small business persons at least to accept some very simple things, that an upgrading of skills is an absolute requirement.

2. Government also has to accept the upgrading of managerial skills. You must have a pool of expertise which could be on loan, on rent, however one wants to have arrangement for the small businesses to ensure that in terms of finance, economics and management and accounting that these small businesses are put on a firm footing for a long-term projection.

They must also understand that businesses cannot operate unless they have a good budget, like a Government. You must have a budget and you must have persons trained in managerial skills.

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

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: I think, Sir, it could well be that we are going into a phase where the old type styled family business is now under threat where a father would pass on a business to a son and a son would pass it on to a son. That could well now be under threat. Unless you have access to capital, unless you can compete in a highly competitive atmosphere, in the absence of certain protection, it could well be that that type of business is under threat. I am one who would be all in favour of a rescue package being put together to aid persons when we know that they have tried their best but because of circumstances their businesses are now under seizure by economic conditions, by international recession and I would be one who would be in favour of moving towards a reorganisation of things to ensure that there is longevity in ventures such as these. Thank you, Sir.
11.50 a.m.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, this debate has given Members an opportunity and I am sure they will have more to say on these very weighty issues relating to the development of the financial programme for small business and particularly for bringing new interest into economic activity.

I would think myself, Sir, that since the prospects for Government to expend considerable sums in public works programmes or in direct investments, that the Opposition itself would take the opportunity to make some comments about these areas for which financing of these bright creative young people and in what areas this financing should be available.

One is surprised, Mr. Chairman, at the absence of comment in such an important debate *such as this from* Members who normally have such a well spring of knowledge and ideas, particularly Honourable Members like the Honourable Member for St. George South wi
speaks so eloquently for the poor black working-class in Barbados but who on this occasion is so banal and silent in *his* reaction to these very important issues and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East who is so concerned about transportation policy and the business class created there.

The silence of the Opposition,. Mr. Chairman, is deafening and I hope that the public judges this silence critically because a lot of talk goes on about this Government not providing resources for people at the bottom and being in some kind of alliance with certain sectors and now the opportunity has come for them to show us what direction we should take in matters of this sort. This deafening silence absolutely shocks me, Mr. Chairman, but any way I think I need to say a bit more about the BDB so that you will understand what role it will be playing in the future.

I spoke last time about the shortcomings which the BDB has faced and I wish to say that the measure of the BDB's suctess relates to the extent that it has financed businesses in tourism, manufacturing and other sectors and assisted in the creation and maintenance of jobs and the earning and saving of foreign exchange.

There are no two ways about it, the BDB has made a contribution, particularly in those areas of economic activity which successive governments have determined they should endeavour to pursue and because it has taken on risks which others will not take on or endure it means that the role of the BDB to some extent is assured. Now that is not to say that the Bank does not need some radical restructuring and I want to get to that point shortly.

However I wish to say that the continuation of the BDB's operation rests principally on two very important considerations. The first is its ability to gain further financial support from its shareholders in the short-term, particularly from Government. The BDB shareholders are Government and the Central Bank. But particularly the support which Government is willing to give it. Also the ability of the Barbados,Development Bank to secure other sources of financing for its operation, whether development finance through the issuing of National Development Bonds, or other kinds of instruments, or through financing from external sources for the kinds of projects which the BDB wishes to finance.

The Public Enterprise Investment Fund, in my view, Mr. Chairman, has to be the source which we have to look to for some of these investments which are going to have to take place. I am not yet sure what mediums we are going to use to do the project appraisal and to advance those funds to those who need them but I wish to say that the BDB has an excellent project appraisal facility on the staff.

There are other problems which the BDB faces and I do not think anybody can question the ability and the qualifications of the members of that staff that do the project appraisal. Therefore we are going to have to draw very considerably on the human resources which the BDB has to undertake with respect to the investments which the Public Enterprise Investment Fund is going to lead the advance.

Apart from that it is quite true and I agree with Honourable Members who feel strongly that the need is there for us to take some of the existing businesses whether it is small hotels, fishing boats, operators of various kinds of public service activity contracted out to Government. There are people who are involved in pest control, there are a whole range of businesses which the BDB over time. has financed and the Government will have to look at those businesses and seek to help the owners of them to restructure them, rehabilitate them and put them in a position to continue to operate, to employ Barbadians and to contribute to national growth.

So that, Mr. Chairman, in terms of the justification of the continued existence of the Bank it appears that the underlying conditions which led to the establishment of the Bank in 1969 still exist. There are no two ways about it. There is still a need for a Barbados Development Bank and those conditions upon which the bank's existence is justified will continue to exist in the 'foreseeable future. Therefore the Government still has an obligation to have in place or in existence an institution like the Barbados Development Bank, together with other private sector institutions like the National Development Foundation and Credit Unions and so on, through which risk investments will be undertaken and particularly the kind of small investments which will encourage self-sufficiency and encourage our citizens who may not be able to find active employment in Government or elsewhere to be involved in.

Now the rationale therefore for the continued existence of the Barbados Development Bank is rooted in the following factors: The first is that we all acknowledge that the Barbadian economy is at a critical juncture, with persistently high levels of unemployment, sluggish investment and all of this is taking place in a very rapidly changing world environment in *which* the ways in *which* we do business, the kind of competition which we will face and *how* it will affect our domestic industries and businesses is changing on a daily basis. So that in the face of all of that the only way that we can launch this economy on a path of sustainable development is if Government has available a pool of funds to invest and if institutions like the Barbados Development Bank take that role seriously and those institutions are mandated to finance innovative economic development in Barbados. So there is still a critical need for the Barbados Development Bank and nobody should believe that the exercise in restructuring the Barbados Development Bank is an exercise simply to shut it down. It may be an exercise to remove from the Bank's operation that part of the portfolio which is contaminated and seek to restructure the existing performing loans, and I will get to that point shortly.

12.00 noon.

The second point that needs to be made is that commercial banks and the rest of the Barbadian private sector are clearly convinced of the need for flexible long-term funding and have demonstrated such conviction by establishing trust companies, merchant banks and the Caribbean Financial Services Corporation. So many of them are making longer term loans. Of course, they are going to restrict those resources which they have available for that lending to their best clients. They are not going to adopt any policy in which they are going to encourage people to , come in to them with projects which they consider risky and certainly people who do not have an investment profile or who themselves have not had a credit rating in which the banks can judge. So for one to start this small business in a risky area, it is not the kind of activity which the commercial banks are going to easily support.

The commercial banks are still essentially retail banks and would normally wish a development bank to take the leading position in lending in a new and risky area. Now it would be desirable if the commercial banks were able to allocate a . portion of their portfolio. It would also

be desirable if the credit unions in Barbados were able to actively work on developing this venture capital fund, so that Government could then put at the disposal of those institutions the project analysis which the Barbados Development Bank has on some kind of consultancy or contractual basis.

The third point is that the success of the Caribbean Financial Services Corporation demonstrates the need for specialized institutions providing for long-term development funding, assuming that the record of the BDB is not one to be admired. I am not making that point but other people may have made it. However, that particular institution has a regional focus with no specific commitment to Barbados. So we need to have in Barbados an institution which is going to undertake and underwrite the investments which we consider to be riskier and have the ability to encourage people to develop initiatives in those areas.

Commercial banks have not been very active, Mr. Chairman, in dealing with medium and long-term development funds provided by the international' lending agency. Therefore, one would assume that these kinds of funds being on lent to the Barbados Development Bank would be the best kind of institution to undertake that kind of lending. Apart from that, Mr. Chairman, what is critical is that with traditional sectors in Barbados that are in difficulty there is need to develop and implement innovative business opportunities in new areas. This is an area of activity that Government can seek through the BDB to underwrite. So that once Government has carried out the studies or the private sector and the analysis is there and we know that this is the direction that we want to take, we can then call on institutions like the Barbados Development Bank to lead the initiatives in those areas which is one of the important roles of that institution.

Mr. Chairman, we all know that business management and development services are needed more now than ever particularly to rehabilitate the tourism and manufacturing sectors which constitute a major portion of the BDB portfolio and which are essential for the national economy. The BDB has a very important role particularly in providing that business management and development services for their clients in those sectors.

Now I want finally, Mr. Chairman, to deal with the main elements of the restructuring of the BDB and to indicate to the House that, even in the face of these grave difficulties which the Barbados Development Bank has had to deal with, it has begun to implement some measures designed to increase its productivity and reduce its cost. So that the Bank is seeking to improve its operational system so that the policy and procedural manuals are being developed in that direction. The Bank is also establishing an effective system of checks and balances and a commitment throughout the Bank to performing value added activities correctly first time everytime. The Bank has also adopted a policy of containing its overall administrative expenditure at a level not exceeding 4 per cent of the active loan portfolio and, in that regard, when staff leaves or if they have been dismissed the Bank has not filled those posts so as to keep the overall administrative costs at the level which is desirable. There has also been a reorganization in the Projects and Loan Administration Department in order to achieve greater focus in the area of collection and recovery.

The overall goal in the restructuring, Mr. Chairman, is to establish a financially viable Development Bank and towards this end four main objectives must be achieved:

(1) Sanitizing of the loan portfolio;

(2) Recapitalization of the Bank;

(3) Debt relief;

(4) Reduction in administrative costs.

So that the main proposals for the restructuring of the Barbados Development Bank are as follows and I am not saying that these will be followed slavishly because one has to discuss these with the international financial institutions particularly the IADB and come to some conclusion:

(1) Divide the existing loan portfolio of the Bank into two sections — Part A and Part B — based on an assessment of the individual projects. In Part A, the active portfolio would form the basis for a viable restructured institution and Part B of the portfolio will becom,e the non-rehabilitable portion and will be liquidated.

(2) Recapitalization of the BDB would be achieved through Government's injection of $20 million which may be effected by its assumption of liability for the maturing National Development Bond, which we have just done with respect to one tranche sometime last week.

(3) The administrative costs will be reduced in line with the size and improved quality of the portfolio. The revision of the Bank's policies and procedures will reflect this changed focus in the Bank.

Those are the elements of restructuring of the Barbados Development Bank which I think are important to the House and which based on that Members may

make a judgment about the restructuring to determine whether they feel it will make the institution more viable.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that I should take the opportunity now to move on to the issue of the Development Plan which forms part of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and to say something about that Plan and the development strategy which will be undertaken. This is very important, Mr. Chairman, because Honourable Members on that side of the House would like to discuss the Development Plan, I am sure, unless they, would like me to say that the Plan is a positive Plan and something that should be endorsed by the House and then sit down and leave it to Members to respond to that. But since I do not wish to do that and since the Plan has focused so significantly...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have to intervene at this moment because I would have to entertain whether the Minister is winding up or just giving an explanation. If he is not winding up, then your time has expired.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No, I am not winding up.
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Mr. CHAIRMAN: Well, your time has expired.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you, Sir.
12.10 p.m.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I just wish to make a brief intervention at this time with regard to a micro-business window, both the one that has been stated in the Estimates under Economic Affairs and also the one that has been spoken about with regard to the Ministry of Trade.

Before I make my comments with regard to the micro-business window, I wish to state that the Estimates seem to have taken a very strange turn this year, since it would appear that if one stands and makes an observation or an alternative suggestion there are writers in the Press who believe that once you have made an alternative suggestion a NO vote is inevitable., I find that extremely strange.

Mr. Chairman, I have stood in cis House on many occasions and I have spoken my mind as I see things, and I will continue to do that, but for anyone to suggest, as has been suggested in the newspapers yesterday, that each and every time I get up in this Honourable Chamber to state my views or to give my alternative to what is being suggested that I am therefore going to vote NO or should vote NO, then they are making me 'a robot. I cannot understand how suggestions are being made as to how things should be done and then people are saying that because you make an alternative suggestion they expect you to vote NO. Mr. Chairman, I will vote NO according to how I feel deep inside of me. No one will dictate to me when I should vote NO against this Government, and least of all, those persons who write for the Press. I have to decide on my own when I will vote NO. I just want to set that point.

I put that point on record, because in these Estimates I will get up and make alternative suggestions and I will speak to the issues as I see them. I do not want anyone to believe that because I give an alternative suggestion, it follows that I am going to vote NO. That is all I have to say.

Mr. Chairman, I was in this House for 13 years. I may be wrong, but I do not recall in those 13 years at any time any person ever dividing on an Appropriation Bill, but the Press will take it as a cardinal sin for me not to vote. I have sat in here and the former Leader of the Opposition, the former Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, spoke for about four hours and a half and did not divide, so I am saying that because a Division is called, and because I gave alternative reasons for my intervention, it should not follow automatically that I am going to vote NO, because as I said, I was in here 13 years and I do not recall...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, there are Standing Orders of Parliament that govern the conduct of debates. As I understand it, we are under Head 20 dealing with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and I would like to submit that the discussion about voting on the Appropriation Bill has nothing to do with Economic Affairs, so the discussion is somewhat irrelevant. I will ask you to rule, Sir.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, the reason why I have started that way, and I said it right from the beginning, is because when I stand in this Honourable Chamber to give an alternative to what is proposed, I do not want it to go abroad that because I give an alternative therefore I am going to vote NO. That is all, so I will get to the point now. That is the only reason why I made that intervention.

Mr. Chairman, my point, as I have stated mostly in my intervention on the Appropriation Bill, was the question of unemployment and how do we tackle the question of employment. I will go to this topic whenever I get the chance during these Estimates, because I consider that unemployment is our greatest problem at the moment. That is what I believe.

I believe that any economic recovery for this country has to be based on small businesses. Small businesses usually operate on the local market. Very few small businesses operate as exporters, but the Government has often said that its concessions and its initiatives and incentives are for those institutions and industries who are catering to the export business. If we admit that small businesses are going to be the ones that are going to drive this ' economy with regards to employment, and if the Government is saying that its incentives and its concessions will be geared mainly to those industries and those institutions that export, that seems to be a contradiction. What it does is throw doubt in the minds of those small business people who are eager and willing to get involved. Because here * it is that a small businessman is getting involved in a small business, but he is hearing that the Government is saying that the incentives and concessions they are willing to give are almost always for those persons who are willing to export.

I think the Government should look at this matter very carefully in their pronouncements. I think the Government should realise that if it is going to encourage....

Aside.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Of course I am part of the Government, for the time being, and I am asking the Government to look at it.

Aside.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Do you want me to say my Government? Okay, I am asking my Government, Mr. Chairman, to look at the question of making those small business people comfortable., making them feel at least that the Government has not forgotten them in their plans for down the road. I have known of quite a few people who are willing to get involved, but when they hear the Government state on more than one occasion that the concessions and the incentives will be geared to those persons who are going to export, a lot of these small business people are waiting and playing a wait and see game. I am just asking the Government to look at this matter because I believe as I stated upfront that small businesses are the ones that are going to generate employment in this country.

12.20 p.m.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, the Government has got the wrong approach to the whole question of economic matters. The Government at this time should be concentrating on measures which would generate employment. There can be no doubt in anybody's mind that unemployment is a very important, or the most important area, for discussion at this point in time of our history.

We know what problems have been created: crime follows unemployment in any country and in particular Barbados at this time. How can a government, how can Members on that side get up and be critical of this Opposition when Barbados is faced with over 30 000 people who can work, who are employable and cannot get work. The Government ought to be ashamed trying to divert this debate talking about the Opposition and what it has not put forward and whether the Opposition should be taking initiative in this debate. What foolishness am I hearing? Nobody wants to hear. Don't shift the emphasis of this debate. It is about providing the level of activity to create the climate whereby those 30 000 persons or so who want work to pay their bills and to send to school their children can work.

Mr. Chairman, as I said, I don't want to be long on this because we are going to come under other Heads which I will speak on at length; but I could not sit here and hear the Government attempt to castigate this Opposition and other Members on tat side talking about 'whether the Press misinterpreted what they said when we should be back to the debate.

Let us focus on the debate. As far as we are concerned the young people out there want work. I want to hear from the Government. Don't tell me about any Development Plan. I read it. No jobs for them between now and the next couple of years. No hope. This is the Barbados in which I live. I have family who would like to get work. It is the responsibility of this Government to provide the atmosphere or the environment for my children and my family to get work. I am sure that all parents of young people out there would like .to hear from the Government what are its plans.

It is all right to talk about providing money for export. There are lots of businesses. The Government has focussed in its plan sometime last year when it said it would concentrate on the development of small businesses because it felt that small business would help to alleviate the unemployment problem in Barbados. Now you are going to tell me that I am going to sit here and hear the Government talk all sorts of things and not focus on what it intends to do to encourage the development of small businesses.

I do agree that small businesses have a potential to generate employment and we have to look at this very seriously. I am going daily around this country and seeing lots of young people in groups in frustration because

they have no work. I am worried about Barbados. I don't want to hear any fancy footwork talk from the Government on this. I am worried about this when I go to my constituency and parts of St. James and see young boys and girls out there languishing on the streets. Now, tell me what does Government hold for these people?

I want the Government to understand that with a workforce of 124 000 or thereabouts and this unemployment in excess or somewhere in the vicinity of 30% this is a significant number and a number that you cannot just ignore. There are people who cannot pay their bills because they cannot find work. Let the debate focus along those lines, not what the Leader of the Opposition hopes to put forward. He is not the Government. Let me make this abundantly clear. I don't want to sit in here and hear people critical of the Leader of the Opposition because he has not disclosed what plans he has to take Barbados out of the economic mess in which this Government has plunged it. We know what we have in store as a team and when the time comes this Party will release those plans.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. It seems as though Honourable Members either have not heard or have forgotten what I said earlier this morning. If they wish to continue to participate in the rest of the Estimates they will do well to take heed. Let the Honourable Member continue.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I just want the Government to understand because the Minister of Education said that the Opposition would have... I listened very carefully and I am responding to some remarks that I have heard in here: I don't want to be part of that, that this Opposition does not want to debate certain things. I want to make this abundantly clear, that is why I have risen. Let it be known that we are not afraid to debate but we are biding our time. What we are going to debate and when we are going to debate... We have strategies like ever good opposition.

Mr. Chairman, with those few remarks as I said later on I will be more detailed but for now I want to warn the Government not to take our silence as inability to debate any subjects that come before this Chamber.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, I want to make a contribution to Head 20, subprogram 03 relative to the National Productivity Board. I understand that my friends on the other side were wondering what I was doing on Thursday and Friday.

Asides.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: If you were part of the wounds I wouldn't mind doing that. Once you give me the opportunity, Darling.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. Are we allowed to address each other as Darling, now, Sir?

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I withdraw those comments, Sir.

As I was saying, I was sorry that I could not be here Thursday to allow the Honourable Member for St. Thomas to continue his tirade, my good friend, but it so happened that 8.30 that morning I was meeting with a nascent company discussing collective bargaining in the context of productivity and working out a gain-sharing scheme. At 10 o'clock that morning I met with the telephone company and got a 4% basic for the workers based on a productivity scheme and at 2.30 in the afternoon I was meeting with the Light and Power, productivity scheme again. They have $900 down on the table and they have to come up with some more and on Friday all day from 9 o'clock to 4.30 p.m. along with a man called Ed Bushell. No insult to this Chamber where I should have been., We were training 24 young public servants in terms of industrial relations problem solving, conflict resolution, a new approach for the future. Part of the productivity teaching which has to go on within the public service. I thought we had a very good day. But then the feedback will come from the 24 persons who were exposed. Just in case they had any doubt about where I was I know the Honourable Members know that I expected that they would target me on Tuesday, especially because of the comments I made about their Party. That is what spurred them on. If I had talked strictly about what we are doing and not attack them for the high debt they ran up, between 1976 and 1986, he would not have responded that way. The high debt is a historical fact. What we did between 1991 and now is a historical fact and we have to mention these things in areas like debates.

12.30 p.m.

The real issue here about productivity and the Productivity Board, I wish to say that in my view the establishment of the Productivity Board and all that goes with that is going to be one of the most trailblazing and significant developmental things that we have done in this country. As a student of Industrial Relations, I looked at the development of these Caribbean countries and particularly over the past 50 years or so, between 1945 and 1973/74. There was an unprecedented period in the history of the world and of the Caribbean in terms of economic

growth. The down turn came from the oil shocks and it has continued. I have watched Caribbean countries struggling in terms of labour/management relations to deal with that situation through systematic changes and introduction of new mechanisms.

I have never been happy with the start made in Trinidad and continued elsewhere to deal with these problems by introducing the industrial court method which is really a borrowing from the United States of America National Labour Relations Board.

I believe . when the late, great, Honourable Eric Williams introduced the Industrial Stabilisation Act in 1962 and then patterned that into the Industrial Relations Act, that he was borrowing from an example, that is the American example, that unfortunately I think was a bad example, but it was borrowed and therefore the solution to our economic problems took a legal route. We know that the law is by nature adversarial and so on. It is my view that the mechanism of the industrial court has not worked in these Caribbean countries and wherever they have existed in Trinidad, Jamaica or wherever else, we have seen labour management relations deteriorate. We have seen the economy deteriorate because I believe it was a wrong prescription because the problems were not correctly diagnosed and therefore the options that were taken were the incorrect ones.

In the Barbadian situation I would say that the Productivity Board, which is economic solution for an economic problem, shows creativity, understanding and wisdom. If our problem is about economics, if our problem is about productivity, making the pie bigger so you can share more, then the answer could not be in legislation. It could not be in an industrial court. The thing is we do not have to be reinventing the wheel all the time.

Productivity Boards have been established for a very long time in places like the United States of America coming out of the 1930 Depression along with, of course, the path breaking moods of the great Roosevelt, things like the Tennessee Valley Authority, the legislation of Trade Unions into being, and several activities that were taken by the United States Government at that time and including the establishment of a Productivity Board. A productivity culture was the answer that pushed the Unites States of America up to this point in time now where you had to look for another thing to push it forward because it is falling back.

Britain, Japan, all of them have gone that route and I believe that we are late [in] establishing a Productivity Board because -the conceptualisation of this Democratic Labour Party back in the '1970s when we set up BIMAP was for an organisation that looked not only at management training but clearly allied to management training was the issue of productivity; but somehow or the other we never got our act together. We got the management training in place but we are now 20 years down the line and we are now trying to put the Productivity Board and the productivity culture in place.

I say to Barbados, it is one of the single greatest gifts that this administration has given to this country. I say to Barbados take this baby and nourish it because the future of this country is around that fledgling little baby up there in Bay Street, that little building there with people in it and the concepts and those who are driving it. That is the baby we develop into the adult, the locomotive to push this country forward. For those who do not have the vision of how these things take root and grow, I say to you today a small seed, tomorrow a hugh tree. That is what is going to carry Barbados forward,

I say to you again that you may 'be too close to that prices and incomes policy and what it means but if you do not understand Barbados has set another example in this world. It is going to be used as a model all over this world that people are going to sit down and ask themselves how could people that are supposed to have disparate aims and objectives, Governmenr, trade onion, and private sector, sit down and work out a protocol without the force of law and employ it in their country. That model is going to be used wherever people wolf(together. It is a second baby that will grow into maturity and be part of the salvation of this country.

12.37 p.m.

I say to you again, let us not underestimate our capacity for dealing with external problems in this country. This country has faced the IMF, the country has faced the World Bank and is facing the IADB. It is one thing I believe in and it is that when you are dealing with those giants we can take a non-partisan approach. Yesterday it was your problem, today it is ours. Somewhere along the line it is going to be one of us again. But these are issues on which there should be no divide in terms of how we deal with those beasts out there. Because I want you to understand that when you are dealing with these kinds of issues we can get up here and polish it as much as possible. But the example we should be setting to the rest of this country is that it is Barbados' problem not any DLP problem or BLP problem. We have all gone through that road already. The way how the world is turning nobody knows what the economic future of the world would be or of this country.

I think we should have some very clear ideas about what we consider development. Every one of us here

as Parliamentarians owe it to ourselves to define very, very carefully what we mean by development. Because even as we speak here everybody might have different ideas about development. But we do not get a chance to meet on both sides of the border to find out what do you mean by development for Barbados. When we are very clear in our minds in terms of what we want as development for the people that we represent then we would be able to meet with the IMF, the World Bank or anybody else and say look we want things from you but this is what we are prepared to negotiate and this is what we are not prepared to negotiate. This is Barbados saying so. Not one group and the other group but this is Barbados telling you where we are coming from, that this is what this country wants.

You are telling me all the time that I have to restructure. You are telling me all the time I have to readjust. Restructure to what? Readjust to what? Restructure for whom? Readjust for whom? It has to be for us. That has to be the motive. I do not think anybody will doubt that this country needs readjusting. Nobody will doubt that this country needs restructuring. It should have started in the mid-1980s – I make that point again – when the Honourable Member for Christ Church South went up to Nassau and was co-signatory to the Nassau Understanding of' 1984. He did not have much chance to put his imprint on the economy of this country because elections changed. In 1985 when he went to Nassau for the Nassau Understanding. It may be 1984 but I know the signature was by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. He was the person who represented Barbados.

I assume that if things had not gone in 1986 it would have been his mandate to introduce structural adjustment to Barbados. That was a mandate for the Caribbean. In all things there is a big lag time. You decided that you have the structural adjustment in 1984 or 1985, it takes a long time until it is forced on you. All of us were supposed to be part of that dialogue, the trade unions, the private sector, Governments. That Nassau Understanding is a vitally important document that should be working its way through this Caribbean. Again we delayed looking at these things and when 1991 came there was no choice.

The future is productivity, Sir. All the talk about employment as though Governments can just go and employ people. My colleague has to make a political point on this, I know. All of them will make that. For an Opposition and you have that amount of people out there you must go out there and talk about employment. But they also know that the economics of employment are not as simple as they make it out to be and therefore we can choose between certain options for ourselves. Each of us have to do that within the context of our conscience, our integrity and our intelligence.

We go out there and tell the people we can create employment when we know it is not done like that to score political points, although we explain to them the macro-economics of how an economy works and difficult it is to go out there and create employment at a time when your tradeable sectors are not performing, at a *time when* your foreign reserves are still fragile, at a time *when,* in fact, you are now restructuring the economy, and that after you have done a significant amount of restructuring can you go ahead and create jobs. It is a matter of the individual conscience. It is a matter of the individual integrity. It is a matter of the individual intelligence. All of us can engage in all the rhetoric of the world, all of us can go out there and talk to the people. But in the end the responsibility for leadership is with us. We cannot shirk that responsibility because we have gone through that exercise more than once when we were afraid to speak our conscience, to use our intelligence and to be truthful each time. Go out there and fool people if you want to. My job is a simple job.

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

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Thank you very much, Sir. My job is a simple job as a representative of the workers and the representative of the people who put me here and that is to tell them that we are poised at a time in the development of our country where the first time that we have ever structurally adjusted this since we became an open economy and a modern *country is now.* Wait and see what happens when all of those reforms are put in place *and* then we will look and see what will happen with unemployment and so on. I have no wish list or no tricks or no big lot of rhetoric to give anybody. I have no promises that we can come in here and destroy the unemployment problem that is bothering everybody else in the world by any Budget or any set of Estimates. I can say again, that I would wish that the money that is put here for productivity were more. That is the truth. But at least the system is in place and I am hoping that we would see more and more allocations in the Budget for productivity because as I said the results are going to pay for themselves.

Thank you very much, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMMIAN: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, when I last intervened in the debate, I made certain observations and indeed certain recommendations with respect to the effective functioning of the National Productivity Board. I would like to conclude that intervention, Mr. Chairman, by stating that the whole notion of information management

is going to be central to my mind to the improvement of produ tivity nationwide and in particular in the public sector.

Mr. Chairman, the whole world and indeed the developed world is moving towards the concept of the paperless office and, I am submitting, that we are going to have to address our minds in the public service to the level of paper produced on a weekly basis and to the fact that it has negative implications for storage in the public service. Indeed many of the grouses which arise from workers related to dust and to the fact that there is inadequate storage space in the public service and indeed in several Government departments.

I submit that the National Productivity Board and indeed the Ministry of the Civil Service must concern themselves with time management, elimination of wastage, data base management and administrative reform. I believe the time has come when we take the whole concept of public sector reform a step forward. I think that too long we have been discussing the whole question of public sector reform without the concomitant results or without the results that one would expect given the level of debate, given the level of research and given the level of time which has been spent on the subject.

We need too to act quickly on the submission of the UNDP identification *mission on public sector reform* and improvements and to ascertain how relevant their findings are to the whole question of productivity in Barbados.

Let me, in winding up, submit or offer a 7-point plan.

Aside.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I am offering a 7-point plan for the public service *in* particular and it could be used in the private sector which will, to my redound, to the benefit of productivity generally in Barbados.

(1) Strengthening of the Training Division and the Personnel Administration Division as far as specialist staff are concerned.

(2) Utilize computer based management information systems.

I think Mr. Chairman, that we have spent a lot of time and money on computers within the public service and if we are to effectively manage the 23 000 persons who are employed by Government and parastatal agencies then we are to move in this direction.

Asides.

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

Asides.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I cannot hear myself, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not think that that should be said even *sotto voce.* Based on what I alerted Members to earlier in this day. I have to be very serious. We must recognize that we must conduct the people's business properly. Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We need also to carry out an ongoing manpower planning process within both the private and the public sector. I know that the whole issue of manpower planning might correctly fall under the Ministry of Labour Relations but I am offering this as a matter which the Ministry of the Civil Service, in consultation with the Ministry of Labour might want to address.
12.50 p.m

Mr. Chairman, I am submitting the scrapping of the present staff report forms and replacing that form with a more modern and practical performance appraisal form. I *think,* for too long as I said in my earlier intervention, the whole concept of performance appraisal in the public service has been reduced to a farce and we are not going to be able to talk about the measurement of productivity, we are not going to be able to talk about rewarding workers for work produced unless we have in place effective and proper performance appraisal systems and indeed mechanisms for ongoing monitoring of these systems.

Now that I am on forms, my fifth point, Mr. Chairman, speaks to the question of reviewing the forms which are used in the public service with a view to revising them to reduce the time taken to conduct business in the public sector.

I think many private sector agencies have been calling for this. Sometimes in order to pass an entry or whatever at the Customs Department you have to fill 3 and 4 forms and the same thing can be said in certain sections of the Ministry of Agriculture and these are areas that we are going to have to look at in order to reduce time.

My sixth point, Mr. Chairman. I am submitting that there is need for Government, in collaboration with

the social partners and the National Productivity Board, to undertake an effective time and motion study in the public and private sector on an ongoing basis. This is a concept to which only lip service is paid and while it is very effective and widely used in the developed world I know it is not used with any degree of regularity in the Third World Countries and indeed in the Caribbean.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the seventh point but certainly not the weakest point by any stretch of the imagination I am calling for a review of the laws relating to safety and health at the work place because I do not see, Mr. Chairman, how we could speak to the question of increasing productivity whether it is a public or private sector unless we have a modem occupational safety and health legislation on the statute books and this is' an area which we must address. This is an area which must, within the immediate future, be addressed in order to improve productivity because we cannot expect workers to be performing under stressful conditions and yet to produce to the optimum.

This, Mr. Chairman, is my seven point plan which I believe should be taken up by the Minister responsible for the National Productivity Board with the Board, and indeed with the Social Partners, the Ministry of the Public Service and the Private Sector. I am obliged, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I recognise the Honourable Member, Mr. Chairman, but I think the Honourable Member for St. George will probably be longer than 2 minutes.

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

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I would be obliged if I can have 2 Bills read. I crave your indulgence and the indulgence of the House to give notice of 2 short Bills if there is no objection.

I would like to give notice of a Bill to amend the Local Loans Act in order to increase the aggregate sum which may be raised by loans in Barbados.

I would also like to give notice of a Bill to repeal section 35(b) of the Exempt Insurance Act.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Local Loans Act be now read a first time.

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

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

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that a Bill to repeal section 35(b) of the Exempt Insurance Act be now read a first time.

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

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be now suspended until 2.00 p.m. this day.

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

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

RESUMPTION

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, and Mr. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee has resumed.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, regarding this Head of Economic Affairs, we have been hearing quite a bit about all of the various areas which are necessary to be the engine of growth and, indeed, we have heard in the last few speeches references made to the whole question of reform and the whole question of productivity. This reform, Mr. Chairman, has been referenced to the reform in the Civil Service and the whole Government operations and indeed to the whole range of performance as it is now associated, as we heard from the Minister of Finance,

with productivity. This prompted me, Mr. Chairman, to make reference to one particular area of reform which I think is absolutely necessary if we are in this year of 1994, as we approach the 21st century to bring this Parliament and this country into what may be referred to as the - modern world.

Mr. Chairman, we had reports in here and indeed the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has been referring to certain reports submitted by the Auditor General in terms' of what he has to say about how things are done and he can only report based upon the requirements of the law as it now stands. We are operating in this country under some rules and regulations which we have to admit in this Honourable House in this year 1994 are not now relevant to the operations of a modern day country. I want to bring to this Honourable House's attention a point which we have discussed in this House in recent weeks, a point which was put forth by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas with all the force, vigor and stamina that rests within his bones. I too, Mr. Chairman, stood there with him and committed myself that I would associate myself with him in an effort to bring some relief to some people in this country. To be specific, Sir, I will now deal with the problem that we have in terms of what is necessary for the reform.

Mr. Chairman, we came into this Honourable House not so long ago and approved a supplementary for $1 million and I want Members to be very clear about this.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I am not criticising the Civil Service.

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

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I am saying that the reform will free up the Civil Service to do what is necessary and this is the problem. We voted in this Honourable House a supplementary of $1 million to provide for the Sanitation Service Authority in its efforts to alleviate the problems of the people of Arch Hall in St. Thomas and in greater detail to alleviate the problems of the people of Barbados. Mr. Chairman, we are approaching the end of the financial year. That is a fact. We know that we are approaching that end but at the same time one of the areas that I am very adamant about and in my view should be reviewed is the whole question of commitment by Government as is done within the private industry.

Mr. Chairman, I have had occasions to state in here that we have identified the compactor for which this Honourable House voted the funds. We have identified the particular piece of equipment and we can probably give you the particular serial number. I do not have the serial number in front of me but we could probably give you that. But the reform is necessary. So if perchance as we have heard that this equipment may not arrive here prior to March 31st and may arrive here on April 1st, areas over which we in this Honourable House have no control, we do not own a shipping line to bring that equipment here.

Mr. Chairman, I am saying in terms of the reform that we should be able to do like the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has done in his business. At the end of a year he knows what is committed and he knows what is done in private industry. He would have worked in both areas and we should be able to allow those funds to be allocated in some suspense account like a normal business venture if we are sure that we can provide the profonna, provide the shipping and arrival date, and the cost factor. The cost is the relevant factor.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The Honourable Member knows very well. If that were not all, it is not that we are worried about what is about to come in from over and away as they say. Take the trucks. We also voted in that same supplementary the whole question of providing two trucks. Mr. Chairman, the trucks are in Barbados. We have identified a supplier. There is a supplier who has the trucks already in Barbados. But because of certain problems which members of the Civil Service might have experienced from time to time and because of other things which were written in certain reports from time to time, I do not blame the officers for having the fear that someone may write something about them at another time.

Central Purchasing, Mr. Chairman, is being cautious because they are saying that we have to worry about getting the tender out and getting back in the tenders before the 31st of March and if we don't get back the tenders and if we don't have a meeting before March 31 there are problems. The same vehicles that are now in Barbados. They are here in Barbados, Mr. Chairman.
2.10 p.m.

Are we going to say to the people of St. Thomas, Arch Hall – and I am sorry the Honourable Member is not now in his seat because I would like to know if he would like to go to the people in Arch Hall and say to them, "I am sorry but the equipment has not arrived before March 31st." Mr. Chairman, March 31 is the end of the financial year.

If this Honourable House is supposed to be the leading lawmaker of the country, if we cannot, having

made a commitment to the people of St. Thomas and indeed to the people of this country, provide equipment and lights to alleviate their problems, if we having identified the compactor, if we know the supplier of the compactor, if we know the arrival date of the compactor and the only problem we have is that it may arrive here after March 31st, then we as a country not just as a Party, cannot deal with the problems of the people because that equipment is going to arrive here after the 31st, I say, Mr. Chairman, that is an open forum for reform within the Financial Rules and within the whole structure.

Asides.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, that is the one as I said that is on its way. But, Mr. Chairman, pray tell me — two trucks identified sitting on Barbadian soil from one of the suppliers contracted to provide this equipment and we may have the possibility that although these trucks . are sitting on Barbadian soil in this day of Our Lord the 21st of March, 1994 that because of paper work flow or requirements of certain rules and regulations, that we may not be able to acquire this equipment and we will have to come back, and as the Member for Christ Church South said, "revote".

Asides.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I will have much more to say on this whole question of the compactor under Health but I want it in the area of reform of economics when we are talking about reform of productivity, because this in itself lends to the productivity of the Government servants. I have spent enough time going on the telephone back and forth trying to see if we could come up with a solution. It is my time and the time of all the officers, so we cannot talk about productivity, when we as a country have committed the dollars to provide this equipment to alleviate the problems of the people in Arch Hall and the people of Barbados. I say that we need some reform in that area and I will have much more to say about that when we get to Health. I am obliged to you.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, before I start my contribution to this debate I would like to refer to two matters raised in this Honourable House. The first one is by the Honourable Member for St. Philip South who raised the point that the Ministry of Trade and its present trade policy is that the incentive offered to businesses mostly concentrate on businesses that are manufacturing for export. I have said always as a policy decision from the Ministry that the Ministry also encourages efficient import substitution companies in Barbados. I have been looking very carefully to extend some additional incentives to any company that is doing import substitution and therefore the point made by the Member for St. Philip South is well taken.

Before I get into the main section, I also want to refer to the Member for St. Michael South East. Let me start by saying that none of us in this House can be satisfied with the present level of unemployment in Barbados.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, I only see 6 Honourable Members in their places.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is in order and I shall instruct that the bell be rung. But the Honourable Member is not in order to leave the Chamber.

Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: I would like to say, Mr. Chairman, that referring to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East let me say that I don't think there is a single Member in this House who is happy about the number of unemployed in Barbados. We are all very...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I think it is disgraceful that we have Estimates going on and not a single member of the Opposition is in his seat. We are discussing the people's business. This is a situation where they have been going around the country telling the people for the last 20 *months* about the economic situation and here we are discussing the economic situation in the country and *not* a single solitary Member over there. As Leader of the House I am ashamed and embarrassed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I want to put on record that in response to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East that there is not a single Member in this Parliament, and I don't think there is a single member in Barbados, who has the good will of Barbados at heart that is comfortable with the present level of unemployment in this country. Therefore, all of us are working towards it. The present method that they are using, the continuous household survey is one they have been using for a long time, and I am saying that it is only fair that since it has been used for a long time that you accept the numbers that they are doing because they apply all over.

I would like to see, Mr. Chairman, that we do some refinement to the present survey method we have

and, mbre particularly, I would like to see a detailed survey done of the *informal* sector because the *only way* we are going to be able to arrive at a figure for planning is if we have a proper survey done of the informal sector in Barbados. We all know that the informal sector of Barbados has grown tremendously over the last 3 or 4 *years. There are* many people in the informal sector making a comfortable living and the point about it is that because it is the informal sector they are not in a position, or very few of them have been paying any income tax on that earning. I am not going to belabour that point. I am going to move on.

I think I would be remiss if I did not join this debate dealing particularly with the formation of the Productivity Board and to give this House my view on where we see the development thrust of Barbados over the next couple of years. The formation of the Productivity Board is tremendously important because when you look at the structure of the economy and where we are going, you realise that we have in Barbados a problem. If we do not increas the productivity and I am saying if we do not have quality production we are going to lose out. My thesis has *been that if you* examine all of these CARICOM countries, with the exception of Guyana, there are few of us that have any physical resources that would be able to keep the quality of life going as it is. There are very few of us outside of Guyana, Trinidad and Jamaica that have any physical and natural resources.
2.20 p.m.

If you take Barbados, in Barbados our natural resource is almost restricted to our land, our sea and our sun. If you look clearly in this present day where you are talking so much about sustainable development, if we take seriously our agricultural potential, my thesis is that if you are to bring sustainable agriculture to Barbados, that whatever you do there is a limit to the production of agricultural products in Barbados from the land we have if we are to do the kind of agriculture that would allow it to be sustained over the years.

Similarly, Mr. Chairman, if we take our mining there is a limit to our mining that we can have. If we take our other natural resource of water, there is a limit to the extraction weight. If you take the oil there is a limit. Therefore I am saying that if you take the limit of those physical resources you will find that they cannot maintain the quality of life that we are accustomed to therefore we must now go on to the other resources in Barbados which we have, the human resource. When you look at it you will see Barbados' main resource is the environment of Barbados. To use the environment in its wider sense, the physical environment and the human resource development, the whole world is moving towards a limit with the liberalisation and the globalisation of trade that only those *countries that can* produce the quality and at the price level will be able to survive.

For a long time the development strategy in Barbados was built around a protectionist attitude that manufacturers were protected by licences, minimum values and other non-tariff barriers. We are being forced by the natural movement in the world all over to the removal of these bathers. Therefore our manufacturers are coming to the stage where over the next couple of years they would have to compete. The GATT arrangement which will be signed in Madrid on March 15 further makes it mandatory, if you are to become a member of the Multi-Trade Organisation of the world, that you have to subscribe and be able to provide bounding rates. Rates, *et cetera* have to be reduced in developing countries by 24% over the next six years and you have to be able to have transparent, sanitary and psycho-sanitary modules so you can no longer hide behind them. Six, where are we in Barbados? Our future and our present development thrust is therefore to the services, tourism, financial services, informatics and the other industries.

What is tourism, Mr. Chairman? Tourism is a blend of our physical resource. In Barbados' case it is the sea, our climate and our people because there are many places in the world with just as good beaches as Barbados and climate that have not been able to put together the tourism plant that we have. A big part of that tourism plant is the human resource element in that plant because any time you do a survey people tell you they come to Barbados because the people in Barbados are intelligent, warm and they get a level of service in keeping with the money they pay for.

Similarly, Mr. Chairman, if you look at our financial services, there are many places that have the same legislation that we have. Some of them are non-tax. In the case of Barbados we are low tax. What we have been offering in Barbados once again is a combination of our environment, the laws, rules and people who are intelligent enough to provide the supporting services in law, managerial policies and accounts. Therefore you can have those financial services.

Similarly the knowledge industry, Mr. Chairman. The formation of the Productivity Board is extremely important, but productivity an inferior good must also be tied to quality because if you are producing an inferior good at the maximum output it is better you do not produce at all. Therefore, that is the reason why the Ministry of Trade has taken the initiative to bring together what we call a national quality management programme. That programme is

now being formulated. It is due to the fact that under the trade there is the Barbados National Standards Institution that has adopted the ISO 9000 standard as the standard for Barbados.

This is extremely important that we now move towards that standard because with the liberalisation of trade, it is now becoming almost mandatory for any person exporting from Barbados to be certified to the ISO 9000 standard. For argument sake, Bondhus, that is exporting to Europe must be certified, Texaco, Shell, all of these places. Bondhus is a tool-making company up in Newton. But more and more you find that in order to export to the international arena and in order to guarantee that the goods and services you are providing as top quality you have to be identified and registered with the ISO standard.

In Barbados we had an initiative taken by the private sector, particularly the Barbados Total Quality Management Association, in which among the private firms in Barbados, they started a programme of trying to bring these firms and impress on those people that a service must be delivered efficiently, at a good price and with all the decorum they have been doing. We had two institutions working towards the improvement of quality in Barbados, the Barbados National Standards Institution working with the companies towards the ISO 9000 and the Barbados Total Quality Management Association.

In order to have a holistic approach, Mr. Chairman, to quality in both services in manufacturing, I have brought those two bodies together *and* we had a steering meeting with the idea to try and form a programme for a national approach towards quality. That programme would be mapped out by a steering committee and the steering committee would be of members of the Ministry of *Commerce and Trade,* the Barbados National Standards Institution, the Barbados National Productivity Council, the Barbados Association of . Total Quality, the Personal Administration of the Government, the Ministry of the Civil Service, Barbados Council of Science and Technology, Barbados Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Barbados Manufacturers Association, the Training Administration, the Trade Unions and Barbados Investment and Development Corporation.

The aims of that Steering- Committee are:

(1) To generate a strategic plan for the introduction of quality management in Barbados;

(2) To create awareness of quality management; and

(3) to implement quality management schemes in the manufacturing sector, the commercial sector and the service sector.

Mr. Chairman, we have to build in Barbados a quality culture and that quality culture can only be brought about by an awareness. The programmes that this Committee would set in place would be programmes that would allow managers and organisations to do the *following* things: learn more about their organisation and department; develop a management strategy and system, carry out strategic planning in internal quality duties, cost quality and analyse and appreciate the relationship between internal and external suppliers, customers, etc. and more importantly, to show them how to manage individuals so that they all work towards achieving the company's goals. And more importantly to show them how to manage individuals so that they all work towards achieving the company's goals. This, Mr. Chairman, is presently being spearheaded by the Ministry of Trade because the Barbados National Standards Institution comes under that one.

2.30 p.m.

As I was saying if you look at the eastern 5 you will find that Singapore has been able to chart an economic development because Singapore did a few things. First of all Singapore introduced discipline among its people. The second thing with that discipline was a quality awareness and the sure thing is proper planning in mobilization of the people.

It is going to be absolutely necessary if we in Barbados are going to push this forward and even maintain the present quality of life that we have, that the services and the human resource of Barbados produces at its maximum productivity with a quality and efficiency that is necessary. Because no longer are you going to be able to produce and shelter the Barbadian manufacturers from competition throughout the world. No longer would the customer in Barbados be forced to buy CARICOM goods because it would be a wide open thing. The customer is going to be just as aware as the producer about quality and therefore the only way you are going to be able to produce goods and services that would compete with the world is if you have the quality of service, if you have the productivity and if you have the management.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member should conclude in 2 m' lutes.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that those 2 organizations that we are putting forward, the productivity board plus the interim Committee, to look towards a total and national quality management association because the Government sector is critical. There is no point the private sector going ahead with quality management. This ties in with the reform because the public sector must act as facilitators to the private sector. If you are not acting with the kind of speed and

efficiency, because you are going to hold back the private sector. An economy can only move forward as fast as the slowest part of the economy. Therefore I am saying that between the productivity board and this steering Committee that has been set up to introduce a total quality management programme in Barbados, they have to work hand in hand to move forward the productivity and the output from our human resource to match that of our physical resource in order to keep the economy of Barbados going.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I wish to deal now with the last part of this...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No, no, no. We are not wrapping up. We are debating. We are debating the people's business. There is not any wrapping up in this. We will debate as long as issues are to be *debated. As* long as people raise issues I will continue to discharge my duty.

Mr. Chairman, what I wanted to do was to deal with the final aspect of the presentation and I had started, when last I sat down, to deal with the issues relating to the Development Plan which is published under the authority of the Minister of Economic Affairs and is published out of monies voted under Head 20.

I am very *grateful to* the Honourable Member for St. Philip South for focussing the debate back on the issue of employment. I say that because the object of any Development Plan is to meet the goals of the Barbadian society. It would be foolish of anybody to believe that we can continue to even speak of any achievements in Barbados unless we are able to tackle the issue of unemployment very seriously. I do not think there is anybody in this House on either side who feels comfortable about the level of dislocation which has been precipitated by the stabilisation programme.

There are economies larger than Barbados which are suffering the same sluggishness in terms of being able to reduce unemployment. There are structural reasons for this, Mr. Chairman, which this House needs to recognize and that is that enterprises are able to do the same task with fewer people and with new kinds of technology that require higher skills and less labour. And that, in addition to that, the mobility of labour is not considerable because it is when you reach the Severance Payments Scheme as I have mentioned already, very often encourages people of better talent and ability to remain in jobs way below their capabilities simply because they have built up severance entitlements.

For us to make the labour market more flexible and to attain the levels of employment which are necessary, it is desirable for us to look at the goals which the Government sets for itself arising out of the Development *Plan and* from that then we might be able to extrapolate what contribution those goals will make towards reducing unemployment in Barbados.

Let me begin by saying, Mr. Chairman, that the Government has published a Development Plan. It is a document that sets out the goals which, by and large, have been discussed between the Government and the social partners and should take Barbados into the Twenty-first Century. Cap. 3 of the Plan sets out the development strategy which the Government intends to employ during the period.

I want to make the point that this Plan represents a point *of departure from previous* Development Plans which Barbados has produced for the simple reason that Government has had to adopt a new strategy in devising this particular Development Plan. That is a strategy that focusses importantly on the two issues of export led growth and increasing of productivity for workers. That is very, very important.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are talking about a Development Plan which focusses, and that is on page 40 of the Plan, on issues relating to export orientation of the economy and increased productivity by Barbadians. We have to focus in our strategies on ways and means of making resources available to those who are going to employ Barbadians in industries in which there may be *high value* added and also in industries which themselves are going to provide opportunities for a skilled work force *such* as we have in Barbados.

The Honourable Member for St. *Philip* North has indicated the orientation of the restructured BIDC which, consequent on its restructuring, *has* made significant advances in bringing new industries in Barbados and in focussing on key sectors in terms of creating employment. The days of the misguided policies of the IDC, particularly after 1976 to 1986 are over. The new IDC is imbued with a new mission to bring the Barbadian economy into modern, trading relationships conscious of the developments which are taking place in the world economy and is having to carry out this mission in the face

of grave changes in the way in which the world trades and certainly in the way in which Barbados is open to more competition.

My own view is that the IDC needs and can focus on very selective areas to encourage employment. I am not sure that I always agree with the arguments about import substitution, but the Honourable Member for St. Philip North is entitled to his views and, certainly, any Minister of Trade would have those views. I do not necessarily share them. But I believe that the focus of the IDC, the new BIDC is in the correct direction.

In this planning period, Mr. Chairman, it is anticipated that the existing export sectors of agriculture and manufacturing would be expected to maintain their present level of exports while the economy undertakes structural adjustment and reduces the heavy burden of taxation. This will mean that we would be able to provide room for the expansion of the tourism sector during the early years of the Plan and towards the latter years of the planning period 1993 to the year 2000 the growth in exports are expected to accelerate, even more, as tourism continues to expand and as business and general services find increased markets overseas.

That is the nature of the strategy and the Development Plan itself is implemented in 2 phases, the first phase which covers the 4-year period 1993-94 to 1996-97 which is characterized by Government's structural adjustment programme which will place the economy on the kind of footing such that it can have sustainable growth thereafter and during which real growth rates of 2% to 3.5% are anticipated.

And then in the second phase of the planning period, Mr. Chairman, 1997-98 to 1999-2000 one should see a return to real growth levels of 3.6% to 4%. It does not mean necessarily that those growth levels are going to produce immediate results in terms of employment in the sectors. I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central – and I have not seen the statistics myself – sought to make a correlation between a real growth of 1% and that would create employment for how many? I cannot remember the exact figures but he gave them at the beginning.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Okay.

2.40 p.m.

So you can see, Mr. Chairman, if those figures are correct, and I have no reason to doubt them, the tremendous amount of growth that Barbados would have to see within a very short planning period if it were able to attack the question of employment in the formal sector. I think, however, that may need more definition because what issues of employment the particular economist who makes that point is raising would have to be determined. In other words whether it is seasonal employment or whether it is in fact employment over a long period of time. But that is something that could be debated.

I want, Mr. Chairman, to point out however, and this is very important, that this is the first development plan Barbados has had which acknowledges the key role of the private sector, the very leading role of the private sector, in developing productive activity as distinct from one in which Government provides the path breaking role and the private sector needs to follow. Now this is a very difficult task in a country like Barbados but one is giving the private sector the opportunity to see whether it can perform.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip North spoke about countries like Singapore. Let us not retreat from the position that those NIC's and that part of China which is growing so fast, all of them had selective Government intervention because when we walk around in Barbados and talk about Barbados should be like Singapore as if the private sector carries the full brunt of the initiative, that is not true. The problem is we have a democratic system in Barbados that means that if I were to pick 10 businessmen tomorrow and say that these 10 businessmen are to lead the advance in a particular area, because we have such an open democratic system the Opposition would say that I picked 10 yardfowls and that it is patronage but in those countries...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I know you understand the point I am making, but in those eastern countries when tyrannical regimes and the benevolent dictators pick 10 businessmen and say we are giving the resources to you, nobody asks any questions. So one has to understand that there are major, cultural and socio-political differences between countries like Barbados and, that to draw a direct parallel as was done by a former Prime Minister, in my view quite erroneously, and is done by others constantly between Barbados and countries like Singapore is not to acknowledge the things that Barbados can do well and the kind of political economic system that we have. So that comparison sometimes is very important but at the end of the day, Mr. Chairman, I do not think it can be carried too far. So that the role of Government in the planning period, Mr. Chairman, is to limit itself mainly to the provision of goods and services necessary to meet social and infrastructural needs of the

population within this framework of economic stability, equity and social welfare.

The private sector now will be anticipated to make its contribution through the provision of stronger incentives for private investment and that is the direction in which Government wishes to have the private sector turn. So that apart from the bankruptcy law being revised, Government institutions which provide the sector with technical assistance promotion and finance will be reformed. Some of them have been reformed already including the Investment Development Corporation, the Tourism Authority, the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation and other entities which we have sought to restructure.

I must say, Mr. Chairman, that the restructuring of some of them, and I am not referring to the BIDC in this respect because they have reported and I believe they has been a net savings in terms of the value for money but in respect of some of the restructured entities we' have to be more careful to ensure that they are not restructured and the net effect is more money being poured at them by the taxpayers and this is one of major concerns that we have that in restructuring one has ...

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

Aside..

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That too? I am going to take that too and if anybody else intervenes I have three more contributions to make under this Head here alone.

This is a very important issue, Mr. Chairman, and I find people are not addressing these issues. Imagine a Development Plan has been laid in this House for the past six weeks and not a single word of analysis from all of these high flown economists and brilliant people in the Opposition. Now we are talking on this, Mr.Chairman, they do not want us talk.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is absolutely not true because in this debate this does not require any high flown economist. I dealt with it, Sir, the Honourable Member for the City, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: So, Mr.Chairman, I believe we need to have a full and frank debate on the Development Plan, not any side glances at it and any superficial discussion. We need to have a full and frank debate on this Development Plan to make sure that the public, on whose behalf it is devised, in collaboration with the social partners understand the full ramifications of the adjustment process, understand Government's plans carefully and can understand where this economy will go, into the year 2000.

So this is very important, Mr. Chairman, and that is why I am going to take time to go through elements of the Plan during the course of this debate but will now give other Members an opportunity to contribute.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make another intervention on the issue of public sector reform which I think is vitally important as an issue at this time in our country. I am quite aware that both parties have over the time spoken very strongly on the need for that reform. I also recognise that we do quite a bit of talking sometimes in our country but in terms of implementation, in terms of strategising to make changes sometimes we take a bit of time.

I believe that the time is now upon us really where we do not have much more opportunity not to make the kinds of changes in the public sector that are vitally important to date. I speak in full recognition that some work has already started and that in fact there is some ongoing discussion between the Ministry of the Civil Service, CARICAD, and international agencies in terms of this public sector reform.

I also recognise, Mr. Chairman, that the Ministry of the Civil Service itself has started some internal work. As I said, I was a participant in part of a programme where a number of middle level civil servants are being trained in a number of areas.

Now, I happen to believe that the public service is a repository of some of the most important intellectual resources in this country. I believe that if we had to divide our country between private sector resources and public sector resources. If it were possible to make that kind artificial separation you would find the intellectual resources we have in the public sector would stand comparison and evaluation with resources anywhere else. If you went through all of our Ministries and you assess the persons who are employed in them as against going through the private sector, you would find that we have nothing to be ashamed about in terms of the level of resources in the public sector. You can take them Ministry by Ministry and Department by Department in terms of...

2.50 p.m.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order. Rule 28 (2) says that a Member must confine his speech to the subject under discussion. While I am aware that we are discussing Head 20, I would want to suggest to the House that he speaks with more relevance under Head 16 which deals with the Ministry of the Civil Service and I would like you to rule on that, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: No point of order, Mr. Chairman. Just that when I am flowing he gets a bit concerned because he knows the value of my inputs and he attempts and the others beside him to stop me from time to time. No problem. A little nuisance value, I guess. But he likes that. He cannot always remember that he is the Leader of the Opposition. Let somebody else do the heckling now. He is a natural heckler which means that he is somewhere down the line in the batting order and he should not be up there, but he forgets himself.

Sir, I was saying that we are looking at Head 20, Sub-programme...I do not know what the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is so concerned about...that looks at general management and coordination services of the operations of the Public Investment Unit. I am looking at the role of the Public Service in effecting the work of that Unit, Sir. The point that I am making is that a lot of the transformation that we have to make in this country is transformation that has to be carried out by the public sector and that is why there is a need for that public sector reform. But I was making the point, Sir, and I do not think there is any particular latitude in first of all discussing the status of where our public servants are and reinforcing the point *that we have a good* quality of public servants, but what we need to do now is to look very carefully in terms of refashioning, especially in terms of the attitudinal approach of the work to be in the Public Service.

We have never had in Barbados a Public Service College. Therefore, people who come into our Public Service from wherever come from their disparate areas of training such as universities and so on where people are really trained in terms of academic disciplines and they come also from the various polytechnics. But we have never put them together in a public sector college where in fact they are able together and collectively to infuse in them the particular ethos that we want to determine that the public sector should follow in our country. I believe that the time is right for that to happen. I believe that it is vitally important that a public sector type of college be set up in this country especially for the middle and upper level public servants who are being told that Government has to be more efficient, and that they must be driven by commercial criteria and so on. I am saying that while these are laudable objectives they can be helped by institutional and systemic planning — part of which, as I said, is a college where in addition to the academic disciplines that normally students coming out of universities or any other training programme will have, that things like negotiating skills should form an important module for public servants. Things like problem solving and decision making should be a module that all of those mid-level and top civil servants should be exposed. Issues such as conflict resolution is a very important module. I think they should be exposed to human resource training at a fairly intense level and especially in skills like job evaluation, work measurement and performance appraisals.

I believe that that package of modules which, as I said, are not likely to be found in any one of the particular academic degrees that most of our public servants would have done but which would be complimentary to the academic training that they have received. I believe that the Public Service should be given the mandate to structure that kind of training. Let me be very clear on that. I am not asking that anybody try to duplicate what is happening at the University or anything like that.

Sir, I am saying that within the Ministry of the Public Service of the Services *Commission* that people should be *given* certain training functions to organize these modules and to deliver them systematically and with purpose to . selected groups of persons.

I believe that because persons are already Permanent Secretary that they should not feel they are immuned to this kind of training or that they should be exempt from this type of training. I believe that we need to recognize the importance of retraining. Many people who have come through the mill already sometimes with Masters might not have been exposed to these kinds of areas of training and it would do us well to invite them to come again and to refresh their skills and take on additional skills for the task for which we have to go forward.

Sir, I believe that it is going to be vitally important that we recognize that training and re-training at these top levels is going to be vitally important. One of the things we need to recognize always is that those persons who got their basic education of First Degree and Second Degree 25 years ago that education becomes almost irrelevant like 20 years down the line in a sense. The education levels that you got 25 years ago becomes almost obsolete. I think that some of us have the experience of our teachers who came out from Harrison College and Lodge with a degree in Greek, Latin and Ancient History. In our own lifetime, we have seen some of the fellows who became like dodos.

That education is totally irrelevant for the present. Those of us who went to Cave Hill 20 years ago when at first term you had a fledgling economic degree because you could not do a whole degree. Now we realize 20 years down the line from the fellows who are coming out with an Economic Degree that a lot of the bases we had at the time now have been eroded.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Now let me say this. Because they are still in there, they have to be researching and keeping up-to-date. That is one of the things about that. The thing about a graduate is that a graduate goes in with 3 years and comes out and, if he does not continue, he is in trouble. But the teacher at least is continuously exposed and has an opportunity to change. If they do not change, something is wrong with them because they are paid to keep up-to-date. But a graduate who comes out and then he goes to the world of work sometimes does not have the time to keep up and to recognize the fantastic changes that are going on in various disciplines.

Sir, I really want to make a strong appeal for public sector reform. I want us to recognize that within that public sector we have some really. bright people. We need to pool those resources and to use those as trainers. We need to be very careful in understanding that there are active people in the public sector who have track records for doing and we must identified those in the public sector who have that track record. They must be able to show by their work that they have done things and that they have been creative and innovative. Once you can identify them, then you have to use those as trainers for those middle management people. Because the job in the public sector in the future in terms of efficient management and creative management is going to be a fantastic challenge, especially in ,this era of productivity measurement where the rewards to the workers will come from how productive they are. Clearly, there must be a TQM culture in the public sector as much as there is a TQM culture in the private sector. I think that this will not happen willy-nilly. This is something that will have to be planned and strategized for. That is why I say that the most important thing is probably attitude. The most 'important change has to be attitudinal change. That is why I say that the most important change has to be attitudinal. I spent some time last Friday with these 25 young persons who appear to me to be very frank, very open minded and who do not come with any particular badge of preconceptions and assumptions. It seems to me that they are the people we need to target, because in all cases you might find that those of an older generation might already have reached their positions about where they are going to be and it is very difficult to change those attitudes. I am not saying that will be so for all of them, but we have to tap into the younger persons and let them know that the business of public sector management is going • to be as important tomorrow as the publicity of private sector management.

3.00 p.m.

Private sector management will also become very public. It is going to be our affair. It is not you running your business as you like to anymore and run down it down. When the private sector runs down a business like *Plantations* Limited or the Sugar Industry it has to be public business not private business. In the same way, public business is going to be very open to everybody.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in 2 minutes.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Again, Sir, in winding up, let me suggest that I recognise that the attitude of this present Government, is that public sector will tend to operate more along commercial lines, lines of efficiency, accountability and so on. This will mean that we really have to get those managers who will be operating the Public Investment Unit and elsewhere to understand very clearly that they have to be trained and retrained in these areas in order to deliver the best for the people of our country. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want to make an intervention here, if you will give way. I seem to suspect that Honourable Members have some concern relevant to the scope under this Head. I am of the view that matters related to Economic Affairs do relate to the economy, and if the level of productivity is a point of discussion, I can see no reason why it should not be accommodated under this Head. I don't want Members to give the impression that the whole thing is going haywire.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I respect your ruling but I would also draw to your attention that just as the Ministry of Economic Affairs has a Head called General Management and Coordinating Services, every Ministry has that Head, so I am not going to challenge your ruling but just to bring to your attention that that Head refers to general management of the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Except that productivity is a specific Head of this particular item.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: I am very pleased that the Member for Christ church East Central was good enough to bring to my attention subprogram 01 of the Ministry of Economic Affairs that has to do with the relationships

between the Minister of Economic Affairs and domestic and international, financial development institutions. It was very refreshing of him to bring that to our attention also to cause us to focus, as we should focus, on the general management of the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

I really must have to say that the general management of the Ministry of Economic Affairs has plummeted to such a low that the level of morale within that Ministry has more than reached rock bottom. If we are speaking in terms of increasing productivity within the Public Service one of the first places that must be addressed is the Ministry of Economic Affairs. It is a pervasive problem, Mr. Chairman.

From this Head are paid out public funds which are intended to support activities concerning the relationship between the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the international financial institutions. It is an open secret that the relationship between the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Prime Minister and the domestic as well as the international institutions that he has to relate to are of a character that, can only be called calamitous.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Prime Minister in his capacity as Minister of Economic Affairs has not only destroyed his relationship with his Cabinet, but he has totally destroyed the relationship between Barbados and the World Bank so much so that, as was conceded on the Government's side today, there is no possibility of Barbados even getting a project loan from the World Bank in the future.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the relationship between the Minister of Economic Affairs — we are dealing with the issues. We are going to debate it now.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, everybody knows that the relationship between the Minister of Economic Affairs and the domestic private sector is in an abysmal state. Not only John Stanley. It is an open secret that the private sector of this country reposes no confidence and has expressed the lack of confidence in the management of the Minister of Economic Affairs. I have heard it said and it was reported in the Press by leading members of the private sector that they repose so little confidence in the general management and coordination of the services of the Ministry of Economic Affairs that they are saying that the Ministry of Economic Affairs should again be amalgamated with the Ministry of Finance.

The morale within the Ministry of Economic Affairs is also low because of the practice of nepotism. If we are going to debate this matter, Sir, we have to let it all hang out. Even when the Government was sending home people from the public service in the thousands a relative of the Minister of Economic Affairs was himself being appointed to a position in the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Nepotism! The practice of nepotism has reduced morale within the Ministry of Economic Affairs. It is also true.

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: His nephew. When he was sending home, we did not hear a word from the trade unionists on the other side who are now going to rush into this matter.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. If the Honourable Member for St. Peter is making charges of nepotism he must state exactly what charges he is making. I consider that to be a grave comment to make about the conduct of any Minister in his Ministry and therefore he must point out...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have difficulty in hearing the Honourable Member. Will the Honourable Member give way a minute?

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I have made the point that this is a grave charge to lay at the feet of any Minister and the particulars must be given. I also wish to say that I was Minister of State in the Ministry of Economic Affairs up to the end of August and therefore any charge which is made like that is a charge for which I must also accept some responsibility assuming that it occurred under me. If that is so, I therefore wish to refute that allegation and say that the Honourable Member is misleading the House unless he can produce the evidence to substantiate the charge.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, morale in the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the general administration of economic and financial matters have been undermined by the instance of a person engaged to work in the Ministry of Economic Affairs, not wanting to take up residence or office at Bay Street because that person has become too large.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member charged that there was nepotism in the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The Honourable Member for St. John raised the question on a point of order and asked for particulars. Either the matter should be struck from the record, I submit, Sir...

3.10 p.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am , going to press on, Mr. Chairman. If you are speaking in terms of lifting public sector productivity, the level of productivity in the Ministry of Economic Affairs is at an historic low. The example of a person being taken on to be employed at the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Finance — we are talking about the general coordination of general economic affairs in the country not taking up his office because he is too big for the office and the conditions at the Ministry of Finance are not to his liking. He is sending a bad signal, Sir.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I want to know where this debate is going. We are not debating the Ministry of Finance. The Honourable Member has the opportunity to cast any aspersions or to make slurs, as is his wont, and should have done it then. I would have answered.

Now, I wish to make it clear, Sir, and I hope you will agree with me, that if the Honourable Member takes this line that I will be given the opportunity to reply in that way. But I am submitting that what the Honourable Member is saying in this debate is irrelevant because we are not debating the Ministry of Finance.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. John refuted an allegation made by the Honourable Member for St. Peter. I do not know that we are in a position to get any further in the debate to paddle over that kind of situation and I would suggest that we get on with the debate rather than dealing with personnel.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I was very precise at the outset of my contribution to this debate to say that this deals with the general management of the affairs of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. This Head does not deal with the general management of economic affairs of the country and a lot of the debate...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must also recognise...

I do not wish to have the Honourable Member interrupting when I am speaking and I do not accept your turning your back to the Chair either.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am not backing the Chair, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member take his seat.

I am saying that when in the course of your contribution you have identified a person in a particular role it goes mighty close to calling names. While I am moved to allow that aspect of your contribution to remain, I do not want you to build a speech around that because it is tantamount to calling names and that is what I am not going to accept. The Honourable Member will proceed. I have no objection...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, I have already made my point and I have gone on to other issues affecting the morale of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. I am saying that the general management of the Ministry of Economic Affairs has been of such a character as to contribute to a fall in morale and a reduction in the level of productivity within that Ministry. It starts with the general relationship between the Minister and the institutions that are serviced under Subprogramme 1, the Domestic and International Development Institutions. The Prime Minister has a rancid relationship with those.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I submit that the rancid relationship is (1), not true, (2) it is casting aspersions on the Minister of Finance, and (3) it is not a fact and therefore he is misleading the House. I submit that the Honourable Member is out of order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am also saying that the Public Investment Unit has been stripped of any serious function and that it has been so stripped of any function that we now have a situation where the Government is now being called upon to have to spend over the course of three years $20 million to try to rebuild the functions that were previously exercised by the Public Investment Unit.

We have also heard in this debate, Sir, a lot of eerie fairy statements issuing from the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central concerning the virtues of Government's incomes policy and the virtues of Government's productivity stance and so on. But if you were to read the Government's Incomes Policy Protocol carefully, you...

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

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: They are too touchous now, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: They want to discuss the Government's productivity strategy, Mr. Chairman, and let us discuss it because that is what they want to discuss. We have persons in this House who are trade unionists by reason of political appointments. They were party to an incomes policy which promised that the social partners would immediately start to work on finding ways of making sure that in areas in which wages are deemed to be substandard will be the *areas in which* the general wage freeze will apply. I want to read it, Sir, section 3 of this Incomes Policy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have one minute to conclude so if it will extend beyond that one minute...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: No problem because the *Government* wants obviously to debate this *matter* and now we are going to debate it they are vex. But we heard from the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central who also professes to be a trade unionist. Section 3 of the...

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I profess as much to be a trade unionist as he professes to be a human being.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR:.."that there will be a general freeze on increases on basic wages...."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I am...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired. This is my third intervention on the issue of time in your presentation.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I will return, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is all right.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am going to ignore the intervention of the last Honourable Member because I am sure the Minister of Finance will deal with it. I can only say in passing that I was disappointed at the Honourable Member's intervention because even at the level of vituperation it was poor.

I wish to refer, Sir, to the rather enlightened and interesting contribution made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central where he made reference to the need in the context of the management of the economic affairs of the country and in particular this Ministry. He spoke of the need for public service reform. I was very interested to hear him suggesting that what we need at this point is a public service college. 3.20 p.m.

I think he would be pleased to hear that as long as 15 years ago when I was a Minister in this country the Professor who was my Professor in Public Administration had been persuaded to own a house in Barbados and came to be, in fact, a regular visitor to and sojourner in Barbados. He is now dead unfortunately. I speak of the late Professor Gorvine who came here and did in fact undertake at my behest a project which resulted in the recommendation that there be established a public service college in Barbados. This is a matter of...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon.

Aside..

Hon. B. M. TAITT: No. The Professor had done a study. He was a genuine Professor of Public Administration in the City University of New York. He was a genuine Professor of Public Administration, Sir. He was my Professor of Public Administration. I would say for the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, I refresh his memory, that I do have a Masters Degree in Public Administration from New York University. I would just refresh his memory.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAM: Yes, it was and that is why when the bogus statements made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South about accounting was made I was able to refute them completely.

Sir, I would like to have this part of the debate with some comfort. I am saying that you would be pleased to know that it was recommended and it forms part of the annals of this Government. Soon after we went out of Government I believe the administrative guru of the day had recommended to the Government of the day that they ought not to follow that advice. It has always been a source of regret for me hat the Government of the day, rather hastily, decided that the establishment of a public service college was not desirable.

I want to put on record another fact which the Honourable Member forced me to recall earlier today. When I first came back to this country in the 1970s with Dr. Kurleigh King who was then at the IDC we recommended and created the Institute of Management and Productivity. The Record will show that, in fact,

it was while I was functioning as Consul-General in New York and Kurleigh King was functioning as General Manager of the IDC that we determined that what was required for Barbados even as far back as the early 1970s was an Institute of Management and Productivity. It so fell to me to be the Minister in 1971 to help flesh out this idea and in fact create what has been one of the most successful institutions created in Barbados. Coupled with the Central Bank which came in 1972, the quality of administrative practice in Barbados moved substantially from a pre-colonial attitude to one looking toward the thodem day.

What the Honourable Member said is absolutely correct. We now need to take hold of the new concepts that have been flowing out of North America and Europe about what kind of management will be required for the Twenty-first Century. I believe it is important. In the public sector, as he said, and I agree with that view, in the public sector can be found some of the best brains in this country — I have said it before and I wish to repeat it — but they are not always allowed, because of the antediluvian system we have, to practise management. We do not have a great deal of management in the public sector because the system does not allow for management. The system is more concerned with rules. We have a whole set of people in this country who were born and grew up under a rule system and they are more concerned with rules than creativity. You cannot have management without creativity.

What you have is a bureaucracy, what Max Weber called the bureaucratization of the system. That has permeated the entire Barbadian public sector. What the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central is saying is something to which we should pay attention. I am grateful to him for giving me the opportunity to speak about it under this Head. Mr. Chairman, Sir, we have started in that direction. The present Chief Personnel Officer — and I am not speaking of him in a derogatory manner — will be the first with the possible exception of the late Major Daniel to have been actually trained in a discipline in which he is called upon to function. It is not well known but he too has a Master's Degree in Public Administration and he has it on the basis of my having recommended to him many years ago when I was in a position to do so that he should study in this field. Therefore I am not speaking of him in his personal capacity. I wish to believe that he is going to bring a great variety of training and reading which he would have engaged in over the years. I hope that he will be able to bring it within the bowels of Government and that he will not be stymied in making certain adjustments in the public sector to allow for growth and development in the sector.

We need, if I might say so, to approach the business of management in the public sector in a completely different frame of mind. Yes, I agree that there is need for retraining and that retraining is important. I think we should also make the very clear distinction between education and training. There are too many people in this country who believe that education and training are one and the same thing. I am one of those people who believe they are not and that we need to examine training in the area of economic development especially to the point where we can anticipate productivity at a different level. I spoke about it earlier.

I want to say that with regard to TQM, Total Quality Management, which incidentally, has been introduced and is being practised in many of the ministries, including the one over which I now have the honour to preside, TQM is not new. It is a new name but the concept of quality management has been around for some time and especially in Britain. Speaking about Britain, one of the things that is fascinating to me, has always been fascinating to me, is that many people in Barbados, certainly those who write to the press, speak about the Westminster system with a certain kind of awe. Many of them do not recognize that that system has long ago given way to modernization. Many of them do not recognize that many of the trained public officers in Britain no longer come from Uxbridge but in fact come from the red brick universities, that they have turned their eyes towards North America in terms of looking at how the system works and they have, where necessary, brought the appropriate reforms into the public sector.

It is true that it can be said that Mrs. Thatcher may have gone too far in another direction *when* she adapted. It is interesting that Errol Barrow 25 years ago adopted the concept of the statutory board as a means of by-passing the public sector management system. The statutory board has got out of hand in some respects. But Margaret Thatcher was able, by her privatisation concepts, *to* bring new management concepts into the public sector.

At the end of the day the need for a business culture in the public sector has been entrenched in the public sector in Britain. Even the local government agencies have been reformed — some of them over reformed — to allow for a businesslike approach. There is an unfortunate concept that in order *to* be businesslike you have *to* be in the private sector. There is nothing that is further from reality in the new world. The new world order requires that a certain efficiency be brought to the system that you are running whether you are in the public sector or in the private sector.

But in Barbados again because those who are responsible for assisting in the formulation of opinion have been able to project them in an "either/or" situation

so that the concept has gone forth that in order to be efficient you have to be in the so-called private sector. *Those of us who know* better know that that is a fallacy. In fact it is hearsay. But it is one of those things in which you are going to have great difficulty convincing the great rank and file because the gurus who write in this country, the gurus who attempt to influence people have adopted a policy in which they feel that economic management is being able to run a certain kind of activity. I believe, Sir, that what we have to do is to get the young public officers, those in middle management, to be trained to begin to believe that they have the ability to the resources which we are now passing in these Estimates, a massive amount of resources, and turn them into a creative force for the rest of the people of Barbados. It is important that we get that kind of ethos flowing *through* the system. I believe it can be done and I look forward to participating in helping to make it that way.
3.30 p.m.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: But I am grateful to the Honourable Member who represents one of the social sectors for recognising and having the courage to stand up and say that these are the things which the people are going to have to come to grips with is an indication that all is not loss, Sir. I am grateful to Your Honour.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I could not sit here and listen to all of these, I cannot use the word hypocritical, but all of the empty outpourings coming from the Government side, Sir. You cannot reform in the civil service and the Government of Barbados without starting from the top. You have to start from the top and Honourable Members on *that* side have sensed *that there is* a need to start reform *at* the top. The problem is *that* they cannot agree on how to carry out that reform. They cannot even agree as to who is to be at top.

Now, Sir, one of the most remarkable things about the Government's attempt at structural reform is that in relation to Government they themselves have reformed the Central Government and the personnel by chopping, in a significant way, the salaries and the numbers in the public sector.

I would have thought that reform would have started at the top and such fundamental matters as the role of the Public Service Commission, the number of Ministries that we have, the existing method of hiring and recruiting the top civil servants, the Permanent Secretaries and the Chief Technical Officers, indeed an inquiry should by now have taken place whether in the context of Barbados today it is necessary for us to have the division between the administrative head and the technical head. Those are fundamental points that have to *be dealt with.*

I find it difficult to understand how today, in the context of modem management structures, *that* one can have a single subject Ministry, Wm *the* Ministry of Health, and still have the traditional method of staffing in which you have a Permanent Secretary and a Chief Medical Officer operating side by side on two parallel lines of authority. These are fundamental problems *that* we have to deal with, and similarly in the Ministry of Agriculture.

We should really look at the question of the Public Service Commission in the context of its recruiting policies. I say without fear of contradiction *that at* the present moment *there is no* proper data base or record of how many applicants they have from time to time in the Civil *Service, their* qualifications, the date of their application, *nor is there is any* proper record being kept as to how people are to be appointed in acting posts. I tried myself, *when for* the short time that I was there, to insist that that occur.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: *Do not worry. The* public did not take me on to their horror. A lot of people did not take me on and a lot of people who did not take me on are now *sorry they did not* take me on so that *is all right. Do not worry about that.* The basic position is, these are fundamental *points that we* have to deal with.

I remember, Sir, very clearly that as a measure of the importance of management and financial accountability in the public service we specifically created a division — a division in the Ministry of Finance in which we wanted to staff that division. We started to staff that division with people who had had a discipline in management — a degree in Management. The first thing the Democratic Labour Party did when they came into office was to abolish that division much to their horror. The object of that public sector management unit was to constantly keep under scrutiny the statutory corporations that were of a commercial nature to ensure ...

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I agree with that, Sir, they are doing it now. It takes them so long to understand the policies that are needed. They are now dealing with it, Sir. They are dealing with it now because the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank and the IMF told them they have to deal with it now. We did not need them to tell us that we had to deal with it. But that is a position, again, Sir. That is a matter of importance so that we are only paying lip service to this.

In addition to that, Sir, if the public sector is to have the same level of efficiency as the private sector, the public sector` must recruit personnel of the same quality and competence as the private sector and we created a large number of posts to attract, not only management personnel but legal personnel. We said that the Ministry of Finance in particular should have a whole corp of specialist people who would understand.

Mr. m a n , Sir, when we look at the damage that has been done in this country by the Honourable Members on the other side since 1986 we can only marvel. If they had abolished some of the posts of Minister, Sir, maybe some of the people that they have now to pay, the pay that has gone in paying them would have been used to recruit people who could make a contribution to the productivity in Barbados. Do not let us fool ourselves in that. So the position is very clear.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order, please.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is only lip service being paid to these reforms. The Minister of Economic Affairs, the Head of this country, has absolutely no intention of changing any thing because he fears that whatever he does he is a political strategist and his aim is survival. The twenty-one months are staring him in his face and all he wants to do is to make sure that he does not rock the boat and he commands *the loyalty* of his members during *that* time.

There is no hope at all that anything radical is going to be done in the next 21 months. Absolutely no hope. So do not let us indulge in this farce. What we are talking about here is a farce. You are going to have the same Public Service Commission, the same part-time Chairman, you are going to have the same recruiting procedure. You are going to have that going on. There will be no change.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I don't draw salary and pension. I have renounced my right to pension. I am making a contribution.
3.40 p.m.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, under this Head is the National Productivity Board which is the institution at the centre of Government's incomes policy. A full year of implementation has now taken place regarding the incomes policy. One therefore is in a position to begin to discern the effectiveness and seriousness of the incomes policy, particularly as an instrument to assist in protecting the interest of the working-class of this country.

I am about to say, Mr. Chai man, that the attitude of the trade unions and the attitude of the trade unionists in relation to the implementation of the incomes policy would suggest that they are not even paying lip-service to the protection of the interest of the poorest section of our society and I am going to say that, with specific reference to the provisions of the incomes policy as they are intended to affect the interest of the poorest of the poor.

Sir, under Section 3 of the incomes policy is contained a provision which is not generally well known by the people of Barbados. The incomes policy has been sold, to the advantage of the private sector, as a policy that is intended to create a general wage freeze in this country. That is not true. Section 3 of the incomes policy says: 'There shall be a general freeze on the basic wages and salaries provided that this freeze shall not be made to apply in areas where wages are deemed by the social partners to be substandard". So that the construction of the incomes policy has been such as to leave open the possibility for wage increases in those areas where those wages are deemed by the social partners to be substandard.

Mr. Chairman, you would believe that if the trade unionists of Barbados were taking their responsibilities seriously and doing more than paying lip-service to the interest of the poorest of the poor that this particular provision would have been seized upon and that all of the areas where people's wages are deemed to be substandard would have been identified and that negotiations would have been pressed by the trade unions in a very vigorous way...

Aside.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, if the Barbados Labour Party was the Government of the day and you had an incomes policy that says that there shall not be a wage freeze on the incomes of persons whose wages are deemed to be substandard...

Aside.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: At least I am in good standing with the Commissioner of Inland Revenue.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, Section (3)(a) puts an onus on the trade unionists of this country to protect the interest of the poorest of the poor in the society by making sure that in areas where wages are deemed to be substandard that the wage freeze would not apply. I think that it is a great shame that a year has passed and

there has not been one area deemed by any trade unionist in this country to be an area of substandard wages requiring that the general wage freeze should not be applied in that area.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. It is not for the trade unions to determine if it is substandard. It is for the social partners to determine if it is substandard. Therefore, they have as a matter of consensus to come to that conclusion and I am certain that there are areas for which the trade union movement will put those matters on the agenda in due course.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me hear the point of order.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, the drafters of that particular Protocol understand well that there are certain occupational areas in the economy like domestic servants and so on that they would normally consider to be in that area of substandard wages. It is not a general category to interfere in the area of industrial relations where salaries are negotiated. You have to have an understanding of what that means. It is not *going raking* and scraping through the country and saying there are certain areas that are substandard. If you do not have an understanding of the Protocol, you will be making errors that the Honourable Member is making.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I stand on the point that the incomes policy was acceptable to certain people in the country because it was understood that it was not intended to be a wage freeze. Indeed, Mr. Chairman, when there was the initial...

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is trying to mislead the House. As the incomes and prices policy states very clearly that there should be a freeze on basic wages and salaries. That is the intention.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, I am very clear and I am reading from Section 3(a) of the incomes policy that the general freeze *on basic wages and* salaries shall not [apply] in those areas where wages are deemed by the social partners to be substandard. It casts the obligation on the part of the *social* partners including the trade unions to go and determine the areas in which wages are substandard.

Now one can understand, Sir, the private sector not being too keen about having to identify the areas. They have a vested interest in the matter, Sir. You would have thought that the trade unions of this *country would* have seized on the provision to make sure that the poorest of the poor in the society would be kept outside of the band.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Each Member will have his opportunity to speak. Can I have some order?

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, if my intervention forces them now to do the work that has to be done to protect the poorest of the poor from the general stringency of a wage freeze, so be it, I am saying that it is a matter of shame that no areas have as yet been identified by the trade unions of this country nor has there been any agitation, Sir.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point order, Sir. The Honourable Member who was on the Floor talks about a point of shame for not identifying substandard wages. Will he be so kind as to tell us in Barbados where the substandard wages are? He has the knowledge. By what criteria would he determine the people with substandard wages in this country to use within the Protocol? Let us hear them.
3.50 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not need assistance in that regard. I cannot give a ruling until I can hear what is being said. I do not consider that a point of order.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want to read this again because when people signed the Protocol they should honour the spirit of what they signed. It says, "where wages_ are deemed by the social partners to be sub-standard." It casts an obligation on the social partners and that includes the trade union movement and one would imagine...

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: So we are going to leave it now. I am understanding the Member for Christ Church East Central to say that he and this Government is going to leave it to the private sector of this country to protect the interests of the poor in Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I go further. The social partners were also intended to start to work immediately to consider and examine ways of indexing wage adjustments and tax allowances. They were to work immediately to bring forward a scheme for indexing wage adjustments and tax allowances to the cost of living. This was written into the Protocol.

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

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, page 7 of the Incomes Policy Protocol that the Member for Christ *Church* East Central... I shall read it, Sir,

> "the Social Partners will immediately work together to consider and examine indexing wage adjustments and tax allowances to increases in the cost of living."

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: What the Honourable Member is reading and the impression he is trying to give, the language has been very *carefully crafted by* the people who were involved in that Protocol. A statement that says that a group of people will work together to consider, is not the same thing as saying there will be in place a regime of indexation. Therefore it is a matter of impression that he is trying to give. Crafters of agreements know exactly what their *intentions* are in terms of language. I will make a direct statement on that, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I thought that the impressionists have left the House and have taken up residence in another Party. But this is a very serious matter, because if you will recall, Sir, when Government issued its first draft of an incomes policy the Barbados Labour Party among other entities put the case that the severity of an incomes policy could be reduced if the Government were to look at making adjustments to the tax allowances in such a way as to make sure that even though wages were being frozen adjustments in the tax allowances would still allow people to be able if feasible to take home more pay. This provision, Sir, is therefore to be understood in that context.

In other countries, and I speak particularly of Great Britain, whenever you have something as draconian as a wage freeze put in place, two things generally happen. The wage freeze is not applied to incomes below a certain level and also adjustments were made in the tax allowances at least to make sure that people's take-home pay still could be improved despite the fact of a wage freeze.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in 2 minutes.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: This, therefore, Mr. Chairman, is a very integral aspect of an incomes policy. This provision is intended to take some of the sting out of the draconian nature of a wage freeze. It is a shocking thing that people could have sat down agreed to this but did not see it as something that was worthy of following through.

The social partners, including the trade unions, were also supposed to set up a monitoring committee to keep monopoly prices under review and I would l i e to hear what has been the work.done by that monopoly committee on the monopoly prices that are set by MOBIL. When these things are written into Protocols, unless we are to believe that people are only paying lip service to their undertakings these things have to be followed *through. I* would like to hear if that monitoring committee has been *set up and what is* the formal position in relation to the rents that were to be set for the National Housing Corporation.

I would also want to know,. Mr. *Chairman, if* the monitoring committee that is supposed to be set up under the *provision at* page 7 of the Incomes Policy has other *monopoly pricing in* the economy under its purview; because one of the most important ways by which the adverse effects of a wage freeze can be minimised is by people who have to be responsible for the implementation of the wage freeze making *sure that* prices and particularly monopoly prices are not allowed to get out of hand.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: Mr. Chairman, I wish to take up from where the Honourable Member has left off because the Government members this morning got in here and read some civil servants' briefs setting out what they said were guidelines for productivity in this country and I expect that they would have related these briefs for whatever reason they were read to the so-called Prices and Incomes Policy.

Now I make bold to say that there has been no proper management of the Prices and Incomes Policy to date. I am going to take the first point that occurred. Either the Government was guilty of bad faith or the Government was totally ignorant when it agreed, despite the existence of the Protocol between the social partners to have a Minister announce on television and issue a public statement raising rents within the poorest sectors of the economy.

You cannot take the Government seriously except it is using the debate for the purpose of continuing to keep us away from getting to other areas. Everybody must know that the poorest of our society are usually housed in the housing area. If you were looking at a proper prices and incomes policy, why would the Government which is a major social partner choose the poor people in the housing area as the first persons on whom it would increase rents? It would be sending a signal to the other landlords who are uncontrolled that they too can increase rents. That is the sort of contradiction that you get in the Government. You cannot take it seriously on matters of this nature. I will give you the facts if you want to hear the facts.

Asides.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: This Honourable Member has no virtue. That is why we are so concerned. He lost it a long time ago. If he would just keep quiet and listen.

Asides.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: He lost it a long time ago, Sir. If the Government was very serious, instead of the arrogance you get from the Honourable Member for St. John while he sits in his seat, if the Government was very serious about its business it would stop the hypocrisy that is manifested in the sort of policies that come under the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE:...the hypocrisy that comes out of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economic Affairs where they ought to be managing the prices and incomes policy rather than sitting down in the Cabinet letting a Minister of Government agree, and agreeing with him, on raising prices. Then it finds itself in the position of having to step back when one of the social partners raises it with the Member. I speak, Sir, because I have housing areas in my area where I know that the word has gone forth — of *which* the Honourable Member for St. John was party to those words because he sat down in Cabinet — to go and throw out the people, not only increase their rents in the circumstances.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Enough on housing.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: No, Sir. I am talking about income policy. They are increasing the prices in the housing areas in breach of the prices and incomes policy, Sir.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not party to putting anybody out of anything and therefore the Honourable Member must withdraw that remark. Those are not part of my statutory functions and if he was not trying so hard to pretend to be some paragon of virtue in Barbados, he could properly debate this issue. I do not understand it.
4.00 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has taken objection...

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I am not trying to pretend that I am any paragon of virtue.

Certain remarks made by Mr. H. deB. FORDE were ordered by Mr. CHAIRMAN to be expunged from the records.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I want to go back...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, No. I am making an intervention because the Honourable Member has taken objection.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: To what, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: To something you have attributed to him which he said was untrue.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: What have I attributed to him? I said that the Honourable Member has sat down in the Cabinet. I know they do not accept...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, No. You go ahead. Let me hear what you are saying.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am going a little further to tell you what I said, Sir. I said the Honourable Member has sat down in the Cabinet and given his approval to a policy that increased the prices for the poor tenants in my constituency and also resulted in throwing them out.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: What is the result of that? They do not accept collective responsibility.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, No. If it is as you put it subsequently I am prepared to accept it but I am sure the Honourable Member did not...

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: One minute. I am saying that the Honourable Member took objection to something different from what you said subsequently. But if you have corrected it to be your subsequent statement I have no problem with it.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I have said what I intended to say. If you did not understand me as saying it, I have placed it in its context.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Now, Sir, having said what he has just said I rise on a point of order. The Honourable Member is not in the Cabinet. I submit that he does not know what goes on in the Cabinet. I submit further that there has been no Cabinet decision to throw anybody out of their houses at which the Honourable Member or any Member of Cabinet participated.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: No 'point of order, Sir.

Now, Sir, I wanted to say as well in the debate that if the Honourable Members were properly monitoring the prices and incomes policy, the Honourable Member in particular under whom Mobil and energy come would have recognised that there has been a tremendous fall in the prices of the raw material on the international market and that they are paying now less for oil than they were paying several years ago and automatically prices would come down.

I am calling on the Honourable Member in the Budget next week to lower the prices of gasolene and kerosine. I am calling on him to look at the prices. I gave the prices in here last week when we were debating energy and I showed the Honourable Member, if he did not know, that the price of gasolene X refinery had fallen to 55.50 per litre whereas in January 1991 it was *67.50* per litre. At a time when gasolene is now retailing at $1.58 per litre, when the price of the raw material has fallen, he has a duty — if the other social partners do not tell him this party will tell him . — to lower the price of oil and gas next week in the Budget. We are calling on him now to lower it. That is one of the ways that he has to monitor the Prices and Incomes Policy. If he wants to monitor the prices and incomes...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: Mr. Chairman, I will draw your attention to the Standing Orders. The Honourable Member if he is going to barrage people whilst they are addressing he will get the same treatment when he gets up. I want him to understand that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am sure the Honourable Member knows that I need no reminder on the Standing Orders because twice today I have already made a position on that. If I do so again I know there are some persons who may not be able to remain for the remainder of the day.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, the Honourable Member is saying that public officers have made basic information available. The Honourable Member should know, if he does not know yet, that the Platts Agreement publishes these prices and they are public knowledge. Commonsense would tell the Honourable Member, and I spoke about it in here a couple of days ago. I drew to the attention of the committee the consumption taxes on the main energy products between the period 1991 and 1993.

The Honourable Member should recall I pointed out that Government was taking more in consumption tax in January 1993 than it was taking in April 1991 despite the fact that prices X refinery were lower today than they were *in January 1991. I* said then and I repeat, that the logical thing to do, if you are seriously following a prices and incomes policy, is to lower the cost of gasolene, diesel and the other fuels that come out of hydro...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in two minutes.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Likewise, Sir, I say as well that since the rate of inflation has gone as it has, and since the Government has a taxation on the small person who is saving in the bank, and the banks have just lowered the savings rate for them so they are getting less, I call on the Minister in his Budget next week to reduce or remove the tax on savings below a certain level for the poor woman up in my constituency who is getting $600 and $1 200 a year. That is how to monitor prices and incomes.

I spoke yesterday at a very special party in my constituency and they got up and reminded me to remind the Minister today that they are expecting him to reduce the taxes to that effect. You want to know about your prices and incomes policy? They are monitoring it that way. When I come in here and speak I speak with the knowledge and I am speaking for the majority of people consistently who are suffering in this way. The Minister may not understand it but he has to understand that there are people who are suffering because of the diastrous policies of the Government and the failure of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, backed by the Minister of Finance, to monitor the prices and incomes policy properly.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: I will ignore all that was said by the last speaker, Sir, and I just want to deal with a couple of points made by the Honourable Member for St. Peter.
4.10 p.m.

It is my understanding that the day when the prices and incomes protocol was voted on in this House that all Members of the House voted aye for the protocol. If I am wrong, then I should like to be corrected. The day when the prices and incomes policy was voted on in this House, all Members present voted aye. I am not corrected. I take it that that is what happened.

I am shocked and surprised, Mr. Chairman, that the Leader of the Opposition could today be advancing the argument that a greater onus is now resting on the trade unions than any other party in the protocol to protect workers. I took it for granted that part and parcel of my aye vote was that the trade unions, the Government, as well as, the private sector had all agreed that a collective approach would have been taken in view of protecting

rights of workers and, that in fact, no greater onus would have rested on anybody. That, in a nutshell, a greater...

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: You see the ignorance of the situation, Mr. Chairman? The raison *d' etre* of the unions as far as militancy is concerned was nullified by the fact that they entered the prices and incomes protocol with the employers.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order, please.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, the very fact that the protocol was signed basically says that the collective bargaining arrangement in which the parties competed was now circumvented, with the exception of what was raised by the Honourable Member for St. Peter, that was now circumvented or circumscribed by a new co-operative arrangement...

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: He can disagree with me.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: It would have meant, Mr. Chairman, that the *raison d' etre* of unions would for the period of time that the protocol existed, not be challenged, but it would have operated within a new framework. The *very raison d' etre* of unions would have previously been one of combat. The unions would engage in combat against the employers. That is the *raison d'etre of* the unions. They are competing interest groups, they are competing trade unions.

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: You can disagree with me. Anybody can disagree with me. I am going to say what I want to say. I am saying, Mr. Chairman, that if they are looking at it that way we were told to believe that a new era of co-operation had entered into the industrial relations framework in Barbados. So I was led to believe that we had entered a new phase of co-operation that all would have been well and for the length of ...

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: ...time that the protocol existed: co-operation, collaboration, consultation, rather than there being a combative attitude between unions and employers. There would now be an approach to problem solving rather than striking, *et cetera.* That is what I was led to believe.

I am now hearing particularly from the mouth of the Honourable Member for St. Peter that the private sector obviously had entered the protocol in bad faith. If one enters a new framework of collaboration, co-operation, consultation and problem solving, you cannot tell me that the *raison d' etre* of trade unions within the framework of that protocol is as existed before, when there was nothing but combat and going on strikes. That would have to be the biggest piece of ignorance in the world. There would have been no reason at all for the protocol.

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Who cares who agrees with me or not? I am a big man and I am entitled to put over things as I see it and argue as I see fit.

I am saying, Mr. Chairman, the protocol itself is saying that there is a collective responsibility nowadays with the exception of the area that is cited by the Honourable Member for St. Peter that where people are below the poverty line then the onus would have been on the unions. When they fell below that line then a greater onus then and only then would have rested on the unions to bring that to notice. But in any event it would have had to have been acted upon by a collaborative approach. That is all I am saying. And the approach was one of mutual responsibility by the 3 partners to the protocol. Why then were there 3 signatories and why were the 3 interest groups in Barbados represented to usher in this new era of co-operation between public and private sectors as well as the unions? Why? We are told today that even with the protocol existing that a greater onus laid on the unions and the unions sold out. That is the biggest piece of nonsense that has been said by man since creation. They did not oppose it. The Honourable Members of the Opposition did not oppose the protocol. They agreed. They either did not understand it as was said by somebody sitting down or we are now being told that they collaborated and conspired with the private sector to trick people. That is the only conclusion that I can come to.

I took it for granted, Mr. Chairman, that the unions entered the protocol in good faith, the Government entered the protocol in good faith and the private sector entered the protocol in good faith to collaborate in respect of problem solving. I never expected in my lifetime that I would have heard from the principal spokesman for the Opposition that the private sector came into the protocol to trick the trade unions. That is what he said. The Honourable Member said the private sector acted in bad faith.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order. At no stage have I made any such statement. I am asking that the remarks of the Honourable Member be withdrawn.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will not withdraw.

Asides.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Chairman, that is what the Honourable Member said.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has refuted having said that. Unless we want to call for the Record, let us leave the matter there.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: All right, Mr. Chairman. The impression I formed from hearing the Honourable Member was that, I am forced to conclude, that it is my opinion from what he said that the private sector acted, negotiated, entered the protocol in bad faith with the underlying position of tricking the trade unions and the workers in this country. That is my opinion. That is my impression.

He also talked about paying lip service to the protocol. Is the Honourable Member *for* St. Peter, the principal spokesman *for* that side saying that the private sector entered the protocol merely to pay lip service to it and therefore acted in bad faith. That is the only conclusion we could come to. No matter how you spin around words, no matter how you try to switch what you said, what you said is what you said. It has gone down in Hansard and will haunt you for the rest of your days, and the few days that you have leading that Party. It is a foolish position you took and it will come back to haunt you. I am shocked, surprised and disappointed in him, Mr. Chairman, that he could have taken that position. The ink on the protocol has not yet dried and we are hearing it being refuted by the principal spokesman *over there, one of* the brown eyes babies of the private sector.

Aside.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: You do not know what is going on.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member must recognize he is addressing the Chair. Will the Honourable Member address the Chair.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Yes, Sir. Sorry, Sir. It was taken for granted across Barbados, across the Caribbean that Barbados was in a period of new found collaboration, new found co-operation between social partners. We coined the term social partners. Previously competing interest groups which competed across the great divide of warfare of strikes, of work stoppages, of go slows and sometimes being accused of sabotage by the likes of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East were now co-operating.

The new era of collaboration has not yet been challenged by the Government. The new era of collaboration has not yet been challenged by the Unions. The new era of collaboration where the competing interest groups that waged war before now sought to solve problems in an atmosphere that was in the best interest of Barbados where productivity was the lynch pin and the interest of Barbados was paramount. This approach has only been challenged as being negotiated, as being signed in bad faith by the Leader of the Opposition. This is the first time I have heard it and it has come from the Leader of the Opposition. It a most ridiculous thing to say. I hope to God that it is untrue. I hope to God that for the interest of this country and the parties that signed that protocol, the names that are on paper, that what the Honourable Member is suggesting is not true.

4.20 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: . The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Chairman, t wish to return to the issue of public sector reform while I look at the whole issue of the prices and incomes policy at the same time because the Ministry of Economic Affairs is taking a close view of labour management relations in the public sector. Labour Management relations operate at various levels. One level is the contractual level, that is the level that relates to salaries and wages and so on and that is therefore about distributive matters, sharing out money or whatever there is and that is where the prices and incomes policy will come in.

It operates at the organisation level. Labour Management relations looks at how the organisation is structured, its functions, roles and so on and that is where public sector reform comes in from an industrial relations point of view.

Then there is the interpersonal relationships; how the Head works with the deputies and all sorts of things. That is probably where the others over there were talking about the role of the Minister as he relates to other people within the organisation *et cetera.* So all of that is in the realm of labour management relations. We need to understand if you put it in that context. So I want to connect the flow of the three of those.

Going back to the question of the leadership of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, I wish to put to this Honourable Chamber that those who want to look at the leadership of this country during these times of economic adversity must understand patterns as they develop and not look at things in isolation.

I am happy the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is with us here today. I say that. And I say to you that three great public sector leaders of this country, I am talking about the late Errol Walton Barrow, I am talking about the late Tom Adams, and I am talking about the present Minister of Economic Affairs, have faced the greatest economic crises this country ever had. Barrow faced it in the seventies; all of you who are now talking about how great he was, how much a giant he was intellectually and everything else, in 1974 you all turned against him because of the economic adversity of the oil crisis and he was not respected in this land in spite of all the greatness you talk about him.

In 1980-81 in economic adversity the same Tom Adams did not have your admiration and respect. Some of you give lip service now. He could not face the music. The country turned against him and some of you out there turned against him. You all see these people as great only when they have gone. Both of them gave their hearts for this country.

And now the third one, coming up against economic adversity in the 1990s, is in difficulties also. You all do not understand these things. You all petty people. I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, this does not refer to you. These three leaders faced the biggest economic challenge this country has ever seen and the one over there was saved from it. And I am glad he is here. Because if he had become Prime Minister for a long period he would have faced the same music too. You had better believe it. He is a prudent person. He might have taken certain actions but I watched him struggling in 1985 with all of those adversities. I used to say, I hope he can cope. Do not fool yourselves about this. The leadership of economic affairs, the politics has carried down our leaders. All of the private sector leaders are still out there living. None of them succumbed because of the challenges. Most of them are still out there making money like peas and setting us off one against the other.

The trade union leaders have survived too, so far. But look at what we have done to our leaders. All of them in the economic realm. We sent off Errol Barrow early, we sent home Tom and now this great leader that we have too, Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, his heart is going too and you are all biding time. You are not looking at the forces that are arraigned against these people. You all make it seem so simple. But look at the pattern. You think it is only he alone? He had the biggest burden to bear so far. Look at the pattern and see what has happened to your economic leaders. You think the civil servants had to absorb this? You think the civil servants had to absorb the stress of carrying these countries through these recessionary times in these modern days? You think things were easy facing Barrow in the '73 crisis, or Tom Adams in the 80s? You all who have been at the seat of Government should know it is not an easy thing. You over here too, that try to trivialise what we are doing and letting people out there make fun at us. All those private sector people that only make money and do not take on any of the problems and who can abuse us, who can point fingers at us as political leaders and talk about `disgust', using those terms towards us and all sorts of things. I am `disgusted' with them and all like you, the Honourable Member for St. Peter, who is only talking to the Press up there.

When you talk about that protocol giving the impression of how the Trade Union people are now selling out workers, you are talking for the Press because you anticipate that tomorrow or sometime the Press will be saying that the Barbados Workers' Union and others have sold out the workers through the protocol. That will give you great satisfaction. That is what you are speaking for. You are not speaking with any internal .... I would not bother to use those terms. You are not speaking what you know to be a sensible thing to do. You are speaking to the Press as if they are your lackies to carry certain news and the people out there are to turn against the Trade Union leaders. That is your intention. That is your low intention because you know ... I withdraw those words, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: I withdraw those words, Sir. Sir, I withdraw those words.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Listen, he does not have to. I am saying that you get up and pontificate to the Press with the understanding that tomorrow they will be saying that the Barbados Workers' Union and so on let down the workers and did not push the protocol, for sensationalism, to turn people against institutions and I am not going to let anybody like you get away with those nasty tricks. This Parliament should see a high level of debate. This Parliament should be looking at issues. All we are doing is personalising these things all the time and you are calling yourself a potential leader. A leader of what? You do not have the stature. When you get over there and debate these issues as becomes a future leader of this country and a future Prime Minister I will give you that respect. As long as you become personal and low I will deal with you the same way because I am not afraid of you, Sir.

I understand this institution to which I belong. I have been trained to come in here. Let me tell you that. I have been trained to deal with workers and I will deal with you as you deserve, Honourable Member for St. Peter.

The issue about the protocol, Sir. When within the incomes policy it was stated that if there was any cadre of workers with substandard wages, that the social partners could get together and decide to lift their wages, it was fully understood that there are some people within the bargaining net, for example, we negotiate for sugar workers, hotel works and a whole lot of other people, and we deal with them in collective bargaining, but there are some people outside of that net — we are talking about domestics and people who work at gas stations, shop assistants, those kinds of people — and it was fully intended that if the social partners considered that their position worsened because they started from a certain basic position, therefore if the inflation rate went ahead and made them worse off or something like that you would then call for particular attention to look at this group of people. But you can see, Sir, that the inflation rate has abated in this country and therefore there is no particular group of workers who have now been pushed into poverty any worse than they were before, Sir. I am not talking about the unemployed and so on I am talking about people who were actually working. That is the situation and if the Barbados Workers' Union had representation from any group of workers that were at a disadvantage we would have taken up their case but now he is making it seem ...

Let me show you the kind of inherent dishonesty in the argument that having agreed to an incomes policy we were now to go out there and rake and scrape and pick up groups and say, "all of you are substandard so we are going to make a case that you get basic increases in your wages and your salary". In other words we then would be tricksters. That is what we would do. We would go and rake up this group and say, "look we want to change the whole philosophy of the protocol". We want some more for them. That is what he is saying to the public.
4.30 p.m.

Well, it was people of principle who signed that incomes policy who understood what they were doing. They were not tricksters. They were people who had this country at heart and who have continued to monitor it and who work day by day negotiating in order to get principled increases for the workers. The workers in all divisions know that we are negotiating on their behalf and this is not a report to Parliament. But I negotiate on their behalf and I can tell you who are the people who are getting the increases. It is based on economic analysis looking at balance sheets and so on about what companies can afford. You talk about the whole question of what unions do and what they do not do. You get in your rooms, yes, you! Some of you believe that you know all about what unions do and you can do the job better than the unionist. That is expressed by some of you with some kind of snobbery. I do not know where you get it from because you are no brighter than the trade unionists. You do not have any better social background than any of us. You do not have any more integrity than any of us. Who do you think you are to think that you are more holier than thou than any trade unionist? Who are you talking about? You! You do not have any better training than any of us. You do not have better background one way or another.

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

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Sorry, Sir, I am talking about the Honourable Member for St. Peter. That is the one I am talking about, the one who gets over there like he is little Jesus. Where do you come from? Where did they send you from that you feel that you are better than anybody else? Tell me your social background. Tell me your education that you are pontificating on trade unions. Tell me about your integrity. Tell me about it. Put it here. Put it right inside of here. You say that you are taking pot-shots at men. Do you think that you are dealing with boys? We got in this Parliament through elections. We were voted for to come in here like you. You do not have any status above anybody else inside of here. I want the Honourable Member for St. Peter to understand this. That is right.

This incomes and prices policy, which is going to be the salvation of our country and which is crafted for our own circumstances, was scrutinized before we came up with a model. Do not tell me about other models. Do not tell me about other models that have nets in terms of wages because Barbados is Barbados and Barbados has a level of income that might not be as diverse as let us say Jamaica or England. Therefore, while you might leave out some groups in some countries, it does not necessarily mean that you may do that within the Barbadian context. So when you give the impression that the people who sat down and negotiated did not know what they were doing but that you have all the answers and you can write the perfect model for Barbados, who do you think you are? You are casting aspersions on those who sat down at the table that you are better than any of us. The same research that you can do we did. The same models that you looked at we looked at. That is the model we decided on. That is the model the social partners agreed on. If you want to step outside of it and say that because you belong to a political party, you are not part of that model, then say so. If you want to say that you want to destroy that model because it was not a good model, then say so. If you feel that it is a weak model, then propose the model that you know is a

better one and propose the model that you know went somewhere else and worked. But once there is a model in this country, the people who drafted it and who crafted it and who worked on it will be the ones monitoring it on behalf of the working-class. But if you want to tell this country of Barbados that you have the working-class's interest more at heart than those of us who work from day to day for them, well you fool yourself about that! You are only talking. You want to give the impression that we who live day by day in representing the working-class and meeting them on Saturday and Sunday and at night time are not interested in them. But you whose only job is I believe the Leader of the Opposition and, therefore, you have the time to talk a lot. I can understand that, so you are more interested in the working-class than we are, little Jesus from St. Peter. The Honourable Member for St. Peter, let me tell you that that kind of posturing will not stand with me, Sir. Let me tell you if you are not clear about yourself, Honourable Little Jesus from St. Peter that, if you want to be competitive, we can be competitive too. But I prefer to deal with issues quite frankly. I prefer to deal with the role of an incomes policy and a prices policy to see how it is affecting the country and I will not be getting up saying that the trade unionists this and the trade unionists that. You are always coming negative. When you come negative, I will come negative with you too. I want you to understand that. Each intervention that you make that is negative, I will be coming back with a negative one for the Honourable Member. I want you to understand that. You have to understand the importance of leadership. It is not nitpicking. Try and lift your level. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I have listened with great interest to the Member for Christ Church East Central and he had a lot to say about me in my personal capacity and about my social standing, my integrity or lack thereof. It falls of course within the Convention of Parliament that when matters are brought into a debate the person who is at the subject of those matters should answer and I am going to answer.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that if I am lacking in integrity it is because I do not know what it is to vote for things which I am supposed to be philosophically opposed. If I am lacking in integrity, Sir...

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The little sniper again. I wish you categorically to state anything that anybody here is philosophically opposed to has voted for. I challenge you to do that.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I have not even referred to him. I said that if I am lacking in integrity...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: My one concern is with a position taken where it seemed to have been said that you have been accused of being lacking in integrity.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, you have allowed a lot of *things to go into* the debate this evening. I was very clear to ask my colleague, Sir, not to let you take anything out because one has a right to defend oneself on the floor of this Parliament. I am rising in my own...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no. I would not sit here and allow a statement like that to go unchallenged and I think the Honourable Member knows that.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, all through the Member's contribution in this debate scathing reference was made to my integrity, my stature, my social standing, my lack of qualifications to be a leader and all of those things, Sir. That was allowed as part...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What I am saying is that the Honourable Member may have an interpretation, but if a specific statement...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I am saying to the Honourable Member that, unless you can point to a specific statement made that is contrary to the rules of this House, I am not going to allow you to set a scenery and then debate on it. I am not going to allow that. If you tell me that reference was made and that reference is not derogatory, well then I am not in a position to allow you to respond because I would have not allowed a derogatory reference to be made to an Honourable Member in this Chamber.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, are you saying then that if a Member in this Parliament makes scathing references to the character of another Member and that is allowed to stand in the debate...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member is prepared to draw the rnecific statement to my attention, then I will call for the record.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, he spoke about my lack of integrity and my lack of qualifications that disqualifies me from being a Prime Minister of Barbados. That was said this afternoon. Yes, he said that and I am going to call for the record. Yes, that is what you

said. You said that and I am going to call for the record if necessary, Sir, because I am going to respond to that this afternoon.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: On a point of elucidation, Sir. I said that he does not have any different social standing than any of us on this side. That is what I said and I certainly do not have any low social standing.

Aside.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: No, Sir. Mr. Chairman, I said that he has no higher social standing than anybody else over here. He is no better qualified than anybody else over here. That is what I said.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Okay. If the Honourable Member has asked for the record to be produced...

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: I want to have the record, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is it on the entire speech?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, in relation to that particular reference.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will you please state the particular reference? What is the reference?

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is a Convention in this Parliament.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will you please state the reference you are referring to?

Mr. Q. S. ARTHUR: The charge has been laid, Mr. Chairman, about my lack of integrity and that lack of integrity being a factor that stands as the disqualification of my being a leader of this country. The statement has been made. It has been said on this Floor and I am going to respond.
4.40 p.m.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: The Honourable Member is misleading the House. All I said is that he has no more integrity than anybody over here. I said that..

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I have given instructions that the record be produced. If the Honourable Member wishes to proceed, I will have no problem.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: I am not going to be deterred by the empty intervention by the Member for Christ Church East Central and even less the position taken by the Member for Christ Church East in relation to the argument that is being put.

When the incomes policy was brought to this House, it came to the House as a set of principles and a set of mechanisms to be established to carry out a policy. Among those mechanisms to be established was the establishment of monitoring committees to make sure, for *example,* that in the interval the incomes policy was in existence that *the* public would not be gouged by *the* setting of monopoly prices by those who could set monopoly prices in this country.

Now, Sir, even if that is enunciated as policy, we can only determine the seriousness of the people who signed that Protocol by examining whether they have in point of fact followed through and set up the monitoring committee to do precisely what the incomes policy requires them to do, which is to protect the interest of the people of Barbados. We have had the most astonishing position taken by the Member for Christ Church East which would imply that because the trade unions have become part of the collaborators to an incomes policy protocol that they are not now responsible for protecting the rights of the workers.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: On a point of order. I particularly said that a new era of collaboration, collective responsibility and matters of that type was ushered in. I also referred to the particular section that the Honourable Member was referring to about prices below a particular level. Within that frame, the unions would still have certain rights. As far as the general policy was concerned, the war that existed between the competing interest groups would have been nullified because of the very existence of the incomes policy. I never said what the Honourable Member is saying.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I want to say categorically in response to the statement that was made by the Member for Christ Church East that the fact that the trade unions of Barbados have entered an incomes policy does not mean that they have to abrogate their responsibility to defend the workers. In point of fact, it is expected that the private sector will defend their capital income policy or no incomes policy and that the trade unions will defend the interests of the workers.

The essential point in all that is written into the incomes policy are various provisions which have to do with the protection of the interests of the workers and particularly the worst off workers in the society. Our argument on this side is that one of the key areas

in which that is reflected is in that provision of the incomes policy that casts an obligation on the so-called social partners to define the areas in which wages are deemed to be substandard.

If you agree that the private sector will want to protect the interest of capital, then it stands to reason that the private sector is going to be happy with a situation obtaining where no pressure is being put on them to make sure that in instances where people's incomes are below the line of poverty that they are going to be entitled to wage increases such as provision is made for under section 3(a) of this Protocol.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot believe that the Member for Christ Church East can imagine that it must fall to the private sector rather than the trade unions to determine the areas in which wages are substandard.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: On a point of order. I never said that anything fell to the private sector to protect the workers's rights. I particularly said the mere fact of the existence of a prices and incomes policy meant that collaboratively and cooperatively the onus is on all the parties who have signed to make sure that the interest of workers and, let me add, capital is not unfaired in any way.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your point is made.

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

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, you must not seek to protect me. It does not matter to me what any member of the Democratic Labour Party in this House and out of the House says about me. I have come to this office expecting that all kinds of things will be said about me.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have to protect the dignity of this Chamber.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, it does not bother me in the least. The point from which we will not be driven is that the Prices and Incomes Protocol did not *only state* a policy but it also requires the setting up for a number of committees after this House had voted *on* the incomes policy. We can now determine whether those persons who signed the incomes policy, including the private sector — I'm not afraid of speaking critically of the private sector – were serious in giving effect to the commitments that are written into this Protocol. This Protocol is one of the most important aspects of the policy elaborated by Government over the course of the last few years. We are now in a position after the vote to say that if monitoring monopoly prices with a view to taking the sting out of monopoly prices was intended to *soften* the blow of the incomes policy that those who signed the Protocol were only giving lip service to it because there has been no monitoring committee set up to monitor monopoly prices, including the price of energy products and rents.

I am also saying that to that same extent, insofar as making recommendations on the indexation of tax allowances to the cost of living was intended to be an important factor in the implementation of the incomes policy, then lip service has been paid to that aspect of the matter by the people who signed this incomes policy and we have a responsibility to bring it to the attention of the House.

The incomes policy also spoke in terms — and I want the House to hear this, Sir, because we have to monitor these things — that a tax regime will be established by Government which supports the objectives set by the Protocol.

Now, Sir, this is very important. The reform of the direct taxation regime of Barbados took place before the incomes policy but the provisions of the incomes policy is saying that the Government will come and thereafter establish a tax regime consistent with the Protocol that was established after the direct tax reform had been undertaken. We have heard the Minister of Finance speak from time to time. That is in the Protocol as well. We had to put ourselves in a position to see if these commitments were going to be put into operation. It was intended that the tax regime would be looked at again. That is the point.
4.50 p.m.

We now have a situation where from time to time the Minister of Finance is making the statement that there will be no changes in the tax regime because the tax regime has just been implemented and will have to be given a chance to work.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central does not like it to be said but it is my view, Mr. Chairman, that the attitude of the leading members of the Barbados Workers' Union in relation to all of the matters affecting the workers and the poorest people in Barbados in the course of the last period represent an abdication of the responsibility of the trade unions in this country. We have seen, in my view, the biggest sell-out of black people since slavery in this country. We have seen trade unionists agree not to raise any protest when a Government determines that people should be granted leave in

lieu of increments. If the Barbados Labour Party was the Government of this country, and a Barbados Labour Party administration had determined that people should be granted leave in lieu of the payment of increments, the Barbados Workers' Union would be up in arms and there would be protests across this country about such a backward and anti-worker attitude on the part of an administration.

I am also saying that if the Barbados Labour Party had been in office and all the legislation that had come to this House pertaining to matters such as a cut in salaries, reduction in severance, causing people to pay for their own severance, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central who has fled this House would be one of the key people keeping noise in this country about the attitude of the Government. He is, in my view, a trade unionist only by reason of political appointment. He is a trade unionist and employed by the trade union movement only because he happens to be a member of the Democratic Labour Party. He has no other credentials, based upon his actions in relation to defence of the rights of the workers of this country, to state any claim to being a trade unionist. He is a disgrace to the trade union movement.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I am reluctant to interfere with the Honourable Member's speech but I am sure the . Honourable Member is aware that to attack an Honourable Member in his profession is not parliamentary. Since libel *per se* is not usually allowed, I wonder if the Honourable Member would not wish to withdraw that, Sir.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: He can attack me, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, this Head deals with one of the portfolios that has to do with the functioning of the Prime Minister as a Minister and the Prime Minister has been defended very stoutly by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central. I would love to share with the House, and I am going to make it a document of the House, an extract from the Harrisonian of 1953/54 so that the House may hear what the Prime Ministers peers, even at that time, were saying about him. They referred to him as "a Mr. Mahatma Sandi, the great cricketer who has scored more runs than any man in any season, 10 million, that is, 100 and five consecutive zeros." Then it went on to a say "a devout moralist, as devout as moralists go, preaching but not doing." And then his hobbies "pretending to be grim and scholarly and preaching morals."

I am charging in this debate, Sir, that the administration of the affairs of the Ministry of Economic Affairs conforms to what was observed by the member's colleagues as far back as 1953. Nothing has changed — doing nothing and the morale within the Ministry of Economic Affairs is low.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I have asked for the records to be brought so that I could defend myself from the scurrilous charges made by the Member for Christ Church East Central.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I did give the Honourable Member the assurance that the records were sought.

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. C. V. WALKER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour, Mr. SPEAKER, and asked for leave to sit again and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Mr. D. A. C. SIIAMONS: On a point of privilege, Sir. I have with me the "Sunday Advocate" for yesterday. On page 3 under a head "$20M. Owing — Consolidated Fund still to collect outstanding loans" there appears a statement that:

> "The majority of parliamentary representatives who acquired loans have been keeping up with repayments. The only exceptions are Mr. Clifton Neblett whose $2 816 loan has now increased to $2 817 and Finance Minister Mr. David Thompson, who seems to have taken out a new loan.
>
> At the end of March 1992, the Statement showed Thompson with a $4 333 outstanding loan. The latest figures, however, show him owing $19 000 to the Consolidated Fund. That is the highest owed by any of the MPs.
>
> The second highest amount, $13 667, is owed by Dr. Carl Clarke and this is down from $17 667.
>
> Opposition MP Billie Miller owes $12 756 almost $4 000 less than that owed in the corresponding period last year, while the MP George Payne is indebted to the tune of $12 667.
>
> Opposition Leader, Mr. Owen Arthur has reduced his $16 006 debt to the Consolidated Fund to $12 006.
>
> All other MPs also managed to contribute $4 000 to their loan repayments.
>
> MPs Harold Blackman, Rawle Eastmond, Delisle Bradshaw, David Simmons, Minister of Labour and Public Works Joseph Tudor and Agriculture Minister David Bowen all now owe $12 000.

The Prime Minister's Personal Aide, Christopher Sinckler, now has to repay $11 250 while St. George South Representative,. Mr. Louis Tull has to pay $11 667.

MPs Keith Simmons, Warwick Franklin and Senator Harcourt Lewis have reduced their debts to the $7 000 bracket and former Cabinet Minister, Evelyn Greaves, having repaid $4 000, cut his debt in half. *He now owes $4 000."*

Now, Sir, I take exception and offence to this article, not that it does not reflect that certain MPs owe certain monies but the way in which it has been written by the *recitation of part With* and *the* absence of *the* whole truth leaves the man in the street to believe that we in here put our hands in a Consolidated Fund till and took out money almost to the tune of $20 million.
5.00 p.m.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that it is a nasty, worthless, malicious piece of journalism. I want to say why I so characterize it, Sir, notwithstanding that I complemented their reporter, in the same paper, for having carried an accurate report of a speech I made in here last week. This by the omissions and the slant allowing for inferences gives the greatest possible credence to the dogma of Richie Haynes that it is not truth that matters, it is impressions. Because it has left a certain impression with the public of Barbados and I hope the *Advocate would* be big enough to carry the facts.

The facts are that there are public officers in Barbados who are entitled .to borrow money to buy cars, public officers travelling allowances, including the Accountant General.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All of them from the very top of the Civil Service back down borrow money to buy cars. That facility is extended to parliamentarians. We have the right to borrow. You apply for it. You have the right to apply to the ,Ministry of Finance for a loan for a car. All of us whose names are reproduced on page 3 did not break any rules in this country. We went through the proper channels and applied to the Ministry of Finance for the car loan which is offered to MPs. The wickedness of it is that the repayments are deducted at source from the salary. We are not asked to pay. You get your salary less the repayment that is paid back to the Ministry. In my case I have deducted and I checked it with Mr. Dawe today, Sir, $333.34 a month because it is a 5-year loan of $20 000. It *comes* out every *month*. We do not see it. The Fund is not in danger because it is not depending upon a voluntary repayment. It is a compulsory deduction and in my case, as at March 31 this year, my loan will be down to $8 000.

The only thing they could do — this is why I said it is wicked and worthless — they took page 23 of the Accountant General's Report...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The accounts and statements... or the Auditor General's Report for 1992-93 and they have a whole set of people here who are indebted to several Funds, National Petroleum Corporation, CBC, National Insurance Board, Aero Services and, down at the bottom, there are $5 million owed by public officers in respect of their car loans. You know they do not say that. Loans to public officers under the authority of the Public Officers Loan and Travelling Allowances Act. In this article they do not even say, for the sake of balance, that there is a large number of public officers who are still paying back their loans and the outstanding amount is $5 million. They go for the parliamentarians. I think that this is an abuse. Sir, because of the way in which it has been written I am asking that the *Advocate* for the 20th March, 1994 be referred to the Committee of Privileges. But in so aslang I am going to implore Your Honour, on this *occasion, let* us have *a meeting of* that Committee. I have referred other things in the past and we have not had a meeting. I want one on this. I leave it to you, Sir.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I should like to add a few words to this because I have not read the article and I must tell you that the *Advocate* newspaper is not one of my favourite journals. But I know that the *Advocate* would have a fixation with who repaid money.

I wish to make it clear in here — I am not adverting to this because they can write what they want about me and I will consult who I have to consult — that there is nobody in this country who can say of this Honourable Member that there is any loan outstanding anywhere whether it is a student's loan, my mortgage or any of my other personal business for which the payments are not up-to-date.

There is nobody who can say that since I was the age of 17 and opened a bank account at Barclays at Sunset Crest that any of my cheques, including those that have errors written on them have been dishonoured. Whenever I have a problem the bank calls me and says we cashed the cheque for you but come up and correct the error. At one time about 6 months passed and between then and it was no problem because they know that when I sign something, it means something. I would never sign a blank

piece of paper and give to somebody, least of all some of those people that work down at the *Advocate* newspaper because as I *say, fortunate for* me, my name does not appear in any Police record anywhere in Barbados. It does not appear in any list of defaulters for anything and therefore the *Advocate will* be hearing from me in due course. I want to thank the Honourable Member for St. Thomas for raising that. I am very much obliged to him and I hope you will take his advice, Mr. Speaker, with respect to this piece of trash emanating from the *Advocate* newspaper.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I can only express sympathy for my colleagues who have fallen afoul of the fleet-footed Editor of the *Advocate.*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in seeking to agree that this should be sent to the Committee of Privileges, along with the other trash that was written in the Editorial column which you have already ruled upon, I would merely say, Sir, that it is a sad day in Barbados when there is journalistic blackmail, when an Editor feels that the only way you can be spared from the scurrilous pen of his own hand is to pay him money.

I am glad that I live in a society where I do not have for my integrity and reputation to pay any Editor to stop writing nasty Editorials about me. I hope that the, *Advocate* has the courage to write what I just said if they can hear me, Sir. Mr. Speaker, I have nothing but sympathy for my colleagues. The style which has been borrowed, the style of which the Honourable Member complains is one to which the public has become accustomed. Only they have not known how often it has been done.
5.10 p.m.

It is a disgusting rag, Sir. And I want to tell you this. In the presence of the Honourable Member, the Minister of Finance, one of the owners of the *Advocate* made it clear that he has no difficulty paying out money because they make more money than they *will ever have to pay* through the courts. He said to me, in the presence of the Minister, that I had to line up behind a whole host of people who are waiting to collect money from defamation by the *Advocate*. That is the newspaper of record which all kinds of people use to defame politicians. But you see, Sir, some politicians allow it to happen because when it is happening to "X", "Y" runs and says, "You see so and so getting some licks". Fortunately for me, as I have always said, Sir, I do not worry about the licks. I have been in public life for the past 30 years and I believe that I have seen all ...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Yes, Sir, the Honourable Member is saying my stomach has some callouses that allows me to see filth and understand it and to know the generic terms.

My only regret, Sir, is that I will not be able because I was not mentioned on this occasion I will not share the largesse that will go to my colleagues.

On another occasion, we on this side were generous enough not to shut down a publication in this country. I have lived to hear the people ...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Not the Beacon. On this side, Sir, we were decent enough. The only exception on this side who did not manage, on that occasion, to benefit – although there are those who said he should have been the only who should have benefitted – he was not privileged to benefit from that particular defamatory statement in another publication. Sir, so soon as we *had* agreed not to shut down the publication, at least one of the senior *people in* that institution was *heard* to be *making fun* at the politicians *who* had allowed their reputations to be settled for $3 000.

I know, Sir, as night follows day that another time will come. There were so many of us that if we had all got what we deserved they claimed the thing would have shut down. We settled for $3 000 each and then thereafter we have been cursed continuously. I have a matter now on which my people are having a discussion so therefore I will go no further. But I hope that this will wake up the *Advocate* to recognising its responsibility to the community and not to curse people for raising legitimate issues. I do not believe they will curse the Honourable Member for St. Thomas because after they have spent so much time building him up then they will have difficulty cursing him. But I hope this will be the beginning of a new era in journalism. I sympathise with my colleagues, Sir, and I welcome them to this area of life where your reputation, by the dropping out of a sentence here ... This style of leaving a piece out is not unknown to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. Being a lawyer, Sir, he has seen it from time to time. My most recent example of it, Sir , was a report that was an Interim Report that was laid in this country. They have given the *Advocate* licence to feel that they can *follow the* same style.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I think I should draw to Your Honour's attention the *Advocate* of Saturday March 19, 1994 under page 3 and it has tips for devaluation and it purportedly quoted a speech by me. Luckily for me, Sir, I well remember the intervention and the source document, Sir, that I refer to is not even anywhere so far

from me. It was right here on the Table. I did not move it and I talked about paragraph 7.18 in this Booker Tate report. I remember it very well.

In view of the fact that someone may in the future, in a moment of wickedness try to use this article against me, I would just like to draw attention to that point, Sir. And I want to draw this paper to the attention of this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The decision is that all matters will go to the Committee of Privileges. And I want to draw to Honourable Members' attention that I have set up a process to deal with all of those outstanding matters of the Committee of Privileges and it is a good chance for me to say that if you are called to a meeting I hope Members will turn up. I can assure you that those and others will be dealt with. Thank you.

Mr. L. R. TULL: On this same matter of privilege I would like one sentence to be put in the record of Parliament that I do not owe the Government one single penny on a car loan, Sir.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I have not read the article myself but I think I understood the Honourable Member for St. Thomas to say that all other parliamentarians and I want to give the assurance that I do not owe the Government any car loans.

SUSPENSION

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I must confess that I regret that my name has not been mentioned.

Sir, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 5.45 p.m.

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

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. When the sitting was suspended, the House was in Committee. To that it shall revert.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Committee is resumed. Can I query whether other Honourable Members want to speak before the Minister winds up?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: My understanding, without prejudice to any other Members who wish to speak, is that the Leader of the Opposition has asked for the record so that he may acquaint himself with certain factors. Now the Minister is going to make an input now, as I understand it. But that does not necessarily mean that he is winding up. If however there is no one to speak, there is no one to speak. But he is not now winding up.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, just let me respond to some of the issues that Honourable Members raised. It is a long time that I intervened, Mr. Chairman, and a lot has been said since then and I do not wish to respond to all. But I believe in fairness to the substantive office holder that the commentary about the morale of the staff in the Ministry of Economic Affairs is something that needs some response. I myself, Mr. Chairman, having had responsibility as Minister of State for both the Ministries of Finance and Economic Affairs, am not aware of the staff morale in those Ministries is as low as Honourable Members would wish to suggest. I do not believe that Ministers of Government should be indifferent to the morale of the staff, but at the same time some of the factors which contribute to the morale of the staff may be totally out of the realm of influence of the persons who are responsible for the Ministry. It is not my job to seek to substitute my judgment as a Minister of Government for that of the Permanent Secretary who is the person responsible for ensuring that the staff performs at the level which is expected of them.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, without any specific point of view being expressed by the Honourable Member for St. Peter or without any specific allegation to which to answer, I can only assume that his comment about the staff morale in the Ministry of Economic Affairs is something that should be ignored because there is no evidence of it.

This particular staff have worked assiduously in the past six months in the preparation of this Development Plan. They have worked on the effort to improve the monitoring of the public investment programme and they have worked together with the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank on the preparation of a medium-term structural adjustment document, which in due course I will lay in the House. This sets out the specific initiatives which the Government wishes to undertake in relation to the structural adjustment effort as distinct from the overall goals set out in the Development Plan.

Sir, I must say that the Honourable Member for St. Peter surprised me when he said that to this side must be attributed the remark that the Government of Barbados will not even be receiving project loans from the World

Bank. I do not recall making that statement, The statement that I made was that the Structural Adjustment Loan and the negotiation with the World Bank for the SAL have come to an end. But in any event, Barbados has been graduated and that means that it does not have access to World Bank resources. Now that is different to saying that the World Bank does not want to lend us money. Because the World Bank has a generic policy which, as I understand it, applies to countries in the world with Barbados being one of them. He should be lauding the fact that this country both under the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party have so improved the standard of living of our people that we now do not have to go cap in hand to any institution succumbing ourselves to conditionalities which we think are subversive to our own interest.

Sir, I think that it is fortunate in a sense that Barbados has been graduated from the World Bank assistance and we will have to seek to play our part on the private financial markets to seek to raise loans in those fora rather than anticipate getting funds from the World Bank.

On the issue of the relationship with the private sector, I too was again surprised, Mr. Chairman, having heard the comment of one of the leading members of the private sector only two months ago in which he said that the relationship between Government and the private sector has never been better.. I [was] a bit shocked to discover that the relationship with the Barbadian private sector is now in an abysmal state and the private sector has no confidence in the Government. Therefore, I am shocked to hear that that confidence has dissipated in such a short space of time. But I only want to say this because I do not intend to lock horns with the private sector unnecessarily:. The private sector has their role to play in Barbados. The Government has its role to play and though the twain will meet from time to time it is not so that we have to surrender to the private sector on each and every issue which comes before us for consideration. This Government has never sought to lie prostrate before the private sector in Barbados. We put our case in each scenario and the private sector negotiated with us until we came to conclusions which were in the national interest. Therefore, if the private sector wishes to have confidence in the Government or not, that is their business because at times I do not have any confidence in the private sector either. When I do not have that confidence and we in here do not have it, we are entitled to say so. But by and large the relationship between Government and the private sector has improved substantially and it is surprising therefore to hear those comments coming from the Opposition Leader. Maybe he has information which I do not have. The fact that the private sector said that the Ministries of Finance and Economic Affairs need amalgamating is neither here nor there. That is a misguided comment. It was always as misguided as the views that Sir John Stanley Goddard expressed about the way in which the budgetary process is undertaken. Because the precise recommendations that he made are the way in which the Budget is in fact constructed. Since we have entered into this programme with the IMF, one looks essentially at the revenue and tries to match the expenditure against the revenue. So we have an idea of the size of Government and then we seek to allocate those resources to programmes. We are trying at consistency over the next few years into the medium-term and one should not expect any major departures from the tax policy which Government has already announced. Next week we will hear what the elements of that programme will be.

On the issue of the State Enterprises Unit, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South is quite right to raise that. Mr. Chairman, because that being his only initiative in the 1985 Budget, it is something that he obviously would find hard done by if it has been according to him dismantled. Well, that is not so. The Ministry still has provision for 4 Chief Accountants and also we monitor the State Enterprises through an officer in the Ministry of Finance and at any given day we have a pretty clear picture of the operation of state enterprises. But if anybody were to look at the consolidated position of the state enterprises in Barbados, they would realize that they are in a much healthier position now than even when the so-called State Enterprises Unit existed, and the position of the State Enterprises in Barbados in terms of their efficiency, utilization of resources, their ability to do more with less and also the goals and the attainment of those goals, I believe that the state enterprises are functioning at optimum efficiency and even without the State Enterprises unit we have been performing very well.

6.00 p.m.

Regarding the Protocol, Mr. Chairman, on prices and incomes, monopoly pricing has been looked at time and time again. We, for example, discussed the housing rents, albeit after the fact, and that was due to the wrong advice being given to the Minister at the point in time.

One of the things that we agreed on before the Protocol was signed was that if you are making rent adjustments that we would bring those before the social partners. Regrettably, that matter obviously was not communicated where it should be and the Minister acted on the housing policy based on the Letter of Intent which was signed in October 1991 and which said that economic rents would be charged in National Housing Corporation units. Therefore, the argument at that time was that since this predated the Protocol that it should be implemented without reference to the Protocol. Fortunately, that argument

did not prevail and the matter was eventually put before the social partners for discussion.

It had been agreed that the other elements of the policy would be introduced except the across the board increase in rent. We would seek to collect the arrears, make the NHC more efficient and self-sustaining. Apart from that, when we adjusted the National Insurance Fund Contributions we put that before the social partners for discussion. I don't remember all the issues but there are a number of issues which have been before the social partners arising out of the Protocol.

I do not know that every clause that you have in the Protocol needs attention all at the same time. Therefore any criticism that the unions have not put forward cases of substandard wages is misplaced. When they come across those cases then they will put them before the social partners for discussion. Now to argue that the unions must now set about in some programme of identifying where substandard wages exist does not make sense for this reason. Assuming that people were represented by the union they have no right receiving substandard wages. If there are people outside of the union representation who are receiving substandard wages who is going to raise that issue on their behalf? That is why those issues have to come to the table on behalf of all the social partners. There is no union leader in Barbados who would argue that those whom he represents are receiving substandard wages. So where is the union going to bring these cases from to the social partners?

It is a realistic position. There are people in Barbados earning substantial wages and one would hope that there would be a mechanism where those cases can be brought to the attention of the social partners but the social partnership is not an excuse for the work of the private sector in ensuring that the people they employ are properly remunerated. It is not an excuse for the trade union movement to seek to encourage more people to join its ranks and put the case for labour and it is not an excuse for Government to avoid its obligations with respect to those who come under Government's employ and with respect to the wider welfare of the nation. We have to understand that.The social partnership is not a cop-out for everybody, a sign-off on the dotted line and therefore our responsibilities come to an end *with* respect to *those for* whom we are responsible.

The final point, Mr. Chairman, relates to the question of monopoly pricing relating to petroleum products. Petroleum products have not increased in price since the Protocol was signed. I do not need – though I am very grateful to the former leaaer of the Opposition for his advice about petroleum prices. I know where he got those ideas from so he does not have to come in here and pretend that he is sending a message to me. Somebody already gave him a message.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: On a point of order. The Honourable Member can speak for himself but let me say that I spoke in here on energy last week. I have my notes here. If the Honourable Member wants my notes I will make them available to him. He must know that those of us who follow prices both futures, particularly futures can say at what particular time the daily price is. The Honourable Member like myself, I suppose, reads the *Financial Times*, the Platts Oilgram prices and therefore you just make your conclusions.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I receive the posting on a weekly basis as Minister of Energy and I do consult the postings. I know there has been a dramatic decline in oil prices but because of the way *in which* the MOBIL agreement operates again it would take some time for one to pass on those benefits because the auditors have to sit down and work out in relation to petroleum prices *in* Barbados what reductions can occur based on the rate of return which has to be given to the refinery. Therefore it is not something that a Minister of Finance can adjust the fuel prices immediately with a drop of the postings.

I am almost certain that the drop which has taken place in the past 12 months, perhaps 18 *is so substantial* as to cause it to be necessary for us to look at the present pricing structure. I undertook publicly on more than one occasion that whenever the prices in the international market for those products decline that Government will pass on that benefit to the consumer but that ' is not something you can do week on week off. In other words, each time the price changes it does not mean that we are going to come here and immediately change it. We may have to work it through the system, get the figures together and ensure that we can pass on that benefit.

If we did not have a refinery, Mr. Chairman, we probably could have those price adjustments taking place very quickly without having to wait on the auditors and so on to determine what portion of the revenues could be passed back on to the public. I thank the Honourable Member for Christ Church West for being diligent enough to have access to that information but I would accept his challenge anyway. The benefits which the consumers of Barbados should receive do not have to be at my dictate or the dictate of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. If we have given the undertaking we would pass on those benefits in due course, though I am grateful to him for telling me when to pass on the benefits, in due course the public .will know what the position will be in

regard to petroleum prices and it will have less to do with what the Honourable Member for Christ Church West says than it will have to do with the consistent policy of Government to pass on the benefits of the reduction in international prices on petroleum products to the consumer *in* Barbados.

As to the withholding tax *on* bank deposits the object of that is to have a final tax which will be easier to collect and to remove those issues from assessable income. I must say it has worked some hardship, particularly for people who benefit exclusively from income on bank deposits or even dividends for which there is also withholding taxes. I am very concerned about pensioners in particular to see if we can find a way that the threshold which they have can include these for the purposes of assessable income but that has_ always been a concern from the beginning. One hopes that we can find a way to resolve it; but in simplifying the tax system one has to be wary that you do not simply grow by accretion back into the direction which we were in .before in which people who were benefiting from these concessions like interest on mortgage payments and repairs to houses are not benefiting at the expense of poorer citizens in this country. Every concession you give which benefits somebody at the top has to be paid for by somebody at the bottom of the society.
6.10 p.m.

I believe that we have to start passing on the benefits at the bottom once again as was the policy of the Democratic Labour Party between 1961 and 1976 and will always be the policy of this great political party.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: With those words, Sir, I wish to thank Members who contributed and now wish to move that Head 20 stand part.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that. Just for the record I believe when I spoke earlier today that I had not in fact uttered those words and so I beg to second it now.

The question that Head 20, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 42 — MINISTRY OF LABOUR, PUBLIC WORKS, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SPORTS — $92 971 392, AS AMENDED

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, by way of introduction of this Head I would indicate at first that the Ministry covers a number of Heads. The one under the Ministry of Labour, Public Works, Community Development and Sports covers an extremely large area of Government activity. I would want to spend some time dealing with a number of the areas as they relate to this particular Head.

I would also, Sir, like to invite this Honourable House's attention to a matter that has been attracting some degree of attention over the last couple of months. It falls under the Ministry of Labour. It is the question of Sunday shopping. Even though this would be the first area I would want to deal with, I am sure you would permit me time seeing that there are a large number of areas that I would obviously have to come back to to explain and respond to certain queries from this side or on the other side.

Sir, on the question of Sunday shopping there has been a position into review the Shop Act 1985 as it relates to Sunday shopping. There has been a lot of debate as to whether we should or should not be involved in Sunday shopping. A number of community groups were drawn together to come up with a position that was palatable to the society in general.

The Barbados Christian Council formed part of that group as well as the Royal Barbados Police Force, the Barbados Employers' Confederation, the supermarket groups, that is, the wide supermarket groups, the Shop Wages Council, the Barbados Chamber of Commerce, the Barbados Workers' Union, the Barbados Advisory Council on Women and the Vendors' Association. The rationale behind having this kind of a committee was obviously to determine a position that was generally accepted to the society because it is an issue that is very broad and wide and may have a number of complications for various groupings.

I will go through some of the positions held by the various groupings because I think it is important to state how they feel about this particular matter. The Royal Barbados Police Force indicated that if Sunday became an ordinary shopping day, there would be an increased need for Police security due to anticipated crime against stores, shoppers and particularly homes. They indicated that traffic would result on the streets and other areas of activity occasioned by Sunday shopping.

The Barbados Employers' Confederation considering labour costs and market forces, suggested that all supermarkets would not open on Sundays if permitted to do so. However, all stores should be permitted to open on Sundays to allow maximum flexibility to meet the demands of the prevailing economic climate and the unemployment situation. In any event, they suggested that the

younger workers preferred their day off in the week rather than at the weekend and acknowledged that a change in the law would be desirable to allow shops to open every day between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. except public holidays and Independence day.

Mr. Chairman, the Supermarket Group recognised that the society should be well structured and orderly. However, the law in its present form was discriminatory because some shops were permitted to open while others had to remain closed. The law should, in fact, reflect equal rights for all traders. In addition, it was essential for supermarkets to respond to the demand by the population, the tourism industry and the business sector. Closure on Sunday would also dampen the development of trade and jobs would be lost.

The Shop Wages Council said they had no objection to the opening of shops for a limited period on Sundays if the necessary safeguards were provided in the Act to ensure that workers were free to choose whether or not they wanted to work *on* Sundays. It was suggested that part-time workers could be employed *on* Sundays.

The Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Chairman, stated that the law should be amended to permit shopping on every day from 7:00 a.m to 10:00 p.m. except on Christmas, Good Friday and Easter.

The Barbados Christian Council, and I think a few others, indicated that because of the diversity of denominations, it was not possible to obtain an absolute position of the churches *in* Barbados. Their spokesman expressed the view of the four large denominations, that is, the Anglicans, Methodists, Moravians and the Roman Catholic, stating that the churches are concerned about the observance of Sunday as a holy day and the deleterious effect on family life and worship which may result from unrestrained business activity on Sundays. However, these denominations would *not oppose* limited opening hours on Sundays.

I think I should repeat that, Sir. The Barbados Christian Council in their summation indicated that they would not oppose limited opening hours on Sundays.

The Barbados Workers' Union held a view, and their nominee, being their General Secretary. He did not attend the meeting but met with the predecessor Minister of Public Works and indicated to him that the Union did not wish to be party to any agreement to change the Shops Act because any change raises a number of social and economic concerns for the workers. The Union also indicated that they are concerned about people and considers that every community should have a day to reflect. Moreover, there is no evidence to suggest that either the community will suffer if shops are closed on Sunday or that it is anything more than a manifestation of a lack of discipline which is leading to other problems.
6.20 p.m.

Even the industrialized countries recognize and express concern about the social dimensions of their communities and Sunday is not a blanket day for shopping in those countries. A major concern of the union is that most of the staff employed in supermarkets are women who, very often, are both father and mother to their children. A day off in the week is not satisfactory for mothers whose children are at schools or day nurseries. They should be at home with their children when the schools and day nurseries are closed and they indicated that a pressing problem is that shop assistants work late on Saturday nights and are required to return to work on a Sunday mornings. When they refuse they are dismissed.

They concluded that as long as the facility for Sunday shopping is available the society will make use of it. However, existing collective Agreements will be effected and the implications.for the Labour Department include the inspection of shops on Sunday by the inspectors.

Mr. Chairman, the Committee deliberated, as I understand it, for some period and *after* giving very close consideration to the varying views of the broad-based Committee, I have agreed that the Act will be amended and the Cabinet has agreed to the adjustment and Amendments to the Shops Act will, in due course, be brought before this Honourable House which would allow limited shopping on Sunday with options from 8.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. or from 4.00 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. That has been accepted by the Cabinet. I would not want to progress that issue any further, except to say that the appropriate legislation will be brought to bear.

I would certainly like to pay my respects to those persons who participated in this exercise and I would hope that this would go a long way in clearing up the difficulties that are presently being experienced by those business houses who have to make weekly applications to the Ministry to allow them to open their doors when cruise ships are in Bridgetown, *et cetera.* That has been cumbersome. They have complained that it is disincentive and I certainly hope that the shops in general right across the length and breadth of Barbados *will* take an opportunity to allow some young persons or those persons who are not now presently employed to bring them in to the

system even if it is on a part-time basis in the first instance. I think that they should try to bring them in, train them and get them up ,and running into the labour market.

I have my own personal views and I still would expect that Sunday would continue to be a day where those who would want to worship at their respective denominations would still do so. I think that this action certainly is the initial step in relation to the attitude that this country will probably have to adopt when they come to compare themselves to the rest of the industrialized world where, in many cases, the shops are allowed morning, noon and night, every day of the week. I think that we are tiptoeing on this issue.

I think that we are ahead of Britain in this regard because they have failed to come up with an Agreement period. I think that the officers who were involved in accumulating this position should be congratulated. I would like to publicly congratulate them.

I should like to spend some time on the question of another burning issue that is before us. It has to do with the question of water in Barbados. This is a burning issue. Before I progress debate in this regard I should like personally to thank and congratulate the General Manager of the Barbados Water Authority for adhering to instructions to publicly keep the public abreast with
difficulties that are being experienced in the water indust

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas, I am sure, would express some respect because he did raise matters relating to the difficulties experienced in water resource in Barbados. The General Manager has done a tremendous job in researching and trying to explain, in . detail, the difficulties that are being experienced in water. This must be complimented. We are having a very difficult task on our hands. The Ministry has all of the empirical evidence that it needs to make the kind of representation to the general consumers that they must make every single effort to conserve the water, in this country, at this time. It is a very precious reserve and we are at a very critical point in our water resource management. I really would like to thank them. I will though, for the record, Sir, want to place some of the general difficulties on the record of the Honourable House.

Mr. Chairman, I think that it is important to indicate that since 1990 the demand for water in Barbados was increasing at a rate of some 4.2% per annum. Qualitatively this equates to the addition of the, equivalent of 1.2 million gallons a day sourced each year just to keep pace with the demand. This is impossible to achieve in practice since it often takes more than one year to commission a well source. As if rapidly rising demand was not bad enough, the changing weather patterns in 1993 resulted in rainfall that reflected that 1993 was the driest year of the last decade, certainly it is on record as being the driest for the last 10 years.

One result was that our pumping capacity was stretched to the limit and in December we pumped a record daily quantity of some 32.6 million gallons a day. This certainly could not match the demand. Ever since 1994 began seasonal increase associated with the dry season have added to our problems to create the situation of mild crisis. In fact the whole of the Southern Caribbean has been suffering from lack of rainfall and similar difficulties are being experienced in Grenada, St. Vincent and Trinidad and Tobago and St. Kitts as well.

In Barbados the worst affected areas are on the west coast and consideration would shortly have to be given to Barbados determining whether they are going to get into the question of a desalination plant which from my understanding is a costly exercise and the ratio in terms of the cost of producing the water is something like 6 to 1 with such a plan. You would appreciate that Barbados is not now in a position where...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of elucidation, if he can just explain about the 6 to 1. I did not follow that.

Hon. J. 0. TUDOR: I was saying that the cost of producing water on a unit factor, it would take about 6 times the cost, if you use that as against what is produced now from the natural wells. The cost is about 6 times more than what it presently cost to produce. I have an understanding that it would cost about 6 times as much. The other problem – and I think we have to be very careful in that regard – is that, at present, on the West Coast and the other areas being affected, the levels are so low that with excess pumping it is likely that we could, in fact, be extracting elements of sea water into the system. We have to be very careful not to venture into excess pumping because we certainly would not want a situation where we start contaminating the water. We certainly would not want to have that. We are restricted in that regard and we will not allow pumping to go beyond the acceptable levels.
6.30 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, as I was saying, the low rainfall of 1993 has impacted negatively on the recharge of our coastal aquifer with the result that the output from

some wells on the West Coast had to be reduced in order to keep salinity down. As a result the higher parts of the West Coast between Sandy Lane and Carlton, St. James suffered outages at some time during the day.

Parts of St. Thomas and St. James, these are the higher levels of the Warleigh/Rock Hall and the. Warleigh/Shop Hill system — Water from Warleigh Reservoir is repumped to reservoirs at Rock Hall, St. Peter and Shop Hill, St. Thomas. However, because of the existing high dry season demand water levels in Warleigh have been low and this has limited our ability to repump to the other reservoirs, especially to Shop Hill.

In response to the representative from St. Thomas, he did write and we sent a response to him, which I believe he has received by now, indicating that particular difficulty.

In the central high areas, Sir, these areas have historically presented supply problems. The hilly terrain coupled with significant seasonal fluctuations in demand have resulted in outages in parts of the distribution system supplied by the Castle Grant Reservoir.

On the East Coast their source of supply is from springs at New Castle and Codrington College. Low rainfall reduced the output from the wrings, creating outages in the higher areas along the East Coast.

The Ministry, as I said earlier, has to find a solution to the problems in the prevailing circumstances and we are convinced that great attention must be paid in the suppressing of the demand through customer conservation *and* systematic leak detection.

There are a number of little things that happen,' Sir, in a home. We find members of the public when they go to take *a shower, and* right across Barbados now there are a number of solar water heaters that are being put into the *system and they* turn on *a tap and allow* it to run for some time so that the cold water will *start to heat* up. There is no instant hot water in the system and a lot of water is wasted when people just allow the system to run. Well the technique may have to be developed where instant hot water will be provided. These are the *areas:* When people brush their teeth they leave the tap running. When they go into the shower they leave the shower on and they are soaking under a shower for a whole afternoon.

I think all Barbadians must really appreciate that we have a problem and I do appreciate the concern from the Members of the other side. I respect that they have taken a serious view in this regard and this water issue has not been played out in the political arena. I respect them for that because this is a problem for all Barbadians. I do not think that we should just take a callous view expecting to turn on a tap and finding water running every time we turn it on. It is becoming a very serious problem and we will have to spend some time paying attention in our individual family units to the preservation of water. It must be done, Sir.

We of course in the Ministry will be stepping up our vigilance in the area of arrears. There are a number of people, Sir, that take the Water Authority for granted. They have been in the habit of receiving warnings from the Water Authority about their bills and there is a total disregard for the warnings that are sent to consumers about the payment of their bills.

There is a large amount of money that is still outstanding to the Water Authority and I think that when we are trapped in difficult times to put money into the system where we will have to improve on the detection system, and where we will have to think in terms of providing a desalination unit it is unfortunate that we do not, as Barbadians, take a collective responsibility in terms of preserving what is naturally ours.

Okay, I will go and come back because I am sure that other Members ... I will leave the Head open. How much time do I have, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have two minutes.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: The Ministry will be embarking on a programme to collect arrears which are rightly due to the Water Authority and we must, as Barbadians, do it with the clear understanding that we are paying to preserve our natural health environment. I really do not want to overstate it, Sir, but the point must be made that we have a very serious problem in this regard.

I will take my leave and I will return because I have a number of heads. I will open the Head for general debate and I will respond accordingly.

I beg, Sir, to move that Head 42, as amended, stand part.

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

6.40 p.m.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I shadow the Ministry of Public Works and I am going to deal with that particular subject. The Minister did not mention it because of time, but I am going to raise a matter

which is of grave concern to me and the public at large. It has now come to the knowledge of Barbadians that the Government is considering a Cabinet .Paper which would see the introduction of a two-tier fare structure. This recommendation on Cabinet Paper, as I understand it, will also show an increase in bus fares in this country and will also see a reduction in bus fares in some areas. As I said, Sir, I like a number of Barbadians have got to ask a number of questions since transport is a very important area especially when we look at the economic structure and what role it plays in helping to develop the economy of this country.

I did not hear the Minister deny the newspaper report that the Government intends in some way or another to increase bus fares. I want to say to the Government that this Barbados Labour Party is not supportive of any fare increase, none whatsoever. We do not feel that a fare increase is fair to the public because we feel that the Government' is placing an additional economic burden on commuters of Barbados and especially the workers who will now have to dip further into their pockets to pay more for transportation. I want to say whatever rut the Government finds itself in today has been brought about by this Democratic Labour Party Government. The Democratic Labour Party Government gave permits to people to operate the short haul routes which are the lucrative routes. They have almost abandoned the short haul routes and the Government has also failed to provide transport *for persons* living in some areas *in* the country and parts of St. Philip and Christ *Church.* The Government having given away the lucrative routes are *now* seeking a suicidal or foolish policy to effect fare increase and reduce fares in some areas.

Let me begin by telling the Government this, Sir. The people who operate on the short hauls are persons that Government permitted to go to borrow money from the Development Bank and other financial institutions, because the Government said then that they wanted to create a class of people who would be able to earn a living. These are the small people. Now I find it very difficult to understand how you can on the one hand say that you want to create this economic enfranchisement to allow *the* small man to make a living and *to* treat his participation in transport as a way of allowing that, then you are seeking now to hurt that same man. It is nothing but hurt. Because what that means is that the man will still have his operating expenses but with less income. I am saying that the Government has not carried out an in-depth study to see whether or not the man will break even or what will be his position when they effect this particular policy.

I am saying at the same time that it is so senseless that I have heard a Member from that side who got up and said that bus fares would remain $1.00 for school children.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The Honourable Member for St. James South. Now I am going to ask the Government if it makes sense to reduce bus fares below $1.00 and at the same time maintain the $1.00 bus fare for children, as the Honourable Member for St. James South said. I want you to think about that You are saying that you are reducing bus fares below $1.00, but at the same time you are calling on school children to pay $1.00 which is more. I want to know what is the explanation for all of this. I am at a loss to find out why the Government is doing this. The long hauls have gone to the country and they have increased bus fares. An increase in bus fares will mean that is more than $1.50.

I am going to say that, if what I read is correct that the intention is to make the Transport Board viable, then I think that the Government has gone about it in the wrong way. Increasing the cost of an item does not necessarily mean that you are correcting the problem. I am calling on the Government to review that decision or even their way of thinking. I know that this Government has a Transport Study – Phase I. The Government did not treat this Parliament with common courtesy of laying something as important as that before this Honourble Chamber. But yet we are hearing that Government is considering implementing some of the recommendations. I am hearing that. This whole talk about bus fares is the IMF recommendation and I am calling on this Government like I called on the Government not to increase house rents...

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: On a point of order, Sir. I am not aware of anybody in the IMF telling me anything about bus fares.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The Honourable Member would not know because he is always late. He is a last minute choice in everything. Mr. Chairman, I really cannot understand how the Government has got a report and has . not studied it. I am glad that the Honourable Minister said that he has not studied it. But still the same Minister, Mr. Chairman, is on record and these are his very words:

> "The Transport Board is left to carry a lot of long-haul routes at the same price as the short haul one, which are now dominated by the route taxis which are hauling in major profits."

If that situation...
6.50 p.m.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: The Honourable Member is being very unfair because...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what has the Honourable Member risen?

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: On a point of order, Sir. He is saying that those are my words, Sir, and I would like him to indicate exactly where those words were said by me.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: These are the words in reported speech attributed to the Member. The Member said in this paper quote.

What I am saying is that the Government would understand that this Barbados Labour Party Government denounced the increase in rents because we felt it was an additional burden on the poor people of this country, especially at this time, and we are denouncing any increase which would impact adversely on the pockets of the same Barbadian poor people.

We are saying, and I will tell the Government, that there are ways and means of correcting the problem at the Transport Board. I have said time and time again and I have made recommendations but the Government must understand that we are not going to support them on any increases and the Minister must not be led to believe that the Barbados Labour Party will be supporting him on this. We do not feel that an increase in the bus fares is justified. We are calling on the Government to desist or not to implement it.

Mr. Chairman, when you think that the transport system is in absolute chaos. I would expect the Government to address the problems in the bus stands, particularly the one in Fairchild Street, where you do not have any proper toilet facilities for commuters. Those are the problems I expect this Government-to address. I expect the Government to have the bus stand properly lit. The one at Fairchild Street, opposite Rediffusion.

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

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I am calling on the Government to recognise that there are still traffic jams over by Rediffusion, particularly on Saturday mornings when there is a complete block of the road. I want the Government to address those problems, how best we can alleviate those problems. These are the problems in Transport not the bus fares.

I have said that the Government should look at how best it can deploy the buses it has. The Government has not up to this time answered some parliamentary questions which I asked whether or not it is going to privatise the Transport Board. The Government has not replied and that question was stated in here some 8 months ago. I am asking the Government what is its position? Is it going to privatise the Transport Board? Is it going to set up the transport authority to regulate transportation in the country? I am calling on the Government to do this so that we can have a properly regulated system.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: I will take my seat. I will be back later on.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Minister did not make any mention of anything much of substance to which I would want to respond. There are just a few areas under this Head I would like to draw to the attention of this House at this particular point in time. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East has alluded to the fact that there are a number of questions which have been asked by Honourable Members to which we have received no answers and I have asked a number of questions in this House relative to the roads in St. Andrew which is a sore point, not only with the travelling public of St. Andrew but with the national travelling public on the whole, especially the tourists, when they travel in those areas in their visits around Barbados. I am yet to get an answer from Government relative...

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is saying that he has asked a question. I have not been able to identify any of those questions on the Order Paper and I wish he would identify them.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: The Honourable Member has just gone into the Ministry and it will take him a little time to acquaint himself.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to deal with whether I have now gone into a Ministry or not. If the Honourable Member has a question to ask about any road in Barbados I can respond to him this evening or any problem dealing with St. Andrew or anywhere.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want Honourable Members to recognise that we can only intervene on particular points and not just jump up and start to speak.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, if the Honourable Minister wants me to refresh his memory, seeing I am all for anything that will improve the roads in St. Andrew, I will refer him to the questions relating to the tenantry roads.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Could we have some order. Each Honourable Member has a right to speak. Let the Honourable Member make his contribution and then you can respond.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I respect your word but if the Honourable Member is saying that he has questions on the Order Paper I have not seen any questions on the Order Paper and he should withdraw that, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The only point I am making is that an Honourable Member must only make an intervention on his feet.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, the Government and Honourable Members on that side are somewhat embarrassed at the way how the people of St. Andrew have been treated since the Democratic Labour Party came into Government. It was a policy of the Barbados Labour Party in our rural development programme to continue the policy of previous Barbados Labour Party administrations to ensure that all tenantry roads in Barbados are properly maintained.

If the Honourable Members on that side would like me to be more specific, since the Democratic Labour Party came into power, since the Members over there were in government we have not had a single tenantry road repaired. Now if he wants to say that I asked questions relating to the roads in St. Andrew and they got up and answered them and said that they did not have any money and they regard that as an answer I don't. Not a single tenantry road in St. Andrew has been repaired – I am not referring to 1991. I am referring to 1986.

I would invite and I have already invited the Honourable Minister since he took up the Ministry to come and go to St. Andrew on a tour with me. He has accepted and I hope he will stick to that commitment. Not a single tenantry road and there are about 50 tenantry roads in St. Andrew. I am saying moreso that since this Honourable Member was in the House... The Honourable Member for Christ Church South is rightfully saying – it is spiting the people of St. Andrew because they did not vote for the Democratic Labour Party. The last representative was inactive.
7.00 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member but I heard the Honourable Member say that he had questions on the Order Paper that had not been answered. I wanted to check before intervening. I have checked the Order Paper. There is no question on the Order Paper.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: But it is still in the record. Sir, I am drawing to your attention now that I have checked the record and there is no evidence that the Honourable Member has a single question on the Order Paper. He was just mistaken and I think it should be taken from the record.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think the Honourable Member should explain what he wanted to say in that regard because if it is understood by the record that you have questions on the Order Paper and there are no such questions on the Order Paper I think you should explain the position you are taking.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I have already explained that. I said if when I raise questions relating to certain roads in St. Andrew that have not been repaired and I have got an answer which states that Government has no money, I do not regard that as an answer. I said that. I went on further to state that since 1986, and certainly since this Honourable Member was in the House, that not a single tenantry road – all the paving of roads that I have seen all over Barbados, Christ Church and St. Michael, all the other areas in which the Democratic Labour Party members are sitting members, none of this is taking place in St. Andrew. That is the point I am making. I do not regard these as answers.

I would like, once again, to draw the attention of the Honourable Minister to the Walkers Bridge which was very well used by especially tourists travelling to the East Coast. Now we have a situation where there is a diversion through Babylon Road. Quite recently we have been having just a little touch-up on the Babylon Road but the answer I have got on Walkers Bridge is that Government does not have any money. I do not regard that as an answer.

Mr. Chairman, this has been going on now for some time and I have reached the stage where I have decided that it is a waste of time bringing any questions to this House because the questions are not properly answered. I will not waste my time to bring a question in this House to get the type of answers that I have been getting. I have asked almost 20 questions in this House relating to St. Andrew and other areas and I have not got the type of answers I think those questions deserved. It shows the attitude of Members on that side of Government.

I will also go a little further, Mr. Chairman. There is one particular road that I would like to bring to the attention of the Honourable Minister and that is the Spring Vale Road. That road was a very important link

to St. Thomas and St. Andrew, the Belleplaine area. About two years ago during periods of heavy rainfall there was a slippage and despite promises from the Minister at the time that this road would be repaired, we have not seen anything being done.

A few weeks ago a tractor came and just pushed aside adjacent to where the road was but this road is an important link to St. Andrew from the St. Thomas area. Here again this is another example of the way how this Government has been treating the people in St. Andrew, no tenantry roads repaired and maintained and all the important links into St. Andrew being neglected.

In addition to that, areas like Rock Hall, also an important link from the St. Peter area to Belleplaine, we have had just a touch-up but it is not good enough, especially for an important road like that and especially when you see the type of paving that Government is doing in the St. Michael and Christ Church areas.

There is also an adjacent road to the new road in Turners Hall but this road links Turners Hall to the Rock Hall area. I think Government should make a decision whether or not they are going to abandon this road because this is a road now which is overgrown with weeds. If something is not done very shortly, that road will have to be abandoned for good.

I just thought I would draw these particular points to the attention of the Minister because I really have not had what I would consider answers to these particular questions. I have not been answered properly in these particular areas.

I just want to touch on the question of the bus fares. As the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East mentioned...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just in two minutes.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE:...there is some recommendation at the moment to the Ministry for the raising of bus fares. This is an area that is very close to me because I recall about 20 years ago, it could have been a little bit more shortly after I left school, I was part of a movement aimed at getting a better bus service in the St. James and the St. Andrew areas and seeking a proper bus fare for the people of those areas. At that time we were talking about a standardised bus fare. The standardised bus fare has become a reality.

Now, the people of St. Andrew have to travel very long distances and it is not a situation where they have to travel by one bus in order to get to their destination. In most cases they have to travel by two and three buses at the moment. Right now the bus fare is burdensome. I believe the situation in St. Andrew is applicable to most of the rural areas. I speak for the people of St. Philip, St. Lucy and St. George.

If I take St. Andrew into consideration that most of the people in St. Andrew more so than other areas have been affected by the structural adjustment programme in that most of those persons worked in Government institutions and most of them have been laid off, most of them are not working and a number of them their only means of support is the little vegetable garden in their backyard. When you take into consideration that these same people will be called upon, if Government adopts the recommendations of this report, to pay additional bus fares, it will be a further nail in the coffin to these people who have been unceremoniously displaced by this Government.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time. The Honourable Member should conclude.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: I think the Government should rethink this whole issue of increasing bus fares especially when it relates to the people in the outlying areas like St. Andrew.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I want in this intervention to focus on the question of water. Never in my life have I known the situation with water to be as acute and as inconvenient as it is now and has been for the last three months to Barbadians. It is particularly acute for my constituents in St. Thomas and even though the Minister is right that the General Manager of the Water Authority has replied to written complaints from me, I want to say that I am not satisfied with the responses. The responses do not address all of the concerns that I raised in here about three weeks ago on March 2, 1994.
7.10 p.m.

I feel that the Water Authority has been lacking in leadership ever since 1986. That feeling is to some extent justified if the Records of this House of Assembly are accurate, by what has been revealed here in the last 45 minutes. I will tell you what it is.

We on this side asked for the latest Annual Report of the Barbados Water Authority. The marshal went to the Library or wherever these Reports are kept and the latest Report of the Barbados Authority in the House of Assembly is for the year 1985-86. I have it here. We asked him if he is sure that this is the latest Report. Because it means that for eight years the Barbados Water

Authority has been in breach of the law, has been in breach of its own act in not reporting to Parliament and letting us know and letting the public know vicariously what has been happening. The last Report that was laid was a Barbados Labour Party Report for the period April 1, 1985 to March 31, 1986. That is a disgraceful thing, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We have not reached there yet. It is going to attract the Public Accounts Committee. This is a matter for the Minister to act on immediately. He must give a directive like tomorrow that all the Reports will be brought up-to-date and be laid in here. It is not a reflection on the Minister at all. He has just come. Those who preceded him in office have to carry the responsibility for this grave dereliction in duties. Why I say it is a grave dereliction in duties is that this Report was instructive. For example, in the period 1985 to 1986 the quantity of water that was demanded from the distribution system in that period was 25 million gallons a day. The average per capita daily consumption was about 100 gallons a day. We are hearing that that has increased from 25 million gallons a day to somewhere in the region of 32 million gallons.

This Report is very helpful because it tells you the kind of work that was being done in the Water Authority. One of the matters that the Water Authority Was not. afraid to address 8 years ago was the question of leaks. This is what they said 8 years ago on page 6:

> "Here in Barbados it is conservatively estimated that the percentage of leakage from the water distribution system is about 25%."

We have not heard from the General Manager in his recent press conference what is the percentage of leakage that is being estimated in 1994. But they said that it was within this type of framework that the Authority's continuing waste control programme is brought into sharp focus.

The reason I raise the question of leaks, Sir, is that on the second of March I said it was my belief that a major contributory factor to the... Sir, we have a little more confusion over there. You see how they are behaving.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Stop picking on the gentleman. I was saying, Sir, that when I spoke in here on the 2nd March I attributed a lot of the problems to leakage in the system because of old mains and so on. I am still fortified in that view by the expose in the *Nation* Friday or Thursday last week whenever it was. The *Nation* asked people to call in and tell them of leaks known to them. They had almost a whole page including wastage of water right in the backyard of the Barbados Water Authority. Up there in the Pine.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do not push around the gentleman. I heard him say that you *all are always pushing* around people. Do not push around people like that. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central complaining that they *are pushing him* around. It is not fair to the gentlemen.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Picking on the man all the time.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Now that we have a little peace and quiet, Sir – make a note of the time for me for the Budget, it was 7.18 on the 20th that Hall asked him to stop pushing him around. I will put that on television next week Monday.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They are interrupting me over there, Sir, including the Minister of Health. The question of leaks is a serious matter. One of the things I did not see in the paper but that was reported to me was that near a bridge by Alleynedale Plantation in St. Peter there is a large main which was throwing away millions of gallons of water. Ask them to check that. It did not appear in the *Nation.*

The problems that have been identified, excessive use of water, low rainfall and leakage must call for solutions. We have to get more water, we have to have more reservoirs, we have to have better quality pipes to distribute water. I wish to accuse the Government and in particular the Water Authority of a failure adequately to plan a capital programme over the last 8 years which, in a systematic way would have, as the contemporary jargon goes, addressed those problems.

Not having a Report shows the parlous state of this Government and its agencies.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am able to proceed with a degree of coherence because my trend of thought is interrupted by the possibility of fisty cuffs on that side, Sir. The internecine warfare. Were it not that the

Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central were involved I am sure it would have resulted in some pugilistic combat.

On page 16 of this Report this Water Authority Board outlined a capital works programme. In those days we were told that with the assistance of CIDA Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA had helped Barbados in laying 182 miles of water distribution mains and 9 miles of mains ranging in size 16 inch to 18 inch.
7.20 p.m.

In addition "This Canadian assistance enabled 8 new water pumping stations to be constructed as well as improvements in communications equipment and general water management". I would like to hear from the Minister tomorrow – he would not have the information today – how many new water pumping stations the Government has put down since 1986, in Barbados.

Some time ago, Sir, when we had problems in St. Thomas with water distribution, the Water Authority wrote me to say that they were going to lay, or drill, some wells at Applewhaites and that that would have solved the problems of the people in Welches, Shop Hill, Edghill and so on.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The laying stopped because you have not solved the problems. It was designed to solve the problems. It has not solved the problems and if the work has stopped then that surely is evidence of the most shoddy planning and the most shoddy execution that you can think of.

Right throughout this report is evidence of an authority that was planning and implementing and knew what they were doing. They had $16 million. When we left, we left $16 million in capital precisely to continue the expansion programme.

The great failure of the Democratic Labour Party in this regard is that in pandering to the manifesto promises of 1986, they called in all the money from the statutory boards, including that $16 million in Treasury Bills. It is here. The first Minister of Finance, under the Democratic Labour Party after 1986 ...

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There has been no money left for Capital Development and that is a shocking thing. That only emphasises that this Government is a Government thoroughly and totally bereft of any vision and any concept of proper planning, because if this has happened, there must have been an occasion when they should have realised that having short-changed the BWA by taking the money from it there would have to come a time when it should have been replenished.

Now, I want to hear finally, Sir, from the Minister, as a matter of urgency, what plans the Government has to recapitalise the BWA so that the necessary old pipes can be dug up and replaced by new pipes.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Hon. J. 0. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member has raised a number of questions and I would want to respond to them tomorrow but I can respond to some of them now. I had anticipated what the Honourable Member for St. Andrew who usually makes one consistent contribution to the House, question or concern, would have been and I came prepared for the answer this time.

The Honourable Member, Sir, raised some concerns and I felt they were a deliberate ploy against the people of St. Andrew and I do not think that is a fair comment, Sir. There is a determination within the system and the priority that is given to roads and the criteria that is used, certainly has nothing to do with whether there is a DLP representative or a BLP representative.

Sir, within the Ministry there is a bencleman beam which is used to measure the strength of the roads in Barbados and the quality of them. In addition to that there is a bump integration which measures the roughness of the roads in Barbados. And thirdly the Ministry uses a traffic count to determine the priority in determining which roads are to be repaired and in what order.

Sir, I have a long list of roads in the receiving programme which runs from the South Central District which would be St. George and St. John and the St. Philip District, the Christ Church District, the North East District which is the Scotland District and there are a number of roads, Franklin Road in Belleplaine, Jordan's Road in Belleplaine, Less-Beholden, Mount, there is King Street, Sedge Pond, Bawden, Cambridge, Vaughn Road, Cutting Road, Water Hall.

Mr. Chairman, the problem that we have is that the economic rate of return does not justify priortising

roads. These roads, Mr. Chairman, will be done in the 1994-95 programme.

With regards to the Scotland District Problem, Sir, the Scotland District which covers about one-sevenths of Barbados has always been a problem area in that land slides can carry away large parcels of land including the roadway. That is understood. Correcting these problems the Honourable Members knows will be extremely expensive and very time consuming.

In fact, Sir, in 1988 the Ministry had commissioned a study which indicated that it would cost over $200 million to make a meaningful impact and no international agency who has been approached for funding has shown any interest because they consider that there could be no economic justification for spending such a large sum in an area which is relatively sparsely populated with low traffic ...

However, the Ministry has continued to carry out work in the area using the funds that have been allocated. 7.30 p.m.

I have a number of areas where work has been carried out in St. Andrew. If the Honourable Member is honest or does his homework, he would confirm that a number of repair activities have been going on in different districts within St. Andrew. So I really do not think that it is fair for the Honourable Member to say that there is any deliberate attempt, because we on this side recognize that the Scotland District is an area that is very beautiful and very attractive and several visitors to our island visit the Scotland District and they go into Chalky Mount and other areas of St. Andrew. We would want to have a situation where people can move as freely as they can around the Scotland District area and we have to function within our financial ability. But we are planning in this financial year for the replacement of the bridge at Stony Gully and we will be repairing the Springvale Road.

Aside.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: We did not have the finance for it but we have included it in this fmancial year. I just thought that the Honourable Member would want to be aware that there is genuine concern from this side in this area.

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Members are concerned about the road schedule that will be in place for this year. We do in fact have significant funding in this financial year and we will be in the course of the coming year completing the work on the Highway 2A – Phase II between Clermont and Canewood we would appreciate that a contract has already been awarded to Rayside Asphalt Paving in the sum of $15 043 395. This project involves the complete reconstruction of 7.7 kilometers of Highway 2A, 1.4 kilometers of Clermont Road and 1.3 kilometers of Canewood Road. That project started in June 1993 and the duration is 27 months with a completion date for September 1995.

The Road Maintenance and Equipment Management Study which will assist the Government and the Ministry in determining the approach to repairing these roads within our limited resources. The technical people in the Ministry have developed a strategy where they are now using the material which is taken from the existing roadways that are under repair, for example, Highway 1. All of the barbergreen that is dug up and put through the machine will be used on the tenantry road programme which would result in a saving of 75 per cent as against using the material. So we are going to extend that programme throughout the length and breadth of Barbados using that material that is dug up from the highways. There are a number of programmes that have been awarded. The one that has been awarded is the schedule financed by the World Bank that includes work at Bath Village which is in St. Lawrence Gap, Highway 1 – Spring Garden to Batts Rock and then down to Paynes Bay, Holetown, Gibbs, Speightstown – Main Street, Highway 7 from Oistins to the ABC Highway, Highway 7 to the Fairy Valley Junction which will be up Wilcox Hill and Stewarts Hill Junction to Carmichael Road via Massiah Street and Woodland Turnpike, Cottage Plantation to Highway 3B in Groves Hill, and Graeme Hall to Highway T – Oistins Hill Junction. Those road programmes have already been awarded. C. O. Williams is in the process of completing those programmes and we are going to use all of the material from those roads that are being re-done in the tenantry roads so that it will be a two-tiered type operation during the fmancial year. But at no time will we attempt to politicize the exercise of road repairs or road restructuring I think that the Ministry should be complimented for being very fair in their delivery in terms of the road repairs.

Regarding the Venezuelan Project, I think it is important for me to indicate at this time because I am aware that I just have two minutes that the Project has scheduled for 81 different tenantry roads. But on examining the number of roads that can be done with the existing finance that we have in place, we will only be able to do some 27 tenantry roads during the 1994/95 period. We have already identified those areas because we will in fact be completing roads in Phase IA and these are areas that are paved. They have associated drainage work and they already have water mains. As an example, Sir, I am

talking about First Avenue in Richmond, Fields Tenantry in St. Michael, Hannays Tenantry in St. Lucy, Cliff Tenantry in St. John, Long Gap No. 3, Long Gap No. 4, and Long Gap No. 5.

Aside.

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

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, I am told that I am out of time but I want to place this on record, because I really do not want to have any accusations levelled at the Ministry where we are favouring this group. That is disruptive planning.

Aside.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: I will return tomorrow and explain in detail the entire programme, Sir.

On the motion of Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to Mr. SPEAKER and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly. 7.40 p.m.

SUSPENSION

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I think that. we have had a fairly long day and I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly. 7.41 p.m.

RESUMPTION

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

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee is resumed.

HEAD 42 – MINISTRY OF LABOUR, PUBLIC WORKS, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SPORTS
(resumed)

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, yesterday when the Minister got up and made the second contribution I did not hear him mention anything at all about the word that has gone abroad that the Government is considering very seriously a two-tiered fare system. I expected the Minister to make a statement so that the public of Barbados and this Honourable Chamber would know in no uncertain terms what the Government has planned for this country, particularly the commuters. This is not a matter that I am going to allow to rest lightly. I am going to demand from the Minister and the Government a clear statement as to what is its position. I will not be satisfied with any denial.

Mr. 0. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I rise to bring to your attention the fact that there is not a quorum in the House and I think that the business of the House should proceed with the benefit of a quorum.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is well made. Let the bell be rung.

The bell was rung and a quorum was obtained.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, as I said before, the Minister owes this country an explanation because there are certain remarks which were in the daily Press attributed to him and I hope when the Minister gets up he will explain what he means by those remarks.

I am going to go back *to this. This* whole question of increased bus fares is a very serious matter and we have to look at things in the proper perspective. If it is the intention of Government to lower bus fares in areas of St. Michael, I am going to make a statement here, that it can only be interpreted as a political move to win seats in St. Michael. The Government is aware that their political strengths lie in the St. Michael area and this is the first move towards softening the electorate in St. Michael so that they will go and vote for them. I am aware that it is a good political move, because we are seeing a repeat of 1976 when the Democratic Labour Party reduced bus fares only to see the bus fares going up again, and I am warning the public of Barbados not to be hooked.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If the Honourable Member will give way, Sir. In 1976, just before the bus fares went down, the bus fares were under the Public Utilities Board. The decision to go to 25 cents was made not by the Democratic Labour Party but by the Public Utilities Board. It was an experiment to try to get a single fare, it was not any reduction, although it turned out that it was lower.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I have never heard such. If the Honourable Member was representing a client in a case where we would see his head go to the deuce, I am sure it would be all over

bar the shouting. This is exactly what I am saying. In 1976 Government was then, according to him, trying to find a single fare structure. We are operating *now on a* single fare structure. I am beginning to wonder now whether the Government will now admit that that decision taken by the Public Utilities Board, and one which the Government agreed to and implemented was wrong. I am saying now that if the Government returns to the two-tiered system, that is wrong. It is unjustified. The Minister will have to explain or give the reasons for that move.

I do not want for there to be any doubt in anybody's mind, it is nothing but a political move, because elections are around the corner, constitutionally due within the next 21 months and this is the first move to try to soften the people of St. Michael, nothing else. When you look at it you find that this Government has already abandoned the same St. Michael routes. They have given away those routes to private concessionaires – the ZR or the route taxi people. This is what this Government has done. I want the Government .to understand this. You must reason. If you are saying that because the Transport *Board is heavily* subsidised and that you want to make it a viable entity, then if you do not have any routes in St. Michael how can a reduction in bus fare help it? You had no interest then, you have nothing at stake in the St. Michael area, because you have taken them off. How can a reduction in bus fare help the Government in boosting the economic situation of the Transport Board? What the Government is doing is punishing workers and people who live in the countryside, and I say this is totally unfair. Do you expect a nurse, a doctor, a police officer or somebody living in St. Lucy, having got to pay additional bus fares and the Government is standing firm on the salaries paid to them? I want to know if the Government has decided to give the nurses and the policemen...
10.15 a.m.

Asides.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I can talk about them. They look after us. You all abandoned them. I want to know if it is fair to ask them to dip further in their pockets when the Government has refused to give them an increase and has reduced their salary. Why are you placing additional burdens on those workers? I am asking a question. I cannot understand. I was thinking as I went home last night and trying to understand why it is that I can have a government spokesman saying that bus fares will remain at $1 but at the same time you find bus fares reduced to under a dollar. I find that strange madness.

If the Government as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West who made an intervention about the Public Utilities Board is trying to find a fare structure, I am going to say, do you know why the Government is rushing to implement this? It is because of a study recently conducted. A transport study, phase 1. The matter has not been thoroughly canvassed, neither has the Government given itself sufficient time to study the implications or the ramifications of this study. The study has made far-reaching recommendations. There were several studies being done in Barbados on transport. This is nothing new.

I am warning the Government as far as this study is concerned not to be carried away. This is not the first study and this study is showing nothing new. It is cold soup being warmed up. I have had contacts with the person who conducted the study. All you have to do, and what they have done, is that they have sat down and analysed what is happening today, the pattern of public transport. That is all. You get into a minibus. They got into a minibuses and travelled and asked people what is going on. There is nothing magical about the exercise. What one should do is to take the study and see how best we can implement or correct some of the problems. That is what the study has done, identified some of the problems in the transport system.

Mr. Chairman, Barbados deserves better. What I am saying is let us address the real problem. The Government must understand that there has been a shift in *population* patterns in Barbados. A lot of people who used to live *in* St. Michael have bought houses in Ruby Park, in Maycocks St. Lucy and *in* St. George. Those are the people who are going to suffer because of Government's foolish approach to transport and fare system.

I am asking the Government and I am telling the Minister that this matter will not be allowed to rest lightly. No way. You cannot abandon certain routes and give them to the private concessionaires and then on the other hand penalise people because they say the Transport Board has not been able to manage efficiently. You should look at how best you can take the Transport Board, look at the directors of the Transport Board and call upon them to correct the evils and wrongs in the Transport Board. These are the managers.

They have not supplied the buses properly. A lot of cannibalisation takes place. You have to look at the ratio of staff to the buses. You have to look at hourly intake and see how best you can compete. Did you ever look at competing with the private concessionaires who have the short hauls and the lucrative routes in St. Michael? No. You have not looked at that. Could you not have considered bringing in buses of the same type and competing with the private concessionaires with a view to raking in some of the revenue that you say the private concessionaires are getting? I will go with that because I believe that competition in business is healthy and good.

What you are doing is that you have set up a class of people in Barbados who are trying to survive in

these harsh economic times and you are now going to implement a policy where those people will have to bring 10 people from the Ivy down to town on $7.50. Do you know how mad that policy is? Do you know what is the cost of a gallon of petrol? You are asking someone to operate their minibus with 10 people to come from the Ivy or as far as Chapel Gap down to town for $7.50, and they have to pay a conductor? I have never seen such madness. What kind of common sense is brought to bear on this?

Let me tell you what will happen as it happened in Jamaica. They will shut down the country. They will not operate. I am warning you, Mr. Minister, that they will not operate because no businessman except he is a madman – he will have to be a candidate for the Psychiatric Hospital – goes into business, has a loan to pay for his vehicle or for his business operating and his receipts are less than his expenditure.

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

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I am going to say this. I have asked the Government to look at this. It is a serious matter. We cannot gloss over it because it is too serious for us to treat it lightly. It has far-reaching implications for this country and it is going to lead to further hardships on people particularly the workers of this country.

I will take my seat and await my next opportunity to talk on this matter.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, yesterday before the House adjourned, the Minister used the occasion to make policy announcements in relation to 2 issues. One related to the issue of Sunday shopping and I want to speak on this matter because I believe that despite all of the consultation that has gone on the Government has shown a great deal of fear in coming to a decision on this issue.

I am not a 7th Day Adventist...

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. At no time in coming to the decision I came to did I experience any fear.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I don't know how long the Honourable Member has become the Government, Sir. I am talking about the Government as a whole. I don't know what was his particular position in relation to the issue when it reached Cabinet but I am suggesting that what has come forth is a compromise, showing in my view, a great deal of fear in taking a decision on the issue.

Let me state that the 7th Day Adventists have enough reason to be angry about shopping – if there was a religious justification – between the hours of 8 and 1 or 8 and 3 on Saturday. There cannot be a religious justification as to whether or not people carry out lawful work on any day whether it be Monday down to Sunday or Sunday back to Friday. There can be no justification based on sole religious qualification.
10.25 a.m.

I am an Anglican, and a practising Anglican, who up to last Sunday was at church so I am speaking in a position where I am not saying that people should not practise their religion but we are high bound in an old system that was based on Observance Laws that are totally outdated in the United Kingdom. We are hooked on some of these arguments without looking at the reality that within our own country the religious people have to acknowledge that there are persons who must work and who work every Sunday just as the Seventh Day Adventists will recognise that there are people who work on Saturdays as well. Therefore, when one is approaching this you have to approach it in a sensible manner.

I do not believe, Mr. Chairman, that one person is going to Church anymore whether or not we have Sunday shopping. I do not believe so. I think that if people want to worship their God they will worship their God and go to Church. Those who want an excuse are *going to say* that you cannot shop on Sunday. Now, we have cricket being played on Sunday. Are we to stop playing cricket on Sunday? We are getting to the stage where they have races on Sunday and Saturday. The Seventh Day Adventists should feel *very strongly* about races *on Saturday.* We have football on Sundays. We have the cinemas on *Sundays. I* believe we cannot approach the moral standing of this country by making all of these compromised exceptions rather than dealing *with* the position.

Now, the Minister says the Government policy is that you can open from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. or from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. That is an absolute half measure. I am concerned that even *within* this half measure there are exceptions. What about the Convenient Stores that are *attached to the various oil* company depots? Are they *going* to be open all the time?

Now, when I was a boy growing up in those days people did not have a lot of money and very often our fathers, and in a few cases mothers, did not get their pay until late Saturday, sometimes *on* Friday but late Saturday night, and on Sunday mornings you could go to your village shops in Water Street, in Maxwell Hill – the Honourable Attorney General will remember this – or in Lodge Road at any time on the Saturday or Sunday and shop because that was the time you had your wages.

I am calling on the Government to do the sensible thing. Commercial enterprise and commercial business know-how require today that Barbadians get into the 21st Century. Cut out a lot of the archaic practices and get on with running the country in a way that we can increase employment opportunities and gain much needed foreign exchange. In my view it is hypocritical of a country to say that we are going to open a certain number of shops by making an application to the Chief Labour Officer when a tourist ship is in Port. Now, what sort of morality is that only because a tourist ship is in Port?

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I know you would not have to do that in the future. It is a false morality. When we talk about hypocrisy I am not talking about the Government now, we must get Barbadians out of this hypocritical frame of mind. I believe that people should go to Church. I believe we need more morality in the society but I do not believe that because people shop on Sunday that they are more religious and you have less morality. I think we ought to speak out on these issues so that it is absolutely clear and that we make a sensible decision.

Now, I believe we ought to safeguard workers' rights but once again I believe that a worker, if he is on a 5-day week, that that 5 days can begin on a Monday or the 5 days can begin on a Saturday. When he gets over his 40 hours, whether he exceeds that 40 hours on a Tuesday, then he should get time and a half, and then if he goes beyond the time and a half time period on a Thursday then he should get double time and that is my view. We ought to bring proper sense of business into the way we conduct our affairs.

Mr. Chairman, one of the things that surprises me is I have seen some of the very people who are giving religious and other reasons for objecting to doing business through the whole week in at Altmans. I have seen them in all the stores in the United States and elsewhere so that the morality seems almost to end outside of the territorial waters of Barbados. I want to be absolutely clear in putting my position. I believe that the Government should have grappled with the issue and say that people can organise their business in a manner that is most efficacious to their business and to creating employment in Barbados.

I have seen Mike's Supermarket, in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, having to close its doois. Now, here is a small man who has been doing business all of this time , a family store. What are we going to do? Are you going to come into the country and tell the people who have grown their pigs in the backyard and who kill them on Sunday morning that killing a pig on Sunday morning and selling pork is contrary to the laws of God and that therefore they cannot carry it on? That is a business too. I really do not understand the rationalisation.

When the Minister gave 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. the Honourable Members applauded but frankly I am disappointed because I believe that the Government should, wherever we can, cut out the cobwebs and let people concentrate on those things which are essential. Sometimes we in public life have to take the calumny and the attacks in order to move forward.

That brings me to the Water Authority, Sir. The other important measure on which the Minister spoke yesterday before I left was the issue of the serious problems confronting us at the Barbados Water Authority. I live in the country in the Parish of St. John, a reasonably salubrious parish. We have, perhaps, above the average rainfall. The pumping station at Bowmanston supplies more than St. John. It supplies water for many areas. Golden Ridge is just on the border between St. George and St. John where water is pumped.

Let me say that in rural Barbados, in particular, where a lot of our water resources are stored outside of the Belle, because I believe the Belle contributes 63% of all of the water supply. But we suffer most and very often in Society and other parts of St. John there is no water available. The same goes for St. Andrew, St. Thomas, St. Joseph, Market Hill in St. George and parts of St. Michael. Now that is not good enough.

I am going to join with the voices that ask for conservation in the household and elsewhere; but there are a few things that a Government must do. Firstly, we have allowed the recapitalisation of the Barbados Water Authority to wait for too long. It was obvious that we had to provide resources to replace in some cases the iron pipes and in other cases the leaden pipes that carry our water resources for distribution throughout this small island. I regret very much the decision which was taken by the Democratic Labour Party after it took over the Government in 1986 to move the capital fund which I think at the time would have been close to $30 million – $16 million of it was held in Treasury Bills – and put it into the Consolidated Fund where it was being spent.

Hon. J. 0. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. At no time were any funds from the Barbados Water Authority placed into the Consolidated Fund. In 1985, it is true to say that there was some $13 million held in Treasury Bills and the current account in 1985 totalled some $5.1 million. In 1986 the Treasury Bills held...

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

Hon. J. 0. TUDOR: On a point of explanation. But he is making the point and I do not want him to make that point.
10.35 a.m.

The point I want to make, Sir, is that at no time was any money from the Barbados Water Authority placed in the Consolidated Fund. That is not true.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, yesterday before I left this House I called for the last Reports that have been filed in here by the Barbados Water Authority. The last Report that was brought to this House was the 1986 Report. The Barbados Water Authority has failed to comply with the very Act under which it operates and has not filed an Annual Report — according' to the research from the *Clerk's office, because* I have asked for the documents — with the *House* since 1986. At that time it showed that it had $16 million in Treasury Bills alone. I can only .go on reliable authority. I have been in this House when the former Right Honourable Member for St. John said that he was transferring what he called slush funds including $30 million.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member is saying now that he is dead, he is telling lies on him. But he said that in a debate. He was transferring those to the Consolidated fund and the then Minister of Finance who is no longer in this House but every night is running around the country talking all sorts of nonsense. He also said that not only was the money coming from statutory authorities like the Water Authority but also from secondary schools who had these large amounts of slush funds.

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am going to have to come back in this debate, Sir, because I ' did not want to be sidetracked by this.

The first thing the Government has to do is to lay out a proper programme for the recapitalization of the Barbados Water Authority so that we can replace pipes that have outlived their usefulness in this country. Too often as you go through Barbados you find leaks occurring. I give the Honourable Member this if he would listen, Sir, in the constituency of Christ Church South, it was formerly in my constituency on Rendezvous Ridge for upwards of 4 weeks there has been reported on several occasions a pipe that was busted near Mrs. Altman's house. That was gushing water all over the place. I am not attacking the Water Works staff. But they are under pressure at this moment.

What I am saying is that we have not got in place as a matter of policy a proper replacement system for the pipes that we knew that were going to be rotten and we need a proper system to deal with that.

Secondly, Sir, ...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member who is leading the House and should know better continues to sit in his seat and interrupt me. But let me say this to him, Sir, it is not true as he is saying from his seat...

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

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, surely if I were interrupting the Honourable Member you would have heard. How can I possibly interrupt the Honourable Member when you did not hear, Sir? The Honourable Member knows that what he is saying deserves interruptions.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I came in here, Sir, to debate today, not to spend time on small talk.

I want to make the point that Mr. Sealy who was then the General Manager of the Water Authority had left plans and had set out plans for a replacement schedule as a result of our Agreement with the World Bank at the time dealing with the issue of Water Works.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have made your point and your time has expired.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: All right, Sir, I will get back in the debate a little later.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am amazed that anyone in the Labour Party but in particular the Honourable Member who just sat down would discuss obsolescence and plans to replace capital plant in this country. The Honourable Member should be ashamed to get up in here and inveigh against the Minister about pipe and other matters relating to the Water Works.

The fact is, first of all, that there are areas in Barbados where people pass and can see nothing but pipes stored. There are almost thousands of lengths of pipe in Barbados waiting to be put down. Everybody knows where it is stored, sometimes on private property...

Secondly the Honourable Member knows that from 1980 when we went into recession that the budget for Barbados, that is, the Estimates for Barbados have

been dogged by the absence of capital sufficient to carry out the repair works. It is no point blaming any particular Party or Government. The country has not had any plans for the replacement of capital equipment. One only has to look at...

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member must not mislead this House. I would refer the Honourable Member to the Barbados Water Authority's Annual Report for April 1, 1985 to March 31, 1986 at page 16 paragraph 5.1 Capital Works Programme. If he will read the Capital Works Programme ...I will read it for him. I do not want to take his time. But when I come back into the debate I will make sure that I give the lie to what he is saying.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am grateful for the Honourable Member's attempt to assist me in reading the old Report which he has in his hand. And he can find 25 other Reports where the best plans are written down about what is going to happen in departments. I invite the Honourable Member to go and bring the Estimates for the same period and see what provision was made for carrying out the same works. That is the point I am making. It is all right for the departments to write what their plans are. It is all right to say what they hope to do. The Honourable Member knows that he made no provision whatsoever.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Again the Honourable Member is wrong.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what has the Honourable Member risen?

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir, because he is misleading the Committee. It starts:

> "The *Canadian* Assistance in the development of the water supply and distribution system in Barbados began in 1970. During the Report period,..."

This is April 1,1985 to March 31, 1986:

> "...Canada's programme of assistance to the Barbados Water sector ended. Through this programme Canada assisted in the laying of 182 miles of water distribution mains and (9) miles of trunk mains ranging *in* sizes from 6" to 18". These large-diameter mains connect pumping stations to water storage *reservoirs" et cetera, et cetera.*

The programme went on from 1980 right up to 1986 and I will tell them about the second phase that was planned.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, everybody has read the water Report since they have trotted it out. He said that that is *1970. In* 1970 it was the Democratic Labour Party. He just got up and said earlier that the Democratic Labour Party made no plans. Now he reads that there was a Canadian programme that started *in 1970. From 1970 to 1976. I do* not understand where the Labour Party comes from. They must have come from *Japan.* They do not *understand that* the country has not had any money and they now jump up in here and try to impress people that the Barbados Labour Party are great planners.

Mr. Chairman, when we discuss the Hospital we will see what plans were made for replacement of capital works. When we discuss almost every institution in this country that requires replacement of capital we will se! what provision was made for replacement.

Under this Head, Sir, when we look at the buses we will see...

Asides.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Honourable Member is capable. If certain other Members over there fulminate and make that kind of speech, it is no real problem because we understand how they operate.

But the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is capable of a much deeper analysis of issues and therefore when he makes this kind of speech, he is being deliberately obtrusive.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members must realize that the Standing Orders... Will the Honourable Member give way a minute. This is very early in this morning's session and I do not want to have to remind Honourable Members of the Standing Orders relating to the silence of Members while not addressing the Chair. I am not going to tolerate these loud outbursts across the Chamber.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You see, Sir, they are saying that I am a little too rough.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Would the Honourable Member proceed.
10.45 a.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am making the point that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West because we have a shortage of water at the moment is popular. He would be much better on a call-in programme, Sir, because that is where you have the popular view being put forward in a political way. So the Honourable Member ought

to get his gang of call-in specialists from the Labour Party to get on the telephone and call Father Hatch later on today. That would make a lot more sense.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You are telling me what? That I cannot say that Father Hatch has a programme? Everybody knows Father Hatch's programme. It would be better for you to call the programme because that would have much more relevance. But to come into this House and try to give the impression that the Government has made no plans for the development of water is misrepresentation of the highest order. That is the only point I am making, Sir.

The Honourable Member, the Minister, will respond in detail but I am saying that in the broader macro sense of understanding of what has been going on in this country, the Honourable Member cannot be said to have been hiding behind bushes. He knew what was going on and therefore I am saying that when he gets up and tries to give the impression that there has been no planning anyone who is familiar with what has been going on in Barbados will know that there has been a continuous annual replacement of mains in Barbados. But the Ministry that is now being considered has had to have cutbacks.

The same Honourable Members over there quarrelled about the 8% pay cut. The same Honourable Members over there quarrelled about a whole lot of other things which had to happen in this country in order for us to survive and to save the currency. And then they want to get up in here and give the impression that there are a lot of dodos running the country, a lot of dodos who do not understand anything, there is no planning.

The same civil servants who worked for the Labour Party are working with the Democratic Labour Party. The same brains are being applied. The planning is not Japanese sometimes and American sometimes. The same brain force is being brought to bear. It is that we have not had the money. We still do not have the money.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I wasted it? Because there had to be an enquiry about a number of ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member address the Chair. I am not going to remind Honourable Members any more about this kind of behaviour. There are Honourable Members who seem to be tired in this debate and I can relieve them if necessary.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I invite you to use your wide powers to curb this indiscipline which emanates from certain quarters of this Committee.

Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to speak any more. The Minister was about to make a response and I am going to allow him to. I just wanted, in the mere possibility that anyone hearing the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, because I know when he goes into a certain tone, Sir ... There is a certain tone which he assumes and gives a veneer of seriousness to what he is saying, it is usually early in the morning and if you are not careful you can believe that what he is saying is deep. Those of us who know him, Sir, know that we have to cut him off at the pass. That is all I am attempting to do at this point. But I will be here for him when he comes with the details, Sir.

I am grateful to Your Honour.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister, the Member for St. Michael East caught my eye.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, I think that I would want to indicate to the House that in fact there has been an on-going plan within the Barbados Water Authority which has been restricted obviously because of the economic constraints that the island experienced over the more recent years.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas last night brought it to the attention of the House that we had in fact not submitted reports on the Barbados Water Authority since 1986 and my investigations indicate that that is a fact. I certainly regret that failure to submit timely reports has occurred. I am assured however that proper financial auditing of the Authority has taken place during that period and I suspect that those audited reports have been made available to Parliament. During my tenure, Sir, I will ensure that these reports are properly tabled in Parliament and will be respecting the rules of this Honourable House. I certainly regret that they have not been filed.

The Capital programme within the Ministry, as indicated, is an ongoing programme. It has been restricted to some extent in the sense that we are not able to carry out any extensive provision of new large mains in the troubled areas or to replace many of those that are now leaking and in a state of disrepair. It is not fair to say that there is no plan.

The programme, Sir, has for the 1994 period been identified and we will be looking during the year at new water sources. The capital programme will include investments in new pumping equipment, new vehicles for transportation of water, the general equipment that is required in the servicing of water, meters, a new drilling rig and equipment for the Bridgetown Sewerage system.

On that question, Sir, I think it is important to note that in fact the Barbados Water Authority has up to 1993 still in its possession some $16.3 million in

Treasiury Bills. It has $9.7 million *in* debentures and fixed deposit of $6.0 million and a current account of $5.7 million. Whereas this may seem like a significant *amount* of money it certainly does not relate to the day to day management funds that are available to the Barbados Water Authority.

You would be aware, Sir, that those funds are being held in anticipation of the South Coast Sewerage Project *which is* coming on stream and the loan for that, Sir, has to be serviced by the Barbados Water Authority. So those funds, when the time comes some time later this year or into 1995 will have to be used for those purposes.

I really would not want to delay the debate on water too much further, but I would say, Sir, that with regard to new wells there are plans for the provision of three new wells. A contract has already been awarded and preliminary work has started on a new well at Buttals in St. George.

The second new well will be additional to the existing plant at Allendale in St. Peter. There is a system in place but there is going to be an additional well which will be run in tandem with that. Similarly at Porters in St. James there will be a similar addition to the well.

I would like to respond briefly on that note to the report that has been laid in this House regarding the burst main at Allendale. I have reported it to the technical people at the Ministry and they have indicated to me that they have looked into it already.
10.55 am.

Mr. Chairman, I want to just address my comment relative to the interjection of the Transport Board. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East has been going up and down this country indicating to the officials in my Ministry that he will be the new Minister and that he believes that he has already assumed the responsibility of the new Minister. Sir, I did not know that Joe Tudor had two sons and certainly if he had two they would not look like him. They would be good looking.

Sir, the point that I must make is that from the position of Minister in the Ministry the question of transportation as it relates to the commuters in this country, one should note that the responsibility rests with the Ministry for organized travel at the most affordable cost possible. Certainly, we would not want to have a repeat situation where when the system was entirely privatized that the travelling public were held up to ransom by the private entrepreneurs in those days when they wanted increases in bus fares and they could not get them, and they subsequently shut down the whole system. But I think, Sir, that the introduction of the Transport Board has set up a competitive market where the market today is designed to be shared by the public transport mode which is under auspices of the Transport Board and to have private transportation fused in with it. Sir, I have to relate to the Transport Board relative to the mandate that has been given to the Ministry by the Ministry of Finance. I would want to indicate that this country has been saddled by very huge deficits resulting from losses by the Transport Board. In 1986/87 period, the deficit was some $17 966 772 and Government subsidy was provided to the tune of $12
and there was a ridership of some 27 286 742 persons. That pattern of deficits varied between 1987 and 1991,'92 in the average amount per year — $15 million deficit in 1989/90, $22 million in 1991, $13 million in 1991 and 1992/93 some $5 million. But in the last financial year there was a deficit of $2.4 million and a subsidy of $1.4 million was received.

Sir, the point that I am making is that the reality of the situation is that Government cannot afford in an environment where there is some $8 million or $9 million profit being derived out of the transportation system comfortably to accept that it is okay to simply provide a subsidy to the Transport Board. It is not practical and we are sending the wrong signals to international institutions when we are aware of the kind of profit margins that are available in a system. Yet, the Transport Board will accumulate deficits in a system where there is profit to be made. It just is not realistic and I have to address any future plan of the Transport Board in the context of which I have been given a mandate.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael South East has a way, Sir, of objecting to everything. He said that he is against an increase in bus fares. Because of his nature of objecting, Sir, if a system happened to be introduced [wh]e[re] his constituents in the Pine are provided with a fare structure that is less than what they are presently paying — (Because you will appreciate that I am not at liberty to indicate the precise policy that we are pursuing and I will not do that because I respect the collective responsibility that I have.) — and if I say the people in the Pine will pay $1.00 for bus fare, he is going to object too.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I do not think that the Honourable Member is fair to anticipate what I will say. I will say that I welcome it contrary to what your views are. I would welcome that.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, I detect a softening of his position as he starts to understand the issue. I will go a little further, Sir. I will say that, if I propose to make bus fares from St. Lucy to St. Peter $1.00, the Honourable Member will object too, because a stage system works two ways. It works that way and it works this way. If the bus goes that way, it has to come back this way. So the system will work both ways and the principle behind it, Sir, is that we have to have a system

operating on behalf of the Transport Board where we are able to market share in a meaningful manner where we are not accumulating debt.

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

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: In addition to that, Sir, when we looked at the introduction of stage fares or a new system for the transport system, I had extensive discussions with the new Minister of Education because we have to look at the movement of children and people in general in a modem context. I appreciate that these gentlemen have been around for some 20 years and will not form part of the new dispensation that will emerge very shortly in this country.

There are plans to develop activity around St. Peter. I have not forgotten the people in St. Peter, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired. Just finish your point.

Hon. J. 0. TUDOR: Thank you, Sir. I am going to have to come back on this. But the whole plan of the new system that we are trying to introduce is taking into consideration a number of factors and the bottom line rests in the fact that we have as a matter of policy the mandate where in 1994/95 we are asked to. operate the Transport Board without a given subsidy. I will come back, Sir.

Mr. H. deB. FORDS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wish to revert to the points that I was making in relation to the Barbados Water Authority. The Honourable Member for St. Michael East has confirmed my statement that no reports have been laid. He has also given confirmation to my statement that in the year 1986 the Water Authority had some $16 million on deposits. As a matter of fact, he is saying now that as at 1993 they have that and a bit more but that those funds must be used, according to him, in respect of the South Coast Sewerage Project.
11.05 a.m.

Now, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, when he got up in his usual blustering manner, tried to give the impression, as usual, that the factual position as being put from this side cannot be borne out. I want to go back and let the Honourable Member know that if he looks at the Estimates for the last 10 years, from 1983, never was any Current Expenditure being expended on the Water Authority. The reason for that is that because of the entering into the sewerage scheme and the reorganisation of the Barbados Water Authority – the Act was done during my time – the intention was that the Barbados Water Authority would become self-sustaining in relation to its Current Expenditure and, generally speaking, in relation to its Capital Expenditure. You will see that the Water Authority was therefore allowed to accumulate substantial retained earnings and to build up a capital base in order to deal with its expansion programmes.

The second thing on the Capital side was that by 1981 we had entered into the third phase of the Canadian Expansion Programme in order to replace pipes that were leaking and at the same time to lay new pipes in areas that required major mains. The last Report that was laid in this House says quite clearly that "In addition, Canadian assistance enabled eight new water pumping stations to be constructed as well as the improvements in communication equipment and general water management." On page 19 it says: "The Government" – and this was the Barbados Labour Party Government – "contributed $1.3 million in CIDA materials to assist in financing the Authority's $2.8 million Capital Works programme. The remaining $1.5 million was financed from the Authority's own funds."

I do not come into this House, Sir, merely to give an impression, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West is so often prone to. I come into this House to debate hard facts in the interest of the people as a whole in this island, and Christ Church West in particular. The problems in the Water Authority have accentuated because of a set and properly thought out plan for dealing with the problems of water. They did not occur in the last couple of months, but the DLP has had a mixed attitude when it comes to the question of conservation of water resources. I am old enough in this House, Sir, to recall when I came out as a student, back in the sixties, I heard the Democratic Labour Party leader at the time and others criticising the late Sir Mencea Cox for importing into the island water meters in order to institute a system of water metering. That was one of the hottest topics being discussed between the 1961 and the 1971 elections, and I have been at public meetings to hear the Democratic Labour Party saying that it was wrong and against the poor people to put metering in place.

The Democratic Labour Party has now gone back on its word, as it has to do on so many things, and that is why I say that they cannot have a look at the long term planning of Barbados and have the courage to tell the people of Barbados where you have to take certain steps and to deal with those steps. Sir Mencea Cox has gone to his grave criticised for the foresight he had in recognising that if Barbados was going along a certain development path, its water resources had to be well-managed and well-controlled. Those are facts. I believe you are old enough to remember some of them as well, Sir. I am not going to come to this House and lie on any matter. If I mislead the House in any way, or misrepresent, I will be the first to apologise to the House, so the Honourable Member's statement about misrepresenting the position is untrue. The point is, Sir, that we need to do something very seriously about looking at conserving water in many ways.

Now, Sir, I am going to speak about the water we are losing from burst mains, I am going to speak on the problem of the Scotland District, where I am told over 11 million gallons a day is going into the sea. I do not know if this is correct or not. Obviously that is a resource that we need to spend money on in order to conserve not only the water resources of the Scotland District, but at the same time to improve the position of the area and to prevent the Scotland area from slipping into the sea. The Scotland District extends from the east of where I live in Society – I think it is from East Point – right into the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Peter to Pico Teneriffe. It is a tremendous area that is slipping and where we know as a fact that our water resources are going into the sea and that we are losing land as well as water. Obviously we must show foresight in trying to conserve the water as well as to conserve the land. I say that when you look at the Government's plans for the Scotland District, over the last eight or nine years there has been no concerted and well-thought out plan for dealing with the area.

There was an internal document done in the Ministry of Transport and Works and at the end of the day officials and the Government threw up their hands and said it would cost too much to do. The former Member for St. Michael East, Dr. Don Blackman, like myself, felt very strongly about the necessity to get into Capital Expenditure to preserve'/, of the land mass of Barbados. We are not going to accomplish the plan in two to three years, but unless we put in place a system of loans, a system of our own resources as well for financing it, we will get nowhere at all and we will not be doing our job in relation to future generations.

I believe that the country is very badly served by its politicians unless they begin to look at rural rehabilitation in a very serious way in the long term interest of Barbados as a whole. I am going to ask the Minister, Sir, of the $600 000 voted last year to undertake a study on the water resources, how much was spent. I cannot find that any of it was spent, Page 110, under Head 42, Subprogram 02, Professional Services $600 000. That was to undertake a water study. This year there is $1.2 million, at page 163, to undertake the study. In other words, we 'are usually trying to close the door once the horse has already got out of the stable, and that is why I am asking for those details. It seems to me that the cut back, or whatever you call it, is having a deleterious effect on a very ...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Page 110, Mr. Minister. I have read the Estimates, you know, with great care. When I am going to speak I speak from facts, I am not going to get in here to fulminate like the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, I talk with the facts.
11.15 a.m.

Let me give the Government another way of dealing with this matter, Sir. There is a strong case for 'giving incentives for people who would conserve water by building tanks. It can be given under the agricultural vote if you want. It can be given under this vote because when people are building new houses and new homes it is in the interest of the country to encourage them. Don't come back and tell me that the IMF says you cannot give an incentive this way. Have some thought, and look at the future of Barbados. We expect people to put their thinking caps on and deal with the problems that are confronting us.

Now, Sir, I want the Minister to tell me as well how many miles of tenantry roads were completed last year and the year before and the year before. I will tell you why, Sir. I think it is a waste of public funds for the Government to go into an area like the area between Lowlands, Lower Estate and Boarded Hall on the hill to put in...

Aside.

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: They have dug up the road and have put in some marl fill and the next thing that happens is that it is washed into the road and is gone. If the. Government knows that it has not got the resources to start the work, it should not start the work. Stop wasting Government funds and public funds in this manner. Sir, it was done under the Democratic Labour Party. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West wants to know which Minister did it. I don't know who was the Minister. They change Ministers so fast and so many have resigned that I cannot tell which one at what time has been doing it, Sir.

I am going to return on this. I want to get the facts on the amount of tenantry roads that have been done last year, in the last financial year and in this current financial year and the one before and where they have been completed.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Peter has given way.

Mr. W. W. HALL: Mr. Chairman, it is a truism that when the wicket is innocuous you have to change up the bowling. It is true that we have a few problems with water. There are water woes in this country. They have been compounded somewhat by the type of weather we have been having in what would normally be a rainy season.

When I was Minister of Tourism, I felt that the sun, sand and sea syndrome was not the type we should

pursue for ever and ever in Barbados and that we should look at bold policy initiatives, including golf courses, marinas and convention centres. So I had been led to believe, having been to Bermuda and seen 9 golf courses in a very small island which has very little water, in fact, an island of 21 square miles where all the inhabitants are forced to catch their water off the roof tops and they have tanks. I said why should we not have at least 4 golf courses here? That was when I was Minister of Tourism. I felt it could be done. I did not know anything particularly about the acute problems we might have with water.

I had read the *Times* magazine and I had been to England, and I saw that there were 2 350 golf courses in England alone, and I know that there were 365 golf courses built in a year in the United States of America, and that there were 25 000 people out there just waiting to play golf on the waiting list. I felt that this was a thing for Barbados.

When I became the Minister of Public Works it took me an hour to know that my idea of a large number of 27-hole golf courses, that is an 18-hole course with a back nine would bring some problems. I did not know at that time about aquifers. I did not particularly know that the Barbados Water Authority would want to bring in 40 000 metres to make Barbadians aware that we were the greatest wasters of water that you can think of, that we need somehow to conserve it, that if we *are going towards* conservation of our water resources and we are also leaning towards the idea of things like golf courses and such enterprises, we would have to look at it very carefully.

So, Sir, with the fact that water might be turned off very often, it is an easy wicket to criticise. I cannot fault that, if that is the position. This Ministry that we are having the privilege now to discuss is not a Ministry of the Water Board. Lots of good work has been done and is being done in this Ministry and if we get too caught up with only a few hours to go with debating just the Water Authority, you will find that the new Minister would hardly have time to talk about the good things in his Ministry.

I am going to talk about *the Transport* Board. So sit down.

I wish you to know, Sir...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I assure the Honourable Member I am sitting.

Mr. W. W. HALL: Yes, Sir. I just wanted to lay the ground work. Yes, we had . problems in the Water Authority. I admit that; but I am saying that the Ministry is a success Ministry. You have the Child Care Board, the National Assistance Board, the Barbados Youth Scheme, the National Training Board, the National Sports Council, the Gymnasium, many things to talk about. The Bureau of Women's Affairs and the national plans for Women's Affairs under that World Bank loan. They are coming and you should be proud of them. I don't know if they scrapped them in the last few weeks but I can talk about the plans for Women's Affairs.

I wish to say, Sir, that we need to look at the Ministry. I don't want to talk about the Transport Board when the member who was criticising it is out of the Chamber, because I really wish to illuminate the dark corners of his mind. I wish to tell him about these things. 11.25 a.m.

But, Sir, down in the Labour Department we have some young people producing things that will help youngsters at school to choose the career they would like to pursue. I am not saying it happened last year because I know it had its genesis in 1983. I am referring to the Dictionary for the Occupational Classification for Barbadians. It started a long time ago but I am saying that in the last 11 years public officers have been doing fantastic work. This would have to be made a document of the House.

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: It is? Thank you then. But, Sir, the public officers are down there, and they have produced this Dictionary which will allow all youngsters to find out exactly the things they should do if they wish to pursue certain jobs. Take, for instance, some jobs that people would not really have known about. I take one dear to my heart. Take for instance, if you wanted to be a jockey. On page 49 you would see exactly what you have to do, where you would have to apply, what is the weight that you would need to aim for, what life style, whose authority it is under, the skills, knowledge and ability. These are things for someone like a jockey, not to mention if you wanted to be a consultant, or a confectionery maker, or anything. There are 84 categories.

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: I would talk about Members of Parliament if you want me to talk about them because I would say this, that while we are talking it is a sad commentary that you could look at the analogy between our brilliance in sports and in cricket where first of all you have a system how you play. It is a system where you move from Under 14s, Under 16s and Under 19s, since you remind me. Then you have a system where there is accountability, where appraisal analyses are done on the players. Then there is a referee or umpire who brings some discipline. Let us compare that with politics and then you will see why, as a nation, we produce great sportsmen

but there is a proliferation of mediocre politicians, and so the *analogy still applies.* Since they ask me to talk about it, I shall get back into lecturing.

Sir, I am saying *that there is* no such thing as the selection process or performance appraisals. You do not do anything. The average man out *there* in the street does not know if *a Minister is a* good Minister or a bad Minister. How are you going to know? By the amount of abuse he gets in Parliament?

Aside.

. Mr. W. W. HALL: No. But therein lies the brilliance of the man, if you are going to talk about that.

Sir, that was just by the way because someone said it and I heard it. I think we need to look at these things. It has given me the opportunity, now the Honourable Member is back in his seat, to say exactly what I would have preferred to say in the first place.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East said that the Transport Board is in chaos.

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: What did you say then? The system? I do not want to misquote you because you are my friend. He said the system is in chaos. Look at the history of the Transport Board. In 1955 when the concessionaires wanted to send up the fares and the Government said "No", they went on strike and the Government took over the Transport Board. Ever since then you have seen at the whims and fancies of successive Ministers, or Governments, what has happened. You have seen the Transport Board being forced to go on the long routes which are not lucrative and on the short routes that are lucrative, they have moved in to such an extent that you now have 265 ZRs, 165 minibuses and only 110 buses in the rolling stock. I think there are about 150 buses but there are 110 on the road.

Sir, let me explain to you the profit margins. The consultant estimated that the minibuses will make a profit of $1.5 million. The route taxis will make a profit of $7.7 million in the existing situation. Then that will be a profit of $9.2 million. But the Transport Board then makes a loss of $5.5 million and therefore there is a net profit of $3.7 million in ; the system. Any caring Government needs to redistribute the profits so that all modes, including the Transport Board, will be profitable and everybody will live. Nobody wants to run anybody off the road. Nobody wants small people to disappear, as we are wont to hear every day. This is not the system.

From the time I was Minister of Public Works and I knew that the consultants were here and they had started their work, I decided that we would put a halt on these people who wanted to have more ZRs and all those different modes. I am telling you, Sir, that not one, to my knowledge, has been given in the last 6 or 7 months. As a matter of fact, if I really wish to make my point pellucidly clear, I would say that only one taxi licence was validated and that is the position.

The position is that we have a situation of a flat fare or you can have stage fares. Let us analyse them. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a flat fare? The first advantage is that it is easy to administer. Anyone can do it, $1.50 from here to Bay Street, $1.50 from here to Bawdens, easy to administer. But it is advantageous to the people in the outlying areas because if you pay $1.50 to Bay Street, and you have to pay the same $1.50 to Penny Hole it is advantageous to the latter. I wish to say that 75% of the population lives in areas from Bridgetown, St. Michael, St. George, Christ Church and St. Philip South. In other words what I am saying is that whereas you have a situation where you have most of the people living in areas about a radius of 4 miles from Bridgetown, you find that is where the bus fares are disadvantageous to them.

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

Mr. W. W. HALL: Sir, in this Ministry I think you should let me speak for two hours instead of getting up all the time. I want to talk about the disadvantages. The disadvantages of a flat fare are simply that (1) it imposes high fares on short journeys and (2) fares for some long journeys are too low. We also have to send 40 buses every day for school children, not at staggered hours as anybody with business acumen will do, but you have to send them all at 8:30 o'clock in the morning.

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: I will get to that. Do not upset me. The five buses in the Defence Force? Do not let me get to that because we have been maligned for the five buses in the Defence Force. After four years you will find that those five buses are in good condition. They have paid back for themselves and they are the best buses in Barbados.
11.35 a.m.

They have paid back for themselves and they are the best buses in Barbados. People in Barbados feel that people must not drive about Barbados in air-conditioned buses. That is the gravamen of the thing. They feel it is luxury. There is no such thing as a luxury when driving about in anything, car, bus or minibus that is air-conditioned in temperatures that are 80 degrees, 90 degrees

fahrenheit. I will have to come back. I have to go overseas and I would hardly get back. I really wish to deal with this situation. It is very hard to deal with it from the backbench, Sir.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, Barbados faces a water crisis which is bigger than the question of leaking pipes. The crisis has to do with the fact that for the first time in modern history the availability and reliability of our water supply is now going to be a constraint on the pace and the extent of Barbados' social and economic development. It is the first time in our modern history that that factor has assumed the magnitude it has in our national development programmes.

The crisis, as I said, is bigger than the question of leaking mains. It has to do, in my judgement, with the need for the institutional development of the Barbados Water Authority. The Barbados Water Authority has enjoyed a status in this country as being the Cinderella of public utilities and the Cinderella of state enterprises. There are people who will pay their bills to the telephone company and to the Light and Power but they will not pay to the Barbados Water Authority and that includes Government departments who have been historically the major delinquents in paying their water bills. Its Cinderella status, Mr. Chairman, *has* not only to do with the public's perception as to whether they should pay the Water Authority or not, but it *has to do* with the fact that in all aspects of its management affairs, the *Barbados Water* Authority has and continues to lack systems equivalent to those of other public utilities and other statutory boards and systems of management that are necessary in order for the management *of our water supply to* be dealt with in the manner that it should be.

I want to develop that argument and also to correct some information that might have been put to the House. The Barbados Water Authority needs people who can undertake financial management. Historically it has been headed by engineers, but the fmancial management aspect of the Water Authority's affairs have not been properly dealt with and they are to some extent responsible for part of the Authority's current problems.

The facts are, Sir, that the Barbados Water Authority under an Agreement signed by the present Prime Minister before the Democratic Labour Party left office in 1976 instituted a rate structure under which it was supposed to accumulate surpluses, not only to finance its own internal capital programme but to assist in the organization of the country's sewerage facilities.

The financial surpluses of the Authority were allowed, for many years, to remain in the bank. The facts are, and I deal only with facts, Sir, that by 1986 the surpluses that had accumulated were not in fact snatched away and put into the Consolidated Fund but they were I think $16 million invested in Government Treasury Bills. There is a story in that that has properly to be told. That story is that the Barbados Water Authority's concept of capital development is an approach to capital development that does not bear any serious relationship whatsoever to the needs of the society for an adequate water supply.

Year after year, despite the surpluses accumulated by the Barbados Water Authority, the capital programme of the Authority has been less in value than the value of the depreciation of its assets. We have a situation, Mr. Chairman, where year by year the assets of the Water Authority depreciates by as much as $5 million but you hardly have a situation in which you have more than a $3 million capital development programme.

Therefore the question of the financial management of the Authority stands seriously to be considered. That point is reinforced in my mind by the fact that the Authority has not been able since 1985-86 to present this Parliament with an Annual Report. It raises the question in my mind as to the basis upon which this Parliament is now being asked to commit resources to support any activity by the Barbados Water Authority. I make that point deliberately, Sir. Nobody in this House knows what is the true financial position of the Barbados Water Authority. I rather doubt that the Water Authority is in a position to do, if it were called upon quickly to give a true and accurate account of its real financial conditions.

Nonetheless, the House is being asked, through the public purse to provide funding to carry out a study in circumstances where there is the likelihood that the institution involved may in fact have fmancial surpluses that it may be mismanaging. Historically, the Barbados Water Authority has had surpluses that it has been putting in Treasury Bills, accumulating in the banks; added to that, year by year, the Authorities capital development programme has been relatively small. As I said they have been historically smaller than the depreciation of the assets.

Therefore, I am saying to this House that, before I can agree to ask that the taxpayers pay for the cost of this water study, I would have to be satisfied, given the history of the Water Authority that there are not surpluses sitting there either in banks or in some form of Government paper that could be utilized if there were a different form of financial management in place within the Water Authority.

The Minister can respond when I am finished, Sir. But I make that point because for a number of years now if you have been following Estimates you would

realize that the Water Authority has not been a charge on the public purse. The understanding from as far back as 1975 when the present Prime Minister signed the Agreement on behalf of Government was that the Barbados Water Authority was intended not only to be able to finance its own operating expenses but should also be generating a surplus for capital development.

The fact therefore that we are now this year, as last year being called upon to write a vote into the Estimates to support the activities of the Water Authority can only be warranted if the Water Authority now fmds itself in a position where, in point of fact, it is no longer covering its operating expenses from its revenues, it is incurring a deficit and the public has, therefore, to carry that deficit.

I would therefore urge the Minister to give the House the benefit of the information to which he has access, but we do not, because we do not get any Annual Reports of the Water Authority, as regards the present and *projected* financial position of the Water Authority and its capacity not only to meet its operating expenses but also *to* generate surpluses to carry out capital expenditures.

The fact that this item is now on budget is suggesting to me – unless there is some loan through the Government that this is being financed by – that there is some deficit that the Water Authority is now incurring. I would fmd it very difficult to believe that the Water Authority could find itself in a deficit position because as you know the water rates for a large class of customers in this country have been increased fairly drastically in the course of the last 2 years.

I want to come back to my basic point that the Water Authority needs to be recognized as an institution that is providing a service which is critical to the development of this country and that all of the modern techniques of management including the management of financial resources, the management of human resources, the management of information have to be brought to bear to the Water Authority in order for it to adequately perform the role that this Parliament so obviously is expecting it to perform.

In a way the fact that the Water Authority has not been able to even prepare and submit to this Parliament an Annual Report says something about the state of the under development of the institution as an institution.

I would like to hear the Minister speak very directly to the question as to what is in store for the Water Authority by way, not just of a programme to replace leaking mains, but by way of a programme to see to the overall institutional development of it to bring it up from the status of the Cinderella of institutions in the society.

11.45 a.m.

I also must grasp this opportunity, Sir, to follow through on a point that I introduced in a second reading speech when I called attention to the fact that in this year's Estimates of Expenditure there is a cut contemplated in the grants that the Government is proposing to give to those institutions in the society that are responsible for the provision of welfare and other social services, Sir.

I think at that time, Sir, when I spoke, I referred to the fact that whereas in last year's Estimates there was provision for $264 million in grants to individuals, non-profit institutions and to public institutions such as the 'Child Care Board, the Welfare Department and the National Assistance Board for training and so on, that overall transfer of iresources to the worst off in the society is to be cut by as much as $20 million.

Now, Sir, as I said then and I want to repeat now, that is contrary to what is stated in Government's just published Development Plan. It *is contrary, in my* judgement as well, to every good precept of social justice and therefore the time has come for the Minister to tell us precisely how he is going to reconcile the twin objectives stated by Government, the *expanded delivery or* the sustenance of its delivery of social services within the context of a shrinking budget.

Now, Sir, I do not ever subscribe to what I call the "Crazy Eddie" approach to Financial Management that you can always get *more for* less. I do not believe it, because a large part of the activities of these institutions have to do with the employment of people and unless of course the Government is contemplating an additional wage cut, *which* I know it is not, then the argument that you can get more *for less by* giving less money to the Welfare Department, less money to the Child Care Board, less money to the National Assistance Board, providing less money *for* the training of young people, is an argument I cannot buy.

I want the Minister to present this House with a comprehensive programme that can satisfy us as to the areas in which the savings are being effected and the waste being reduced. And I want him to be cautious in how he presents that programme bearing in mind that the Auditor General's Report has spoken in the most caustic terms regarding the fact that there is a practice now for Government Departments to defer expenditure from year to year and not bring things to book.

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

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I happen to know, Sir, as a matter of fact, that the practice of the deferment of expenditure has been taking place, particularly in the Child Care Board and a lot of other institutions that fall directly under the surveillance of this present Minister.

In the two minutes left to me, Sir, I also want to draw attention to a particular matter within the Ministry having to do with the provision for drainage.

Mr. Chairman, I have a special interest in flooding and drainage and whenever I see any public expenditure votes that either trivialise or mitigate the seriousness of this as a problem in this country, I am tempted to look at it very carefully.

Now, these Estimates are telling me that the Government wants to cut the provision for dealing with the drainage problems in the society. That can only be a justifiable course of action if we can also be satisfied that the drainage problems in areas like Speightstown and other areas like Holetown have been put behind us.

My knowledge of my constituency in particular would lead me to the conclusion that that problem has not yet been whipped and I therefore must draw the Minister's attention to the fact that we on this side do not support the policy implied in these Estimates that one of the areas in which the Government should seek to effect economy in the expenditure of public funds this year is in reducing its expenditure on training.

We think it is a misguided policy, Sir, and again this is a matter on which I would want the Minister to address with a view to letting us know the specific details of his programime so that we can know where the cuts are to be effected. I may have to come back, Sir. I am obliged to you.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in 1995 in Beijing, China in September of 1995 there is going to be the Fourth World Conference on Women and the main objectives are for action, equality development and peace. The 1995 Women's Conference comes after the 1985 Nairobi Conference and the 1975 Mexico Conference at all of which Barbados was represented.

I have no reason to doubt that Barbados will be represented at the Beijing Conference in China. The purpose among other things of the Beijing Conference is very importantly, Sir, to review the advancement of women since 1985 which was the date of the last Conference in Nairobi. At that time I led this country's delegation to the Nairobi meeting.

I am deeply concerned, Sir, when I look at last year's vote in the Estimates and this year's vote in respect of Women's Affairs. There is a Bureau of Women's Affairs in the Schedule of Personal Emoluments. It will be found described at page 205 for 1994/95. It has a staff of exactly three people and that has been the case for many years – a Director, a Research Officer and a Stenotypist whose salaries amount to just over $88 000. The Government pays little or no respect to the Bureau and particularly little respect to its Director.

The fact is, Sir, that the report for Barbados for 1985-95 in Beijing will have to show, in my submission, that there has been lost ground. Women have lost ground in this country over the past 5 to 6 years in particular. But there has been lost ground between 1985 and 1995.

We only have to start at the unemployment, Sir. Of those unemployed in Barbados today, and we are talking in excess of 33 000, the majority are women. Women are still the last in and the first out in almost every sector in our economy. We will find that there are more women in prison, we will find there are more women coming before the courts, we will find that there are more young women at the Government Industrial School for women. All of these are unhappy indicators that the status of women in Barbados is on the decline rather than otherwise.
11.55 a.m.

I looked in this year's Estimates compared to last year at the Child Care vote, Welfare vote, National Assistance vote and I see only increases in salary and other fixed costs which do not disclose the reality that under these Heads there have been any increases in services. In fact, Sir, the Government is not even maintaining the services. What happens in every single one of these Heads is that by October 1994 of the financial year the vote is going to be busted and you are not going to get the Minister coming back here for a supplementary until possibly January or February of the following year which will be 1995.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, at a time when unemployment is running in excess of 30 per cent and...

At this point certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for the City were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Miss B. A. MILLER: The Ministry of Health which on the last day of discussion for the Estimates has not yet been called by the Government. We are at Head 42 and Health is Head 36. It has been skipped over. The Minister will tell us now that it is coming next.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member knows that I personally informed the other side that there was a note made to the amendment after I made the statement yesterday about the equipment and that will be coming after. The Honourable Member and I specifically went behind the Chair and spoke on that matter.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Did you speak on the fact that the Ministry of Health has not been debated in these Estimates debates? That is David Simmons.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Who is David Simmons?

Miss B. A. MILLER: I do not know, Sir. I do not know what they drug in here with to interrupt me and take away time from my 15 minutes.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. So that the record will be clear, Sir, it has always been from time immemorial an understanding that when the two sides meet behind the Speaker's Chair that whatever agreements are reached there, they are binding on each side. Let me finish.

Sir, there was a technical problem where an amendment has to be done to allow the Ministry of Health to have the provision in its Estimates to deal with the landfill. It was agreed that we would hold the Ministry of Health until the amendment could be prepared and be brought down. That was agreed between the two sides. Now the Honourable Member is saying that we are hiding something in the debate. Nobody is hiding anything from anybody.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is made. Let the Honourable Member continue her *contribution* under Head 42 which does not relate to the Ministry of Health.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I need to make it clear that no agreement or discussion has been made about when the Ministry of Health *will come on or* about an amendment relating to the *Ministry of* Health.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. Two Honourable Members are on their feet. Just a minute. We are running into danger. Will the Honourable Member recognize that the Chair is intervening. Before the Honourable Member proceeds, there is nothing that will be recorded until I have made my intervention. I want to make the point that I have already said that the matter related to the Ministry of Health does not come under this Head. I understand the Honourable Member to say that she is not privy to any conversation. Well, that should end the matter. So it cannot now be used as a vehicle to cast aspersions. I am not allowing it. Will the Honourable Member please proceed under Head 42?

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have difficulty with your suggestion that I am attempting to cast aspersions. I am not. I am simply saying that I have had no such conversation and no such information has been communicated to me as Deputy Leader of the Opposition nor to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That should end the matter under Head 42.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am saying, Sir, that at a time when unemployment is running at 33 per cent in this country, at a time when user fees have been introduced and increased in the Ministries of Health, Housing and Community Development when women and particularly those with children and families to look after...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading this Committee. The Honourable Member said that user fees have been introduced in the Ministry of Health. No user fees have been introduced in the Ministry of Health. All fees that are being paid in the Ministry of Health were being paid from the time that the hospital was established. To give that information, she is misleading this Committee.

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

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member...

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have ruled that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East is on a point of order.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Thank you, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House when she said that user fees have been increased in the Ministry of Education. There is no evidence of that. I never have sought to increase them. You said increase and that is relevant to this debate here today.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is made.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, if Members would listen carefully, I said "introduced and increased". User fees were increased in this Parliament last year in the Estimates debate. I am saying, Sir, that at a time when there are increases in user fees, when unemployment is running in excess of 30 per cent, when women with children and families will be looking to the Child Care Board, Welfare Department and to the National Assistance Board...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think the real problem is that we need to pay closer attention to the Head under discussion which relates to the Estimates 1994/95.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the matter before the House at this time is Head 42, Ministry of Labour, Public Works, Community Development and Sports. I am addressing Sub-programme 03 *which* deals with the *Child* Care Board, Head 17 which deals with Women's Affairs Bureau, and National Assistance Board – Head 16, Sub-programme 02. I am saying that at

a time when there are no increases being made under these Heads women are finding it even more difficult That is what I am saying. Nobody in this country can deny that there has been a decline in services.

Now if I can speak more particularly to the Women's Affairs Bureau. I have pointed out that it has an almighty staff of three which has been the case for many years. I have already pointed out that there is a National Women's Conference due in 1995. I would venture to suggest, Sir, that when we see in this year's Estimates a quite impressive increase under Women's Affairs, it really has to do with a window-dressing exercise that the Government is embarking upon in order to make itself look good at the International Conference in 1995.
12.05 p.m.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am under Women's Affairs, Sir, at 17. You will see, Sir, there that the Statutory Personal Emoluments just in excess of $88 000 refer to the salaries and that has not moved from last year. National Insurance Contributions, fixed cost, has not differed from last year, but suddenly we see that Operating Expenses are now at $19 500. Listen to what the Women's Affairs Bureau has been doing for the last few years: Postage, incidentals, Women's Affairs Projects — $20 000 is to cover all of this — Career Show Case, Public Education Program, National Advisory Council of Women, Committee on Women's Affairs, International Women's Day. That is the sum total of the role and function of the Bureau of Women's Affairs. But this year we see in the Estimates now a *new line item called* Professional Services $455 672, and the note on the *other side tells us absolutely* nothing. I am hoping that the Minister will enlighten us.

The note in respect of these professional services, it turns out that they are just consultancy fees, provides for consultancies under the IADB project. I want to know what *this project is,* Sir. We *want to* know who the consultants are going to be. Are these more non Barbadian and non Caribbean consultants coming in here to tell us what the national policy on matters affecting women are going to be? When he is responding to that, perhaps the Minister would enlighten us further and tell us what in fact is the Government's policy on affairs and matters affecting women. We want to know why these professional studies, why these consultancies are being undertaken at this time. We want to know what this IADB project is all about, and we want to be assured that it is not pure cosmetic window dressing being undertaken by the Government just because there is going to be an international conference in 1995, not that they are going to get to send any delegation there. The people who are going to have to go to that conference and represent Barbados will be over on this side of the House at that time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member conclude in two minutes?

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, Sir.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: It will not be me, Sir, there will be many more women in this Parliament It need not be me. Mr. Chairman, Sir, also under Head 42...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West is leading the House. He must not from his seat continually interrupt Members and then...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member recognises...

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am drawing it to your attention.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member recognises that not a minute ago I called for order. It is unnecessary, I think, for the Honourable Member to go that route, because he is questioning the Chair.

Miss B. A. MILLER: In the two uninterrupted minutes left to me, Sir, I would like under this Head 42, Public Works, to say a few words about the west wing of Parliament. The west wing of this Parliament has been under refurbishment for over four years, in fact, at least $4^1/_2$ years. It cannot be hidden from us, it is right there. I went over there and inspected it for myself yesterday. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West *said* that he saw me. I went and inspected the work for myself. There is a great deal of material over there. I saw two men painting in a very desultory fashion a window. Is it that the west wing of Parliament is yet another bottomless pit, like Sherbourne and like the St. Joseph Hospital, that we just *put money in* every year and *see nothing* else coming up for it?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I just wanted to speak for a minute before the other Honourable Members got up. The Honourable Member for *the City who just sat* down raised *a question* which she raised under the Head of Parliament. We postponed the Head of Parliament because the Honourable Member raised the question about the repair of the west wing. One of the reasons why we have postponed the Head of Parliament is because we are seeking to have the funds that appear under this Head we are now discussing *for* the repair of Parliament transferred under Parliament, which would be the correct Head, because

the Management Commission of Parliament had made a decision, as I informed the House when we did the Head, that funds for the repair of Parliament should be controlled by the Accounting Officer of Parliament.

I bring this to your attention because the Honourable Member has a very small attention and retention span, and one has to help her to understand things even when she raises them. There can be no other reason for her to be talking about the west wing in this context.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I resent being referred to as one with a short attention and retention span. Let us get it clear. The Government has been indulging in a filibuster in here in this Estimates debate all of yesterday, and they are doing it again today, hiding Ministries from debate. I have no way of knowing that anything they say will come to pass and I do not trust anything said by them to the effect that these things will come back. All of this will go under the guillotine tonight and we will never get the answers to it. I am entitled to raise it as many times as I like. That is my right in here, and I will raise it again.

Mr, CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I have said to the Honourable Member for Bridgetown that I could not accept her opinion that Government was hiding any Heads from debate.

Miss B. A. MILLER: You have no difficulty, Sir, accepting the opinion of the Honourable Member for St. Michael West that I have a short attention and retention span. I have spoken to your lack of hearing in here already in this debate, and I am only using those words to be generous.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is still going to take her seat.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am not entitled to an opinion, but he is.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Honourable Member continues to behave that way to the Chair I will have to do what is absolutely necessary.

Miss B. A. MILLER: It is a two-way street, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Honourable Member take her seat?

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am in it.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: May I have some order? I am sure that Honourable Members would recall that further consideration of the Head of Parliament has been postponed on the premise *that* was raised both by the Honourable Member for St. George North and *the* Honourable Leader of the House. I am not in a position to accept the charge that a Head is being hidden under those *circumstances and I would wish* that *the* Honourable Member would *recognise that* we have *to do our business* in a businesslike way and not get into *these little tantrums* over things of *this nature.*

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I wish to say that I resent very much any implication that I am party to any filibustering in the House and I want the Honourable Member for the City to understand that she is in no position to determine for the Government what issues are going to be debated. When the opportunity comes she can move any number *of Private* Members' Resolutions requesting any issue that she wishes debated debated, and nobody has ever tried to stop her from doing that. Yesterday we discussed issues *of* great concern to this country. She obviously found the level of intellectual debate too high for her liking and *therefore* avoided any discussion *of* those serious issues, so what she has opted to do in this debate is to bring the usual shallowness, huff and puff and the superlatives which are way beyond, in my view, her usual standard, certainly of intellect, to try to demonstrate that she understands more than anybody else about the women's movement in Barbados.
12.15 p.m.

I wish to explode a myth right here and now about which she herself should take counsel from the Honourable Member for Christ Church West who describes himself publicly as the ladies man in politics. I know and he knows that the advances which the Barbados Labour Party takes credit for introducing in this country, and which I must say some of them are quite entitled to accept credit for, were undertaken with a Women's Bureau with less *than* 3 members. at that time.

It was because of the goodwill, the cooperation and the sense of mission that people from even partisan background were able to bring to the table in Marine House, together with the students from secondary schools – I was one of them – who serviced the deliberations of the National Commission on the Status of Women. Since then, nearly all except 3 of the recommendations have been introduced. There is only one related to citizenship and I think two other minor issues which have not yet been introduced. Yet the Honourable Member can come in here, it can fall from her mouth to talk the utmost foolishness to suggest to the people of this country that in the past 5 years the status of women in this country has declined.

Now I want to make this point very clear because...

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: The Commission which enquired into the status of women in this country reported early on in the 1976-86 stint of government under the Barbados Labour Party and the reference that was made by the Honourable Member for St. John for recommendations being classified happened in our time not in the time of the DLP since 1986. Look to your own Development Plan at page 235.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, that is the height of irrelevance. I do not care who it took place under. I said that all Barbadians brought good will to the table under the leadership of the then Minister of Women's Affairs and I accept that he is entitled to take credit for that. But I also wish to give credit to people like Senator Carmeta Fraser and others who put behind them their partisan political views in an attempt to ensure that women in this country were given the kind of opportunity which according to the Barbados Labour Party was denied them.

What I am saying to you is that if you learnt the lesson of that period well it would not fall from your mouth to come in this Chamber and give the impression that women and their standards have suddenly declined.

I was practising law 3 years ago. I am telling you because you mind my business more than I mind yours but it is not my interest to determine how you run your personal life. If not, you may have problems remaining in this House. I want to read the Constitution again to discover whether you should be disqualified for holding office. That is what I should do.

Mr. Chairman, I was practising law 3 years ago. I used to do conveyancing and I know the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and the Honourable Member for St. James North can tell you that by the year 2 000 there will be more women owning houses in this country than men. There will be more women owning motor cars. The crisis in this country in terms of gender is not a crisis that can be faced by any women's bureau. I am going to make bold to say that as far as I am concerned the Women's Bureau is as irrelevant to the progress of women in this country as is the National Cultural Foundation to the progress of artists.

The longer that Government feels that only government can lead the advances in these areas and spend money on things, that as far as I am concerned, have no relevance to the population the longer we are going to have problems in focussing our resources on the things we really need to do. Anyway, I have nothing to say on the Women's Bureau. I was Minister of Women's Affairs and I will defer to the women and to people like the Honourable Member if she feels we need a big bureau and thinks that that is going to advance the cause of women in Barbados. Well, I will defer to that.

I was part of the process and I know how it began and therefore I have some sympathy to the cause which you say still needs to be augmented.

The real point is that the crisis is not among women. Instead of your jumping around looking to go up to Beijing to...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now....

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Instead of the Honourable Member for the City waiting with bated breath and clawing the table anxiously to get to Beijing next year... We could still send you. We can send you to Beijing if you really want to go. We are proud of you as a woman, not in here, but when you leave in here. When you go overseas I am proud of you as a woman. The problem I have with you is what you do inside here because the majority of women in Barbados I don't think if they saw you in here would have the same view they have of you as when they see you in Cairo and Beijing and New York and London and flying all over the world. There is nothing wrong with that. You are a good ambassador for Barbados and it does not cost the Government anything, so you know I am very happy when you go and I am very happy about that and I credit you for those achievements you have wrought. But when you come in here and seek to give the impression that the Bureau of Women's Affairs...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. Can I have some order, please. I would wish to remind Honourable Members of Standing Order 40.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am waiting to have some order. I would wish to remind Honourable Members of Standing Order 40(2)(a) and it reads:

> "The Speaker, or the Chairman in Committee ... shall order any Member whose conduct is grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the House during the remainder of that day's sitting."

I would not wish to be forced to bring that Standing Order into force. Let us continue with some decorum in this House.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, the point I was making is that it is true that the Estimates Debate is about spending money but politicians have to bring to this debate some philosophy which informs the kinds of policy to which the resources which we are spending here should be committed. I am saying that I did not hear from the Honourable Member for the City other than talk about sending people to Beijing. I see no sense in

sending them if they have nothing to say. I have been to many of these women's conferences...

Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order. It is not my fault if the Honourable Member for St. John was not listening. I particularly asked for the Government's policy. Please, will the Minister enlighten us on the Government's policy on matters relating to women. I want to know what this IDB project is about. You can put all the philosophy in here.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, I want to identify the slow boat to take her to China. I hope it takes a long time to get there and back. I will commit any resources to identify that slow boat to China.

All I am trying to say, Mr. Chairman, in this debate is that when Barbados goes overseas it is true that there may be many reporting gaps in our social welfare provision and that there may be many women in Barbados living way below the poverty line but because we have moved away from means testing we do not in Barbados have the kind of data base in terms of our social safety net which tells us on an on-going basis those persons who are below the family income level.
12.25 p.m.

We still function on a hit and miss basis and the longer we throw out the baby with the bath water the more problems we are going to have. We resent means testing and because we resent it there are gaps in the knowledge that we have about the social problems that are being faced in Barbados.

The real point I want to make, Mr. Chairman, is that there may be women who are living way below the poverty line and who may be suffering from many of the disabilities which do not conform with the general approach for which Barbados is acknowledged as being at the forefront. But when we go to these Conferences on Womens' Affairs and discuss issues like women and structural adjustment and so on, Barbados has fortunately been able to avoid those very calamitous kinds of policies which other countries have implemented which have marginalised women totally in those societies. Therefore, it does not make sense our fooling around with the issue of womens' affairs and trying to make a political *football out* of it.

The reason why I intervened in *this* debate, Mr. *Chairman,* is to call on the Honourable Member, if she is the Shadow Minister of Women's Affairs, I do *not know* that she is, to rethink the stance she has taken on this particular issue and perhaps rethink whether, in fact, Barbados needs to have those kinds of resources devoted exclusively to issues like the institutional strengthening of the Women's Bureau, or whether there are not other projects of more value to Barbados as a society which could be pursued. That really is the only reason why I have intervened in this debate. I hope we will get that kind of consideration from the Honourable Member for the City before she opts to get back up again and treat this House with the kind of contribution which she just did.

Thank you.

Mr. W. W. HALL: Sir, the more I listen to debates in here, I believe it should be compulsory for politicians to say with their hands in the air, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to thee, Oh Lord." I will tell you why. When kids and women hear what we have to say about each other, and I say this all the time, it makes me very sad. I have been Minister of Women's Affairs too for 18 months, I must admit, but I would not walk up and down Barbados and go on Rediffusion, VOB and CBC and proclaim my greatness as the defender of women. I think that the women in Barbados know that too well and they talk about it, not me, so I do not feel that anyone should come in the House or anywhere else and say how good they have been in a particular Ministry. I think we need not worry about that.

I rise, Sir, just to give a few comments on the Barbados Water Authority and indeed, the Transport Board because those two Boards have been the subject of much discussion, if not criticism. I wish to say that the Barbados Water Authority and the Transport Board are well launched towards making themselves commercially viable organisations. That is true.

The Barbados Water Authority: There has been a lot of talk about not seeing the Annual Reports. This is true and so I discovered when I was there for six months that we have not been able to give the public and the members of this Honourable Chamber annual reports, so it is easy to understand why Honourable Members of this House will criticize the Board for that indiscretion. But I wish to make it very clear that as far as the Barbados Water Authority is concerned, they have been generating profits of over $3 million.

This morning, Sir, you heard that they did not have any report, therefore everybody jumped up in here, and it looked very bad on the Authority that they had not given a report. Now I have stood up in here and proudly proclaimed that the Barbados Water Authority for the last four or five years has made profits in excess of $3 million...

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: I will tell you what is happening *now. I will* tell you exactly how they are going to spend the money. They have put millions of dollars in

Government bonds and debentures going back to 1984, therefore I am saying that successive Governments have used the money of the Barbados Water Authority. They have enough funds to take care of the annual capital investment programme in water as well as sewage. Admittedly, Sir, you have to give credit where credit is due and you have therefore to be honest and admit when things happen. These funds will be committed to a ..

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is obviously not speaking in the same way in which the current Minister is speaking because I understood from the Honourable Minister's statement that the money that has been there in retained earnings is onlent to the Government by way of Treasury Bills and that that money is to be used for the South Coast Sewage Scheme, not for developing any new wells or putting in any new pipes. So if he really had listened to the Minister, that is what the Minister said not so long ago. I understand that he is changing his views.

Mr. W. W. HALL: Sir, why this premeditation? Why is he actually saying things I have not said. I have not actually said it yet. I said this is how the funds will be committed. I said "will be". That is future. It is not past. He was Minister for three weeks. I was Minister for seven months. We will talk. He will be given the necessary guidance. His more experienced and indeed illustrious colleagues will make sure that his apprenticeship period will be well served.

Sir, I say these funds will be committed to the development of water resources and sewage systems along the south and west coasts. We will therefore have to review the Water Authority's position to ensure that they meet the commitments into the 21st Century.

Listen to this, Sir. That is why we commissioned studies dealing with institutional review of the Barbados Water Authority. This is including the financial and commercial policies and also an internal audit and management information systems so the money will go in that. I do not particularly like any big lot of studies and I know somebody is going to get up and say so, so let me say it. They are going to say that studies clutter up things and that you have a paralysis of analysis. That is what they said about tourism. That is what they said about all studies we have had. But the Water Authority will have these studies nonetheless. There will be a tariff study to determine the rates to be charged. There will be a meter study to determine the extent of metering required on an all island basis.

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: That is not true. On the contrary, Sir. Water is so precious that we decided to leave water until the last. Listen to it. Last but not least, last and foremost — water resource and water lost study. That is the thing. You cannot premeditate. Why do they always premeditate when I am talking? Why do they always try to tell me what I should say?

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: Now you are saying the Minister should say it. I can say it too. The Minister has told me to say this and that is what I am going to say.

As regards the Transport Board, Sir, the Minister needs to reduce the deficit from $21 million. In fact, they have reduced the deficit to $2.4 million. The staff and members at the Transport Board have done a fantastic job. Anybody who suggests anything to the contrary is only ignorance on stilts. That is what it is.

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: Ignorance is not a bad word. Ignorance is very common. They would not have any commonsense. Not commonsense, Sir, because all sense is not common. I would say rare sense.
12.35 p.m.

Sir, I am saying that the deficit has been reduced from $21 million to $2.4 million in this Financial year.

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: The Transport Board. I do not mind people disagreeing with me but I do not like the idea of telling me it is not true, just because they feel it is not true. I am not saying they reduced the $21 million to $2.4 million in this year. I am saying that the deficit is now $2.4 million.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Can I have some order.

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: The deficit, yes. It is now $2.4 million. The projected deficit is less than $2 million next year. You ask us about privatising. I am saying that it would be folly to just go out there and privatise the Board. I say so. I am not talking about a policy now. I am saying that as a citizen of Barbados it *will* be folly to go out there and privatize. It is obvious that what we should do is to give the people at the Transport Board the opportunity.

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: Did you say that? We must give them the opportunity to have it as a commercially

viable organization. Barbadian people expect the Government of the day to give them a transportation system which must not only be viable but it should act as a buffer. It is obvious that that is the position.

Sir, we are going to rationalize the staff. I know you are laughing. You will smile. Are you smiling because of the rationalization of the staff? It makes my heart bleed because we took the advice to rationalize the staff. People have had to go home and that bleeds my heart, but the point is we have to make it commercially viable.

We are going to undertake training to make workers more customer oriented. That is very important. It is a service they are rendering and they have to be customer oriented. I think that is very important.

The management and staff are working to raise the level of productivity but if there is a customer orientation, it goes hand in hand with raising the level of productivity. Indeed that is something that is endemic in most societies where you fmd that productivity is something that people think is a foreign language. We need therefore at all levels to encourage our people to raise the level of their productivity.

We have, at the Transport Board, to gear the workers, and they have to gear themselves, to compete with the private sector. That is it. There is no point having a Transport Board that is losing money day in, day out. Therefore you have to pull it up by the boot straps and decide in your mind that you are going to make it a commercially viable operation. That is very important.

I am saying that Government would give the Transport Board all the support necessary to make sure that it is just that, a commercially viable operation. I wish to say also that as far as I am concerned, I feel that the Transport Board should be given the opportunity to become viable. I also feel that we should give support to the small, large and medium business people who have invested their large sums of monies in route taxis, or minibuses, some of whom live in my constituency. You see them parked in Black Rock.

I feel that we have to look very seriously at the transportation problems and have the political will and not heighten the moral turpitude of people. I Think we have to have the political will and the moral suasion to make sure that these people are brought together.

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: I said not heighten the moral turpitude. So what? It does not matter.

I am saying that we need to get them together and discuss the issue with them. We do not wish to have people who have invested a lot of money who feel that this Government is going to be unfair to them. That is *not the* intention of the Government. I say that sometimes it is not the wisest thing for 200 people, young entrepreneurs all going in different directions to make the almighty dollar. Perhaps it would be a better thing if they were to come together even if it is to buy gasolene and to have a common goal.

I think that after we have had dialogue with all of these young entrepreneurs...

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

Mr. W. W. HALL: I cannot even conclude in 2 seconds, Sir, because I cannot hear myself.

Asides.

Mr. W. W. HALL: Sir, I was ending by saying, having said...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. The Honourable Member seems to be put off by the asides. Just give him a break. Go ahead. Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Mr. W. W. HALL: ...earlier that the Board should be commercially viable, having said that the Transport Board should be allowed also to operate the lucrative routes, I say so full in the knowledge that if you are going to take a bus from St. John to St. Joseph you have to come to Bridgetown and then go back up to the country. There is no other way to get there. If you were in Church Village and want to go to school at Princess Margaret, you have come to town and then go back up there. That is the reality of the situation, the stark reality of it all.

It is folly to suggest that if you are living in the country that you should not pay more than the man who lives in Bay Street. That is what I am saying. I am saying so because given a bus with 50% occupancy, it would not take more, in my opinion, than 450 or 500 per passenger to be viable.

On the contrary from Bridgetown to St. Lucy you would fmd that you would need about $2.88 per passenger to be viable. Anyone with a modicum of common sense would understand therefore that you have to look towards having stage fares. If you were flying from here to St. Lucia you do not pay the same fare that you pay to Luxembourg. I am using that as an analogy. I would feel that if you are going further, you should, of necessity, pay more. Therefore, Sir, I close by saying that both the

Transport Board and indeed the Water Authority are equipoised for a large take-off into commercial viability.

I believe that given the reins, the officers that run these two organizations, and with good political will from the Government we will see them through. I sincerely hope that there are not moved off that path which can only lead to some success.

Thank you very much, Sir.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wish to speak to Major Works and Renovations Subprogram= 2 of Programme 5 and Community Development. What I am going to say will require Government, from today, to address its attention to the major works in relation to the people of Arch Hall and Bennett's.
12.45 p.m.

Those people have been suffering long and unceasingly from the problems of the landfill at Mangrove and I have had irrevocable instructions today.

I am dealing with major works and renovations to show how the community of Arch Hall and Bennett's are calling for resiting and relocation.

Now last week the Minister of Health in here explained that expert advice that he had had would require the continuation of the landfill at its present location and into areas of Content to enable landfilling to continue there for another 22 years. The people who live under the landfill and downwind of it at Arch Hall and Bennett's cannot be expected to endure what is happening up there for another 22 years and it will therefore require major works on the part of the Government to plan the relocation and resiting of these people. But there is going to be the dislocation of a community and the need to develop that community elsewhere, if the Government accepts the recommendation of the IADB to continue the landfill up there.

I only want to let the House know, Sir, that today, this morning, I filed this Writ against the Sanitation Service Authority brought by 15 residents, representing all of the occupiers and householders in Bennett's and Arch Hall, that is over 500 persons. There are approximately 123 houses affected by this problem and we are seeking damages for nuisance, damages for negligence, damages under Rylands and Fletcher and we want an injunction to stop the dumping at the present site.

Let me explain that, Sir, because I was up there at 8.00 o'clock this morning and I saw one traxcavator/Caterpillar owned by Rayside operating on the side of the dump nearest Vaucluse. Down in the .excavated area that the Minister and I visited last month no work is going on. There is no equipment up there but one Rayside bit of equipment. I believe the rest of the equipment is at Sherbourne because I counted 9 pieces of theirs on the weekend.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think the Honourable Member will agree with me that the frame of this is more under Housing. Let us get back closer to Head 42.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes. I have no guarantee that ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am obviously not going to allow you to anticipate.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is a matter which involves major public works and community development.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: For which provision is made under this Head? I mean dollar provision.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There are people in those communities ...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I understand and I appreciate your capacity to raise the issue but I cannot allow it under Head 42 ...

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am only trying to put it in a context within this Head. I think the Government has to do some serious planning.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I understand where you are coming from.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But, Sir, it is important because on the present site where Government is carrying out major works of dumping that mountain has got even higher since we were there. And what we are calling for is a closure of that part of the landfill forthwith. And down in the bottom, in the excavated area you can start to operate down there. But the Minister will see when he goes that no work is going on down there. They have laid about as much clay as from here to that door. There was no equipment. I was down there this morning. There is also the problem of the smoke coming out all the time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member, Sir, but I think that the Honourable Member has achieved his purpose. I do not think we can really discuss that particular area of the community within the wide ambit of public works, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member would have close to 8 minutes to get back to Head 42.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS:. I am complaining, Sir, that no effort has been made to help those two communities develop.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Since that point is made, let us move on to Head 42.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have to expand the point.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Not under Health.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am dealing with Community Development, Sir. Let me show you, Sir. Youth and Community Development, Sir, Programme 15, opposite page 186. All of my youngsters in Arch Hall and Bennett's have no playing field. They have no community centre. The community centre that was at Rock Hall has been closed down. It is being used as a court. They have nowhere to go, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Where? At Bagatelle? The one at Bagatelle has to serve Bagatelle Terrace, Bagatelle Gardens, Redmans Village, Kew Land, Welches. I want to hear from the Minister of Community Development what plans he has to assist in the proper development of the communities in St. Thomas, bearing in mind that we have no community centre any more. It is one parish in Barbados without a community centre.

Now, when the present Minister of Health was Minister of Education and turned the sod for the St. Thomas Secondary school he and I agreed at the ceremony the morning that that school would have been so constructed as to provide an auditorium facility which would enable the people of St. Thomas . to resort to that facility for the development of the cultural talents that reside in the community.

In the meantime what happened? St. Thomas secondary school is languishing half constructed, plenty steel in there, and nothing will happen to that until probably 1988/99 according to the Development Plan. So for all of these years the people of St. Thomas will be expected to put up without a community centre. I do not think it is fair. If we are trying to get hold of the youth of this country, channel them in useful, wholesome and worthwhile cultural and associated activities, and we do not provide the physical accommodation for them to give vent to these innate talents, we are spinning top in mud.
12.55 p.m.

We are encouraging them to withdraw and drop out of the society and find themselves involved in whatever else that is perhaps not as wholesome as if they had these places of resort.

I would wish to make a submission and a suggestion to the Minister. We are fairly well satisfied with purveyance. We built one at Content and Holy Innocents and there is also one at Farmers. Of course, there is one at Bagatelle, Redman's Village.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I would not encourage people to go into the St. Thomas Secondary School in a half open way. The Government will have to make special arrangements for that. I am not encouraging people to go on Government property where you have security, where the place is half finished, and so on. I am talking about the existing facilities that we have — Redman's ' Village, Bagatelle, Holy Innocents, Farmers and Content. The problem has been ever since 1991 that these places are closed more often during the week than they are open on the allegation that Government has to 'cut back and cannot pay for the watchmen and caretakers to look after them. I am asking for a special exemption to be made in respect to the people of St. Thomas because they have no community centre at all. I am asking that, even if you have to cut back elsewhere which is well supplied with community centres. Government should develop a policy and let it be known that the pavilions and so on will be open I suggest from 9 o'clock in the morning until 10 o'clock at night with the caretakers in place so they may be used for community activities in the meantime.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Membe; should conclude in two minutes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I would also wish the Minister at sometime to respond to the road development in St. Thomas particularly the development of tenantry roads. I think that last year, when the present Minister of Home Affairs, the Deputy Prime Minister, had responsibility for road works, I read out in here a list of roads in my constituency that were in need of repair. The Minister asked me to give my list to the Chief Technical Officer who was sitting over there. I gave the list to the Chief Technical Officer in this House of Assembly, but I have not had any work done on any of the tenantry roads. This was last year in the Estimates concerning a similar debate as this when the Deputy Prime Minister was then responsible for roads. He said rather than read out the list in here to give it to the Chief Technical Officer.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Well, I would like to put that in too so I can tell the people of St. Thomas your attitude towards them. Why do you not put it in the record your attitude to the people of St. Thomas exemplified by your management of the dump that you are responsible for? It is your mismanagement.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member certainly is not addressing the Chair.

Certain remarks by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member mentioned the Honourable Member for St. Michael West. I challenge him to say what I said. That Honourable Member was saying that the Deputy Prime Minister when he was responsible for Public Works did not give him something and I was expressing surprise that the Deputy Prime Minister would not give the Honourable Member for St. Thomas something. That is all I was doing, Sir. Anybody in Barbados would express great surprise that the Deputy Prime Minister would not give his trusted and former brother-in-law something.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I also have to recognize that I have made it abundantly clear that asides are not part of the record and that to respond to asides creates a problem for the proper reporting of the proceedings of Parliament.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I listened to you, Sir, and I will comply with your direction. But I would hope that in the future you would ask the Honourable Member to observe Standing Order 33 (6).

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have been reminding the Committee of that for almost the entire duration.

Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Your Honour, Sir, I am going to move that you report progress, but that is how they get editorials.

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

On the motion of the Hon. B. M. TAIT?', seconded by Hon. C. V. WALKER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress to His Honour the SPEAKER, and asked for leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER reported accordingly.

SUSPENSION

Hon. B. M. TAUT': Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2:15 p.m. today.

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

The question that this sitting be now suspended until 2.15 p.m. today was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

1.05 p.m.

RESUMPTION

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into committee.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Committee is resumed.

Hon. J. 0. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, I think that it is necessary for me, in light of comments that have been made during this debate, to update the House on a number of matters. The debate has crossed many barriers but I think it necessary to put some of these difficulties into a proper perspective.

The Honourable Member for St. Thomas had indicated during his debate that the capital programme for the Barbados Water Authority had been abandoned due to the funds of the Barbados Water Authority being placed into the Consolidated Fund. That was corrected during the course of the debate and I want it to be clearly understood that the funds that were in surplus within the Barbados Water Authority were used to purchase treasury bills, government debentures and in 1993 fixed deposits which when totalled to their current account resulted in some $32 million. That money is still being held in the $16.3 million in Treasury Bills, $9.7 million is being held in debentures and the fixed deposit is $6 million and the amount of money on the current account is $5.7 million.

Those funds are being held with the understanding that there will become a requirement for Government to service the loan for the South Coast Sewerage Project which is expected to commence during this financial year and it will also go towards the West Coast Sewerage Project and the total cost of that is expected in the vicinity of US$52 million. So the money that is presently being held is a very small portion of what will be required to finance the entire sewerage programme on the South and the West Coasts.

The other queries raised by the Member for St. Thomas were dealt *with* during the course of the debate and form part of the record and I don't think we need to regurgitate those answers.

The Honourable Member and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition raised a number of queries and

I would want to respond to them in a specific sense and indicate that the institutional review of the Barbados Water Authority has commenced and is being undertaken by Coopers and Lybrand. The study will include a review of the fixed assets, an internal audit, management information systems and organisational structure and fmancial and commercial systems.

Coopers and Lybrand, it should be noted, have started to work on a thorough study to recommend the rates that will be charged in the future. It should further be noted that the Barbados Water Authority meets its recurrent expenditure from revenues and has funds for capital expansion. In fact, Sir, it is not true to say that the investment programme of the Barbados Water Authority has been adversely affected since 1986. The Barbados Water Authority has been purchasing pipes every year since its establishment in 1980. Even now during the period pipes have been ordered for this current financial year.

The Barbados Water Authority has about 1 600 miles of pipes and 90% of it is in very good condition. At present there is a tender in the local newspapers for the digging of pipe tracks in respect of the replacement of approximately 10 000 feet of pipes on Highway 1. It is anticipated that – on Highway 1...

Asides.

Hon. J. 0. TUDOR: The problem on Highway 1 – I do my research. I do my homework.

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

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: ... has to do with the fact that the present contractors are in the process of paving the highway and they are not quite ready to put in the pipes and we in fact have to make a decision to place the pipes which will take up some 1000 feet. All of this will not be along the roadway. Some of it will be off the road but there is a portion of it that will disrupt the repaving exercise. That decision has to be made whether we continue to disrupt the users of Highway 1 or whether we see if we can have some of the pipes put down in the area that is going to be affected and then we bridge it at some later stage. But we are trying to avoid having to pave the road and then dig it up again.

Asides.

Hon. J. 0. TUDOR: 9 000 feet along the East Coast and at Shop Hill in St. Thomas will be replaced during this fmancial year.

Barbados' water resource study has not yet commenced and therefore the suggestion that funds had already been allocated... There were no funds spent during 1993-94. Firms have been prequalified but they will be invited to tender in a very short while. Of course, the work will commence on the Water Resources Study during the 1994-95 fiscal year.

With those explanations as far as the water is concerned I would just like to state that it is clear that we understand the problem within the water base in Barbados and the Ministry will be very actively pursuing measures that will seek in the first instance to alleviate some of the immediate difficulties being experienced by householders. Again we make the plea for conservation of water wherever possible in all households across Barbados and I hope that the members will be satisfied with the explanations that have been given on such short notice.

Sir, the member for the City said a lot of things but usually it is very difficult to follow the Honourable Member for the City because she speaks at times and then she shouts at other times and I get trouble when she starts to shout. There were a number of questions raised regarding the Bureau of Women's Affairs. There was some concern expressed regarding the Inter-American Bank Project on support to the women's programmes that are being undertaken during this financial year. There are 3 projects that will come on stream.

Project 1 deals with the strengthening of the Bureau of Women's Affairs which has been funded by the Inter-American Development Bank. That 3-year project will be implemented during this budgetary period and the project will strengthen the capacity of the Bureau to implement its mandate further. The project will promote and strengthen the capacity of the non-governmental organisations and any government agencies committed to facilitating Government's policy on the full integration of women in development. Focus will be on their projects with a productivity component. Training in gender sensitivity in the planning and implementation stages of the project will focus on executive and policy level officers.
2.25 p.m.

Project 2, Sir, will deal with the national and regional level preparation for the Fourth UN World Conference of Women funded by the British Development Division. My understanding is that this will be held in Beijing with the focus being on quality development and peace.

Project 3 deals with the implementation of local and regional legislation on violence against women. This will include provision of technical assistance from SIM or the OAS and Commonwealth Secretariat for training of police officers regarding incidence of domestic violence.

I think those projects with regard to the Ministry of Women's Affairs will come on stream. I hope that would answer the questions concerned.

A number of questions . were raised regarding the West Wing of Parliament. An amendment is coming before the Committee for an adjustment on the Heads and that will be spelt out in some detail when we come to that Head. What I will say is that my information tells me that there has not been any funding put in place for the continued work at the West Wing of Parliament. During this financial year it is anticipated that some funds will be put in place to assist in the restoring of the West Wing of Parliament.

Now, there is some suggestion that the members of the staff of MTW are idling and lawless. These kinds of remarks are spouted at them. I would like to defend them to some extent. The members of the Ministry of Public Works that function from this area are not necessarily all working at the West Wing because that work has been held up due to lack of funds. The members of the staff and the technocrats who come down here and function from here as a centre actually go out and perform repair work on several Government buildings in Bridgetown. It is not really generally known but I really would hate to think that people are just callously discarding them as callous workers. It is not really fair to them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in two minutes.

Hon. J. 0. TUDOR: The last area has to deal with the question of the community centres. I did ask for the information. The information is simply that we do acknowledge that in St. Thomas there is no community centre but persons from Rock Hall use Bennett's Pavilion. I want to be clear. Although there has been no centre at Rock Hall, the Rock Hall Community Centre was represented and in fact placed first in the inter-community centre games.

Similarly, there is no community centre in St. Lucy but there is a very good working relationship with the Sports Depai tment and the residents in the various areas around Barbados. We would hope that there is some cooperation. There is the question of costing and keeping the centres open all day. There is no scope in terms of doubling the work force which would ensure that the facilities are kept open on a daily basis.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I want to make three main points here. First of all, I want to get back to this subject of the Transport Board. I shall not be long on this but I wish to make this point that instead of the Government allowing Mobil to benefit from petroleum products in this country, rather than allowing them to get the 12'1$_2$% in the light that on the world market the price of petroleum products has been on the decline, that any savings derived from petroleum products should go towards the Transport Board that consumes a lot. The component of petroleum should be taken into consideration and that would reduce the deficit of the Transport Board.

I am calling on the Government rather than increasing the bus fares to lower the bus fares in the light of what is happening in the area of petroleum products. I am asking the Government to do that. They should lower the price of oil, petroleum, diesel and hence reduce the cost of bus fares to the travelling public of Barbados. That would include the outlying districts where the Government proposes to increase the bus fares. Rather than increasing the bus fares I think you could reduce it from the $1.50 as it now stands and I have given you the reason.

The other point I want to make is this. I have heard the Minister say that the Water Authority intends to dig three new wells. I want to get it straight. With these three new wells has the Government taken into consideration the fact that these will take care of the present requirements? Are the three wells in anticipation of additional commercial buildings and water requirements as well as additional building of homes? I want to know that. In other words, it is not sufficient to tell me that you are digging three additional wells because the three wells could just be to take care of the present requirements. I am looking at a projection. There are lots of open lots throughout the length and breadth of Barbados. What happens if these lots are built on and then it places a strain on the Water Authority? Are you projecting that these three wells will be sufficient? I am saying this is a serious consideration. If these three wells are for the short term, fair enough, but I am asking the Minister to consider the future requirements of those persons who will build and the development of certain commercial activities in Barbados.

Now, let me turn to the third point, the question of training in Barbados, the National Training Board and training generally.
2.35 p.m.

I have not heard the minister mention anything or much about the National Training Board and training of young people. It is an area that we have to look at. Do not forget that we have got to look at new requirements of skills, the age of technology and therefore the National Training Board should be equipped in order to train people for the new jobs that will become available in the Twenty-first Century.

I am therefore concerned that the National Training Board has not — I see in the Development Plan

that no provision is made for the Skills Action Programme. I want to know what has become of that programme. The programme was renamed the Work Experience Programme. The reason for the National Training Board creating that particular programme was to give school leavers an opportunity to experience what it means to be in the world of work. They used to be paid a stipend. That programme has been dropped, according to the Development Plan.

Aside.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Nonsense. No money, what? I do not want to trivialize or anyone else to trivialize this debate. What I am saying is that the work experience programme has been a very important programme. You had the apprenticeship programme, the Skills Training and the Work Experience programme all geared to help the young people to acquire skills and to bring them into the work force. What we are saying now is that...

Asides.

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW:... you have replaced that. You have now gone ahead and developed an opportunities programme.

Certain remarks made by Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW were ordered, by Mr. CHAIRMAN, to be expunged from the Record.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member should know by now – he has been in the House and has been a Minister – that the capital development plan does not include every little inky dinky plan that they have in the Ministry. Do you expect to see every single policy of every Ministry in a Development Plan? A Development Plan does not have in those kinds of things. You are wasting the Committee's time. And then you talk about trivializing the debate. Do you want more trivia than that?

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: I do not mind the intervention by the Honourable Member. But what I am saying is, how can someone really be serious when we are talking about training of young people *with* over 35 000 out of work, most of which are young people. They cannot find work. I am appealing to the Government to make some provision for the training of those people so that they could become self-employed. I am hearing an Honourable Member from that side getting up and saying that it is trivia.

Hon. B. M. TAIT1': On a point of order, Sir, I am saying...

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: He can ask a Minister why the Minister has not included it in his Estimates. But to say it is not on the Development Plan is foolishness. That is what I am saying.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, what I saying is that this Development Plan is here and it mentions 3 programmes and it has left out the Work Experience Programme. Instead it has concentrated on an Opportunities Programme and an opportunities Programme is a Programme designed to help persons who were displaced, who have lost their jobs. I have no quarrel with that programme. But I want to know why, the Work Experience Programme has been left out because you do not now cater for young people who need that much needed experience before they enter into a job. It is wrong. I want to know what plans does the Government have for it? I have not seen it even in the Estimates nor in the Development Plan. There is no money for it. The Government has got to explain why it is not pursuing the Work Experience Programme.

On the other hand, I am saying this. The Government has also set out to say they are going to add some other disciplines, apart from the 12 disciplines that are conducted by the National Training Board. What are those disciplines? We need to know. We need to know if those additional disciplines – you said they are 15 and you are moving from 12 to 15 – we want to know what are the 3 additional disciplines. We want to know. The country wants to know because we want to determine whether they are relevant to our situation and the direction in which this country is going. If you are going to attract new enterprise *and* new business we want to know what you are *going* to train people in, whether the training is relevant or irrelevant. We have to look at it, scrutinize it *and* analyze it carefully. I do not mind any intervention from any Honourable Member because that is just a matter of trying to throw off what is a great contribution to a debate of this sort.

We want to know if all of the confusion that took place in the National Training Board has been cleared. We have had the change, the new Technical and Vocational councils set up and we want to know if everything is going smoothly. I want to know' that because the last time we debated it in here there were fears that all was not well and some people were not clear as to where the areas of responsibility rest. We have to be clear. I want to know whether these things have been ironed out. If the council is in operation, what sums of money will be allocated if the National Training Board will continue along the lines developing programmes for testing if they have the responsibilities as yet or if they have passed over the responsibilities for testing and creating new programmes.

I am following the National Training Board because as I have said it is a very important area in our national development. The Minister is listening, I hope he understands this. He like myself, has got his feet firmly planted on the ground and his ears near to people that matter. This concerns me. I am worried when I see young people out there applying to the National Board to be trained and are being told, "Sorry we do not have any vacancies. You have to wait." I am worried when young people apply to the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and are being told "Sorry, all vacancies have been closed. Therefore you have to wait. Or you do not have the qualifications for entering the Polytechnic." I want to have all these things explained.

There is a number of parents who have contacted me in my constituency and outside of my *constituency with a* view to getting their children to do something in the National Training Board. I have been told that the National Training Board is not equipped to handle all of these applications. But at the same time it says something for our system. Are you serious about training the young people to become self-employed? You have to think along those lines. Because we know that if we are going to correct the serious question of unemployment that we would have to look at gearing people or training people to become self-employed in this country.

Not only that. I want to know, the country wants to know what funds are made available for persons who have acquired the skills coming out of the Polytechnic or from the National Training Board. We want to know what funds are made available to them so that they could have starter funds.

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

Mr. DeL. 0. BRADSHAW: All of this is relevant. It is no sense training people and training them in areas that are not required for the present time or for the future. We want to know also whether funds are available for these people so that when they come out they would be able to go in and start a small business. I want to know this. This is relevant. We had better address these questions now because more and more young people are getting frustrated and the frustration ranges *from not being* able to get funds' when they are trained and from the fact that they do not have the opportunity to enter any Skills Training Programme in this country. We had better pay some attention to this very serious development in this country. 2.45 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Unless any Honourable Member wishes to make a contribution the Honourable Minister will wind up.

Hon. J. 0. TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, thank you. I want to say in winding up that the concern of the Honourable Member regarding the wells that are to be built we are satisfied that in the immediate future those wells will satisfy the demand but clearly down the road we will have to look at alternative sites and so on. But in the initial stages we are satisfied that it will alleviate some of the problems of demand and there is a determination which will allow some focusing to be directed at the new housing developments and areas like those.

The concerns of the National Training in Barbados will be dealt with very swiftly. There is the training programme for retrenched workers which will be progressed during the financial year and the TVET Council has been approved by Cabinet and will be launched in the island in another two weeks. The council itself should be staffed and functioning by mid June and we expect that they will be identifying the areas that are required for retraining in the different vocational disciplines in Barbados. I expect that those training programmes will satisfy the present day need in terms of the required skills that we are going to require in this country.

There are several other programmes under the Head, Sir, that would take a fair degree of debating but they are not areas that are contentious and I would want to advise the public that in the areas of the Child Care Board, the National Assistance Board, the Youth Affairs, we would like to get into further programmes on Women's Affairs and of course I would like to say briefly on sports that we are going to have to look at ways and means of having some of the sporting organisations in Barbados financed in a manner that would allow them access to the Wildey Gymnasium on a more regular basis.

I was once ostracised for being bold to suggest that there should be a national lottery focussed at the development of sport. It is strange that since I have assumed the office of Minister of Sports that on at least five different occasions that I have attended opening functions on behalf of sporting associations, all of them have indicated to the Ministry that they would like to see a national lottery or they would like to have some kind of assistance from the present one in operation. I hope they will understand that they have a responsibility to make sure that the sporting organisations are able to offset the cost of the gymnasium. I hope the ears of the present operators of the lottery would hear in the short term and that in the future we may not have to consider venturing into a national lottery on behalf of the sporting organisations in this country.

Sir, with those comments, I would like to move that Head 42, as amended, stand part.

The Question that Head 42, as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 36 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH
(AMENDED) — $129 391 778

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, in moving the Head 36, first I would like to say that Honourable Members should be in possession of the amendments. I think there is only one amendment *which has a dollar* significance — page 118 as it relates to the Sanitation Service Authority, Object 625 — Plant Equipment and Furniture — Provision for the Landfill compactor — to which I made reference yesterday. So we are being reassured that the funds will be there even with the late arrival after March 31st, of the compactor. The corresponding adjustment, Mr. Chairman, is on the same page 118, subprogram 14, Object 626, which is adjusted appropriately.

Mr. Chairman, this Head calls for an expenditure and more specific in the current expenditure area I would like to mention that for 1994/95 we are projecting some $151 379 498. Mr. Chairman, I will say that this is a decrease of $1 752 891 under the Approved Estimates for the Financial Year 1993/94. However it will be noted that in the total current expenditure, the personal emoluments account for some $92 million or 60.9% of the total *projected* expenditure. I will not break down the $92 million but suffice to say that $92 million out of $152 million is for the statutory personal emoluments.

The main programmes of expenditure under the Ministry, Mr. Chairman, are in the direction and policy formation of about 4.6% or $6.9 million. In the area of primary health care services $35.8 million or 23.7% of the total expenditure and in hospital services $90.5 million or 59.8% of the total expenditure. Care of the disabled $1.8 million or 1.2%. Pharmaceutical Programme $16.2 million or 10.7%. That, Mr. Chairman, makes up the total of the current expenditure.

We have, Mr. Chairman, on the capital side an increase. We have capital expenditure *which is* projected this year at some $34 523 010 which is an increase of $12 670 930 or some 57.9% of the approved amount for the year 1993/94.

Mr. Chairman, I am sure that Honourable Members would have analysed the figures presented and they would have looked at the 28 Heads, to be more specific, under the Ministry. And the overall expenditure represents an increase of 5.9% or some $10 357 388 over 1993/94.

One will argue and one can argue that in the division of 18 Heads it can be and it will be pointed out that 17 of the Heads do show a small decrease and 11 show an increase. Mr. Chairman, there are basically three key heads that we will have to address which show the significant change. That is, in the first area we will see in the South Coast project an increase of some $14 508 687 or a general increase of some 440% Over the 1993/94 figure. 2.55 p.m.

The second area, *Mr. Chairman,* is for the West Coast Sewerage Project which will show an increase and that figure will be an *increase over the 1993/94 figure. The* third *area, Mr.* Chairman, is for the Geriatric Hospital and for the repairs you will see an increase of $710,225 over the 1993/94 figure.

Mr. Chairman, in taking a quick look at this first introduction of the various Heads and if we were to look at what is happening in the Polyclinic Services which includes the General Practice Service, Dental Services, Nutrition Programmes, Rehabilitation Services and the Services for Disabled Children, these are under the responsibility of the Senior Medical Officer of Health. We find that in the Polyclinic Services that we continue to maintain the 8 Polyclinics and the 5 Satellite Units throughout the country and we offer services in the areas of paternal and child health where we have mothers being tested for HIV. We have ante-natal care, post-natal care, child health clinics, registration and examination of babies of some 2,937 who were tested within the clinics over the year, family life education programmes, and home visits done by the Public Health Nurses. We have private health care clinics with Clinical Medical Officers. We continue to visit patients who are unable to attend the clinics and we have the varying services for the disabled and some geriatric services within the area of the polyclinics.

Mr. Chairman, now a quick overview on the question of the Sewerage and Solid Waste Project. I think that I have spent quite a bit of time in this Honourable House dealing with the whole question of solid waste, but I would like to be more specific in terms of the South Coast Sewerage Project which is due to be started. We have already heard from the Minister in dealing with the Water Authority the linkage which has to be done between the Water Authority and the South Coast Sewerage Project in order to improve that area. The South Coast Sewerage Project is intended to improve the general waste water disposal and general sanitation of the South Coast area and to contribute to the improvement of the operation and maintenance of the Bridgetown Treatment Plant by the reduction of the septic disposed of.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that the Ministry of Health will be seeking the disbursements from the IDB before the expenditure for mobilization. Indeed, that has already started to occur and request for further disbursements will be made. As I mentioned, the Barbados Water Authority by contract will be required to reimburse the Ministry of Health for the local expenditure incurred. This has to do with the acquisition and the utilization of water meters. The consultants are expected to

start the work March 28th and, therefore, the actual construction work should be going full blast in August of this year.

In the Rockley/Worthing area before any question is asked, because I know that I have been asked this from time to time almost on a daily basis since we have seen that some work has just been done by Transport & Works in the Worthing area where new lights are supposed to be going up, et cetera, the question is being asked: Will we go back and dig that up later on at the end of the year or early next year? It so happens that that particular area falls in what is referred to as the "no dig" area where they will not be digging up of the street, but they will be digging under the street. That qualifies that to be part of the "no dig" area. So that the trenchless method of laying sewage pipes is planned to avoid excavation of the highway which was recently renovated.

We will get back to that, Mr. Chairman, specifically on the Solid Waste Study *which I* made a statement early this week in this Honourable House. I pointed out that there were recommendations for certain mound landfills. Let me state that there is no acceptance of that mound landfill concept. Indeed, *the only* concern *that* we have is the cost of the alternative method of incineration. So far none of the officers of the technical officers of the Ministry nor myself are willing to accept the concept of this 40 meter mound in Barbados. Yes, we know what the alternative is in terms of the incineration and the cost. But, Mr. Chairman, I think that we as a country will have to face the reality. As I said earlier in this Honourable Chamber, if we deal with one area and that one area is not acceptable, how can we therefore then go to another area within this community and say that you have to accept what the other people have rejected? Therefore, that is a consideration which we have to bear in mind. We took note that in all of the studies only three areas were considered and thought suitable by the consultants for the mound landfill type.

Mr. Chairman, we have already alerted the IADB that we are not in favour of the mound landfill and we ask that all details of any analysis be given to us within the month in terms of all the possible costing for all possible alternatives to the mound landfill. More on that later, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, I had an intervention yesterday where I had to point out my concerns about the arrival of the equipment which was supposed to be forthcoming based on the supplementary that I had piloted through this Honourable Chamber a few weeks ago and it is to that that the special amendment to the Estimates is now made. I am appreciative of the officers who understood clearly the position that I was making where, if the landfill compactor was not going to be here by March 31st, we would be assured that we would have the funds within the Estimates of 1994/95 year to pay for that equipment when it arrives. I must also express my concerns about the two trucks for the plant. They are already here and a solution has been found that I would say with some reasonable thinking, businesslike thinking, I would put it that way, Mr. Chairman.

3.05 p.m.

The other area which is of great importance to the Committee and to the country happens to be that of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We pointed out that we have to deal in terms of the care of residents of Barbados, that their health comes first. During the financial year of 1993-94, we have been able in spite of certain monetary restrictions to show some growth in the acquisition of new beds, to develop and reorganise additional departments and services . and we were able to maintain a programme of refurbishment in selected areas of the infrastructure of the QEH while at the same time focussing some attention on the development of a human resource base in the form of increased in-service training complemented by local and overseas courses.

The surgical intensive care unit was opened and fully utilised. The 2 new obstetric and gynecological operating *theatres which have replaced the old single operating theatre have been commissioned and are working satisfactorily. The angiographic suite which was purchased by the Government at a price of some $1 800 000 was subsequently housed, calibrated and commissioned for a further $700 000. It is now functional to the extent that cardiac catherisations are now being routinely done.

The Department of Invasive Cardiology and cardiac surgery has been formed and is operational. The first phase of the Chronic Disease Research Centre which includes the *reception area,* laboratory and computer facilities at Avalon is in place. The main kitchen of the Hospital was being upgraded for a long period and the main difficulty stems from the fact that work could not be done at the same time that meals were being served within the Hospital. We are correcting that, thanks to the assistance from the Ministry of Education in the last 8 or 9 months, and we were able to work along with them.

Extensive rewiring and refurbishing of the Hospital's laundry has been undertaken and phase 2 of the refurbishing of the aircondition and the pathology lab has continued. In the medical records area we continue to attempt to bring them up to date in the modern world so that we can have the instant access that is so necessary for the enhancement of the delivery of health services within the country.

There are several other areas that I can deal with Mr. Chairman, but I just want to move on to one quick area. Over the period we have heard much talk in the

last 6-8 months or so about the status of bodies left in the hospital mortuary and we have been able to deal with that particular area so that arrangements are now properly put in place with the coroner, the Welfare Department to deal with the still births. I think we have that under control.

Mr. Chairman, let me also say before I leave the QEH. The management of the QEH is now finalising the idea of removing the discrimination of private patients vis-a-vis public patients in terms of the visiting hours. It-is generally known that private patients up to now have been able to have visitors during the day and the evening. Management is now trying to finalise that so that public patients can also have visitors during the day.

While we are looking at that they are also planning to extend the evening visiting hours. I have even suggested that we consider having the evening hours extended to the point where the families can come in and assist in feeding the patients while they are there. That pre-supposes that we are going to have all the proper feeding equipment with all the warmers which are necessary within a properly run institution.

Let me move to the Psychiatric Hospital. There was during 1993 and 1994 the upgrading of the physical structures and the provision of up-to-date furniture and equipment, the employment of personnel to utilise the skills and training effectively and efficiently and incorporating the opportunities for promotion and the educational advancement of staff at that institution.There is also the expansion and strengthening of community based programmes to minimise relapses and to treat patients in the least restricted setting and wherever possible in their communities.

The year marked the end of a planning period which was instituted by my colleague and there are several areas of success which we can point to, things which have been achieved because as I said yesterday Government is a continuum and there is no way that many of the things of which I speak here today could have been conceptualised by me and the same would apply to any other Ministry where I come from or where I come to. I think the same policy will hold.

There has been physical upgrading of the wards, the security system, the transportation system and appointment of community consultants, psychiatrists and primary health care all of these things which were conceptualised and started some time ago have now been put in place.

Moving quickly to the Geriatric Hospital. As we know, the Geriatric Hospital is a public organisation which seeks to provide and improve quality health care, long term and short term for the elderly in an environment that is safe and pleasant. This will only be achieved through good nutrition, quality nursing, medical care, rehabilitative therapy, good housekeeping and maintenance of the particular institution as well as having all of these things provided by well trained and motivated staff.

At the Geriatric Hospital, as we know, the methodology utilised there in terms of admission and assessment has to do with the catchment area of the Geriatric Hospital being the entire population of Barbados. Therefore, as we know the population of Barbados is increasingly becoming very elderly and therefore we have to plan for their recreational and social activities of the elderly while we continue to live in this beautiful island.

Since 1989 all patients are referred to for long term care to a governmental institution first have to go through the Geriatric and thereafter they are *reassigned possibly to* the Gordon *Cummings* in St. Philip or wherever.

Turning quickly to the Drug Service under subprogram 05, the operation of the Barbados Drug Service as we know, Mr. Chairman, which is governed by the Drug Service Act and the Financial (Drug Service) Rules of 1980. The main areas of responsibility of the Barbados Drug Service are the Barbados National Drug Formulary, the Supply Service, the Special Benefit Service, the Pharmacy Service and the Drug Inspectorate.
3.15 p.m.

The broad objectives as we know, to refresh our minds, are to provide the continued supply of drugs and related items listed under this formula for all Government institutions and the private sector.

Mr. Chairman, the Drug Service has a complement of staff of about 73 who, I think, are very efficient, well trained and are expected to deal on what we would call an action reply basis because of the importance of health to our people. I am sure that no Honourable Member in this Chamber would like to know that he, she, his or her relative would be in need of a particular drug and there was no quick action on behalf of the staff to make use of the special benefit service.

Currently, that special benefit service covers persons 65 years and over, children under 16 years, persons who receive prescribed formulary drugs and related items for the treatment of such things as hypertension, diabetes, cancer, asthma and/or epilepsy.

In the public sector all residents of Barbados are eligible to receive drugs and related items listed in the Barbados Drug Formulary free of cost at the point of service – this is it – provided they have been seen by a physician in that sector, "that sector" being the public sector. We all know that as far back as November 1989 all beneficiaries of the Drug Service in the public

sector were required to produce their Barbados Identification Card along with their prescriptions in order to obtain medication free of cost at the point of service under the Special Benefit Service Programme. This is still creating a problem out in the community. There are many people who are still questioning that area.

In April, 1992, children under 16 years were required to present their Minors' Identification Card. I would only say that the Special Benefit Service specifically for the drugs for the fiscal year 1993194 as of January 31, 1994, stood at $5 790 747 which is really an increase of some $33 047 over the previous year.

I have recognised your signal, Sir, and I will come back. Much obliged.

I beg to move that Head 36 stand part.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: I beg to second that.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we appreciate on this side that the Honourable Minister is new so he read out his brief as it was prepared for him.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: The Honourable Minister read his brief like a recitation that was prepared for him. He is relatively new in the job but we hoped that by this time he would have had a *grasp* of some of the important and fundamentally important aspects of that Ministry. Of course, Mr. Chairman, he was brave, right and correct to admit at the beginning that there is an overall decrease in the vote for the Ministry of Health. Then he went on to state what we have always known that Personal Emoluments and other fixed costs account for an excess of 60% of the vote of the Ministry of Health.

I want to start off, Sir, in this intervention by asking a series of questions of the Minister. I really would wish that the Minister would address these questions and not like other Ministers before him in this debate just ignore questions asked from this side.

I start with the St. Joseph Hospital, Sir. The St. Joseph Hospital at page 120 of the Estimates, under Head 36, this year we are being invited ,to vote in excess of $4.1 million. This is the question. Last year 1993194 Estimates we were invited and did in fact vote for $3.5 million. Now this year we are being asked for even more. At a time when the Ministry's overall budget is being decreased we are being asked to vote substantially more for the St. Joseph Hospital than we did in the year before that.

Now, Sir, I have in this and other debates described the St. Joseph Hospital as a bottomless pit into which we have poured money for many years without seeing in return for that money a fair and decent public service. I will never tire of pointing out that the St. Joseph Hospital is no different now in its scope and the kind of service it delivers to the public of Barbados than it was when it was a private institution. It continues to be an institution where the poor people of the north, as Honourable Members on that side like to point out, do not have any large number of beds reserved for them. This came from the mouth of a former Minister of Health, who shall be nameless.

Mr. Chairman, I think that in view of the way in which the St. Joseph Hospital has come to be a matter of overall public concern in Barbados, that it really is grossly insufficient for the Explanatory Note just to tell us that this $4.1 million is to provide for the operation of the St. Joseph Hospital in areas of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. We were told that was all it would do, General Surgery – that is not enough – Medicine and Drug Rehabilitation and that it is also to provide for the completion of the refurbishing programme.
3.25 p.m.

We on this side demand to know and to have some breakdown, Mr. Minister, Sir, in respect of the $4.1 million. We want to know too at this date, March 1994 what is the cost to date of the St. Joseph Hospital? And I think all things considered that we are also entitled to know at this time what is going to be the projected overall cost of this Hospital? When is it expected to be finished?

This is like the west wing of Parliament. THis is like the St. Thomas Secondary School. We go on pouring in money every Financial Year but we cannot see anything coming out at the other end for it. That is the first thing I want the Minister to address himself to.

I want him also to address himself to the Glebe Polyclinic. We see that the Minister of Finance is going to get a polyclinic in St. John at long last in excess of $1 million we are being invited to vote for the construction of a polyclinic at the Glebe in St. John. The Honourable Member for St. John, this is part of, I believe, the St. John Development Plan. The Honourable Member for St. John has been the butt of much criticism, rightfully so too...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am perfectly happy where I am... in respect of the non-existence of this polyclinic. There are many people in this country who doubted that there was ever a St. John Development Plan.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: He was in great doubt. The only reason that this has come about is because he as Minister of Finance is in a position to make sure. You are wise.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we want a little more information than we are seeing in the Explanatory Notes about the Glebe Polyclinic as well. We are entitled to know what services this Polyclinic is going to offer. We have watched...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I do not want to hear the same as others. Because I have watched in this country over the past 5, 6 years, services that people have become accustomed to receiving at Polyclinics declining.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, everything in this country is declining. This is symptomatic of it.

I would wish the Minister to turn his attention to page 114 of the Estimates. I am interested in the nutrition service, Sir. We are being asked to vote less money for the nutrition service. Even though there is an increased demand for services, I want to know too about the nutrition centre. Where is it now located? I know that there was some difficulty with the building way back in my time and I know that it was closed down by the Democratic Labour Party. I looked at page 142, Personal Emoluments to see the staff complement at the nutrition centre and I see a staff of 17. I would be interested to know where there Headquarters is, if it is still the old nutrition centre that we used to know in the compound of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

I want to know if research has been done or if there is even, by casual observation, anything to suggest that increasing demand for nutrition services or nutrition counselling might be related to the inordinately high rate of unemployment in this country.

I move on quickly to page 115 - I will come back to other things, Mr. Chairman, Sir - the Environmental Sanitation Unit. 1 have a lot of difficulty in 1994 with the Democratic Labour Party Govemment still asking us to vote money to dig dry pits. Can we not get-to a policy in this country, Sir, where every Barbadian would have a waterborne system.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I do know Barbados and I know that in urban and suburban Barbados there are dry pits cheek by jowl with waterborne systems. I know that in the New Orleans in the City of Bridgetown where the water table is perhaps the highest that you will find in Barbados, you will find water at less than a foot in some areas of the New Orleans. That there are people who have to dig 2, 3, 4 pits in their yard to escape the water. It is time to move away from this, Sir. This is an indictment.

We claim to be one of the most developed of the developing countries. Imagine in 1994 we are still digging *dry* pits.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: What? Why? Because you have a waterborne system. There is nobody in here who has a dry pit, Sir. I do not want to heat anybody in here recommending one for anybody else. I am not recommending one for my constituents.

Certain remarks made by Miss B. A. MILLER were ordered, by Mr. CHAIRMAN, to be expunged from the Record.

Miss B. A. MILLER: He is my Member of Parliament.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Of course he is.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Of course, he was to beg for the vote, but he knew he could not get it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the sewerage projects. The South Coast Sewerage Project. For 8 years now this Government has been trying to get this project off the ground. This year we are being asked to vote for structures $12.6 million, for Professional Services $2.6 million. We hear from this Minister, as we have heard from Ministers before him, that this is going to be a system that you do not dig up the road. It would not be visible to the naked eye. But nothing is visible to the naked eye. I think we are entitled to know what the status of the South Coast Sewerage Project is and, at the same time, let us know what the preparatory status of the West Coast Sewerage Project is as well.

I should like to know, for instance, from which point of the South Coast to which other point the system will run, for public information, not for me. I know. But Honourable Members need to know and the Barbadian public needs to know. Because we do not see anything with the naked eye. We need to know what you are talking about. The same thing would be true of the west coast system.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: In the 2 minutes left to me, Sir, I should like to address the question of the annual grant from the Barbados Government to the Barbados Family Planning Association. I would not like to think – let me start off by saying that, Sir – that at this stage the Government would be seeking to reduce the grant to the Barbados Family Planning Association. I have looked at the Development Plan 1993-2000 and one of the things which please me most, and there are not many things in this Plan which do – is to be found at page 100, Family Life Development where the Government acknowledges the sterling work that the Barbados Family Planning has been doing, particularly in recent years, with the peer counselling programme and the family life education programme. Several hundred have passed through this course.

We started out between the ages of 15 and 25, it is now between the ages of 15 and 40. Even teachers in the school system are now approaching the Barbados Family Planning Association. They too want to be included in this peer counselling. It started off as a spontaneous spin-off, as a project that we had some years ago and it is going from strength to strength.

The Development Plan speaks of improved family life. These are the objectives of a national family planning programme. REduction in teenage pregnancies, reduction in child abuse, improved care for the aged in their homes and their communities and so on and so forth.

I would wish to particularly appeal in this 40th year, the year of the 40th anniversary of the Barbados Family Planning Association, a year when we are going to highlight our community-based and other programmes, a year when we are going to celebrate the way in which this major NGO, Non-Governmental Organization has contributed to the development of Barbados.
3.35 p.m.

I would not wish that in this year the Government would reduce the grant to the Barbados Family Planning Association and I will plead with the Minister, however he cuts, that in this year in particular, that he would not cut the Barbados Family Planning Association.

I will come back to other Heads as we go on, Sir.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to raise a few questions in relation to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and hope that the Minister will vouchsafe detailed replies rather than getting up and carrying us through a lot of rhetoric.

I will start with the doctors. The word is that the Govemment has not been paying junior hospital doctors their on-call pay for months.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am neither junior nor doctor. I am getting complaints from at least two of my constituents who fall into that category. And I understand also that there is something classified as an Honorary Intern at the Hospital. It means that young doctors, just qualified, are working long, long hours, far beyond a normal working shift and are not being paid for the work they do in the hospital.

Now, if this was part of their training and the Government was getting it for free I could understand the logic of it, but I understand there are interns who are honorary and they do not get paid and there are other interns who come out of the same graduation class and they are paid interns. I do not understand that dichotomy. It is working a tremendous amount of hardship on those people who are newly qualified and find that they have to give as much as 12 hours a day to the hospital without any remuneration.

I want the Minister to answer that specifically because I have to explain to persons who call me and ask me about it, exactly what is the situation with the Government.

There is a situation also, Mr. Chairman, with the student nurses. Those who read the newspapers from time to time and listen to the comments being made by representatives of the Nurses' Association pick up that student nurses are not being paid when they should be paid, and there are some of them that are not being paid at all. I am asking the Minister again to explain this because if it is as we are hearing from the Nurses' Association the Minister will have, after he answers, a lot more to take than he is now currently taking.

I understand too, Mr. Chairman, that in relation to the student nurses, it is the Government's decision not to pay student nurses from the 1st of September of this year. They are abolishing all stipends for student nurses.

I want, Mr. Chairman, also to deal with the question of the general decrepitude of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Not only the physical decrepitude but the systemic. I want to deal first with the systems in relation to billing of persons who receive services in the hospital and the poor state of the accounts which make it impossible at any time for the Government to know how much is owed to the hospital and whether those who owe the Government are paying, how much they pay, and how much is outstanding.

In other words, Mr. Chairman, I am submitting, from all that I have gathered, that the state of the accounts in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is in total disarray.

I will give an example, Sir. In the Laboratory of the Hospital I understand that several thousand tests are done in the Lab monthly. If the figures given to me are correct, I understand those figures to be in the vicinity of probably 8 000 or 9 000. That figure seems high to me but those who deal with it say that is not a high figure. The billing in relation to these tests present something of a financial maze. I understand the bills are made out for machine costs and consultant costs and all kinds of costs. I understand that the money that is collected in the Lab is passed on to some department, I believe it must be the Accounts Department, and then payments are made out of the Accounts Department to individual persons and particularly the head of the Lab at the Hospital.

I do not understand it. The former Minister of Health, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West must be familiar with that particular problem because I understand that it was reported to his Ministry while he was still Minister of Health and he had given an undertaking that he would cause an investigation into it to be carried out.

No such investigation has taken place, Mr. Chairman, up to this point but I understand there are persons who work in the Lab who carry home as much as $200 000 a year. There is at least one person in the Lab at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital who takes home at least $200 000 a year as a result of the way in which the system of billing and the allocation of the money paid in is made. The Government itself sometimes seems to be supplementing the incomes of persons who are already employees of the Hospital.

I am being asked by a former Minister of Health on that side if it is true. I am raising the questions and I want the Government to answer. Don't believe me. I have never looked into the Hospital yet to see how the billing is done. Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is the word on the road and we must get some answers.

I understand, Sir, that poor patients in some cases are required to pay some fee for HIV tests. I would hardly think, Mr. Chairman, it would be those patients who go off the street into the Hospital for tests. But it might be those patients who were referred by a doctor to the lab and who have to pay. How could you ask people to pay for tests for HIV when we are concerned about the pandemic nature of AIDS in this country.

I understand the income from HIV tests is so high and so little remains in the Govemment coffers that questions seriously have to be asked about where is all this money going. Whose pockets is this kind of money going into.

I do not want to tear out my tongue on this word but there is something called a phlebotomist and a fee taken from patients for the taking of blood. How could you charge people for taking blood when every time I turn on my television set I am hearing the Govemment is very concerned about the spread of the HIV virus and the devastation it is doing among young people in this country. But they do the test and you have to pay for it. There is something wrong with that. Paying is bad enough but the money that is being paid, not all of it, I would not be that irresponsible, but a substantial part of the money that is being paid in the lab is ending up in the pockets of people who are in charge.

3.45 p.m.

I will leave that as widely as "in charge" of the lab. This is a matter of extreme disgrace and particularly, Sir, when you cannot get bandages in the hospital. You cannot even get soap.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Yes, so they tell me. Mr. Chairman, I used to listen to what the Members of Government tell me and I have realized that for a long time that they have been fooling me. Now they are telling me not to listen to the public. This is what the people are saying that basic supplies and materials in the hospital are constantly in short supply. When I look at the Estimates, Mr. Chairman, they reflect that there is not a sufficiently high financial allocation for supplies and materials in the hospital to keep it going for the next 12 months. Now these are things that you have to answer.

Sir, I want to say a little bit more about this business of the lab. I heard the figures of the people who get tested at the lab on a weekly basis. I found them to be extremely high until I looked at the report of the Chief Medical Officer for 1990. These do not come out too often. They deal with clinical chemistry immunology, pathology, cytology, micro-biology, hematology and one or two others that I find it difficult to wrap my tongue around. But a lot of tests are done at the hospital every week and by extension every year and the Minister will have to satisfy the misgivings of persons like me that the system for the collection of fees and the proper accounting is done in that Department because the morale is very, very low among the lab technologists. The lab technologists are the ones who have to do the work. They do all the tests. When they finish doing the tests, other people draw the money.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Honourable Member conclude in two minutes.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Two minutes, Sir. I will spend the two minutes in the "lab" and come back. I have information, Sir, to the effect that the Bayview Hospital from time to time sends to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital emergency work, but that the arrangements are not made through the management of the Hospital. To put it another way, Mr. Chairman, I am saying that the Queen Elizabeth Lab is operated like a private lab in relation to some of its operations.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: You find all of that out and tell me. I do not know. But I understand that that is another area of scandal concerning the private arrangements between the Bayview Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Lab. I will stop at this point and I hope that the Minister can answer the questions that I have raised. I have a series of other issues to raise with him if tie would be good enough to answer these in the first place. Thank you, Sir.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN. Mr. Chairman, while the Minister is getting his brief on this, I am sure that the Minister will have to ask for a special brief because the reports that come to the Minister no doubt will exclude these matters. So that while the Minister is getting his brief, I would like him to tell this House frankly whether it is not a fact that every year at the beginning of the fiscal year the Queen Elizabeth Hospital finds itself in a position in which the money that we appropriate in here, thinking that that money is going to pay claims that are going to arise from the April 1st in the current year and that that money will last until March the next year, that in truth and in fact go to pay claims that arose in the last financial year? I want to know whether this is not a fact. In other words, at the end of every fiscal year there are large sums of money outstanding and these are not unforeseen expenses. They relate to matters that the Honourable Member for St. George South has spoken about and there is a deliberate policy of not paying claims in the fiscal year in which they have occurred because of the fear of having to bring supplementary Resolutions to this House so that this House will know what is the true cost of operations in a particular fiscal year at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and in the Ministry of Health generally. Health is a bad example of this. The Auditor General has adverted to that in his report.

Now it is not only the young doctors who suffer. Other specialists do not get paid either. So that the Minister must be in a position now to inform us because this is near the end of the financial year. A properly run institution would now have its receivables and its payables. It would now know what is owed to the Hospital and what the Hospital owes and in matters like salaries and allowances that have not been paid is a very serious thing. I understand that there are millions of dollars owed in this area. I want to know the young doctors that the Honourable Member talked about, the middle ones who got their rent paid, and the big-ups, the specialists. They do not pay their rents either because some landladies telephone Honourable Members on this side and ask us to beg for the money for them. The landladies are very charitable. They do not throw the doctors out. They allow them to incur the debt. So we want to know about these things.

One of the most amazing things is that I came into politics and heard a talk about a Board to run the Hospital. I am not going out yet. So do not think that I am going out yet. Now when I go out, there still will not be a Board running the Hospital. We are in a quandary here because, if we take the example of the St. Joseph Hospital Board, that is not an example that we should think to super-impose now on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We want to know what are the Government's plans for improvement in the management structure at the Hospital. This is a very serious thing. A lot of money was spent in sending people on some high highfaluted courses and a lot of Ivy League Universities and such institutions. In all of the years that I have been around here, I hear this talk about hospital management is a specialty and that you must expose people to this specialized training. I want to see the beneficial effects. Because all the training that we have been exposed to, every personal injury lawyer in Bridgetown will tell the Court that a victim who was attended to at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and I have absolutely no quarrel with that.

3.55 p.m.

If you look at the Road Traffic Act you will see that as a matter of fact there is a legal obligation to reimburse the Crown for the hospital expenses. But they cannot reimburse because they cannot get the bill. When you get the bill sometimes you cannot even understand what it is because they send you a draft bill and when you get the bill and you try to settle on the basis of that bill another one comes and says that that bill relates to one particular area of activity, but the other parts of the activity the tests, the drugs and things of that kind the pharmacy did not send in this and this body did not send in that. So you cannot get a comprehensive bill.

Now if you contrast that with other institutions from abroad when you have personal injury cases here and you see bills coming from abroad whether it be Canada, the United Kingdom or the United States you see a computer printout and it has a whole category and it shows you precisely on the bill what is incurred. It even tells you the name of the doctor who attended, how long the doctor spent in attendance and they multiply it by the hourly rate. Why can't we have that? Why is it so impossible for a minimum level of sophistication and computerisation to come to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital? The Honourable

Minister will tell you that he has a lot of experience in this area. I don't expect him to go down there and design no system. This is an era for modem experts.

There are computer programmes that you can buy. This is software that can be bought off the shelf. The Honourable Minister will understand that this is a mystery as to why it cannot be better. You tell us why these things cannot occur at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Why is it? Lawyers are supposed to be conservative and don't like change; but 99% of the lawyers' offices in Bridgetown have computers in them. So why is it in these days with powerful computers that departments like the Accounting Department of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital finds it impossible to deal with these matters? We want to know that but we want the true answers in relation to this matter.

I have been accused, Sir, of surrendering to the specialists at the Hospital. I know this. They had more sense than the general practitioners because when they were dealing with the medical scheme they were the first to sight the benefits and they agreed while the others outside disagreed and they are outside and the specialists are inside. Their pensions and their emoluments and everything improved. So they were one of the ones that had the good sense to accept the fact that in return for additional work – I want to know, because that money was paid upon the basis of the fact that additional work would have been generated by the polyclinics and therefore the new work that was generated by the polyclinics had to be remunerated at the specialist level as part of this arrangement for increase and regrading. I want to know whether that takes place. That is not my fault if it does not take place.

At the time when you were trying to encourage the Government to sabotage our noble scheme and all the saboteurs were trying to operate, you did not think that you may have to administer it, and now you have to administer it you are going to come and complain to me that you are not getting the work. You should have demanded a return. You should have gone back and looked at the files and let it be clearly understood that a variety of work it was clear would be generated as a result of the expansion of the polyclinics.

I like the polyclinics and every time anybody has any problem I can send them to the one at Oistins.

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Honourable Member could not put his hand on that. It was too well designed for the Honourable Member to interfere with that. I only hope that the St. Joseph Hospital is not carrying away resources from the polyclinics. I do not wish it to carry away any resources from the polyclinics because I would like to see an expansion of the services at the polcylinics in the area particularly of mental health. There definitely needs to be more delegation.

For years we have those problems. When you are an M.P. for an area you get all kinds of problems. People come to you to help solve a number of their domestic problems and in this area I still say that there is not enough integration between the psychiatric services and the polyclinics. There are people who all they need to know is that when certain types come they must give them tablets. You have all those problems coming to you and you have to go through a whole elaborate exercise to get somebody to look after them. I have not seen the integration that I thought would have taken place. I have always understood that there was going to be a lot of integration with the psychiatric services and there would be link people at the polyclinics to deal with.

I have not seen it having been put to the test, Sir. We want these answers. These are questions that the Opposition get everyday. People ring us up asking us about these matters. The non-payment is a very serious thing so we will sit and await the answers. I have suppliers, too. My constituency is in an area in which a number of small farmers supply the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Despite the fact that the tendering system is slanted, in the end when it comes down to brass tacks, everybody know that the people who administer it have sufficient sense to know that while the tenders say they must go to A they give B a little piece to make sure regularity of supply. I know all of that. All those directions that you give cannot be carried out in practice. I have been around long enough to know what happens in fact. I know also what happens in fact is that they do not get paid and I want to know about that.

Hon. C. V. **WALKER:** Mr. Chairman, the 3 Honourable Members have asked some very pertinent questions which I think they have a right so to do. After all, they represent constituents and whatever they hear, whether it be true or not, it is their duty to check it out. I think that is specifically what the requirements of a representative are. However, since they are all lawyers on the other side one may not automatically assume that you are guilty until proven guilty. Therefore we all know that sometimes people give half a story.

The Member for the City. Under the Head which she specifically referred to and under the Grants to Non-profit agencies in which was included the family planning she is correct in her observation that the vote was $910 000 in 1993-94 and it is now $810 000 in 1994-95. Therefore there has to be some adjustment made within the various groups she read out. I think they were the Red Cross, Cancer Society, Registered Nurses' Association, Family Planning, Community College, the Association of Medical Practitioners and the St. John's Council.

The question of the St. Joseph Hospital and expenditure. Prior to **1992-93** there was expenditure of some **$19** million. In **1992-93** there was **$1 718 851** and in **1993-94** there was **$3 508 946** giving us an approximate total of **$24 227 097** to **date.** That is the expenditure for the period up to this point. I do not think the Honourable Member would expect me to give a breakdown for each item that was purchased.
4.05 **p.m.**

The other question asked by the Honourable Member for the City had to do with the same St. Joseph Hospital as to what is going on there. This year alone the services will be expanded. The obstetrics in that area – all pregnant mothers from the **Maurice Byer** Polyclinic are being referred to the St. Joseph Hospital. In the area of surgery, **specialist** services will be introduced. For example, you **heard** in this Honourable Chamber just a few days ago one honourable Member made reference to the joint replacement programme which took place only last week. To **date,** therefore, as I said, **$24.2** million has been spent.

Again the Honourable Member for the City questioned the Nutrition Services. The Headquarters is the **Ladymeade** Gardens but there are offices which are decentralised at the various Polyclinics. I think she wanted to know where it was located.

The question of the Glebe Polyclinic in St. John and what will be done there. First of all, I would not be one who would give the impression that money voted will complete the Glebe Polyclinic by the end of this financial year. Therefore, I cannot state what will happen. However, I will state that the services, if and when completed, will be similar to all the services which are offered at Polyclinics. All the services offered at the Glebe Polyclinic, St. John, will be the same.

It is not true that student nurses will not be paid stipends from September. The only decision that was taken was that after they have taken the examinations persons would proceed on their leave because they would have gone through their studies, completed their examinations and then they would proceed on leave. These are the nursing trainees who are coming in. The problem rests **with** the fact that there was a complaint by an agency stating that we were paying unqualified nurses at the Hospital. That is how it all started by an association accusing the Government of paying unqualified nurses, that they were not qualified and we were paying unqualified nurses to do the work at the Hospital. They got the stipend and they will continue to get the stipend up to the examination time.

Yes, there are some people who are working as honorary interns because of the number of posts which are available because there are no posts to accommodate the increased number of graduates who are currently coming down from the University and doing internship *at* the Hospital. We are reviewing the need for more posts.

Again, with reference to the question from the Honourable Member for St. **George** South with regard to unpaid calls to doctors and junior doctors, all have been honoured to date. Indeed, I came here for a supplementary to honour all the outstanding debts.

Aside.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: If you know of any and if you **are** insisting I will double check to see if they are any who are leaking.

The question of the labs, the billing system and the HIV tests, I will have to make an enquiry to find out what that is all about because the **kind** of dollars you are **talking** about, if that **kind** of inflow is coming into the system and as you said, it is not being reported – No. 1 you said it is being paid out so if it is being paid out there should be some accountability for it. If it is not being paid out then there is something else so I will have to make an enquiry.

In reply to the other point made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, yes, we are looking at the whole question of the computerisation and a system implementation is now taking place. I will say this. It is a lot better, if my memory serves me correctly. When the first attempt was made some time in 1984 or so, I recall the investment at that time. The cost of the investment for the purchase of a piece of equipment *at* that time once they started collected more than would pay for the piece of equipment itself. It is an ongoing process and I am not going to deal with it.

The other question about plans of the Government about managing the Hospital by a board, I know of no plans at this stage for any board management at the Hospital.

Mr. Chairman, I think I have answered all their questions so far, If any Honourable Members have any other questions...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I wish to say a word, Mr. Chairman.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I was Minister responsible for Health when a substantial part of the issues relating to the Hospital occurred. I feel the record should be made straight since the Honourable Member did indicate that it had been brought to my attention. I wish to state that it is a fact that information along the lines outlined by the Honourable

Member for St. George South was brought to my attention and in my capacity as Minister I acted in the way I was supposed to. I had a confidential meeting and passed the information confidentially to the appropriate authorities in the Hospital. I was under the impression that the appropriate investigation and enquiry would be made and I assumed that it is continuing. That is the information I was given. But it is a fact that information as outlined by the Honourable Member was brought to my attention while I was Minister of Health and I took the appropriate steps. I think the Chair would appreciate that the circumstances and the information is of such a nature that I could not give details of what was said to me and by whom.

I also feel that in the light of what the Honourable Member for the City raised concerning the St. Joseph Hospital that it should be pointed out.

4.15 p.m.

I should like to ask the Minister if he would be so kind as to give details of the number of consultations which have occurred at the St. Joseph Hospital to the present, the number of patients that have been in the Hospital since it was opened in February, 1993. I would appreciate it if the Minister would give the information as to the number of patients that have been in the hospital to date, the cumulative number of patients, the number of those who have paid fees, those who are public patients coming through the polyclinic system and any other relevant information.

The Minister referred to a comment made earlier which, I believe, I had made because I had heard so and I subsequently checked that in fact there was a hip replacement done at the St. Joseph Hospital during the last few weeks, a hip replacement for a person who came out of Guyana. I got my information from Guyana, believe it or not, because the wife of the former Prime Minister of Guyana herself a doctor and who had been a patient in the St. Joseph Hospital had been so impressed that she has passed the word along to a number of her Guyanese compatriots that the St. Joseph Hospital is available for private care.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon. Yes, but she was a patient so she told me in a letter...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Of course it is hearsay. It is no more hearsay than what you hear, as a Member of Parliament. It is information...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am saying that she said it is perfectly okay for me to say that she had a good stay in the St. Joseph Hospital and she will tell anybody whom she meets in and out of Guyana that it is a good Hospital to come to.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is not my responsibility any more.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am glad that I do not have you to contend with.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am asking questions but I am responding to what the Honourable Member said which occurred during my time as Minister. I think I have a duty to confirm or deny that the thing occurred. I take it that that is still the responsibility of a Minister who was sitting at the time.

I think there was one other question which the Honourable Member asked which I really cannot remember. There was another question which he asked concerning that time which I cannot remember and if he would refresh my memory I would be happy to respond to it. I have no intention of attempting to have a debate on the Ministry of Health.

But I would say this in relation to the Member for Christ Church South who raised the question of the computerization of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The computerization of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has been an ongoing factor for the last 2 years. The Pan American Health Organization has made software and hardware available to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. It is my understanding that the billing system ought to have been in place and should be functioning by now.

One of the reasons why I sought to have a central admissions system in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was precisely to deal with the matters that have been raised. I think that it has to be appreciated that after 300 years of a certain system that there are some people functioning in the system who seem impervious to change. I find it difficult to understand how it is possible for a 600 bed hospital not to have a central admissions system. We sought to implement one. I am sure the Minister will confirm whether it is functional or not.

But the idea was that a person who entered the Hospital whether he entered as a public patient or a private patient would have the same kind of record system immediately and would have a billing at the end of his or her stay in the hospital. Those whose billing - I believe I reported this to the House before - was supplemented by the Government would have a cancellation on the Bill and those who had to pay would know exactly what their charges were as they were leaving the Hospital.

There is no reason why, in 1994, a person who leaves the Queen Elizabeth Hospital should not receive a bill in the same way as a person who leaves a hotel. There is no reason on earth why it should not be so. The computer programme is available. The system was got for free. We did not have to buy it. I can only say that when I left, I was given to understand that it was in the process of being put together. I am sure that the Minister will respond to that..

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It has nothing to do with that. It cost me money too. We are all taxpayers. When we have a situation where people come from the USA and want to pay their bill and at 4.00 o'clock in the evening they go to pay the bill and somebody tells them: "We are closed." The person leaves the next day and goes to the United States. That is the end of that. We have people who get into accidents who come here as tourists, they go to the Accident and Emergency Department one of the most expensive in the Caribbean, they use the facilities of the Hospital, they use the facilities of doctors and they expect to pay. When they go to pay they do not know who to pay to.

We had a situation where a Catholic priest in this country called me as Minister and told me that one of his parishioners had gone to the Hospital...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It happened during my time. It had nothing to do with the Minister. It happened during my time, as Minister, where the person went to pay their bill and a public officer asked them what they wanted to confuse themselves with paying for. The Catholic priest said that I can quote him any time because he was disgusted at that behaviour. I drew that to the attention of the Director. That is all you can do, as Minister, as the Honourable Members know. I am saying that in response to the Honourable Member's question as to whether there is a computerized system. The Pan American Health Organization is working and was working, when I left, to set that system in place. The third point I want to make has to do with the consultants and the polyclinics, because again, it was during my time.

When I arrived in the Ministry of Health I found a situation where there was some question as to the definition of the number of hours which consultants were supposed to work arising out of the contract negotiations that had gone on during the time of the Honourable Member. We came to a conclusion with BAMP as to what constituted a proper month's work or week's work or whatever. The Honourable Members know that was part of the difficulty. It was settled. It was always understood and it is still understood, as I understand it, that consultants would be available to the polyclinics to do clinics in their specialties as required by the polyclinic system.

The answer to the Honourable Member's question is that the system is in place for consultants to go to the polyclinics and to give clinics in their respective specialties because the system requires that and expects it. The other thing is that during my time, and I believe the Minister has enhanced it, we introduced an additional consultant at the level of community psychiatry for the polyclinics. There is a Consultant Psychiatrist linked to both systems whose principal function working out of the Ministry of Health is to work in the polyclinics.

My understanding up to when I left - and I have reason to believe that it has continued - is that it has been eminently successful, that they have been able, by prevention, to obviate a number of conditions which in fact present themselves early as psychiatric problems. I wish to say that that has been one of the successes and concomitant with that before I left the Ministry of Health we were able to institute, for the first time in the history of Barbados, a psychiatric ward in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Some Members will remember that as early as 1969 the present Senior Consultant in the Psychiatric Hospital had been sent away to be trained to come back to be the consultant for or to work in a Psychiatric ward in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. That came about, as I understand it, and it was put in place only in 1993. There is now a Psychiatric Ward in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for the first time and there is a link between the Psychiatric Ward, the polyclinics, the Ministry and the Psychiatric Hospital so that the Government of Barbados, as it has done under both Administrations, is continuing to recognize the need for growth in various specialties, and psychiatric care is receiving the community and the integrated approach which the Honourable Member hoped had come to fruition. I am pleased to tell him that the system has come to fruition and is working very well.

4.25 p.m.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West who has just spoken cannot have been more damning in his condemnation of the poor system operating in relation to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital than if it had come from this side. I have to admire his candour in putting it clearly before this Honourble Chamber that what we say on this side are not things of our own imaginings.

I want to deal very quickly with one or two matters raised by the Honourable Minister in his reply. I do not want to engage in any debate with him on the points that he made because he is not usually adversarial in nature. He is not a combative person so I am not going to spend a lot of time rebutting some of the things that he said. But there are one or two things I want to mention quickly in relation to what the 2 Honourable Members said before I go on the further points.

We always feared that the St. Joseph Hospital would take up some of the resources that would normally be allocated to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. That was always our fear. It was a concern of people in the whole health sector and we were given many assurances by the Government that that would not happen.

I was interested to hear the Honourable Member for St. Michael West mention the hip replacement unit at the St. Joseph Hospital. I too have heard of it. But while the St. Joseph Hospital is now in a position to do hip replacement, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, as I understand it, is not in a position to fix fractured femurs.

I understand for instance, Sir, that there is a shortage of the metallic plates that are used in orthopedic surgery, those that are used for the fixation of limbs when there are fractures. The result is, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that Ward B5 – I think that is the one dealing with fractures – is full of people in traction and full of people in casts. It has nothing to do with any management problem. They do not have the resources at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to deal with these problems. So the Minister could tell us again about Ward B5 and the fact that people are in traction hanging up like hams from the ceiling for weeks and weeks because the resources in Orthopedics are not available for something to be done about it.

I understand. Mr. Chairman, Sir, that there is a shortage of prostheses in Barbados. What is the Government doing with the citizens of this country? I am getting a lot of facile comments coming from the other side. This is a serious situation and it is nothing to be trifled with. I will move off that, Sir, because Honourable Members do not deal with these things with the importance which they merit.

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

Hon. B. M. **TAITT:** Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member cannot say that the Honourable Members on this side do not take the thing seriously. When he asks questions we answer them. He is now asking questions. Is he answering them as well? We are taking them seriously.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I was speaking in my first intervention about the decrepitude, the physical state of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I have noticed in the Estimates, Sir, there is no reasonable financial provision made far a refurbishment of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and we could expect another year of the state in which it now finds itself. I mentioned this in the context of a statement made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael West when he was Minister of Health last year, that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was the finest hospital in the Caribbean. It is the only time I have heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael West talk in terms that were not way beyond what one would consider normal.

We agreed with him on that occasion, Sir. But it is not happening any more if we are going to cause the decline both in the resources and in the physical condition of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Quickly, Sir, I want to mention 3 or 4 other points. One relates to the dental programme. The dental health service is suffering this year, a decrease in expenditure and the dental health service provides for the rendering of health care to school children. Now when one looks at the annual reports of the Chief Medical Officer we see that there are a number of school children who are still not getting the benefit of preventative health care. One of the reasons given in the past was that there was a shortage of dentists in Barbados. There is no longer any shortage of dentists in Barbados but despite that the Government is not making provision adequately for the preventative care of teeth of school children and particularly those of the lower income groups.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I repeat the point I am making that the school children of Barbados are not getting the full preventative dental care that they should be getting and the Government cannot find any argument to rebut that. I have all the figures.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us have some order.

Mr. L. R. **TULL:** I understand, Mr. Chairman, that in relation to the Medical Aid Scheme a lot of it is working like kisses going by favour. The report of the Auditor General states that he has some difficulty in determining

what expenditures were for loans and what were for grants. And Mr. Chairman, I have on uncontestable evidence that certain persons who were given loans on Medical Aid Scheme had their loans converted to grants even though those persons were financially able to repay the loans that were made to them.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, lest that should go unchallenged, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. He says he understands. I am not accusing him of being wilfully misleading but he is none the less misleading the House. I wish to state categorically that to the best of my knowledge that has never occurred. Each case where a medical aid scheme loan has been converted to a grant has been after the result of the most thoroughgoing consultation and investigation and the Honourable Member should really avoid going down that road unless he needs to.

4.35 p.m.

He says to the best of his knowledge but categorically. The two cannot go together. Well, I am saying categorically that there were several persons who were given loans under the Medical Aid Scheme and have had their loans converted to grants even though by every criteria they are able to pay. I do not know about this scrutiny that was being done by the Honourable Member when he was Minister. These persons who had their loans converted to grants are persons who are well and able to pay the Government back the money that was made in a loan to them.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member knows that it would be unethical to name any person who had a grant and/or loan under the Medical Aid Scheme in a debate. He knows that. For him to say that and leave it hanging, I will speak to the Honourable Member privately and I am sure the Minister will speak to him privately. It is not fair to leave it hanging in the air that somebody got a conversion.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I just want to clarify just one issue because you know my position on these things. I am stating clearly here that I deal specifically with any loan or grant as recommended by all of the specialists and officers who are involved who submit them to me. I do not make any unilateral decision. Just for the record, I think you know me well enough. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. L. R. TULL: We are getting into deep waters here. Every time the Honourable Member for St. Michael West gets up he sticks his foot in his mouth. He said on the one hand that you cannot call names of persons who are the beneficiaries of this largesse from the Ministry of Health and I agree with him, but at the same time he is asking for me to say who these people are.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Anything that the Honourable Member for St. George North, who is my parliamentary representative says about these things I am willing to accept because I have always known him to be an honourable man.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. **TULL:** In respect of the Environmental Engineering Unit, Sir, I have some very serious concerns which I have expressed repeatedly on the floor of this House in relation to illnesses as a result of problems in the environment. I talk about them over and over again, Sir. I believe that it is one of the growing areas of concern in our health profile. Now we have for a long time the question of dust in the Green Hill area and the Government has been pussy-footing around that for sometime in saying that it is a private problem. It is an issue between the private sufferers and the person who is responsible for the dust in that area and the Government refuses to take a hand in it.

We also have had in recent times the problem over the McBride Plant where they had the fire with the pharmaceuticals and whatever else they have up there. The Government again in my submission, Mr. Chairman, has not been taking as sufficiently a strong lead in doing something about this problem and in giving the persons who live in the immediate environs of the McBride operation some assurance that they will not have to be concerned about that problem in the future.

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I am glad that the Honourable Member for Christ Church East has the problem with the people who live in the McBride area settled, I am glad that he said that, because he will live to hear that repeatedly on public platforms all around that area in due course.

Aside.

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

Mr. L. R. **TULL:** We have the further problem with the silicate plant in St. Lucy. The people in that area do not get any representation. So I will do my best for them. These people were concerned as you well remember. Mr. Chairman, with air pollution and they were also concerned about the oil waste that was coming from the Arawak Cement Plant and going into the areas surrounding the plant. They have asked the Government to see about their interests. I well remember about a year ago, if it is so long when the issue was very current, that the people were saying that the Government was more concerned about the

coral formation in Barbados than they were concerned about people. My information is that the problem has not yet been resolved to the satisfaction of the people in the area. They were concerned about the damage that can be done to the health of themselves and their children. I would like the Minister of Health to also get up and give an answer to this problem. Do not mind the former Minister of Health, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West because he is going to get up and large off with fancy language and at the end of it he does not have any answers.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time has expired.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Before the Honourable Member gets up to reply, Sir, I am very interested in constitutional matters and matters of the structure of Government. The Honourable Member is the new Minister of Health. Not so long ago in here we asked of the former Minister for a best effort to ensure that the law relating to the production of accounts at the statutory board that comes under the Ministry of Health would be complied with. I want it to be clearly understood that Parliament regards it as a gross contempt of Parliament for the board's chairman and members of boards who take the honour of being board members and refuse to accept their obligations. If the staff under the board do not carry out their duties, it is the Board's duty to take disciplinary steps against the board. It is no excuse to have any public relations consultant draft any statement and publish it in the newspaper about how good a businessman you are and that you are a chairman of the board and you are a shocking chairman of the board if you defy the law and are in breach of the law repeatedly. I think that the Honourable Member should fire the board's chairman at the St. Joseph Hospital for being contemptuous of Parliament for failing to carry out their obligations under statute. It is a fact, Sir.

4.45 p.m.

It is a statute. You cannot get away with it. You cannot say that you are not going to honour your obligations as a Parliament. It is a very serious thing and the present Minister must not be seen to be condoning it. Others were seen to be so, but you must not allow yourself to fall into that position. Let it be clearly understood that if the Honourable Minister does not deal with this matter we will bring an appropriate resolution in here to deal with that conduct. He has been threatening to resign but that is not the real reason he wants to resign. He cannot stand the dissension in the camp over there. It stinks. He cannot stand it.

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir. We must find out about this. We want to see the report in here about what took place down there. Perhaps the Minister will now tell us as whether there is a new chief executive appointed there. We understood that the last one resigned. I don't know whether we have a new one. We know the last time that came under public scrutiny that people were paid for a long period of time and it is alleged because we have not seen the Report so we can only go by what we hear that they were paid for doing nothing for a long period of time. We want to know. I am sorry that our real authority in this area is not with us at the present moment. She had to go to a funeral.

We want to know whether there is an administrator there, not the doctor who acts as an administrator who is the big boss. We want to know whether there is an administrator there who replaced the former administrator. As I understand it – I am not calling any names - there was an administrator there who it is alleged had tremendous experience in the United States of America or some other foreign country and who came here to act in that post and was confirmed in that post. It is alleged that he departed from that post. I am not suggesting that it was voluntary or involuntary or anything like that. I just want to know if he is no longer in the post whether there is a replacement in respect of that. Perhaps the Honourable Minister will tell us about the St. Joseph Hospital.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I will directly answer the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. I will say to him that there is no new Chief Executive as yet. The Honourable Member, if you heard his words, is aware that the chief executive is performing a function. He is totally aware of that but there is no appointed new Chief Executive yet.

The St. Joseph Hospital Report. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in an aside, maybe you did not hear it, Sir, said that I made a comment when he was discussing the question of the St. Joseph Report. I have agonised over this Report having heard all the debate in here over the last 5 months since I became the Minister and certainly, I have established some serious deadlines about that Report. I am now informed that it is in draft form but I want to see it past the draft form so that we can get it in here. I must admit it is at that level now to be finalised and I will assure this Honourable House it will be forthcoming in the proper manner.

The comment about medical aid for St. George South that kisses go by favour, I think that in my intervention, I said that I don't know of any kisses going by favour. I believe that if individuals are assigned to analyse situations and to analyse whether or not people qualify for a certain aid, and when that would have passed through the process I don't think that it would be fair or proper for any Minister to say no to it after X number of people who are trained in that area recommend the work which was to be done here is over.

The question of the dental service. We have been increasing the number of dental chairs in the polyclinics and the dental clinics at the polyclinics continue to provide routine and emergency services for children under 18 years. Contrary to the comment we heard, emphasis in the dental service is on prevention and as such there was an increase in restorative services provided to the children attending. It is not extractions. We are not in the old days of extraction when a guy would come downstairs in the school room in the 40s – and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South would know this – and take the pliers. Those days are gone.

Mr. Chairman, a few more things to reply to my colleague from St. George South on the payment of outstanding bills to doctors *etc.* If he is still suggesting he will bring a list of names to me I assure him that the list for March is now in the Treasury and it includes overtime and on-calls for the month of February. Payments for rental of accommodation for doctors is also included for February.

Asides.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The comments made by the member for *St.* George South and indeed the member for Christ Church South and also the member for St. Michael West related to the whole question of the efficiency of the computerisation of the business systems within the hospital set up. It is generally known that in a hospital set up from the time of admission to payment there is and there have been standard systems in existence for a long time where you can enter and go out throughout the whole hospital systems, now the QEH Barbados is now trying to catch up so many years behind We have to move with all speed to try to catch up because we are far behind.

What has happened within the last few years in the Ministry in which I was before this in terms of data processing and establishing data bases, it is known that in that Ministry now one can go and find out where any teacher is, what school he is at, how old he is, when he was appointed and when he is going to retire. All of that information is now on a proper data base within that system. I am hoping that I will be there long enough in this one to bring this one up to the level whereby we can finally reach the goals that we have established before us.

The Central Administration Office. The central admissions within the same area are due to commence on the first working day in April. It is not too far from now. In time for the new financial year. I am going to be the first to admit in here that it will have some bugs in it I don't want someone to come back later on and say that we had this hiccup within the system and nobody has cared to debug it. However we will hope that this will kick off from April. This is expected to capture all the patients as they arrive. They arrive and their whole financial status is determined and all the advance payment required where we have to deal with private patients. We will be able to identify them using numbers and logging the charges so that by the time they are ready to go you *can* be able to make an enquiry and have either a printout or a total bill produced out of the system.

Mr. Chairman, I will not go on in any more detail about that but you *can* assume that all of the other areas that are relevant will be incorporated.

4.55 p.m.

The question by the Honourable Member for *St.* George South dealing with B5 and metallic plates et cetera – there was a recent shortage of pins and plates due to an unusually high usage rate because of large numbers of accidents recently. An order is already off and supplies are expected this week. It has nothing to do with money. Any orthopedic ward is commonly filled with patients on traction, as we know, in plaster-paris etc. which is routine from the treatment.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the question about the details of the consultations at the St. Joseph Hospital over the period. The St. Joseph Hospital started offering patient service in May, 1992. Between opening day and the end of April, 1993, consultations totalled 673. Since May 1992 the consultations have been as follows, and I can give you the detail by month, starting in May 1992 – 80, June 1992 – 60, July 1992 – 94, August – 54, September – 82, October – 87, November – 123, December – 79 and therefore to the end of December 1993 there were 1 332.

Asides.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Yes, December 1993. In January 1994 there were 107, February 113, March 73 giving a total to date of 1 625. There have been 3 217 admissions in the acute in-patient facility since that section was open in February 1993. Of these 248 have been paying patients and the others have been patients requiring admission who had been referred by the Maurice Byer Polyclinic. The total number of surgical cases the Operating Theatre performed to date stands at 564.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I wonder if the Minister would be so kind as to give us a copy of that.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, if he can give the information on his feet we should have a copy to look at as a courtesy.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, on a point of order.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not finished yet.

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

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Will you help me with it, Sir? While I am on my feet I wish to congratulate the Honourable Member for St.Michael East for taking his position where he had always belong, right on the back bench.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Chairman, I think I have answered all the queries.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 5.30 p.m.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 5.30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.
5.05 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: The sitting is resumed. When the Suspension was taken the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it now reverts.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHARIMAN: The Committee is resumed.

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

HEAD 12 - PARLIAMENT - AS AMENDED
- $3 845 007

Head 12 - Parliament, as amended, $3 845 007 - was called.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, you would recall that earlier when we started to discuss this Head, Item 12 Parliament, that a question was raised by Honourable Members on the other side concerning the refurbishment of Parliament, and more particularly, with regard to the west wing. I do not know if any other Honourable Members had any questions. We had postponed consideration of Head 12 because I was able to draw to the attention of the Committee that the Commission had met and had made a decision that all of the matters relating to Parliament should fall under the control of the Commission with the Clerk of Parliament as the accounting officer. This would also include the refurbishment of the west wing.

Steps have now been taken and Amendment No.5 to the 1994-95 Draft Estimates has been circulated and Head 12 has been revamped to show that under Formation total capital and lending for subprogramme 01 Management Commission of Parliament insert $300 000. The $300 000 is understood to be the funding which will be required to get the west wing of Parliament on the way again.

As I understand it, Sir, a substantial number of the required workmen will still come from the Ministry of Communications and Works by its new name, I do not always remember it, Sir, but the Ministry responsible for Public Works. A similar amendment was included in the Head which was passed, Head 42, and so attempts to finish the work of Parliament will be made during this Financial Year.

We have reason to believe that under the general and broad supervision of the Clerk of Parliament that this work will proceed on different lines. We hope that it will not be long before the full recommendations made at the time of the 350th Anniversary Committee can find fruition and that Parliament can be completed.

There are one or two other aspects of this Head which I would have wished to speak about but given the time I would sit and allow any other Honourable Member who wishes to raise questions to do so now so that I can wind up the Head.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have, as I have said earlier in this debate, serious concerns about the management of this renovation work which has to be done to Parliament.

This wing in which we sit now, the East Wing was refurbished, returned to its original splendour except for this ceiling but one day we will correct that. This was done with a Committee, an all Party Committee, a Committee of the joint Houses of this Parliament being in charge of the works. An architect's plan was laid out for us. We could come here from time to time - I remember I was

designated for several years, I chaired the Committee, which looked after the works and I did that along with other ministerial duties.

I am not agreeing entirely with the Honourable Member for St. Michael West that this should be solely under the management of the Clerk of Parliament.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Under the Management Commission which is an all Party Committee.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Thank you. In that case, Sir, the Management Commission as I have said earlier has to move away from this once and twice a year meeting. I would like to say that, at the earliest opportunity, we need to see a plan of what actually is on the ground over there. It is for us as Parliamentarians to decide what kind of accommodation we want over there.

It is my understanding that proper and perhaps more commodious and better appointed accommodation will be available over there for Members of the Opposition. I have commented in the past, not in this debate, and I will use this opportunity to comment upon the fact of how scandalous it is that there is no room called a library in this Parliament to which Members can go for research or to have a moment of quietness.

I am concerned that there is no proper committee room apart from the room immediately on your right as you come up the steps there in which Members can sit down and talk with other people, especially when you are in the Opposition you are at a tremendous disadvantage. I suppose we understand that. I am concerned that we do not end up having in the east wing some civil service idea of what suits Members of Parliament. We dictated what we wanted in this building and I think that we served ourselves fairly well, except that once I had left the Committee and it was taken over by other people, proper restrooms for lady Members of Parliament are not yet to be found in this building. That has to be repaired, Sir.

That situation also does not take account of the Reporters who have to report from the reporting box above the clock and who have to run quite a distance if they need to go to the restroom. This is an oversight. I have no doubt in my mind that more women will be coming into this Parliament and it really needs to be corrected. There are still one or two things which need to be corrected in this building.

But certainly in the west wing the first thing, as a Member of the Management Commission, I would wish to see is a plan. The second thing I would wish is a tour to see what is going on over there. We do not know what is going on over there.

There was a time when we had even thought we would have a small parliamentary museum, a Parliament that is well over 350 years old. This could be a Commonwealth attraction, it could be a tourism attraction, it could speak at the same time to a sense of history in respect of our Parliament. There are all those things. Rooms for Members, committee rooms and that sort of thing.

I would like to think, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that the Management Commission has its work set out for it. I am glad that it is no longer in the hands of Public Works.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg your pardon.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, the public workers did it but this is 4 years and we cannot see even one room completed across the courtyard. That is because, material would be delivered to this site and then it would mysteriously be spirited away to other sites. All of that went on and people behaved as though they could do as they please and this threatened this whole west wing reconstruction to be a financial dark hole, what I call a bottomless pit in the style and the mode of the St. Joseph Hospital and the St. Thomas Secondary School.

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

HEAD 35 – MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS **– $10 477 794**

Head 35 – Ministry of Foreign Affairs – $10 477 794 was called.

5.40 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I had hoped that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would have come earlier in the debate but certain happenings required that it would only now be brought to the Committee and I therefore shall try to be as summary as possible. The estimated non-statutory requirement for the Ministry for the coming year is **$10 477 794**, a **6.6%** increase over last year and I can say that the sum will be used to pursue broadly five objectives in foreign policy.

Soon after I became the Minister of Foreign Affairs I wrote to the Missions overseas to reiterate that the Barbados Foreign Policy would rest on two major planks – the protection and promotion of the interest and welfare of Barbadian nationals abroad and the promotion of the economic, commercial and cultural interest of Barbados. Coupled with those two main planks are the three

broad categories of foreign policy: the preservation and protection of national sovereignty and security; the establishment and preservation of harmonious relations with foreign governments; and cooperation with Like-minded countries to advance the concept of morality, justice and respect for human rights and democracy in international affairs. That, Sir, is a summary of the broad foreign policy of Barbados and I believe that I can say with impunity that it is the foreign policy that has more or less been followed ever since Barbados had an opportunity to pronounce on its own foreign policy. But I would state quite clearly that I regard the first two, the protection and the promotion of interest of Barbadian nationals overseas and the promotion of the economic, commercial and cultural interest of Barbados as the fundamental and most important aspect of work overseas.

There is one point I wish to make very early and it has to do with a concept which has not been emphasised in the work of the overseas missions. It has not always been fully appreciated that the Missions overseas are involved in the business of revenue earning for the reason that the Estimates are organised in a particular way. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not in fact show a revenue head. But when I became Minister and examined the Estimates from the view point of my training I immediately recognised that in fact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not being given its full due for the work it was doing in the earning of revenue overseas. It would not be well known, for example, that by the sale of passports, by the notarial services and by all of the other things which it has done the Ministry earned just short of $1 million in hard currency over the last year and in fact has been so earning almost from its inception; and when persons talk about the expenditure by the diplomats it is not remembered often that in fact they also earn a substantial part of what they expend. I have directed the posts overseas to pay special attention to encouraging the thousands of Barbadians overseas who are entitled to a Barbados Passport to see that they get one. Also we are in the process of ensuring that there is an increased charge for the services performed by the consular corps overseas. They have not had any update in their charges for some considerable time. I shall be either making an Order or bringing legislation to the House to have the fees changed to make them commensurate with what is happening in the real world.

It is not appreciated for example that Americans are now paying US $70 for a passport which will last 10 years. I do not know if the Minister of Finance will be taking any steps in this direction, but it is not passports that I am concerned with so much as a number of notarial services which are performed for which there is a substantial amount of revenue which Barbados should be getting.

Secondly we have looked, and as I said I will be summary, but we have looked at our offices overseas. We have had a review and one of the policy decisions which has already been taken is that we would upgrade our representation in the Miami area to look after the South Eastern Region of the United States. We feel that there is a substantial amount of benefit to be realised from having a full Consulate General in the Miami area and so one of the things which the Cabinet has agreed to is the upgrading of that office.

We have also put in the Embassy in Washington, a Commercial Counsellor as well as in the Embassy at Brussels. All of this is with a view to taking a much more active role in the promotion of Barbados' economic interest overseas.

Barbados has had a successful year in the international arena. We have been able to make our presence felt in the customary places but this year in particular we have seen some successes and we are on the verge of some other successes which include, for example, the very strong possibility that we will have for the first time, a Barbadian heading one of the major inter-regional organisations, that is, the Pan American Health Organisation.

We also have a candidate up for the Inter American Court for Human Rights. We have a candidate who is also vying for position on that. We are doing better in the first one than ... We are putting up a candidate who has a possibility of winning. I think it is fair to say – I had better be a little more specific and say that we have prepared draft legislation for the imposition of fees for consular services provided by the Ministry. Once the legislation has been enacted I hope the Attorney General will be able to work quickly on it. It is something which I was surprised to find that we had not as yet completed.

I am of the view, Mr. Chairman, that Barbadians living overseas can play a much more active role in the economic development of Barbados. There was a time in the sixties when we were in some economic difficulty and it was the Barbadians overseas who sent funds back home that assisted strongly in the maintenance of our balance of payments position. There are a number of very successful Barbadians in all parts of the world many of whom are unknown to Barbados and to Barbadians. It is my view that it is part of the duty of our overseas representation to seek out these Barbadians and interest them in Barbados as well as interesting Barbados in them and their performance overseas. Because whatever reputation Barbados has been able to gain overseas, it is to a large extent due to the result of the activities of Barbadians who are not official ambassadors but who nonetheless perform a role as ambassadors, unpaid and sometimes unsung ambassadors for Barbados overseas.

5.50 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, in the time available to me, I will draw attention to the export potential, some of which has been fulfilled in relation to the LOME Convention. Barbados' nun has seen some continuing rise in its acceptance and one of the things which we have had to work tirelessly in recent time was to prevent Barbadian rum from being shut out of the European market. In addition to restrictions under the Protocol and well founded reservations as to the actual administration of the terms of the Protocol, there has arisen on the Continent a wide range of spurious brews carrying the title "rum". We have "Rum Barbados Superior" though it contains no Barbados rum at all. Then there is one called "Black Currant Rum" and then there is "Finnish Rum", "Inlander Rum", 'Rum Fantasia" and, of course, 'Rum Verschmidt". All of these are attempts that have been made to use the name of Barbados in the promotion of some spirit that has been described as rum.

Sir, as a result of that kind of activity, the Embassy at Brussels had its work cut out for it. I would like to take this opportunity to pay some tribute to the officers, Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Consuls General, and other overseas representatives who in sometimes very difficult circumstances have continued to maintain generally speaking a high level of representation for Barbados.

I believe that the crowning glory of Barbados' foreign policy to date, and it is really a culmination of the activities of all the Governments over the years, will be the Global Conference which is scheduled in Barbados next month.

I think that the fact that Barbados' invitation was accepted is a tribute to the reputation which Barbados has managed to gain over the years in the international forums. Barbados also played its part in the Commonwealth. At Commonwealth Meetings Barbados has had an opportunity to give its views in a number of areas and we were fortunate perhaps to participate as one of the countries from which a representative joined with four other representatives to assist in the bringing on stream of the new World Trade Agreement. I believe the Commonwealth Secretariat's Newsletter calls it "Around the World In Eight Days". But the activities have assisted in bringing the United States and Europe closer together and have resulted in meeting the deadline of December 15. Barbados has also played its role where Ambassador Marville is now the Chairman of the Ambassadorial Committee in Brussels for the ACP and for the next 6 months he will be presiding. That will give us a chance to make some inputs in vital areas in our relations even at a time when sugar is going to be on the agenda in a very specific way.

We have ratified a number of International Conventions. Time does not allow me to list them all, but one point I should make is that we have established the Barbados Ship's Registry in the premises at the High Commission in London. It has already started to function under a contract arrangement made between the Government and people who are experienced in the establishment of a Ship's Registry. It is expected to yield a substantial amount of foreign exchange. The arrangements will probably be discussed in more detail when we conclude the Shipping Bill which is currently before this House. I will certainly take the opportunity to speak in more detail about the Ship's Registry.

Sir, I would like to make sure that I put on the record that we will spare no effort and the Missions overseas will spare no effort to do commercial promotion as a substantive part of the work of the Missions overseas. This is not new. I am not in any way saying that is new. However, I am saying that emphasis and re-emphasis is being put on that. I want to suggest that arising out of some of that activity can be found such things as Guinness, the world famous brewers, who have selected Barbados as a site for their Caribbean operations. There is a brew named Bajan Beer which is produced by Banks Breweries. It is now being distributed through 18 outlets in the United Kingdom. A drive to import black belly sheep is being followed up with two British importers. Arrangements have been completed for the establishment of a recording studio in Barbados by a Barbadian who happens to be blind and, of course, we are continuing to see how much rum we can have sold throughout the United Kingdom.

Sir, as the hour goes and since I had intimation from the Honourable Members on the other side that I should give them an opportunity to have me respond to the specific areas which would be of concern to them rather than for me to take the rest of the time merely to recite what I consider to be the successes of our foreign policy in the world.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is asking *sotto voce* about CARICOM and my colleague, the CARICOM Minister, may or may not depending on the questions asked answer as necessary. The point that I wish to make is that the members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have also been invited to take a look at our relations within Barbados. I want to make the point that Foreign Affairs have been seen up until recently anyhow as some esoteric subject matter that has to do with what is going on elsewhere. The truth is that those who have CNN need only to look and see how the various players in the international community have interaction with their domestic and foreign policy. Barbados is no different in that regard even though we are small. It is important that the people in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and it is our intention to do so, bring to their contemplation a

focus which allows Barbadians to see the interplay of forces between what happens in Barbados and what happens outside of Barbados.
6.00 p.m.

Our human rights position as well as what is published in our newspapers. Our newspapers are now sold in capitals outside of Barbados and it is important that people understand that what we do here is no longer a secret retained within the comdors of Barbadian territory. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, I am sure you are aware that from time to time if you wish to find out what is happening in Barbados the better thing to do would be to call somebody in New York or London and you will be sure to get a fuller and better picture of certain matters which are going on. Every now and again when I wish to find out something about one of my colleagues over there of a certain nature I call overseas and get good information about what is happening. I usually do it inside the envelope of official business.

Seriously, Sir, I wish to see our Foreign Ministry become a little more pro-active in relation to Barbados to allow people to recognise that the foreign ministry is in fact the focal point through which other activities which are designated to other ministries have impact both inside and outside of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman, I will stop here now and I am going to allow Honourable Members who have questions to so raise them. I beg to move that Head 35 stand part.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will try to be quick. I know that other Honourable Members wish to speak. The Honourable Minister spoke of rationalisation and that is where I would want to begin.

Rationalisation not only in respect of sectorial interests within the various missions and consulates etc. that we have abroad but in respect of accommodation as well. I think we have to face the fact that over the past several years there have been competing interests in respect of the Tourist Board, industrial development interests out of Barbados and ordinary consular business which would be expected to be carried out in missions abroad; that there has been a quarrel over turf, over territory and there has been a lot of duplication overlap that small developing countries like Barbados *can* ill afford.

I think it is a little ridiculous that you would walk into a building in any of the large metropolises in the world where we have representation and find tourism in separate accommodation from what used to be the IDC from what is the consulate and in a place like New York from what is the accommodation reserved for the Permanent Representative to the United Nations. All of that needs some rationalisation.

We also need rationalisation in terms of – I am looking here at this vote, operating expenses running at $888 000 in one subhead and structures running at $200 000 in another, purchase of vehicles $200 000 in another. Mr. Chairman, Barbados needs to look at the fact that even some developed countries have moved away from this elaborate mode where you either buy or you lease or rent highly expensive office space in the middle of London, New York, Brussels, Washington and then you go into the nearest embassy row and again either buy, lease or rent elaborate and expensive accommodation for people to live in a residence where little or no entertaining is done, where you are often at a large distance in terms of travel to the office on a day to day basis.

The United States of America can afford that. The United Kingdom can afford that. Several European countries can afford that; but I don't know that the developing countries like ours can afford to do that for much longer. There are some countries where they accommodate their officers now living above the shop and it can be done very tastefully and very nicely at a great saving of cost. I think that perhaps the time is past when Barbados should be looking at that possibility wherever it is feasible.

The Minister spoke of the Inter-American Human Rights Court and Barbados' attempt to get a seat there. Barbados has always been over the year engaged in that kind of thing. It is part and parcel of the functioning of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but I am concerned that over many years people go into those posts for their own sense of self importance. They do little or nothing to represent the interests of the country. You cannot find a Barbadian that you *can* say that they helped get a job for. There are so many jobs going at the UN. but our people do not think that it is part of their role and their function to help Barbadian nationals into jobs there. There are Barbadian nationals who have the skills and who have the training and the experience that would equip them for many jobs. Yet I can look across and see that other nationals of other countries can get jobs.

Why is it that this is not a priority with Barbadian officers who fill these posts in the various missions?

I have a concern too which has been voiced to me on several occasions and I think that I must speak out about it now. It relates particularly to consulates which are treated by consuls as though they are a post of the Democratic Labour Party's political administration. Barbadian nationals take a dim view of it. Many of them, particularly in

North America feel that their interests are not adequately and efficiently looked after and addressed and particularly those who are not card carrying members feel that they have no right even to enter upon the premises of the Barbados Consulate.

I hear from the Minister that something is going to happen in Miami. Miami has been the site of many infelicities in the past and in the present. Something is always happening in Miami. Part of the Guatemala sugar scam had to do with Miami connections which were never divulged. Don't force me to do it now.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Is the Honourable Member saying it had to do with the Barbados office? I just want to get the record straight. You know people who hear do not always hear in detail.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Don't put words in my mouth. CARICARGO had to do with infelicities to do with a Barbados officer.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would wish the Minister to give some assurances to Honourable Members that this whole business of consulates and to a lesser extent other missions too becoming a post of the Democratic Labour Party Administration and being politically partisan in the way that they fail to look after the affairs of Barbadian nationals is something that he must look into.

If I might just say a word about Brussels. I was there quite recently on two occasions already this year and one last year and it is constantly drawn to my attention that there are monies which can be available to several sectors in Barbados but which are never brought to the attention of those sectors. I think it is universally known that the bureaucracy of the European Commission is torturous to say the very least, to put it at the slightest, I remember in 1977 that what is now known as the Maurice Byer Polyclinic was built out of LOMÉ 1 funds at a time when other countries felt that they could not access LOMÉ funding and we missed so many good opportunities.
6.10 p.m.

Perhaps, the chairmanship of whatever it is that the Ambassador at Brussels is about to undertake might be explained to us a little more. I would want to know if that really has any potential to make LOME and funding coming out of Europe a little more accessible to us here in Barbados.

I do not want to sit down, Sir, without asking the Minister precisely what it is. I do not know what designation I should attach to a man called DaSilva and a man called Forbes. I believe they have substantive posts in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Barbados. I think we are entitled to know now. We are accustomed to ambassadors abroad. We are not accustomed to ambassadors who reside at the home front. It is important. There is money being expended here. These people are being paid salaries. They are enjoying perks. They carry on their private business. Sometimes they do not even know where conflict of interest start and personal interest must stop. I think this country, and certainly this Honourable Chamber, deserves some explanation from the Minister as to what exactly is the role and function of those two gentlemen.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I will sit down at this point, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I only have about five questions for the Minister, Sir. The first one is the Auditor General has complained that there has been no inventory of Government property updated since 1981. What is the Minister or the Ministry doing about that?

Secondly, Sir, in the period 1990-91 actual expenditure exceeded the amount authorised by finance warrants by more than half a million dollars.

Thirdly, Sir, in respect of the Embassy in Brussels, I believe that Government paid a deposit of $377 068.53 in respect of the Chancery there and the report is that that is likely to be forfeited. In other words, the Government would have paid $377 068.53 and is about to lose it up to last year. I would like the Minister to give me the up-to-date position on that. That is $377 068.53 going down the drain.

Similarly, Sir, there were some renovations to the Ambassador's residence in Brussels to a tune of about 300 000 Belgium francs.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I would not know how much it is. It sounds like a lot to me. I understand that 300 000 Belgium francs is also likely to be forfeited.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Why? You should know. I am asking the Minister. The Minister should know. It is page 84 of the Auditor General's Report. But it is symptomatic of bureaucratic bundling and poor management of the taxpayers' money. The Minister has his officials and he should be able to tell us the up-to-date position on that.

I want to know about the Venezuelan Embassy. Is that going to be kept open, and if so, for how much longer? I would like the Minister to tell us what

benefits we are getting from that. I would like him to tell me whether they have settled the question of the car for the Ambassador to Venezuela, whether they have settled the question of the chauffeurs because she has changed about six since she has been down there because they are paying rates lower than the going rate in Venezuela. All those things he knows about. I want him to give the answers.

In relation to the Toronto Consulate, Sir, that is not functioning. I will finish now. I am just drawing the Minister's attention to Toronto. It is a pity we cannot go any longer but that is not functioning. The Consul General in Toronto is not functioning. He has been there for some time now. Nobody has ever seen his photograph.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I can say he is not functioning. I do not care if he is a public officer. He does not rice me. I say he is not functioning. Why should I exempt him from that? He has done nothing to promote Barbados' interest since he has been there.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ... and sleeps, since you asked it. He goes to work, yes, and sleeps. They do not see him. He has not been in the newspapers. He has done nothing to develop the image of Barbados. That is all I can manage now. I will give the Minister a chance to reply.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Now, Sir, I regret that time does not permit me to deal with all but I am going to try. First of all, the Honourable Member for the City raised the question of rationalisation and talked about accommodation. I wish to say to her that there has been no purchase of any property since the Barbados Labour Party left office except for the downpayment on the property in Brussels. The downpayment on the property in Brussels was an attempt to purchase a property at a cost of 20 million Belgium francs or $1.2 million to be used as a Chancery. The payment was to be in two tranches. Deposits of $58 000 were made.

The long and short of it is that what the Auditor General said is correct. However, we have been advised that the deposit has not been forfeited. There are circumstances which if the funds become available we will be seeking to recover and to continue the purchase. We have been so advised by the Brussels lawyer so we are seeking to see if that is so.

I think it is fair to say to the committee that at the precise time when we had the financing difficulty that was one of the areas where we could not pay the foreign exchange necessary to complete the deal. However, I have to say in relation to the Honourable Member's comment that there is no Barbadian diplomat living in what may be called Diplomats' Row. At any of the places where we live we have decent housing. We have houses that when they were purchased were considered by the Government of the day to be adequate. In the case of the Heads of Mission there are housing in all of the countries that are considered to be acceptable for Barbados but it could not in any way compare with the lavish housing which many of the other major countries, and some developing countries have.

6.20 p.m.

I want to deal with this point about DLP outposts. Having myself served at one of these outposts and being able to state categorically that no one can say, at any time, that when I served in that outpost that I was partisan in my approach to dealing with nationals. I say categorically that, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, I will have no overseas representative treating any Barbadian national in a partisan way. If...

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: If I converted them, it is by love. You did not do too badly yourself when it comes to that category.

But, Sir, what I will say as Minister of Foreign Affairs I will not tolerate any partisan ... All of my officers everywhere know that that is one of the things I feel very strongly about. When a national leaves Barbados...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I do not think that will be fair. The officers you have called. I have had no complaint whatsoever about the Deputy High Commissioner in London. I have had many bits of information that the Honourable Member for the City had been most courteously dealt with at all of the missions where she has visited and her visits have been considerable.

The last information I have is that when you were in New York you were treated extremely well. That is what I was told.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No, no, no. On a point of order, Sir. I have not visited a Barbados Mission since I left Government in 1986. I must say that when called upon by various bodies to do something on my behalf like get a visa for a foreign country, they would oblige. That is the most.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member is a lawyer and is adept, from time to time, in the use of language. It may be true that she has not visited a Mission but it is also true that she has had services from the missions.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: It is no point saying you have not visited. There are many people who have not visited who have received services. The point is that the Missions have been put at your disposal whenever you have made it known that you were coming, that you were there and that you needed their services. That is my information.

Therefore I am saying that if there is any Honourable Member who knows of any instance where the situation has been otherwise, I would be very clear in my own mind as to how to deal with that. I wish us not to try to cast any aspersions on the overseas offices suggesting that they may be politically partisan.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am not able to speak to the question of no work being done. To the best of my knowledge, the reports coming from the Ottawa Mission have been - certainly the ones I have received - accurate, they have been effective and so far as the Consulate is concerned the Consulate is not required to deal in matters at the same level as the Mission in Ottawa.

I will, however, give the assurance that all of the officers in the foreign ministry overseas have very clear indications of what their role is and I really cannot accept that of one of the officers, especially a public officer. I cannot be party to criticism of him. However, if the Honourable Member wishes to give me further and better particulars privately, I assure him I will treat the matter seriously.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I wish to say that whatever scams may have gone on in Miami, there is no evidence nor have I ever heard a scintilla of information that there have been any scams connected with any of the Honorary Consulates of Barbados, certainly not the Honorary Consulate at Miami. I therefore take the reference to a scam on Guatemala sugar with the greatest reserve.

On the question of the Auditor-General's queries which could be found in the Report, all of the queries are receiving the attention of the Accounting Officer and the Accounting Officer will deal with them in the manner that accounting officers deal with the Auditor-General's queries both in the past and now. I have no difficultly saying that the Auditor-General's Report has been in the hands of the Accounting Officer and will be dealt with accordingly.

Ambassador DaSilva and Ambassador Forbes have been appointed Ambassadors by the Government of Barbados. They are Ambassadors-at-large. Ambassador Forbes is the non-resident High Commissioner to Jamaica and the Bahamas and Ambassador DaSilva is the non-resident High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago and the OECS countries. He is not Ambassador to Columbia. The Ambassador of Venezuela I believe is, at the moment. One of the Ambassadors either to Venezuela or the Ambassador to the OAS. They represent the non-resident Ambassadors in the CARICOM. Let me say that both of them have been tireless in their efforts to promote economic development of Barbados. I have sat in at a meeting with Ambassador DaSilva who is not without superior skills in the area of negotiations.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Well if he speaks out of turn he is probably no different from a number of other persons. Out of turn would be defined by the Honourable Member quite differently from how I would define it. They are Ambassadors, they are not clerks. They are permitted to speak.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: They are able to speak for Barbados. I am fully satisfied that both of them are doing a fine job in their attempt to bring some measure of urgency to the question of the economic development of Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Time has run out. But I give this Committee the assurance that as soon as it is practicable we will have a foreign policy debate. I shall initiate a foreign policy debate in this House if Honourable Members so require it so that we can discuss foreign policy at a more leisurely pace and in more depth.

I am grateful to you, Mr. Chairman.

The question that Head 35 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 37 - MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND LANDS - $24 **863 847**

Head 37 - Ministry of the Environment, Housing and Lands - $24 863 847 was called.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to move, Sir, that Head 37 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 40 – MINISTRY OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, AS AMENDED, – **$12 683 248**

Head 40 – Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce as amended $12 683 248 – was called.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: I beg to move that Head **40,** as amended, stand **part.**

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

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

HEAD 43 – MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT, AS AMENDED, – **$45 143 196**

Head 43 – Ministry of Tourism and International Transport, as amended – $45 143 196 was called.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to move, Sir, that Head **43** stand **part.**

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

The question that Head 43 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing itself as follows.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: A division is called for.

The bell was rung.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Head **43** stand **part.**

Ayes: Hon. B. M. Taitt, Hon. M. A. King, Hon. W. O. Franklin, Hon. C. V. Walker, Hon. J. O. Tudor, Hon. T. C. Estwick, Hon. D. W. Bowen, Hon. D. J. H. Thompson, Mr. E. E. Greaves, Mr. W. W. Hall, Mr. H. A. Blackman. – 11.

Noes: Mr. O. S. Arthur, Miss B. A. Miller, Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, Hon. H. B. St. John, Mr. H. deB. Forde, Mr. L. R. Tull, Dr. R. L. Cheltenham, Mr. DeL. O. Bradshaw, Mr. R. C. Eastmond, Mr. G. W. Payne. – 10.

6.30 p.m.

HEAD 50 – POST OFFICE – $6 **342 342**

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head **50** – Post Office in the sum of $6 **342 342** stand **part.**

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN. I am hearing **too many** voices.

The question that Head 50 in the sum of $6 342 342 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 13 – PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (AS AMENDED) – **$26 295 306**

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head **13** stand **part.**

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

DIVISION

The bell was rung.

The question that Head 13 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. B. M. Taitt, Hon. M. A. King, Hon. W. O. Franklin, Hon. C. V. Walker, Hon. J. O. Tudor, Hon. T. C. Estwick, Hon. D. W. Bowen, Hon. D. J. H. Thompson, Mr. H. A. Blackman, Mr. W. W. Hall, Mr. E. E. Greaves, Mr. R. L. Morris – 12.

Noes: Mr. O. S. Arthur, Miss B. A. Miller, Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, Hon. H. B. St. John, Mr. H. deB. Forde, Mr. L. R. Tull, Dr. R. L. Cheltenham, Mr. DeL. O. Bradshaw, Mr. R. C. Eastmond and Mr G. W. Payne – 10.

HEAD 15 – CABINET OFFICE – **$3 184 178**

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head **15** – Cabinet Office – in the sum of $3 **184 178** stand **part.**

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

DIVISION

The question that Head 15, Cabinet office stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. B. M. Taitt, Hon. M. A. King, Hon. W. O. Franklin, Hon. C. V. Walker, Hon. J. O. Tudor, Hon. T. C. Estwick, Hon. D. W. Bowen, Hon. D. J. H. Thompson, Mr. R. L. Morris, Mr. E. E. Greaves, Mr. W. W. Hall and Mr. H. A. Blackman – 12.

Noes: Mr. O. S. Arthur, Miss B. A. Miller, Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, Hon. H. B. St. John, Mr. H. deB. Forde, Mr. L. R. Tull, Dr. R. L. Cheltenham, Mr. DeL. O. Bradshaw, Mr. R. C. Eastmond and Mr. G. W. Payne – 10.

HEAD 16 – MINISTRY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE – $6 615 440

Hon. B. M. **TAITT**: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 16 stand part, Sir.

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

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2, as amended, was called and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4 were called and passed.

The Schedule as amended was called and passed.

On the motion of the Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Appropriation Bill 1994 and the Barbados Estimates 1994 in Committee of Supply, with amendments, to His Honour Mr. Speaker and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. B. M. TAITT, seconded by Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, the Appropriation Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Appropriation Act, 1994.

ORDER NO. 10 – AMENDMENTS PROPOSED TO OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON BILL, 1994

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, a couple of amendments to the Offences Against the Person Act which have been passed by this House have been circulated and are now before this Chamber. These amendments were passed in the Senate and they, to some extent, reflect some of the concerns which were addressed in this House during the course of debate.

In relation to Clause 27, for instance, you will recall that Clause 27 had included, assaults which covered assaulting, resisting and wilfully obstructing police officers in the execution of duty. The point was made during the course of the debate that assaults of that nature were already covered in the Police Act. The Senate amendment removes those assaults from the Offences Against The Persons Act. Assaults of this nature will fall to be prosecuted under the Police Act as they were before. The other amendments in Clause 27 are consequential in that the following sub-clauses are renumbered. In relation to the amendment to Clause 42 proposed by the Senate, the original Clause 42 passed by the House of Assembly as indicated stated that any person who wilfully or without lawful excuse does any indecent act in any public place or wilfully does any indecent act in any place with intent to insult or offend any person is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term of 12 months.

6.40 **p.m.**

Aside.

Hon. M. A. **KING:** The amendment that the Senate proposed, Mr. Speaker, provides that any person who is guilty of any of those acts is guilty of an offence which is triable on indictment or summarily. No mention is made of the penalty. But if you will remember from the Bill that was before the House, there is a general penalty clause in the Bill. Where there is no specific penalty stated in clauses, the general penalty provided for applies. So that this is a tidier way, Mr. Speaker, of dealing with the amendment and I move that the amendments as proposed by the Senate be agreed to.

Hon. B. M. **TAITT:** Mr. Speaker, I beg to second the motion and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: First of all, on page 2 of the Note from the Other Place in relation to Clause 42, I think that it is a glorious waste of time, manpower, and an attempt to clog up the administration of justice even more than it is to have this as an "either way offence". I do not know what they put it in for. Some brilliant lawyer I suppose must have thought of it and I think that we should reject this. We all are upset by people who expose themselves and urinate around the road and so on. But really that is nothing that should engage a whole full blown jury trial. Put the person before a magistrate and the magistrate has ample power to lock up for 12 months. But to concede that you could convene a jury trial like that, it is a waste.

Sir, on Clause 27, I would only say to the Honourable Attorney General that this serves him right. When we were debating this in here, it was pointed out to the Attorney General that the offence which was in the Offences Against the Persons Act was already covered in the Police Act We suggested here that it be deleted and something be done and postpone consideration, and refer it to Parliamentary Council and get their opinion. Now it has gone to the Senate and they have made the same point as was made down here which was not then accepted by the Attorney General. That is all that I can say. I think that the Attorney General should be more responsive sometimes to sense when it is spoken down here. That is all I have to say. We said that it should be deleted because it was a duplication and you were giving the Police an opportunity to charge under the Offences Against The Persons Act or under the Police Act for the same offence of assaulting a policeman in the execution of his duties.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Honourable Member for St. **Thomas** that the offence under Clause 2 does not warrant trial by indictment. I would wish that the Attorney General would agree with us and take it out. The view is that this is what now can be called the "Chico" amendment. To say that you must carry a man through trial by jury or where what is stated here is **a** decent act really is a waste of time. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Attorney General accede to the request of this side from persons who are in daily practice of the law dealing with these matters.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, **first** of all in relation to the assaults against police officers. If Your Honour will recall, during the course of the debate I did give a commitment that I would look at the matter and make a decision on which way we would go. The fact that the Senate has made a decision on the matter is neither here nor there. The fact that the matter comes back here and I can move that we accept the amendment as proposed by the Senate does indicate that after **all** I have reviewed the matter and I **am** prepared to accept that amendment.

In relation to the amendment which has been proposed in relation to Section 42, one of the problems with the initial formulation was that the offence as it was stated provided that any person guilty of an offence was liable on summary conviction to a term of imprisonment for 12 months. So that on the original formulation it appears as if there was not the option of imposing a fine. I think what the drafters of the legislation considered was that the option for a **fine** should be provided for. They thought that, since you were providing the option for a fine, just provide that the offence be triable either way without stating a penalty since the general clause provided for fine and imprisonment.

Now the point is being made that the offence of indecent exposure is the type of offence which is not so heinous as to warrant a trial by jury. I suppose a lot of us may feel that way too.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Well, that is a matter of opinion. A lot of us might feel that the offence is not one which you need to trouble a jury with. But the fact that it is stated in the Act that it is triable either way does not mean, Mr. Speaker, that the time of **the** Assize Court will necessarily be wasted on trivial offences. If you have an indecent exposure which in relative terms is trivial, it is most unlikely that anyone would waste the time of the Assize Court in seeking to prosecute that offence indictably.

6.50 p.m.

I think that parliamentary counsel in drafting the legislation may have been of the view that there can be possible situations where the indecent act which is performed can be so gross that the option for indictable charge should be there. I think that was the reason which motivated parliamentary counsel in drafting it that way. The point is taken that by far and away most of the offences which are charged under this, are likely to be offences which are not of so serious a nature as to warrant prosecution indictably. I see no reason why the legislation cannot remain as it is, bearing in mind that it is highly unlikely that the time of the High Court will be wasted on trivial matters.

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

ORDER NO. 11 – SECOND READING OF A BILL TO AMEND THE LOCAL LOANS ACT

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, this is a Bill to amend the Local Loans Act. By way of information, the nominal value of the local debenture and treasury notes outstanding as of March 1, 1994 under the Act is $878 784 000 as against the statutory limit which is $997 000.

The Insurance Board in restructuring its portfolio in 1989 was advised by the actuary to seek to extend its maturity structure of its investment and since special issue treasury bills accounted for the majority of its investment portfolio and was being rolled over every **6** months for several years the Board is advised that consideration should be given to converting these bills to longer termed higher yielding security.

In that regard, I have agreed to the proposal of the National Insurance Board to convert the special issue treasury bills which it now holds into debentures. These treasury bills amount to **$230.2** million and the full conversion will take place over 5 consecutive months.The first transaction has already mopped up $55 million and took place on March 1, 1994 and is therefore included in the amount which I just cited.

Mr. Speaker, the conversion will cause the present limit under the Local Loans Act to be exceeded even though the level of total debt will remain unchanged and there will be a corresponding reduction of treasury bills. The Central Bank of Barbados intends to place new issues on the market for an amount of **$40** million which includes $17 million for redemption of the Barbados Development Bank Bond to which I spoke during the course of previous debates.

Apart from that, a fiscal 1994-95 an amount of **$43.5** million will be redeemed while domestic financing is

projected at about $49.3 million. So what we sought to do is to make provision for an additional $123 million for new borrowing in the year subsequent to fiscal year 1994-95. So it is being proposed by this amendment that the limit be raised by $303 million to accommodate the new issue as well as the conversion by the National Insurance fund. Therefore I am asking the House to agree to the statutory limit for the amount that can be borrowed by way of the issue of securities under the Local Loans Act be raised to $1.3 billion.

Mr. Speaker, I am moving that this Bill be read a second time.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, there will be ample opportunity soon to go into a large number of other matters pertaining to Government financial management. But I really do believe that it is ironic to hear a Democratic Labour Party Minister of Finance have to speak in terms of restructuring the portfolio of the National Insurance in terms of its holding of Government paper. There was a time when it was fashionable for persons in the Democratic Labour Party, including a former Minister of Finance who has now left the Democratic Labour Party, to say that it was a cardinal sin for the National Insurance funds to be pressed into the financing of Government operations. I remember that the debate in this House used to be fierce about how wrongful the Barbados Labour Party was behaving in causing the people's savings held in the National Insurance to be used to finance the people's business.

The wheel now has come full circle and this evening the extent of Government's dependence upon the National Insurance funds for support of its activities is being exposed. We have no fundamental difficulty with the restructuring of the portfolio of the NIS. One regrets that this matter is not going to be the subject of a deeper debate in Parliament, given the time when it is occurring, but we have no fundamental objections with the principles behind the move.

However, Mr. Speaker, I must grasp the opportunity to reinforce a number of points concerning the management of the debt. Whenever it suits certain spokesmen from the Democratic Labour Party they like to put forward the jaundiced and unsupportable proposition that a lot of Barbados' problems today and in the recent past have been caused by the repayment of debt incurred by the Barbados Labour Party. That myth to some extent has been destroyed in a recent debate by my colleague in response to what I call a jaundiced position put by a spokesman of the Democratic Labour Party.

I want to stress for the record that to the extent that there was a foreign exchange burden in the last 2 years caused by the repayment of debt, the foreign debts that were repaid in 1991 which caused a problem was the Japanese loan raised by a former Democratic Labour Party Minister of Finance over the objection of a Democratic Labour Party Prime Minister, a yen bond that was supported then by all members on the other side including those who have been vociferous in blaming the Barbados Labour Party for causing...

Asides.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I would just want to make that point because it is a matter of public record that in late 1991 a lot of Barbados' foreign exchange's critical problems were caused by the Government being put to the necessity of having to service the Japanese bullet loan that was raised by the present leader of the NDP. That is a fact. It is also a matter of fact that most of the debt that is now being serviced and most of the funding that is now included in the Estimates that we have just recently approved is debt service for loans incurred after 1986. I want particularly to draw attention to the local loans portion of the debt and the facts are remarkable in what they have to say.

Since 1986 the local component of the debt has increased remarkably from $713 000 000 at the end of 1986 to $1.34 billion in September 1993. Most of this local debt, a lot of which is now being serviced, is debt incurred under the Local Loans Act. I think my colleague drew reference to the fact that Appendix D of this year's Estimates cites the fact that there are only about 4 issues amounting to about $45 million under the Local Loans Act that were in fact raised before 1986. That point, Sir, has to be grasped. I want it to be grasped for a very deliberate reason.

7.00 p.m.

In 1986 when the Barbados Labour Party came into this House as the Opposition, we took a position then that we would not be opposing debt on the incurring of loans willy-nilly provided that we were satisfied that the proceeds from the loans were going to be used for productive purposes. That is still our position. We are satisfied that the loans which were incurred by us as a Government were used for productive purposes to expand the productive sectors of this society, to strengthen our infrastructure, the benefits of which are still being realised by the country.

I am not going to, on this occasion, run off the list of purposes to which BLP loans were put. But I just want to say that in a sense there is one Government in this country and that when loans are raised to expand the productive capacity of the country to improve our social facilities, it becomes somewhat carping and narrow-minded for an

administration which is benefitting from the foresight and investment of a previous administration to be holding that previous administration to be responsible for its own difficulties.

As recently as 1988 the then Minister of Finance and Prime Minister spoke clearly to the fact that the debt profile inherited by the Democratic Labour Party was a manageable debt profile. He was very clear in that position in this House. We on this side are not going to bury our heads in the sand. If there are things that have to be done on the country's behalf and funds have to be raised for the purpose we are going to support them.

I strongly believe, Sir, and I have felt so for the last two years, that the Government should have sought to raise funds on the international market to help modernise and reform our productive structures rather than look to the IADB or the World Bank for investment loans. I felt so strongly. I also wonder at the paradox as to why Barbados is supposed to have the highest credit-rating of any country in Latin America but finds it almost impossible, so we are told, to raise a loan on the international market.

Sir, we are not going to take a blindfolded type position on the raising of loans but we want the record always to be clearly stated and the record as it stands now is that the Local Loans Act has been amply utilised by the Democratic Labour Party since 1986 to assist in raising funds to carry out Government's operations and that the time has come when the Democratic Labour Party has to acknowledge its own contribution to the creating of that debt problem.

My contribution to this debate is to defend the name of the Barbados Labour Party from the slanderers who, despite all the evidence to the contrary, will still want the country to believe that the problems of 1994 were Barbados Labour Party problems despite the fact that the economy in 1989 under the Democratic Labour Party was supposed to be batting like Sir Garfield Sobers.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I simply cannot let this matter pass and I want to make four very simple points. The first is that I have piloted a number of amendments to the Local Loans Act in this House regarding borrowings that had to be undertaken since June 1993. The Honourable Member for St. Peter is quite right to point out that the debts were not incurred by the Barbados Labour Party in the one hand and say that one should not slander the party by saying so but then goes on to say who incurred them even though he also makes the point that there is only one Barbados.

That point does not wash particularly well with me, Mr. Speaker for this reason. At June 30, 1993 the nominal value of the local debentures outstanding was $479 606 500 and the statutory limit was $550 million. We had to clear $30 million in debts incurred by statutory corporations some of which predate 1986, Arawak, BADC, I can give you the list, so that even the recent borrowings are to cover debts incurred not only by the Democratic Labour Party operations and statutory corporations but also by the Barbados Labour Party. If you read the Central Bank yellow book and I know the Honourable Member for St. Thomas judges one's capacity by how regularly one reads that book alone, and if you read this page in the back, that does not tell you anything. You have to look behind those figures because then I subsequently...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But I have brought these to the House before. This is not the first occasion. I had to bring before this House a further amendment to accommodate $281 million in new borrowing for the sugar sector. Some of those debts, a large proportion of them, are debts incurred by sugar plantations in respect of the agricultural division of the BNB under the Barbados Labour Party, not just the Democratic Labour Party, but the Barbados Labour Party. I can get the debt profile of BNB, if you want it.

The point I am trying to make is that if it is foolishness for us to characterise the debt as BLP or DLP debt, it is equally foolish, Mr. Speaker, for the Honourable Member for St. Peter, and unworthy of him, to seek to do so because even in the recent borrowings we have been clearing arrears due to debts incurred by statutory corporations. I could have said that off the top of my head. The file did not have to tell me because I know that every time we had to come here for a borrowing, it has to accommodate either transfers or debt swaps of one form or another as is occurring in this case.

Now, what it means, Sir, is that there has been an increase in the kinds of securities issued under the Local Loans Act where it has gone from $550 million in June last year to $1.3 billion. But I want to make the point that more than half of that increase relates to the clearance of arrears which were built up over time and relates to Government really seeking to clean up its financial portfolio. That point has to be accepted by the House and is not something for which anybody can really provide a counter argument. I understand the point the Honourable Member for St. Peter makes and if he wishes a full debate on this, at any time he wishes to bring a Private Members' Resolution I will respond accordingly when the time comes.

The second point relates to the NIS funds. I believe that the Investment Committee of the National Insurance

Fund is not creating enough in investing those funds in, for example, Government's privatisation programme, in real estate and a whole number of areas I think it should invest in. The yield on debentures and on treasuries as one can check I do not know what last month's was but I think it was almost to the order of 8% – probably 8.7% which...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Precisely. Any time you have spreads like that you are going to have a major problem convincing the Investment Committee that it should invest in other kinds of securities. So until we have an active programme, and I have asked the Central Bank to deal with this right away, for the marketing of Government instruments, including those that are issued under the Local Loans Act, we are going to continue to have this problem where the National Insurance Fund and the commercial banks take up those debentures.
7.10 p.m.

Until we have an active programme – and I have asked the Central Bank to deal with this right away – for the marketing of Government instruments including those which relate to the issues and the Local Loans Act, we are going to continue to have this problem where the National Insurance Fund and the commercial banks take up those debentures.

Any former Minister of Finance who makes the point that the MS funds should not be used in that way obviously does not have a holistic view of how the economy functions. Because if in lieu of the NIS taking up those debentures the commercial banks take them up with the same funds which the NIS deposits with the commercial banks, the net effect is that the commercial banks reap the rewards and not the National Insurance Fund. Therefore it would not make sense, in my view, for any Minister of Finance to tell the MS that they are better off depositing their money at 4% interest in a commercial bank in Barbados than purchasing Government securities which are traded by auction at almost 13% last year and even higher.

Nobody has to convince me, least of all the Honourable Member for St. Peter, that that point was a nonsense point and is something not to be admired in the speaker. But he was a financial genius and I have never professed to be. But on paper when you put the figures before me I can tell whether it makes sense or does not.

The last point I want to make is that it would have been attractive had we been able to go to the market last year, the international capital markets for funds. However, my own view is that not everybody is as patriotic as you are or alleged to be. There are people who have a vested interest in tarnishing Barbados' reputation and had we gone to the market with a number of factors outstanding, including the public servants pay increases and so on, I believe that there could have been speeches that the Government could not have answered. The markets are changing. The commercial banks which we did business with before are not in to that kind of lending. The kind of market Barbados has to go into now is a totally new market: the emerging markets where people are purchasing bonds for mutual funds. That market requires different kinds of procedures and that really is the simple fact of the matter, Mr. Speaker.

With those few words, Sir, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. D. W. BOWEN, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 2 inclusively were called** and **passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. D. W. BOWEN, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to Mr. SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair** and **reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON seconded by Hon. D. W. BOWEN the Bill was read a third time and passed.

EXEMPT INSURANCE (AMENDMENT') ACT, 1994

Order No. 12 war called – To move: the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Exempt Insurance Act, Cap. 308A.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, this is a simple Amendment. The Government has established an International Financial Services Advisory Committee which deals not only with exempt insurance but also international business matters. In lieu of that it has been decided that this Act be amended so that the establishment of an Exempt Insurance Advisory Committee which advises the Minister be deleted from the Act.

I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that, Sir, and reserve my right to speak.

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

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported, to Mr. SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, seconded by Hon. B. M. TAITT the Bill was read a third time and passed.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GUARANTEE BY MINISTER OF FINANCE FOR THE PAYMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST ON THE BORROWING OF $900 000 BY THE CARIBBEAN BROADCASTING CORPQRATION FROM THE BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA

Order No. 9 was called - To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Guarantee by the Minister of Finance for the payment of the principal and interest on the borrowing of $900 000 by the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation from the Bank of Nova Scotia.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as Your Honour is aware as this Honourable House is also aware very shortly we will be hosting the Global Conference in Barbados. The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation has been selected as the agency that will co-ordinate and broadcast the proceedings of the Conference all over the world The Corporation while examining its capacity to provide this service at the level that would be expected of Barbados concluded that it would need to purchase some additional equipment to the tune of some $900 000. The Corporation which, according to its Reports made a profit during the year determined at its Board Meeting that it ought to borrow the $900 000 from its bankers over a 5-year period and the bankers agreed. However, Sir, as is the case with banks in Barbados, especially, they wish to have a Government guarantee. The Minister of Finance has agreed and the law requires that this House approves the guarantee.

7.20 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think that we listened to the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, not long ago indicate that where there is work to be done of benefit to Barbados and funds need to be borrowed that they ought to be borrowed. The terms of the loan seem to me, Sir, and I think to most reasonable people, to be reasonable in the circumstances. It will be amortised over a 5-year period with monthly payments of $7 500 for 59 months and a final balloon payment of $457 500. This payment can be rescheduled over a further 5-year period if the Corporation's cash flow cannot meet such a payment.

You may recall, Sir, that this was done in the case of the loan obtained to purchase the TVRO in 1983. Interest is calculated at 11% per annum on a reducing balance. It is expected that in the first year, interest will be in the region of $95 000.

Mr. Chairman, the Caribbean Broadcasting Act, section 13(2) requires that it seeks the approval of the Minister of Finance and the Minister responsible for Broadcasting has also approved their seeking the loan. I believe, Sir, that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation has been demonstrating a certain fiscal prudence over the last few years. The last General Manager has reported in the press that the Corporation had shown a tremendous improvement over the last 5 years. I read that in the newspaper. I believe that the files indicate that to be so. I believe that all right thinking people would wish to see the CBC in a position to carry out its work effectively.

I hope, Sir, that there is not much more the House would wish me to add, given the state of the Honourable Members after 5 days of debate but I stand ready. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South says he is ready to debate, Sir, but I have heard one of his colleagues say that he and one other Member are the only persons in this House who have a certain disposition and I am not going to deprive the Honourable Member of Christ Church South of any of the things which stimulate him, Sir. If he feels able at this hour to tax his lesser brethren on that side with further debate I stand ready in response to deal with that and I feel that the young turks over here on this Front Bench seem just ready to bite. In the circumstances ...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: That is probably the best confession I have heard, Sir. That is the first time I

have ever heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael East admit that he was over thirty years old, Sir. It has taken 15 years for him to admit that, Sir, but I am very glad it is today. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I listen to the Honourable Minister introducing this loan, Sir, there is one point that he made that I cannot agree with him at all. He said that the teams of this loan are reasonable. I am very disturbed that in this era of low interest rates as was evidenced by the very low deposit rate that is paid by banks, that a Statutory Corporation with a Government guarantee is still being called upon to pay 11%. What hope is there for us?

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation. I said 11% but in fact the interest would be payable monthly at the bank's base rate plus 1%. The banks' effective base lending rate is 9%. Of course that is subject to change. So the base lending rate is 9% plus 1. But I have calculated that it adds up to 11%.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Well, Sir, there may be a couple of points reduction in the interest rate but I still say, Sir, that the base rate is 9, the savings rate is 4 but I am finding it strange with a government guarantee that you cannot get prime. I would like to know who gets prime in Barbados. It is a very serious thing. Because if you have a guarantee from the Minister of Finance where the whole treasury of Barbados is backing you and you still do not get prime, I cannot understand it. It is fictitious, Sir. Seriously no progress is going to be made against the attack on this serious problem of investment without an examination of what factors affect the financial markets in Barbados because they are very illogical to me, Sir. Something is basically wrong. We have a semi-monopolistic position in existence in Barbados that has to be broken that is why I am a great believer in the National Bank, Sir. I had hoped that the National Bank should crack this with a little competition. It is a very serious thing, Sir.

Now, Sir, on the question of CBC. I am very glad to see that the investment and the wisdom of the decision that was made some time ago to invest in STV is now beginning to pay off. It is fairly obvious to us that a lot of people are now convinced that STV was a very wise decision and it certainly has commanded a lot more acceptance among the community than at first and I would like to see it expanded. I would like to see CBC look seriously at the fact that some of the programmes that they charge you for and the amount of charges, I do not feel justified because I feel that if they gave some more inducements in this area and brought a greater variety of the shows, that more people would put in STV.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: You would be surprised how many people pay for kick boxing. I see it on TV and apparently a lot of people like it. But the other point about STV, Sir, is the bringing together of the Caribbean programmes and for those people who watch it, it is a very good thing. The sports is very good, Sir. But I would like to see also some more effort being done in the commercial area. This question of the competitor in the satellite dish. There are a lot of problems associated with that and scrambling and things of that kind but I really would like to see a movement forward in respect of the STV.

We still have problems with CBC, Sir. Sometimes the news reports bear no relation to what occurs particularly in relation to this House. I would say there has been a great improvement in the objectivity. I would like to see some more programmes with respect to discussion on the issues. I do not think that CBC, for instance, has had on TV and programme dealing with the Constitutional crisis that we have in our country. I am quite willing to volunteer to go and I will meet you there too, if you want to come. I am quite willing to go on the programme. That is a very serious issue, Sir, and we do want any specialist and adviser from the department at Cave Hill, Sir. We do not wish that, Sir. There must be people in the community who would like to express an opinion on this with an informed moderator. I feel that some of these programmes should be expanded. I do not know if Honourable Members really realise this, that politics and campaigning in this country has changed a lot. People no longer wish to go out in the dew and hear anybody.
7.30 p.m.

It is quite clear to me, and CBC should respond to this, that people in this country are determined in their minds that just as they can see the issues of American politics in their homes and discussed on a regular basis, they fail to understand how it is that issues in their own country cannot be discussed and seen by them. That is very serious, Sir. This House must not fail in its duty to deal with the question of broadcast of our proceedings. Otherwise, we will be doing a great disservice to Parliament as an institution. Young people will soon know more about the American system of government than our own system of government.

It behoves all of us, Sir, in this House to take a serious and objective look at what is going on and the changes that are taking place and we must understand our role and function. We must make a decision with a view to ensuring that not only something like the Budget is debated and extraordinary events, but we have to have some regular programme to ensure that the serious issues that we

have to deal with are dealt with in a manner in which the public can see them just as they can see how the American issues are dealt with.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, there has been some improvement in the quality of output from CBC in the last couple of years. I have no doubt at all in my mind that it was entirely due to the strictures of the Opposition in here in the last 3 or so years due to the consistent attack and also the consistent suggestion from this side during debates which involved CBC. But there has been improvement, Sir, and they have proven themselves responsive.

Sir, I have one or two quick comments to make. I heard the Minister talking about profit and suggesting that they are on some growth path and so on. There is a big debt of $6,556,609 still owed to the Consolidated Fund by way of loans. I would like to know to what extent is it being liquidated. Because when you put that on one side of the balance sheet against last year, you are not in any position. at all other than a severe deficit position.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The second point I wish to make is in relation to the use of STV. I am entirely in agreement with the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, but I would like to add and refer to a speech that I made in here around 1989 or 1990. I said then that STV could be used in addition to being an educational channel in part and an entertainment channel in terms of the inculcation of the correct Caribbean perspectives and precepts, and that STV had a role to play in the development of a Caribbean identity. In particular, I referred then to the question of sports broadcasting. Whereas we are inundated year round with basketball from the United States... in fact, let me tell you how stark it is, Sir. Sunday evening at 4.30 p.m. a radio station personnel from Melbourne, Australia called me for their quarter to seven in the morning sports programme and had a ten minutes discussion with me about sports in Barbados. They were concerned in Australia about the heavy emphasis *on* North American sports in Barbados, something that I see Allan Lee in the *London Times* of last Tuesday is complaining about also. Now these are people outside of the Caribbean complaining from their vantage point complaining about this heavy cultural sporting penetration and we do not seem to be correcting the imbalance.

It is my suggestion, Sir, that STV could be used not to inundate but to redress the balance. Let me tell you how, Sir. For the Sir Garfield Sobers Anniversary the Committee was at a loss to find film on Sir Garfield Sobers. CBC had none. Let it be understood that the greatest national sporting hero that this country has ever had...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: CBC has no worthwhile footage of Sir Garfield Sobers. I say that here without reservation. What they do up there with the tapes is to recycle them and record over them and *so* forth and they do not have anything.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They do not have any recent film. So when we were sitting around the table discussing where we can get film from, I volunteered my own personal tapes which I have of Sir Garfield from Lord's in 1957 playing a couple of shots to his last inning 150 not out at Lord's in 1973. I have volunteered them as the former Minister of Sports can tell you. Three tapes I loan to CBC. Now we thought that in the build up for the celebrations we would have been seeing some exerts. I have not been seeing any but I would like to say something. I believe that Barbadians would pay whatever fee it is if CBC during the period culminating with the final event in April, let us say on a Friday night in April, said that they are going to put on an hour and a half of Sir Garfield, Barbadians would rush and buy it once it does not clash with anything else of equal significance. They do not seem to be thinking along those lines. I may be anticipating them. I do not know. But I have not seen anything out and there is *so* much film available.
7.40 p.m.

The Members in here do not have any film of Everton Weekes playing shots. I have that. Everton Weekes hitting Trevor Bayley past the extra cover for 4 in 1957 when he made 90. I have the Honourable. Member over there bowling in 1966. There is film available at the BBC and we can buy it. Arrange the rights from the BBC and buy it. The BCA, on my suggestion, tried to buy some of this film but they did not send anybody to the BBC in England to monitor what they were buying so they bought what I got for £13.99 a piece. To get them converted costs $120 a piece.

What I am submitting is that the footage is there and it only needs the right approach from whichever organisation. I would say CBC dealing directly with the BBC. You can get it and you *can* plan the programme over a period of time which would be of interest not only to us who are of that vintage but for the youngsters coming up. It only takes a little imagination. The information is there and we *can* get it.

I saw the...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member is still speaking.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir. Finally, Sir, I notice that the former General Manager of CBC departed without any fanfare. It was as though they were glad to get rid of him but people bearing that surname are also not averse to being kicked about like footballs. He has gone in a very unsung way. I wonder why he has departed.

Asides.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, protect me from the loquacious one on that side.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have not heard him.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am hearing him.

Sir, the House should be given an explanation as to why the former General Manager had to depart. It is a matter of some national concern. A few months have passed and I believe this corporation falls under the sovereignty of the Prime Minister and the way that he has operated in relation to the Ministry of Tourism on appointments to the Board we can well anticipate that there will be some considerable time before a chief executive officer is appointed at CBC unless current rumour is true. Now rumour can be a very lying jay but in this particular case there seems to be such a solid substratum of fact that I would like to encourage members on that side and particularly members in Cabinet to whom I hope the appointment will come not by way of a G7 paper for note but hope that the appointment will come for an approval to Cabinet so that when May comes make sure that no support is given to the present Director of the NCF. I know that there will be...

Mr. SPEAKER: I would not accept that.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: What is wrong with that?

Mr. SPEAKER: Because as a public officer, you are making reference to his conduct in another way. If you say that, then you are committing something that is not right.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He is not a public officer for a start.

Mr. SPEAKER: He is.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: NCF? No, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Operating in his capacity as such.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Even if he is, all I was saying is that I think it would be better off...

Mr. SPEAKER: I think you would be better off not to go down that road. I am not dealing with individuals.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not reflecting adversely, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Even so, I would rather not take that road.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Do you mean for trying to say that in my view he would be better placed remaining among the broken windows and the rats in West Terrace...

Mr. SPEAKER: That is why I said that. I have already made my ruling. You have identified the person. There is no doubt about that.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I would only say that it would be a disastrous day for Barbados if somebody like him were appointed to head up CBC. It would be the ultimate disaster. I am asking members on that side to use such influence as they may have.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, let me wind up this debate by first of all responding to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who started off by suggesting that. the time has come for us to examine what factors affect the market in Barbados. I do not think anyone will have any quarrel with that. There is a general feeling with those who have any interest, knowledge or feeling of what goes on in markets elsewhere in the world agree that the one in Barbados has very little elastic in it. There is a feeling that there is a kind of autonomy that is directed from outside. I agree that examination should be in order.

Mr. Speaker, his second point was to make note that STV was a wise decision and I am heartened to hear that because as time goes by in this country facts are sometimes forgotten. I wish to remind the Honourable Member – I am sure he will remember – that when I became Minister responsible for Broadcasting in 1986 the STV equipment was down in the Port rotting. Yes, it was, over a million dollars in equipment. It had been down there for some considerable time with port charges accruing. I made the very firm decision. In fact, there was a row going on between the then Minister responsible for Broadcasting – I think it was Hon. Nigel Barrow – as to whether there should be STV or Cable.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: So, Sir, it was in the context of the very early decisions which I made as Minister responsible for Broadcasting in which they went to the Bank of Nova Scotia and raised the money because the matter had been outstanding for some time. I gave the Board approval to go to the Bank of Nova Scotia to

raise the money. I not only put STV in place but, you will recall, I put the Honourable Member who is now the Minister of Finance on the Board of CBC.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, we went and got the money to build the new CBC. It is not generally known and recognised that it was a decision by this Minister acting in my capacity as Minister responsible for Information that went out and made the bold decision of that day to get all the money and show them how to get the money from the Bank of Nova Scotia to build the new CBC Headquarters.

I recall when we went up to Sturges – the Honourable Member might not remember as I don't think he was here, the Leader of the Opposition – to fix the antenna there was a massive vituperative reaction from the Barbados Labour Party of the time.
7.50 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Suffice it to say, Sir, that the record will show, and I am glad that the Honourable Member, the Minister of Finance, is here because he can confirm every single word I am saying about the difficulties which CBC had at that time under the regime of the Barbados Labour Party that we rescued them.

I recall, Sir, that was the time when Elombe had been banned from CBC. And the very first decision I made as a Minister was to restore Elombe to the radio waves in Barbados. I recall that with pleasure, Sir. When I look and see now that the then Chairman of CBC is writing about democracy, sometimes I feel that he would have done much better as a comedian.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: You go and see if the record will show you passed that money. You may have passed the money but nobody could get it. The record will show that we showed them how to go to Nova Scotia. We had discussions with the Bank of Nova Scotia,from the Post Office Building.

I notice too, Sir, that he said that there has been some improvement and I agree with the Honourable Member. There has been substantial improvement at CBC. I recall very well how CBC had been pilloried, pushed around and dealt with in a manner that was inconsistent with what is decent. I am very pleased to see that the improvement includes what the Honourable Member calls a change in the fairness. I understood him to be saying that there is now a more dispassionate approach to the presentation of facts and information although he did say that from time to time news reports from this House have a tendency not to bear relationship to the truth. If that is so, it is not different from what occurs with all of the media in Barbados. We see sometimes reports from this House which are very strange.

I wish to agree with the Honourable Member. I do not think anyone can disagree with the Honourable Member that there needs to be more broadcasts of the matters of current interest in Barbados, in particular politics. There seems to be a view in Barbados that somehow it is all right to discuss Mrs. Thatcher and Mr. Major and discuss Mr. Clinton and have STV showing on a continuing basis CNN and all the politics of everywhere in the world but somehow to discuss the politics of Barbados, unless the politicians are biting out each others throats, it is not worthwhile discussing.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: What, in fact, should happen is that there should be at least one weekly, in my view, where people could take opposite views just like we see the broadcast every night on CNN where there are four persons, two anchors and two guests and one takes the left position and one takes the right.

Aside.

Hon. B.M. TAITT: If by use of a "Gang" it will help to improve and enlighten our people I think it is desirable. I am one of those persons who, having been trained in North America, believes very seriously that good information is one of the best things you can give to anybody. If it is true and if it is good then people would want to have it. I do not mind if the information is something negative about me if there is an opportunity to respond to it. I think that is healthy. All my colleagues who know me know that in and outside of this House I take my blows like a man for if you are in this business and you do not get blows...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Ask the Honourable Member for Christ Church South. Getting blows allow us to have callouses in places that when we start to share blows we can share them with power.

Now, Sir, I personally believe that the proceedings of this House of Assembly should be broadcast. I am not speaking for the Government. I am saying that I, personally believe, have always believed, and will continue to believe, that the proceedings of this House should be broadcast. I think that the Commission, at a time not long from

now, must deal with the issue and the House should deal with it not in a partisan manner but it should be dealt with in accordance with the wishes of the members of the House.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am saying it now to you. I have always felt that information from this House would enlighten the people about the good things we do in here. More than 80% of the things that happen in this House are non-controversial but they are of importance to the people and the only information they get is two inches in the "Advocate" or the "Nation" the next day. Many people do not bother with Hansard and the call-in programmes do not necessarily give information and the politicians are afraid most of the time to go on the call-in programmes, not because they do not know how to speak, but they fear most of the kinds of questions that might come from time to time.

Cultural sporting penetration and STV could be used to address the balance in cultural sporting penetration. I believe that in due course STV will be used in that way. But I want to say that we must be very careful when we get STV or its improvement because there is no need in the modem technology to have a long list of pieces of equipment anymore for SW. As I understand it, the technology has reached the point now where they will be moving to a different stage. I believe that it will only be a matter of time when these things happen.

The Honourable Member wanted me to say, if I *can,* why Mr. Sam Taitt left CBC. I can only say to him that he says that people with the name of Taitt are accustomed to being kicked around. He knows that better than most people because he sharpens his foot on this Taia from time to time when it suits him. Whenever the rules allow he takes an opportunity to see how he *can* use his feet on this Taitt so he has some experience in pushing and kicking Taitts around. I cannot, however, speak to the pushing around of that Taitt at CBC. I know nothing about it and therefore cannot inform the House as to why 'he left. I know that he is working as a professor in the United States because I have read it and he has confirmed it to me. He has gone back to the system from whence he came which is the University system and he, no doubt, considers himself to be better off. I hope he does. I will merely say that in the five years while he was at CBC we have seen the fruits of his labour. He has performed well. My understanding is that that was the view of the Board. I do not know why he left. I cannot now say because I am not the Minister.

On the question of having no film of Everton Weekes and indeed not sufficient film of Sir Gary, I have to say that is an unfortunate failure of the entire community.
8.00 p.m.

First of all it has to be remembered that there was no television as we know it now, although in the last 5 years or so many people take for granted such things as television film. Individuals now have their own – almost – film production unit. It has to be remembered that much of this technology is less than 10 years old.

When Tony Marshal1 recently – through Barclays Bank – was having a number of lectures about cricket, it was very difficult for them to find film anywhere, not only in Barbados but there was not a lot of film about the West Indian players. There is not a lot of film about Sir Gary. I am responding to the point that was made. Sir, there will not ever be sufficient film of what went on 10 years ago because it was not even considered at that time that it was worthwhile to keep it. What we have to do is ensure that the new heroes who come along do not suffer the same fate.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I take this opportunity also to say that CBC will survive for a very long time. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that brings us to the end of Government Business, I would wish before we close the proceedings to thank the Reporters especially. The Reporters have worked as usual over a 5-day period. This is their toughest time during the year but even so we take it for granted. But we still have to say thanks to them and all the other persons who work in Parliament to help make these Estimates as smooth as they were – the security forces who ensure that we can be comfortable while we are here because they are looking after us outside, I would like to thank all of them. I should like to thank all Honourable Members. Members on this side for their unstinting support in the face of some laudable but nonetheless feeble attempts to bring the debate, at some times, to a point which it might have been thought to be embarrassing to the Government. I wish to go on record as thanking my colleagues for the sterling support which they gave us on this side. I should like to thank all Honourable Members on that side who kept democracy in Barbados going by whatever tactic they use, nonetheless it forms part of the democratic system. I should like to thank the Honourable Members on that side for their continued contribution. May they long remain in that position to assist us with carrying out the democratic profile of Barbados at this level.

I think we had good debate on those days when debate was engaged. I am very pleased. I hope that my colleagues who were not here, the Prime Minister who is recuperating well and the Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the House who is also recuperating well – I hope that it will not be long before we are able to feel and hear their presence with us again. We wish them well.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as the Minister of Finance has announced, Budget Day is the 28th March, 1994 and I believe that he will be speaking at 5.00 o'clock in the evening. I therefore beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Monday the 28th day of March, 1994 at 4.45 p.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in rising to second the motion for Adjournment, I would also want to associate the Opposition with the compliments that have been paid to the Reporters and members of staff of Parliament, members of the security forces who have assisted so greatly during the course of the last week during the proceedings of Parliament.

This debate will go down in history as being distinguished as much for what was debated as for what was not debated, Sir. It has to be disclosed that on March 18, I did serve notice to you as required by the Standing Order 66.3 of my intention to move an Amendment to reduce by $1 the allocations to the Prime Minister's Head and the allocation to the Cabinet Office and allocation to the Ministry of Tourism. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for all kinds of reasons those were precisely the kinds of Heads that the House did not have the opportunity to debate.

History will come to wonder what might have been the outcome of the debate had the House been put to that test. Having said that, I remember last year the anxiety on the part of Government to collaborate with the Opposition in setting the very fine standard of having all of the Heads debated. One is left to wonder what special set of circumstances caused the Government this year to depart from the tradition that was set last year and a tradition which we all pledged to uphold.

But history will have to report, as I said, that this debate was distinguished more for what was not debated than for what was. It was a strong debate in some respects. I truly believe that the debate on the Ministry of Finance was one of the best debates that I heard in this House where privatisation policy of Government together with about 6 other topics engaged the attention of Members of this Parliament. I must thank the Members of my side for their sterling contributions to this debate.

Mr. Speaker, regrettably I have to say that I was privileged to be in the House in 1987 when the quality of Chairmanship in the Committee was of such an extraordinarily high standard exemplified by the best tenets of even-handedness and fairness that the House had to put on Record then its recognition of the magnificent job that was performed by the Chairman. I am not going to deprecate the role of the Chairman, with all due respect.

Certain remarks made ***by Mr. O. S. ARTHUR were ordered, by Mr. SPEAKER to be expunged from the Record.***

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I would just say, Sir, I wish on this occasion that I was in a position to say, as was said in 1987 that the Chairman discharged his responsibilities in a magnificent manner.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

The question that the sitting be now adjourned until Monday, March 28, 1994 at 4.45 p.m. was put nnd resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the sitting accordingly.

8.10 p.m.

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BRADSHAW, Mr. DeL. O. (St. Michael South East)
BRATHWAITE, Mr. L. L. (St. Michael North East)
CHELTENHAM, Dr. R. L. (St. Joseph)
EASTMOND, Mr. R. C. (St. James North)
ESTWICK, Hon. T. C. (Christ Church East)
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TULL, Mr. L. R. (St. George South)
WALKER, Hon. C. V. (St. George North)

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 – 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Monday, March 28, 1994

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 4.55 p.m. on Monday, March 28, 1994.

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. WEEKES, G.C.M., JP., (Speaker)
Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A.,(Econ.), J.P., (Prime Minister, Minister of Economic Affairs, Tourism, International Transport and Minister for the Civil Service)
Mr. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B.
Hon. B. M. TAITT, B.A.(Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B.(Hons.), (Minister of Foreign Affairs & Deputy Leader of the House)
Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Q.C., B.A., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs and Leader of the House)
Hon. M. A. KING, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General, Minister of Justice and Minister for CARICOM Affairs)
Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P., (Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce)
Mr. N. K. SIMMONS
Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc.(Econ.)
Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc.(Econ.), (Leader of the Opposition)
Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Q.C., LL.M.
Hon. C. V. WALKER, J.P., (Minister of Health)
Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, J.P., (Chairman of Committees)
Mr. E. E. GREAVES, G.C.M., B.A., Ed.M.
Mr. W. W. HALL, G.C.M., H.B.M., J.P.
Mr. C. LeR. TROTMAN, M.A.
Mr. R. L. MORRIS, B.A., Cert. Ed.
Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B.(Hons.), (Minister of Finance)
Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Q.C., LL.B.
Mr. L.R. TULL, Q.C., M.A.
Miss B. A. MILLER
Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, B.A. (Hons.), J.P.,
Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc. (Econ.)
Hon. J. O. TUDOR, J.P. (Minister of Labour, Public Works, Community Development & Sports)
Hon. D. W. BOWEN, B.Sc. (Accounts) (Hons.) (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries)
Mr. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A., LL.B.
Hon. T. C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., LL.B., (Minister of Education and Culture)

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of this House of Tuesday, March 15, 1994.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes of this House for Tuesday, 15th March, 1994 have been circulated and presumed to be read.

I beg to move that the Minutes be now confirmed, Sir.

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

PAPERS

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Economic Report, 1993.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay:

The International Business Companies (MCC Capital Limited) (Rate of Tax) Order, 1994.

The 1993 Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Central Bank of Barbados.

Barbados' Structural Adjustment Strategy.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Praedial Larceny Prevention Regulations, 1994.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Praedial Larceny Prevention Act, 1992 - 5 be now read a first time.

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

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY
SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20.42 (5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of the sitting.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker suspended those Standing Orders accordingly.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is the Order of the day.

Order No. 1 was called - To present the Annual Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals for 1994.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. John.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND
BUDGETARY PROPOSALS

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I count it as a privilege to live in an age when Barbados demands that great things be done by its citizens, an honour to be of the generation of Barbadians who are called upon to put to maximum use the creativity and knowledge which are the natural consequences of the foresight of those who fought for free educational opportunities. I am also proud to be of the generation which must say: "we will give" instead of "we will take."

This generation of Barbadians has learnt, and continues to learn, that there is no comfort in laziness, that there will be no progress without risk, that we can go no further without struggle and that only change will take us confidently into the twenty-first century. We could as well now write our odes to business as usual and let the hagiographers do their job in extolling the virtue of the work of the forbears of modem Barbados.

In November 1918, the war had ended and an era had ended. David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of the victorious Britain, spoke these important words,

> "...we are approaching the new problems in a spirit of comradeship. Let us keep it as long as we can. I have no doubt that human nature will prevail yet, but for the moment let us finish the task together, and when we have finished it, then let us play political football. You can afford to do it then. But the work is not over yet - the work of the nation, the work of the people, the work of those who have sacrificed. Let us work together first."

I start this evening's presentation on that note, Mr. Speaker, because I am more than ever conscious of the adversity faced and the sacrifices Barbadians have made in the name of economic stabilisation and adjustment, the achievements we have wrought, the new spirit of comradeship that we are developing and the optimism which now envelopes this nation.

And we must not sacrifice that on any altar. I say this because we still have much more to do. And though there are many who, through their writings and public stances despair, criticise, obstruct, agitate and foment negativity, we fully understand that Barbados is a democracy and that our citizens must choose their own path in life without let or hindrance. That apart, those who are with us need to be energised with more creativity, ingenuity and commitment to this task.

5.05 p.m.

One does not expect that the policies of the Democratic Labour Party will easily find favour with all sectors of the Barbadian society - they never have. We have always had the reins of Government in the most difficult of times, faced with the greatest of challenges and with a modicum of resources but that has never, and will never, deter us. There is something that those who oppose our policies have in common and have always had

in common and you need only to judge them by whose side they instinctively take on the great issues which affect this nation.

As all kinds of viewpoints contend on our economic development, particularly on the call-in programmes, in newspaper columns and editorials, and on our street corners, I have heard many Barbadians ask and rightly so, "Why do we need to do more?"

"What more?" and

"When?"

I hope, this evening, Mr. Speaker, to let you know the answers to these questions in as simple a manner as possible. Conscious as I am of the weighty matters which have hitherto been part of the Budget process in Barbados, I am also anxious to give you the figures but there are those who would say, like Thomas Carlyle, that "you might prove anything by figures".

The real proof of our success as Barbadians must rest on what you instinctively feel about what is happening and how involved you are in the process. As long as some influential Barbadians believe that our economic policies bear a "Made in Washington" stamp, our sense of independence and our commitment to sharing ideals will be shattered. But one must be weary that, there are also "hose who apply the "Made in Washington" stamp to everything. They see it as their task to undermine yours and my conscious independent judgements about what we need to do and my job is to help you to understand that there are some things that we need to do because they need to be done and not because anyone else has told us so.

However, before I seek to answer those questions I think Barbadians want answered I think it incumbent for me to elucidate a bit about the global economic environment, including our region so that we all will be better able to comprehend our current situation and the steps we propose to take in our advancement to a better society.

INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS:

World Economic performance in 1993 was generally disappointing, although some countries recorded strong output growth. Economic recovery continued to be feeble in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries with Germany and Japan experiencing periods of output contraction and with the United Kingdom, after a promising start, recording a slowing of output growth as the year progressed. Economic performance in the United States was the reverse of that in the United Kingdom, with a strong fourth quarter performance following an uncertain start in the first quarter. In Eastern Europe the countries of the former Soviet Union, and in Africa, generally poor economic performance contributed to and was in turn influenced by political instability. In Latin America relatively strong growth was recorded in Columbia, Chile, Argentina; and East Asian economic performance, (excluding that of Japan) continued to be impressive.

Inflation rates generally remained low perhaps influenced as much by official policy in most countries to restrict the growth in prices and by the low growth in demand caused by weak economic performance and high unemployment rates. In spite of some setbacks, the processes of economic reform continued in Eastern Europe and in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), with substantial Western economic and political support. In the Middle East, as in South Africa, agreement on steps towards political settlement seem to promise greater attention to economic issues and in Europe there was a greater national independence in the conduct of monitoring policy while allowing the unification processes to go forward.

On the trade front the United States Congress approved the North American Free Trade (NAFTA) legislation, paving the way for its implementation in 1994; and the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations, in which Barbados played no insignificant part as a Member of the Commonwealth, was finally completed, providing a major boost to the movement toward world wide trade liberalisation.

Economic performance in the OECD countries as a group remain disappointing, following low growth in 1991 and 1992, particularly given the extent of the influence by QECD countries.

As a matter of great interest, Mr. Speaker, the relationship between output growth and unemployment is changing. Output growth in the United States and Canada was relatively strong and in the United States it was estimated that between 3% and 4% for 1993, with the overall performance being strongly influenced by developments during the second half of the year and was accompanied by substantial labour productivity gains, which had little impact on the unemployment rate for most of the year. The rate of inflation remained below 3% during the year. In Canada, output expanded by about 3.1% accompanied by a large budget deficit and considerable unemployment. Inflation was, however, contained below 2% partly by tight monetary policy stance.

Mr. Speaker, just let me digress a bit and touch briefly on an area that is of great concern to me and the Government, and that is unemployment. We in Barbados and the region are beset by fairly high levels of unemployment. We are not unique in this respect, for many developed and industrialised countries in the world face similar difficulties. Indeed, one only has to look at the United States where hundreds of thousands of workers were retrenched last year alone. There are many examples: the world's biggest company, General Motors, closed over a dozen plants with the resultant loss of job equivalent to the total workforce of Barbados, yes Mr. Speaker, close to 90 000 persons were severed. Alexanders, Macys, and Sears Roebuck Department Stores have closed several outlets, laying off thousands of workers; IBM, the computer giant that prided itself on never ever displacing any of its employees since its inception, laid off close to 50 000 in short order. Numerous businesses, both large and small, have either closed or gone into receivership. Savings and Loans Banks have slided into financial ruin, costing the American taxpayers billions of dollars in federal bailouts. And one of the most severe retrenchment programmes ever undertaken by a modern day government will see the Federal Government of the United States slashing its work force by a whopping 250 000 workers over the short term – yes, again, Mr. Speaker, as much as the total population of Barbados. They have euphemistically called it reinventing Government. Barbados is not alone.

Sir, we are part of this global trend. However, we take no comfort or satisfaction from the fact that unemployment is rampant worldwide, for we know we have our own responsibility and commitment to our young people to provide the climate at the opportunities for job creation, and that is what we are relentlessly and assiduously working towards.

In 1993, economic performance in the newly industrialising economies of Asia continued to be impressive, with China recording a growth rate of 13 per cent, Hong Kong, North Korea, Singapore and Taiwan achieving average growth rates of 6 per cent.

In Latin America, economic performance was mixed, with the high rates of growth of Argentina, Brazil and Chile, which averaged 6 per cent, contrasting with the 1 per cent recorded by Mexico and Venezuela Adverse weather conditions, weak import demand in the industrial countries, and political 'instability in many countries contribute to continuing poor economic performance in Africa. Despite considerable economic support from Western European countries the transition to market economies in the Commonwealth of Independent States, which' formerly were members of the Soviet Union, and other Eastern European countries continued to be impeded by structural constraints.

While world economic performance in 1993 was generally disappointing, the trend in performance in most countries of the OECD, and in a number of countries in Asia and Latin America, points to improvement in the future. Why?

*Efforts to keep inflation under control,

*the slow downward movement in unemployment rates,

*the slow upward drift in growth rates,

*the increased opportunities for production and trade provided by successful conclusion of the GATT negotiations, and

*the passage of the NAFTA legislation in the US,

provide considerable hope for performance improvement in the medium term.

5.15 p.m.

Increased production and trade will, however, be accompanied by substantial economic restructuring in many countries; and this adjustment process is likely to cause significant social and economic dislocation. Benefits will accrue to those economies with the capacity to identify, create and meet the demand for new goods and services in the international marketplace, and to those economies with the flexibility to adapt to new products and processes as demand patterns change.

REGIONAL PERFORMANCE

At the regional level, Mr. Speaker, in terms of real output growth during 1993, preliminary data identified Anguilla, Guyana, the Cayman Islands, St. Kitts-Nevis and Belize as the high growth countries, with output increases ranging from 7.5% for Anguilla to 3.9% for Belize. In Anguilla, the Cayman Islands and St. Kitts-Nevis the major contribution to growth came from tourism, although in St. Kitts-Nevis a rise in sugar production and in private sector construction activity helped to boost activity levels.

Growth in Guyana, estimated at 8.3%, was more broadly based, with substantial output increases recorded 'for rice, gold and timber, and indications of significant activity increases in the construction and distribution sectors. Growth in Belize, although relatively high by regional standards, represented a substantial slowdown from the 1992 performance caused mainly by delays in public sector project implementation as a new administration re-oriented the country's development programmes and strategies.

As mentioned earlier, unfavourable banana export market developments, including currency value effects. adversely affected output levels in the banana-producing countries, with the impact being particularly noticeable in St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Dominica. Sharp declines in banana output and export-earnings in St. Lucia, and to a lesser extent in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, were partly compensated for by increases in tourism activity, but differences in the worker-employment profiles in the two industries were probably reflected in some increase in unemployment among banana workers and farmers.

Marginal growth performances or, in some cases, declines, were recorded for the Bahamas, Grenada, Montserrat and Trinidad and Tobago; although, given the preliminary nature of the data and the weakness of the statistical base in the Region, there is likelihood that revised data may show changes in the performance patterns of all the countries. Zero or negative growth in the Bahamas resulted from a further decline in tourism earnings, as a rise in the number of stopover visitors was not sufficient to compensate for a contraction in the average length of stay and a fall in the average hotel room rate.

In Grenada, output expansion in the tourist industry probably just compensated for declines in agricultural and manufacturing output, and growth is expected to be marginal. In Montserrat, although visitor arrivals increased consumption and investment demand declined, the GDP growth was negative. The weak economic performance in Trinidad and Tobago continued into 1993 as crude oil production continued its secular decline and as prices in the international petroleum markets remained soft.

The generally weak economic performances of the economies in the region contributed to the maintenance of high levels of unemployment.

PROSPECTS FOR THE REGION

Economic recovery in the Region will depend as much on a resumption of sustained growth in the global economy as on the restructuring of individual economies to enable them to respond competitively to new demand. Why?

* The movement towards increased trade liberalisation (particularly given the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of the GATT negotiations and the passage of NAFTA),

* greater freedom of factor movements and

* intensification of information flows

will require both the public and private sectors to become more open in their operations, to become more efficient in production and to re-examine traditional roles and behaviour patterns.

BARBADOS ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE IN 1993

Mr. Speaker, the economy of Barbados recorded real growth of 1 per cent in 1993, mainly as a result of the improved performance of the tourism sector. Real output in the tourism sector increased by an estimated 3.1%, the first growth in three years. Long-stay arrivals increased by 2.7%, reflecting more intensive marketing of Barbados as a tourist destination, a significant increase in the number of airline seats into Barbados and an improved economic performance in some industrialized countries. Both the average length of stay and hotel occupancy increased and the number of visitors arriving by cruise ships rose by 7.2% and, for the second successive year, exceeded the number of long-stay visitors.

Long-stay arrivals from the United States increased by 1.9%, the first increase since 1987. The U.S. remained Barbados* premier market, accounting for 28.5% of all visitors. However, with the growth of other markets in recent years, Barbados' dependence on the U.S. has declined somewhat. The United Kingdom market performed well in both the winter and summer seasons, recording an overall increase of 12.7% and increasing its market share to 25.3%. Barbados attracted 25% of U.K. visitors to the Caribbean and despite the weakness in the German economy, arrivals from that market grew by 49.5% as a result of effective marketing and increased seating capacity. Germany's market share rose to 7.3% in 1993. The Scandinavian market, which expanded rapidly during the latter half of the 1980s, suffered from deep recession and withdrawal of charter services, resulting in a 25.6% fall in visitors. The Canadian market, which showed signs of recovery in 1992, declined by 1.6% in 1993 as the Canadian economy remained weak.

In the agricultural sector, production fell by 7.1% during 1993 due mainly to a large decline in sugar output. The 10% fall in output was the result of declining acreage under cane, lower yields and reduced sucrose content. For the second successive year, the entire crop was exported. Production was below the quota under the Lome Agreement which was satisfied by residual shipments from the 1992 crop.

Output in non-sugar agriculture fell by 5% during 1993. Problems of over production by dairy farmers and chicken producers during the previous year resulted in cutbacks, especially during the first half of the year. Milk production declined by 11.4%, as farmers adjusted to their new quotas with the Pine Hill Dairy. With excess stocks

of chicken, producers lowered prices and reduced production by almost 5%. However, consumption of chicken rose, and fish catches increased by 22.8%, reducing the demand for substitutes like pork, veal and mutton.
5.25 p.m.

In the manufacturing sector output registered a decline of 0.3% in 1993. Some subsectors – paints, insecticides, tobacco and beverages – recorded strong export performance but local demand remained weak. Increased activity in the transportation sector raised output of petroleum products by 7.5%. Food manufacturing continued to face significant competition from regional sources and registered a decline. The garment industry, which has been in chronic decline for four years, slipped further by 15.1%.

Construction activity rose by 2.1% in 1993, mainly as a result of modest resumption in Government's capital works programme and tourism-related investment activities. Work was completed on a cruise ship terminal at the Bridgetown Port, a project funded jointly by Government and private interests. The first phase of the Westmoreland Golf project got underway. Some hotels were refurbished and a number of duty-free shopping outlets were renovated. Work on road construction and rehabilitation resumed in the third quarter. Quarrying output increased by 2.1%, following the 8% decline in 1992.

With international oil prices falling, local production declined by 3.4% to 462,450 barrels, as exploratory drilling ceased. The average import price was US$16 a barrel, compared to US$16.50 a year earlier. Natural gas sales also fell. Consumption of electricity increased by 1.9% during 1993; the increase was concentrated in the second half of the year due to higher energy demand by the Barbados Water Authority to operate its water pumps. Usage by the commercial sector and householders rose by 2.1% and 3.5% respectively.

It was heartening that the 12 monthly average rate of inflation declined to 1.1% by year-end and this compares to averages of 6.3% in 1991 and 6.1% in 1992, when Government's fiscal tightening put upward pressure on prices. In 1993, tax policy had little or no impact on domestic inflation and lower international oil prices reduced energy costs. Housing and food prices remained relatively stable while transportation prices rose by 5.3%.

Wage inflation was contained by the Protocol on Prices and Incomes which froze wages for a two-year period starting in April 1993. Wage increases were generally limited to those included in previously negotiated settlements. Public sector workers received an effective 8.9% increase on their 1992 pay when their salaries were restored to 1991 levels. However, new legislation in October 1993 froze increments for public servants for a further twelve-month period.

The average rate of unemployment was 24.7% for 1993, compared to 23% for 1992. However, unemployment claims filed with the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) declined by 21% during 1993, an indication of a slowdown in the rate of job losses. The unemployment rate at the end of December was 22%, three percentage points lower than at the end of 1992.

FISCAL OUTTURN 1993/94

Mr. Speaker, you will recall that the fiscal programme for 1993/94 was put together with a view to achieving an overall deficit of less than 1% of Gross Domestic Product. In keeping with this objective, the original Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure indicated that revenue would have been $1 060.0m, while current expenditure (including amortisation), was targeted at $1 141.5m and capital expenditure at $138.7m. This suggested that the overall deficit on the basis of our presentation of the data would have been $220.2m. When this was converted to the basis used by the international institutions, by excluding amortisation and showing the operations of enterprises such as the Airport and Printery on a net basis, the deficit would have been $26.4m or 0.9% of Gross Domestic Product

At that time, the key macroeconomics variables on which the programme had been prepared were that the economy would have experienced a 2.0% growth in real GDP, an annual rate of inflation of 2.4% and that retained imports would have increased by 28.6%.

However, Mr. Speaker, because of a slow recovery of the international economy, the temporary difficulties which were experienced in the local tourist industry and the slow recovery of the sugar industry, the anticipated 2% growth in real GDP did not materialise.

As a result, it became necessary for us to revise the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure downwards. On the basis of an anticipated growth rate of 0.9% in real GDP, a rate of inflation of 2.7% and a 20.7% growth in retained imports, the revenue was revised to $1 013.6m. Current expenditure (including amortisation) had to be reduced to $1 118.4m with capital expenditure of $100.9m. This is expected to result in a deficit of $205.7m and when that is converted to the basis used by the international institutions, it becomes $8.2m or 0.3% of nominal GDP.

Current Revenue for 1993/94 is expected to show an increase of $9.1m or 0.9% over that for 1992193. However, a close analysis of the data will show that because of the tax reform measures which were implemented during 1993/94 as part of the restructuring of the economy, the composition of revenue changed significantly.

For example, while there was a strong growth in taxes on incomes and profits as a result of the changes to the Income Tax Structure, and in taxes on goods and services because of increases in the Consumption Taxes, there was a substantial decline in the Levies. Personal Income Tax is expected to increase by $49.7m or 37.3% as a result of the widening of the tax base and the elimination of exemptions, while the levies are expected to decline by $34.8 m. or 40.6% as a consequence of those changes which were effected from January 1, 1994 when the Health Levy, the Transport Levy and the Employment Levy were eliminated as part of the direct tax reform programme.

Consumption Taxes are expected to increase by $28.6m or 12.3% as a result of the increased consumption tax rates in April, 1993, while it is anticipated that the non-tax revenue will decline by $17.6m mainly because of a decrease in the profits of the Central Bank by about $15.0m.

The major feature of the 1993194 outturn of the current expenditure is the restoration of the 8% to public workers. This decision is expected to raise wages and salaries by $27.6m. or 7.4% to a total of $390.2m. National Insurance contributions and other levies are not expected to increase in view of the reductions which took effect during the year.

Expenditure on goods and services is expected to fall by $59.9m to $98.0m. However, it is important to point out that the 1992193 goods and services figure included the sum of $60.0m which was provided to cover the settlement of intra-public sector arrears and therefore would not be present in the 1993/94 figures. As a result, expenditure on goods and services in 1993/94 will be about the same as in 1992/93.

During the fiscal year under review, the Government continued with its strategy to reduce its borrowing on the foreign commercial market. Thus, even though debt servicing costs are expected to increase by $16.8m to $327.0m in 1993/94, the interest cost component is expected to decline by 7.6%. This decline will occur despite an increase of 1.4% in domestic interest costs, largely because of a 23.8% decline in foreign interest costs as the foreign component of the National Debt declined.

At March 31, 1994, the National Debt is expected to be $2 397.4m of which the foreign component will be $675.4m and the domestic portion $1 722.0m. The substantial increase in Current Transfers of $44.0m or 19.0% over those for 1992/93 is the result of the settlement of arrears to the University and the provision of $9.5m to meet the operating deficit of the sugar sector.

Capital expenditure is expected to fall by $19.0m or 15.8% below that for 1992/93 and the largest area of decline is in capital transfers from $39.4m to $22.0m, which reflects reductions in transfers to domestic public financial institutions and contributions to international financial institutions. Net lending is projected at $12.1m which is $1.1m less than in 1992193. Provision is made in that amount for a loan of $10.0m to be made available to the Barbados Development Bank to meet the cost of redeeming the National Development Bonds which mature at the end of March, 1994.

5.35 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that in spite of the decline of $19 million in the capital expenditure and net lending, the amount spent on capital formation of $61.8 million is the same as in 1992/93. In other words, while difficulties which we experienced did not permit us to increase spending on capital formation, we made sure that we at least maintained the same level as last year.

MONETARY POLICY - 1993

The aims of monetary policy during the calendar year 1993 were to further the process of financial sector liberalisation, provide a moderate stimulus to economic activity and to maintain an adequate level of international reserves.

Economic activity in the first half of the year was weak and to provide stimulus for the return to growth, monetary policy was eased considerably. Credit controls on consumer lending, which had been in place since 1977, and the hire purchase control regime were formally removed. During this period, commercial banks were extremely liquid but interest rates remained relatively high. The Central Bank reduced its discount rate to banks from 12% to 8% and the commercial banks responded by lowering prime lending rates to 8% down from 11% at the end of 1992. In addition, the cash reserve ratio for banks was lowered from 8% to 6% of deposit liabilities.

In continuation of the process of liberalisation of the financial system which had started as early as 1991 with the removal of the ceiling on commercial banks' average lending rate, financial institutions were allowed to determine the rate for residential mortgages. During 1993, institutions reported a reduction of the mortgage rate by one percentage point to [illegible] with at least one institution offering 8% for mortgages

In the latter half of the year as credit demand and economic activity picked up, the international reserves came under pressure, inducing the Bank to raise the minimum savings rate to 5% in November 1993. Prime lending rates rose again inducing the Bank to raise the minimum savings rate to 5% in November 1993. Prime lending rates rose again, ranging between 8 3/4% to 9%.

There was a resurgence in credit demand during 1993. The Central Bank of Barbados estimates that there was an underlying increase in credit of $116.3 million, principally due to rising demand by the distributive and personal sectors. Part of the increased borrowing by the distributive sector was used for restocking and upgrading and expanding duty-free facilities.

Deposit growth slowed in 1993. The low interest rates offered on time deposits acted as a disincentive to savings within the financial system. Government benefitted from this pattern as some institutional investors shifted some of their savings into Government paper. Some savers lent their funds directly to commercial houses.

Movements in the Net International Reserves (NIR) of the monetary authorities during 1993 followed the traditional pattern of rising in the earlier part of the year and thereafter falling. In the first half of the year, the NIR grew by almost $93 million, allowing the foreign reserves targets agreed with the IMF to be met by a fairly comfortable margin of $25.1 million in the first quarter and $7.9 million in the second quarter.

The large increase in reserves in the first quarter is attributable more to a reduction in the demand for foreign exchange than to stronger receipts. Despite a recovery in the value of retained imports, actual payments for imports were comparatively low and debt service payments by Govenunent were the smallest for some time. During the second quarter, debt-servicing and sales to commercial banks picked up significantly. However, with the receipt of proceeds from the 1993 sugar crop and the Natwest loan, the NIR continued to rise, albeit less quickly.

In the last six months of the year, the Net International Reserves fell by $50.8 million. This compares with a decline of $36.4 million and an increase of $0.5 million respectively during the comparable period in 1991 and 1992.

Although reserves were projected to decline in the third quarter, the fall of $72 million was well above expectations and the target of $170.9 million was missed by a wide margin. Heavy debt service obligations put pressure on available reserves and this was compounded by much higher sales to commercial banks to facilitate increased payments for imports, foreign travel and reinsurance premiums. At the same time, tourism receipts weakened as a result of a fall in long-stay visitors and other invisible earnings and transfers also declined.

Despite a steep fall in November, resulting primarily from Government's debt service payments, there was some recovery in the NIR during the last quarter. Consequently, the reserves target, which had been lowered in light of the third quarter outturn was met by a comfortable margin.

In light of the achievements of which I have spoken and which I believe that most of our citizens are now internalising, the questions earlier posed are significant. Mr. Speaker, why Q we need to do more?

STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT TO DATE: WHY AND WHAT MORE?

As policy-makem we need to spell out the processes and mechanisms which are required to implement a programme of medium-term macroeconomic measures to make our economy more resilient and self-reliant. We must design pragmatic policies for the growth, development and improvement in the quality of life of the people of Barbados, which can be effectively implemented within the prevailing social economic and political climate of Barbados.

Since 1991, the Government has been putting in place a coherent programme of refonn of policies and institutions, both of a microeconomic and macroeconomic nature. This programme which can be characterised as structural adjustment includes changes designed to make institutions more efficient. These changes seek to improve resource allocation, increase economic efficiency, expand growth potential and increase resilience to future shocks. Stabilisation policies, by contrast, seek to achieve sustainable reductions in the current account of the balance of payments and the fiscal deficit, as well as to bring the rate of inflation to a sustainable level. The adjustment model which we embrace encompasses policies and actions to achieve changes in external and internal balances, as well as changes in the structure of incentives and institutions.

While the concept of structural adjustment tends to be associated with policies advocated on developing countries by the Washington-based multilateral financial institutions, we as a people must accept, Mr. Speaker, the intrinsic good sense of undertaking actions which enhance our capacity to earn our way in the world

5.45 p.m.

The Government's vision of the new Barbados is contained in the Development Plan for the period 1993 to 2000, which was circulated to Honourable Members two weeks ago and on which there has been some debate. This document sets out the overall macroeconomic programming framework, the monetary, trade and fiscal policies, the sectoral initiatives and programmes and activities aimed at mitigating the undesirable social impact of adjustment which the Government will pursue. I am also proposing to lay today, in fact, I have already laid, the

Government's Structural Adjustment Strategy prepared by the Ministries of Finance and Economic Affairs and the Central Bank of Barbados. No one can now doubt where we are going.

The decline which the economy of Barbados experienced after 1989, measured in terms of a significant cumulative fall in gross domestic product between 1990 and 1992 and an accompanying contraction in employment has been the subject of much discussion in this Honourable Chamber. The major contributing factors to this decline were the poor performance of the tourism sector, the continuing contraction of the manufacturing sector and the difficulties experienced in the sugar industry. Happily, as the performance of our economy in 1993 indicates, we are well on the road to recovery.

The downturn in national output coincided with a peak in external debt servicing obligations between 1990 and 1992. Barbados, like other developing countries, despite its good credit rating, found it difficult to raise new loans on favourable terms from the international private market to roll over loans falling due during this period. Foreign exchange became scarce and the ensuing loss of confidence in the Barbados dollar placed the exchange rate under pressure. No one can deny that the measures which the Government was forced to implement, with the assistance of the International Monetary Fund in mid-1991, though unpopular, were effective in stabilizing this economy. They were not the wrong policies, though they have been costly politically and socially. But history will prove that this country, faced with grave difficulties, made the right choices. More importantly, Mr. Speaker, we set our faces to the wind and sailed into the storm.

It is precisely this kind of adversity that our ancestors would expect us to overcome. Many of them toiled in sub-human conditions, practised great frugality and thrift, adhered to strong values and planned with great foresight to ensure that their children were better educated, housed, fed and prepared for greatness. To have disappointed them by cowardice, lack of patriotism, timidity and retreat when faced with the *great* challenge of managing change out of crisis would be a harsh and cruel blow. That is not the fate of the Barbadian, Mr. Speaker, and even though there are those who jeer and sneer at our public servants for their courageous actions and sacrifice in accepting, with some exceptions, a reduction of emoluments, there are few countries in the world where citizens put the national interest so high in their priorities.

Government has recognized that a change in fiscal outlook is an essential component of the economic stabilization programme. The Central Government deficit was slashed form 8 per cent of GDP for fiscal year 1990191 to 1.1 per cent for the fiscal year 1991/92, and low fiscal deficits have been maintained in subsequent years. This was achieved through a combination of tax increases and spending cuts involving reductions in public sector employment and wages, as well as large cuts in public investment. As I indicated in my presentation of the Estimates for 1994195, I intend to pursue a policy of maintaining a low deficit through tight control of current expenditures.

Mr. Speaker, let no one fool you, I wish that I were able to be the Minister of Finance who could usher in a new era of new employment opportunities in Government, new social programmes, paved roads in every tenantry, wage increases for public sector workers and the answer to every dream. But we need to be careful and prudent. We need to let what we have done so far take root and work; and dramatic changes will come in time. We need to do mare before those reins can be loosened.

Mr. Speaker, what mare do we need to do?

The medium-term economic strategy has been designed to improve the country's long-term competitiveness and it includes

* improving incentives for investment in foreign exchange earning activities,
* reducing the extent of Government intervention in the economy,
* enhancing the incentives for private sector initiative; and
* removing structural impediments in the economic system.

We have to recognize that as a very small economy we must adjust to unfavourable external development or shocks. This is the essence of structural adjustment and we have been slow to respond, during the decade of the 1980s, to the switch in international demand from our goods and services towards goods and services which require higher levels of skill in their production. These changes are constantly taking place in a dynamic and expanding global economy. The mann in which a nation responds to such changes essentially defines its comparative advantage.

The medium-term strategy involves strengthening incentives for private investment, especially in exports of goods and services. The incentives that will secure comparative advantage in the areas mentioned above include tax reform, trade reform, the institution of productivity related wage contracts, divestment,

reorganization and closure of public enterprises and the enhancement of export promotion services.

Stabilization of the balance of payments has provided breathing space to complete the design and implementation of a medium-term structural adjustment package. Fear of devaluation has receded and with it the expectation of high inflation. Market forces pushed interest rates downwards as the banking system became more liquid. However, because the savings deposit rate is the only rate fixed by the Central Bank, the rate paid by commercial banks on time deposits has fallen below that paid on savings, thereby creating a distortion in the structure of rates and encouraging a movement of time deposits out of the commercial banking system.

Our most notable achievement to date has been the rationalization of the direct taxation system which came into effect at the beginning of July, 1992. The reform of the system of direct taxation has increased the profitability of firms by reducing their payroll costs through the elimination of special levies for health and transportation. As of January 1,1994, contributions to the Unemployment Benefit Fund have also been reduced.

Mr. Speaker, that was followed by the successful negotiation of a Prices and Incomes Protocol which is the centrepiece of our economic strategy. The Protocol addresses a number of issues related to improving productivity among Barbadians, maintaining our commitment to low inflation, monitoring monopoly pricing, improving conditions in the labour market and the development of a framework for continued discussion with the Social Partners. I am told that this document is sought after throughout the world, particularly among developing countries, as a model draft document for consensus and national commitment.
5.55 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the Protocol represents a compact which demonstrates that our Social Partners have the maturity to discuss the fundamental issues which will determine the future competitiveness of the Barbadian economy from a rational and informed perspective. We must use the National Productivity Board to provide us with the analysis which will enable a better understanding on how productivity gains can be used to promote investment, rather than to finance consumption. We have to recognise that the deferment of consumption of the additional output which results from increased productivity can be used as the basis for creating job opportunities for the unemployed and we need, therefore, to devise schemes which will encourage workers to invest their share of the gains from productivity to support the process of economic expansion.

In February of this year, the first phase of the trade reform programme which will help improve the competitiveness of exports of goods and services by lowering the cost of import competing goods was implemented. The necessary amendments to customs legislation and the Miscellaneous Controls Orders were gazetted on February 10, 1994. Reduction in protection for import substituting manufacturing is to be accompanied by intensified programmes for export promotion and financing so that manufacturing firms may improve productivity and quality to internationally competitive standards.

The sugar industry and agriculture in general has been the subject of intensive discussions over the past year, and a comprehensive action plan for its restructuring has been completed. The preparation of the action plan has benefitted from consultations with the Inter-American Development Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank has approved a loan of $23 million for a $60 million sugar industry revitalization project

The programme for arresting the decline of the sugar industry constitutes the most critical area of the agricultural reform agenda. The existence of a guaranteed preferential export market and the demand in the domestic market provide the basis for a strategy that seeks to return sugar production to the level of between 66 000 and 70 000 tons per year on completion of the project The Government has established the Barbados Agricultural Management Company Ltd. to produce sugar cane on those plantations which have been heavily indebted to the BNB and to manage the assets of the Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd. The BAMC has contracted Booker Tate Ltd., an international firm of sugar consultants, to provide it with management services.

The success of the sugar industry revitalisation programme will depend on the improvement in production on the independent sugar cane plantations and to this end, a subsidy of $1.8 million has been allocated in the Estimates for next year 1994/95 to assist them in meeting the first year's cost of a five-year sugar cane replanting programme. This programme, which will be supervised by the BAMC is intended to improve sugar cane quality by replanting approximately 5 000 acres per year.

The Government has established the Barbados Agricultural Credit Trust to take over and manage the non-performing sugar industry loans of the Barbados National Bank. On October 1,1993, the Government issued $208.9 million to the BACT which has been used to purchase the loans made to the heavily indebted plantations and the insolvent Barbados Sugar Industries Ltd. from the Barbados National Bank.

We need, now, to put in place sectoral reforms in the areas of tourism, agriculture, the financial sector and

public enterprise. The medium-term recovery of the economy depends critically on the performance of the tourism sector. The medium-term strategy for the recovery of tourism involves improvements in the area of marketing, the financing of improvements to hotel plant and the strengthening of institutional structures in the industry to enhance its capacity to make informed market-focussed decisions. To ensure that the efforts to improve the marketing of our tourism are supported by the provision of a high quality product, financing will be provided for the refurbishing of hotel plant and the investment in new facilities through the Public Enterprise Investment Fund. Hotel owners and new investors will benefit from the creation of a financial environment which improves the profitability of efficiently managed operations.

Let me turn, now, to the role of the private sector. While the philosophy of a market driven economy has been a fundamental determinant of the Government's economic policies, interventions in response to sectoral interests have become a source of significant distortions. The object of the structural reforms is to remove these distortions, to reduce the extent of Government intervention, to improve the collaboration between Government and the private sector and to improve the incentive framework.

Direct government participation in economic activities is being reduced through the divestment programme and the management of Government's demand for finance to minimize competition with the private sector for available credit. A thorough review of the Government enterprises is underway. Government equity has already been divested in a number of public enterprises and others have been identified for sale, closure or reform. The remaining public enterprises are being evaluated with the assistance of the international financial institutions.

The improvement of institutional arrangements for co-operation between the private sector and Government will be a major contributory factor to the successful implementation of the structural adjustment programme. The Foreign Exchange Committee comprising representatives from the Government, the Private Sector and Organized Labour has been proving to be a useful forum for discussions of national and sectoral issues. Its operational effectiveness has been enhanced by the creation of task forces to address specific issues and prepare action programmes for implementation by the Government. One of these task forces has recently prepared a report on administrative constraints to private sector activity.

Mr. Speaker, turning to the cost of adjustment I must note that the major component has been the rise in the level of unemployment, from an average of 17% between 1986 and 1991 to 25.5% in the second quarter of 1993. Government has been able to cut its expenditure without reducing the delivery or quality of education, health, social services and environmental services, although plans for improvement in some desirable areas such as road maintenance have been temporarily suspended.

Unemployment is partly a consequence of Government's over-absorption of labour. The elimination of inefficiencies allowed for the provision of essentially the same Government services with 10% fewer workers.

Private sector restructuring involves the replacement of low productivity, low quality operations with more skilled intensive activity. This has released large numbers of low skilled workers at a time that shortages are emerging for specific skills, especially in the areas of information services. Labour market rigidities, especially the high level of severance payments, meant that many firms had built up an excess supply of labour which they could no longer maintain on the payroll as the recession continued. The time required for planning and implementing new competitive investment leaves a gap between the release of labour from declining sectors and the availability of jobs in the sunrise sectors.

Government's programmes to alleviate the employment transition will focus on restraining, ownership of small scale enterprise and job counselling. The range of training opportunities for the unemployed and new entrants to the work force has been reviewed and is being extended. Training is being provided to Government agencies to enable more effective counselling for job seekers. Surveys for the unemployed and their skills requirements and availabilities are underway. The private sector is being invited to collaborate on new employment opportunities and on training.

The Year 1994/95

Mr. Speaker, let us turn our attention to the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for 1994/95. Before I do so, I wish to say something about the organisation of Government's budgetary process. Over the last fortnight there has been much comment, both inside Parliament and in the wider community, about the revenue forecasting methods used by the Government. One comment made by one prominent member of the business community asserted that Government estimates its expenditure needs for the year and then formulates a tax package to put in the required funds. To believe that the methodology of government budgetting is as simplistic as this, would be to believe that the Barbados economy possesses an infinite capacity to be taxed. This, by no stretch of the imagination, can be true. Indeed, Government's introduction of a simplified direct tax regime last year, based as it was on the concept of revenue neutrality, attests to Government's desire not

to push the tax burden much higher in the current economic environment. The reform of the indirect taxation system next year will also have revenue neutrality as its central theme. Government is prepared to let economic growth be the main factor which increases revenue inflow.

Simply put, Government's revenue estimation methodology starts, as it must, on the revenue side, with an estimate of what the current year revenue position will be. Using that position as the base, projection of the ensuing year's revenue inflow is generated by applying to that base estimates of coming year's sectoral nominal Gross Domestic Product and the retained imports which help in generating the GDP.

The final step in the revenue estimation process is to refine the revenue estimate by taking into account the effects of extraordinary. actions which the Government intends to carry out, for example, the lowering of the Common External Tariff or the introduction of a tax measure or concession. It is this refined revenue estimate which, when added to expected foreign resources, forms the envelope within which expenditure plans must be fitted. 6.10 p.m.

No forecasting method is foolproof. One is aware that estimation errors will occur. These may be due to the forecasting process itself, a process I may say which we are continuously seeking to improve. Frequently, however, our estimates turn out to be incorrect due to unexpected changes in the economic landscape. In such a context the vital requirement is to be immediately cognizant of such changes and to make compensating adjustments. Let me assure you, however, Mr. Speaker, that Government's budget building process is neither back-to-front nor haphazard. Rather it is based on well accepted practices of estimation.

The fiscal programme for 1994/95 has been designed on the basis of certain assumptions and with certain objectives in mind. The more important assumptions are that real GDP will grow by 2.7%, the annual rate of inflation will be 2.3% and retained imports will increase by 8.5%.

Mr. Speaker, the major boost to the economy is expected to come from the tourist industry through the combined efforts of the public and private sectors. Government, for its part, intends to spend $172.1 million in 1994/95 on its Capital Projects. The major areas of spending are as follows:

	$ million
Tax Administration and Expenditure Management	8.8
Sugar Sector Rehabilitation	11.0
Project Cycle Management	1.2
Primary Education Programme	3.0
Barbados Community College Hospitality Institute	6.3
Third Education and Human Resources Project	1.8
South Coast Sewerage Project	17.8
West Coast Sewerage Study	2.3
Health Services Rationalisation	1.5
Solid Waste Study	1.1
Geriatric Hospital Upgrade	4.7
New Polyclinics (Glebe, St. John)	1.1
Coastal Conservation	4.7
Industrial Estates	4.2
Technical and Vocational Education and Training	2.6
Highway 2A	6.5
Second Road Rehabilitation	11.2
Bridgetown Roads Safety	1.0
National Transport Plan	1.0
Water Resources Study	1.2
Subsidiary Roads	0.9
Sir Garfield Sobers Sports Complex	1.3
Tourism Development Study	1.2
Sherbourne Centre	5.5
Airport Expansion Study	0.9
Airport Improvement	2.8
Bridgetown Port Expansion Study	0.7
	$106.3m

The revenue of $1 022.2m shows an increase of $8.6m or 0.9% over the projected outturn for 1993/94.

The current expenditure of $1 099.5m constitutes a decrease of $34.5m from the projected outturn for fiscal year 1993/94.

The major changes in the composition of the current expenditure are in the areas of foreign amortisation and transfers which have declined by $13.5m and $33.4m respectively.

During the fiscal year 1993/94, a special effort was made to deal with arrears due to the University, but the same effort is not necessary this year and this is largely responsible for the decline in transfers.

There is an increase of $5.8m in Personal Emoluments over the projected outturn for 1993/94 mainly to reflect the provision for paying increments.

Capital Expenditure and lending for 1994/95 of $170.9m will be an increase of $70.9m over the projected outturn for 1993/94.

Mr. Speaker, one of the objectives of this year's fiscal programme is to provide for a substantial increase in spending on capital formation. The idea behind this objective is to assist with the projected growth in the economy and the reduction in unemployment.

FISCAL POLICY: THE ISSUES

Mr. Speaker, the presentation of the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals for the year 1994 provides the opportunity for review of some of our most cherished opinions on the role of the Government in the management of the economy. Lord Keynes reminded us many years ago that even when we profess to be hard-headed and practical in our approach to economic issues, our actions are frequently rooted in the theories of some longdefunct economist. Let me confess my own bias, as the Minister of Finance of a country which has responded with fortitude to the shocks of this decade.

Faced with the conflicting pressures to reduce the burden of taxation and to produce more goods and services from a dwindling revenue base, I will seek refuge not in history, but in pragmatism. This is a challenge of major proportions which requires the Government to review and redefine its traditional role.

If we understand the lessons of the past three years, we must recognise that there must be a shift in the basic model of governance used in Barbados. To those who are concerned that for the financial year 1994195 the projected level of government expenditure is lower than that for 1993/94, I would frankly recommend that they open their eyes to what is going on in the world around them. We cannot continue to believe that the only workable model of government is one which is large, centralised and bureaucratic. This does not signal government in retreat but government redefined.

We need to adopt a new approach to Government to take us into the twenty-first century. The role which will most often enable the Government to achieve a balance between the demands exerted on it and the resources at its disposal will be that of a catalyst and a facilitator of productive enterprise. For too long we have been chained to the wagon of spending and taxing. We have seen taxes rise to levels which impose a fiscal drag on the economy. We have seen, also, the attempt to finance an unsustainable level of government activity by borrowing which led to an accumulation of debt which threatened the domestic and external balance of this economy.

These financial proposals have been built upon a careful analysis of what constitutes an appropriate fiscal policy framework for promoting the continuation of the recovery of our economy. From this perspective, I have had to strike a balance between activities which the Government should do to promote the rate of growth of the economy and those which it should avoid so as not to become, itself, an impediment to growth.

AREAS OF REFORM:

Government is undertaking a programme of expenditure reform so that we can change what Government does and the way that Government works. But as two experts from Singapore have said in a recent World Bank document "Change cannot happen suddenly, not least because experience is a vital part of any institution's effectiveness".

Government in Barbados is an old institution which needs to be surveyed thoroughly so that changes that are introduced do not affect the distributive justice that we hold dear and so that the changes are practicable and therefore implementable.

In the first instance, we need to modernise the way we do things, improving our office space for professionals, introducing better systems for managing information and reducing the dependence we have on files. The capital expenditure, the more widespread use of computers, the establishment of communication systems by electronic mail and the associated training, will call for increased expenditure which will pay for itself by later savings in operational costs. Even though we are aware of the benefits, we have been constrained by financial considerations from undertaking most of this expenditure immediately.

There are, however, three institutions-building projects which the Government is undertaking in this regard. The Ministry of Finance, with assistance from the Inter-American Development Bank, is undertaking a Tax Administration and Expenditure Management Project to improve the efficiency in tax collection and to get better value for money spent

6.20 p.m.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs is improving the management of every stage of the *project cycle* from identification to post-completion evaluation with IDB assistance to ensure that projects are selected which will bring the highest returns to the economy; and the Ministry of the Civil Service is embarking on additional training in a *Human Resources Development Project to* improve the operations in the Civil Service as a whole.

These initiatives will involve the expenditures of $10.2 million in the Ministries of Finance, Economic Affairs and the Civil Service in the forthcoming Budget year. In addition, my Ministry is intensifying the process with a view to achieving efficiencies additional to those being introduced by the three projects. As those two experts from Singapore also pointed out: 'The ***process of change must be built into the way that the public sector operates.***"

Accordingly, we are reducing operational costs where operating standards suggest that those costs are too high. We are saving money by rationalising operations that are inefficiently decentralised, we are de-emphasizing those activities that are no longer important and, where possible, arranging to transfer activities to the private sector, bearing in mind the issues of distributive justice and political and legal constraints already mentioned.

As one can see, the preparedness to transfer activities to the private sector is in evidence in the road maintenance projects on Highway 2A and Highway 1 and in other activities. The competition between public and private sectors is stimulating efficiency and provides useful examples for other operations to follow.

MONETARY POLICY 1994

The thrust of monetary policy during 1994 will be designed to build on the gains of 1993. Earlier this month the Central Bank, encouraged by the growth of international reserves, lowered the minimum savings rate to 4%.

In keeping with Government's commitment to increase liberalisation of trade and the improvement in our financial system, I have decided, on the advice of the Central Bank, to further liberalise the existing system of Exchange Control management in Barbados. This will be another step in the direction which I think is desirable – a more open and liberal exchange control regime.

The liberalisation measures will take the form of additional authority to be delegated to commercial banks to facilitate the execution of a greater number of foreign exchange transactions without prior reference to the Central Bank.

These measures are designed to expedite the execution of foreign exchange transactions and to relieve the Central Bank of repetitive tasks in order to enable the Central Bank to undertake a more extensive programme of monitoring foreign exchange flows. The proposals include, Mr. Speaker, higher limits for commercial banks to release foreign exchange in respect of prepayments for merchandise imports, business and private travel and sundry payments. In addition, commercial banks will, for the first time, be allowed to approve the remittance of funds for medical treatment abroad and open foreign currency accounts in the names of companies operating in Barbados on the advice of the Central Bank within prescribed limits. Details of these measures will be announced by the Central Bank in due course.

These arrangements should impact positively on the cost of operations of businesses, thus enhancing their competitiveness. They should also minimize the cost and inconvenience to individuals in enabling them access to foreign exchange.

I also wish to announce that Government has accepted the obligations of Article VIII, Sections 2, 3 and 4 of the IMF Articles of Agreement, with effect from November 3, 1993. With respect to payments for invisibles, the Central Bank will continue its general policy of granting requests for foreign exchange which are in excess of the basic allocation delegated to authorised dealers.

By accepting the obligations of Article VIII, Barbados gives confidence to the international community that it will pursue sound economic policies that will obviate the need to use restrictions on the making of payments and transfers for current international transactions and thereby contribute to a multilateral, payments system free of restrictions.

CAPITAL MARKET DEVELOPMENT: AN INITIATIVE

Capital market operations in Barbados are executed through a variety of institutions including commercial banks, trust companies, insurance companies, finance companies and the Securities Exchange. These institutions have harnessed Barbadian savings and used them to finance investment activity in important areas like construction, manufacturing and tourism. They have also enabled Barbadians to improve their living standards at a somewhat faster rate than would otherwise have been feasible for the individual without capital resources. The instruments they offer represent a relatively wide spectrum of maturities. In the public sector these include treasury bills, treasury notes and debentures; in the private sector deposits and shares.

By investing in Government paper, as required by Central Bank's stipulations, or as a result of their own portfolio requirements, the institutions have been an important source of funding for Government activity. At the end of 1993 the lending institutions provided credit amounting to 85% of estimated GDP.

There has, however, been continued concern with the heavy dependence of our firms on debt finance. Equity finance, through the issue of shares, would enable owners to diversify their risks and permit greater flexibility. Further, while our current institutions have been able to extend mortgages of up to 20 years and by rolling over principal sums with a long-term credit to firms, in general the funding available for business activity is so short-term as to possibly preclude some high-risk, but high return activity.

The administrative difficulties in issuing and disposing of shares were addressed by the 1987 establishment of the Securities Exchange of Barbados. It has clearly helped. The number of companies listed

have increased from 13 in 1987 to 16 in 1993. Trades increased from $4.2 million in 1988, the first full year of operation to $18.3 million in 1991 before plunging to $4.4 million in that difficult economic year, 1992. Renewed trade in 1993 reversed investors' losses and is a good sign of the market's robustness. However, equity remains an under-utilised source of finance and, as a matter of interest, Government is considering the facilitation of the development of mutual funds in Barbados as a means of providing better returns and a more diversified portfolio of investments for our citizens.

6.30 p.m.

In 1991 Government entered into an arrangement for the establishment of a regional stock exchange to include the three existing exchanges in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. It is hoped that this arrangement will eventually help to strengthen equity demand and supply by providing investors with a wider range of opportunities. To further encourage firm and investor participation, Government is taking a two-pronged approach - the promotion of public awareness and the encouragement of institutional development.

First, the Central Bank will be undertaking work on an educational programme to provide better information to the public about the mechanisms and opportunities available for financial investment. This should help savers to understand the process of investing through the capital market. Secondly, research will be undertaken with a view to foster institutional development to promote greater use of tradeable instruments such as public and private bonds, bills and commercial paper. Institutions such as unit trusts will be encouraged to pool the resources of small savers and provide them with management services at a cost that makes participation in the bond and equity markets a practical possibility.

I therefore plan to seek technical assistance to work with Central Bank personnel and private institutions to develop proposals for instruments and organisations appropriate to our size and circumstances. Part of this exercise should include the establishment of a statistical data base system on capital market flows, to facilitate our understanding and planning for the sector.

PUBLIC ENTERPRISE INVESTMENT FUND

It is in this context that I wish to announce that I shall be immediately establishing a high-level committee to advise me on the most effective and equitable arrangements for the use of the resources of the Public Enterprise Investment Fund. According to the Public Enterprise Investment Fund Act, 1993-19, the purposes of the Fund include:

defraying the costs associated with the sale of an enterprise or any interest in an enterprise,

financing specific investment projects and

financing the repayment of any public debt.

The resources of the Fund have been obtained from the divestment of public assets, and I consider it entirely appropriate that I should be advised by a tripartite committee, consisting of two representatives of each of the social partners.

While I would not wish to restrict the scope of the committee's recommendations, I will be particularly interested in receiving advice on how those resources which will be made available at concessionary rates from the PEIF could be blended with funds from commercial lenders.

The committee should give priority to recommending how these funds could be used to finance the refurbishment of our hotel plant, and to provide loans and equity capital for small scale enterprises. In short, the committee's recommendations should focus on how the PEIF's resources can be used to support innovative employment generating activities, as well as assisting in the improvement of the product of our major sector.

Mt. Speaker, there are two other developments of which I should speak in today's presentation because of their significance in the short-term and their impact on the lives of our citizens.

INDIRECT TAX REFORM : THE INTRODUCTION OF A VALUE ADDED TAX FOR BARBADOS

Over the last few years the Government of Barbados has responded to the challenge of meeting the financial and economic needs of the country by embarking on a comprehensive programme to reform its domestic system of taxation which had become ineffective. As you will recall in 1992 and 1993, major changes were made to the direct tax system. Individual income tax was reduced in 1992 from a top marginal rate of 50% and five income bands to a top marginal rate of 40% and three bands. In 1993 the number of income bands were further reduced to only two with the rates being 25% and 40%. In 1992 the corporation tax rate was increased from 35% to 40% to be consistent with the top marginal income tax rate. The changes also included the removal of the stabilisation tax and a significant reduction in the levies on individuals.

The reform process which is to be continued in 1995 will now target the indirect tax system. This aspect of the reform is intended to simplify the system, minimise

economic distortions and provide a more stable source of Government revenues. Under this phase several indirect taxes will be replaced by a value added tax system. The VAT system proposed for Barbados is one type of broad based consumption taxes, the fundamental differences in concept between a value added tax and other sales taxes being the composition of the tax base and the point of collection of the tax. For example, a retail sales tax is applied to the entire base of the tax including the imported portion, whereas the value added tax technically excludes the imported portion from the base of the tax, that is, it is a tax on only the local value added component on the base. A retail sales tax is collected entirely from firms selling at retail while the value added tax is collected in part from every firm throughout the production and distribution chain, with each link in the chain being entitled to a refund of taxes on its inputs.

Although the VAT system, like any other indirect system, is inherently regressive, it will be imposed in conjunction with the existing progressive direct taxation system and therefore the overall taxation regime will maintain its progressivity. In any case, Government may consider the use of an income tax credit facility for the vulnerable lower-income groups.

Some of the advantages of the value added tax over other forms of sales tax are:

- The value added tax provides, by far, the easiest way of eliminating cascading in the system by allowing a credit of all tax paid on inputs. Businesses will simply impose the tax on their sales and remit the net amount to Government.

- The value added tax provides a more effective audit trail than other forms of sales taxes. In order to claim a credit against the tax due on their sales the tax paid by firms to their suppliers must be supported by invoices. These invoices provide a means of selectively cross checking between firms to ensure that the proper amount of tax is' being claimed on purchases and reported on sales.

- Under the value added tax, a large majority of the revenue will be collected at the import, manufacturing, wholesale and services levels, where compliance and enforcement are most effective.

In practice, the value added tax is not nearly as complex as it first appears. Under the common invoice or credit method of application which we are adopting, firms will charge value added tax on all their taxable sales by simply applying the value added tax rate to each sale. They will keep records of all tax charged on their sales and all tax paid on their purchases. For each tax period the firm will subtract all tax paid on purchases from all tax charged on sales and the difference will be the firm's total VAT liability. In the event that the tax on purchases exceeds the tax on sales the firm will have no tax liability and will in fact be due a refund of the difference from the Government if the tax on purchases exceeds the tax charged on sales.
6.40 p.m.

The relative simplicity of the value added tax and the ease with which we hope the tax can be administered, are reflected in the unprecedented growth in the popularity of the tax as a means of generating the resources necessary for financing governmental activities. International experience with the value added tax has shown that the most effective and easily administered system is one that is imposed at a single overall rate and that applies broadly to the majority of goods and services that are consumed within the country. The objective of simplicity which underlies the tax reforms to date will apply equally to the design of the proposed value added tax.

A value added tax will be introduced in Barbados with effect from April 1995, and will be levied at a single positive ad valorem rate on a wide variety of goods and services. This tax will be a more buoyant revenue source than the current indirect tax structure, which has narrow tax bases and large numbers of exemptions. The rate of value added tax that will be imposed will be way below the lowest basic rate of consumption tax that is currently applied, which is 21%. Furthermore, both the existing stamp duty of 20% and all the consumption taxes will be abolished.

In addition, the introduction of the broad based VAT will be accompanied by the elimination of several other taxes currently levied by the Government including:

- entertainment tax

- tax on overseas telephone calls

- hotel and restaurant sales tax.

The excise tax on rum will be retained and this excise tax regime will be extended to include petroleum, alcoholic beverages, cigarettes and motor vehicles. But the combined rate of excise tax and VAT will approximate the level of taxation currently existing on these commodities.

Mr. Speaker, the success of any tax depends upon effective administration. In light of this, the administration of the value added tax will be carried out by a new office being established within the Customs and Excise Department. The Government recently appointed a VAT Implementation Team charged with the responsibility

for implementing the VAT system. Specialist consultants with experience in this field have been contracted to assist the Implementation Team in their efforts. As you are aware, the Government has recently signed with the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank reimbursable loan agreements which will provide the necessary financial resources to assist in our comprehensive tax reform programme.

INSURANCE: LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

As a result of developments in other parts of the world, the local insurance industry has been experiencing some difficulty in obtaining reinsurance coverage. This reinsurance crisis is not peculiar to the Caribbean but is a worldwide crisis and it is believed that the problems of Barbados and other developing countries have been made more difficult by limited capital resources, an historic agency mentality and an over-indulgence in reinsurance over the years.

These factors have inhibited the application of risk management techniques and risk definition systems. Now that reinsurance is more difficult to secure at a reasonable cost, companies will be forced to review their methods of operation.

Government fully *appreciates* the importance of the insurance industry to the economy and, with the assistance of a committee made up of persons from the industry, has undertaken a comprehensive review of the Insurance Act which is now being drafted.

As a result, measures will be taken to improve the protection for policyholders, increase the capital and solvency requirements of insurance companies and expand the regulatory framework to include the regulation of all intermediaries including loss assessors, adjustors and surveyors.

The changes to the legislation are being drafted but, for the information of the public, I think it is necessary for me to mention some of the more important amendments because of their impact on the financial system. These are as follows:

(1) Paid Up Share Capital

The minimum paid up share capital is now $200 000 for a life insurance company, and $100 000 for a general insurance company. It is proposed that the minimum capital for all companies should be $3 million with the following exceptions:

(a) a company transacting motor vehicle insurance business only: $1 million,

(b) an industrial life insurance company only: $1 million,

(c) composite companies: $5 million.

Deposits

* Life insurance companies will be required to deposit securities worth $1 million,

* General insurance companies, a minimum of $250 000 and a maximum of $1 million, depending on the volume of their premium income, and

* Companies which have stopped writing new business: $200 000.

These provisions will be applicable to locally incorporated companies which are presently exempt from making deposits.

Solvency Requirements

Admissible assets for the purpose of solvency will be prescribed and the margin of solvency for general insurance companies will be increased These changes will remove the existing concerns about assets of doubtful value.

Settlement of Claims:

Provision is being made for the settlement of claims involving personal injury by periodic payments instead of through a lump sum payment as is the case at present.

Statutory Funds

The concept of statutory funds will be introduced to give *greater* protection to policy holders in the event of insolvency, winding-up or liquidation of an insurer. In addition, measures will be taken to ensure that the winding-up of a foreign insurer does not have any adverse effect on the operations of the local branch office.

Catastrophe Reserve Fund

General Insurance companies transacting property insurance business in Barbados will be allowed to set aside 25% of their *gross* net premium for property insurance as a catastrophe reserve fund. The total reserve fund will be subject to a maximum of 100% of the paid-up capital and surplus of the company.

The objective for setting up a catastrophe reserve is to allow companies to reduce their overall dependence on the reinsurance market and consequently to allow a greater assumption of risks by local insurance companies.

Mr. Speaker, there are several other changes to the Insurance Act, but they will be left until the legislation is brought before Parliament shortly.

BUDGETARY PROPOSALS:

Mr. **Speaker,** I turn now to the budgetary proposals.

Energy

It has been the declared policy of this **Government** that when prices of **feedstock** fall, the **consumers** should benefit and when they rise the consumers will have to meet the additional costs.

From time to time, because of our obligations under the **Agreement** with MOBIL, we are forced to delay any adjustment in the prices to the **consumers** until we are satisfied that the refinery will achieve the agreed rate of return.

Mr. Speaker, there is scope for an adjustment in the prices of gasoline and diesel and in the case of gasoline an adjustment in the **marketers'** margin through a reduction of 5 cents in the **Refinery** Surcharge. Therefore, with effect from the 1st April, 1994 these prices will be adjusted downwards as follows:

	Present	Proposed
Gasoline	1.58 per litre	1.54 per litre
Diesel (48/52)	1.34 per litre	1.29 per litre
Diesel (43147)	1.02 per litre	.97 cents per litre.

A review of the prices of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and natural gas is being undertaken and changes in these areas will be announced shortly.

Mr. **Speaker,** last year I indicated that unleaded gasoline would be made available from 1st April, 1994 and a Committee drawn from all interested parties in the private sector, along with members of the public sector, was established to make plans for its introduction.

I have now been advised by the committee that the implementation date should be delayed until 1st June, 1994 so as to give the Refinery additional time to complete its research on the blend stocks which will be used in the manufacture of unleaded gasoline containing an octane level of 95.

Meanwhile, the marketing companies have to make certain alterations to their stations in order to accommodate both leaded and unleaded gasoline and after considering their request for an increase in their margin to enable them to recover the outlays necessary, I have decided to increase their margin on gasoline by 1 cent per litre effective from 1st April, 1994.

While on this matter, Mr. Speaker, I have noted with interest that when the margin for dealers was increased a few months ago, at least one marketing company took the opportunity to increase the rental fee for its service stations to such an extent that it eliminated the benefits which those stations would have enjoyed from the increased margin.

I do not know that there was a nexus between the two events. But since we live in a free market society and while the Government has no control over the right of the marketing companies to increase the rental fees for their properties, it is still expected that every effort will be taken to give small businesses an opportunity to survive along with the larger businesses. It is perhaps this, more than anything else, Mr. Speaker, which has dampened the Government's enthusiasm to increase the margin for marketing companies. Therefore, I hope that there will be an amicable solution to this matter.

6.50 p.m.

The change in these prices and margin will not result in any loss of revenue because they are brought about through a reduction in the Refinery Surcharge and not the Consumption Tax.

Agriculture

Last year a decision was taken to waive the Consumption Tax on machinery and spare parts as well as the Stamp Duty on raw materials and packaging materials for use by manufacturers.

Since that time, those persons with a special interest in the agricultural sector have been submitting evidence to show why that sector should receive similar treatment.

In view of the importance which we have assigned to the agricultural sector in the economic recovery, I have decided to waive the Stamp Duty on inputs, including hatching eggs, and packaging materials for use in the agricultural industry, and to waive the Consumption Tax on machinery and equipment, including spare parts.

These changes will take effect from April 1, 1994, and are expected to result in revenue loss of $2.3m but I am sure that no one will consider that too high a price to pay for increased activity in the Agricultural Sector.

Income Tax

It is recognised that the 12 1/2% Withholding Tax as it is presently administered with respect to interest

and dividends constitutes a burden on pensioners in instances where their income is less than the allowance of $20 000.

Therefore, I have decided that effective from income year 1994, the legislation will be amended to ensure that in instances where pensioners are receiving income, including interest and dividends less than $20 000, they will not pay the 12½% Withholding Tax on any interest and dividends which they receive. The revenue loss is expected to be negligible but this change should be of great help to those persons who are presently experiencing a problem.

Accrual of Interest

The members of the accounting fraternity raised with me their concerns about the fact that the Income Tax Act presently requires that interest must be paid in order to qualify for deduction.

I have taken note of their concerns and after discussing the matter with all concerned, I have decided that, from this income year, appropriate amendments will be made to the Income Tax Act to permit interest accrued to be deducted for tax purposes.

FOREIGN CURRENCY EARNINGS

In 1986, an amendment was made to the Income Tax Act to provide an incentive to local companies which earned foreign exchange and repatriated it. The original section 12G of the Barbados Income Tax Act, was modelled on Section 156B of the New Zealand Income Tax Act in several ways except that, unlike the New Zealand Act, it did not prescribe special rates to be applied to the net foreign exchange earnings.

Over the years, problems of interpretation have arisen and the 1990 amendment did not succeed in resolving these problems. As a result, representations have been made to me on the matter and, after considering the issues involved, I have come to the conclusion that the best way to deal with it is to go a step further and fix a lower rate of tax for net foreign exchange earnings. That lower rate will be fixed in due course after consideration by and consultation with interested parties.

Regrettably this matter needs some more discussion between the Inland Revenue Department and the Professional bodies but the changes will be applicable to the current tax year.

Treatment of Extra Regional Securities

At present securities owned by CARICOM nationals traded on the regional securities exchanges are granted exemption from Property Transfer Tax and Stamp Duty. However, as part of our effort to encourage foreign investment and the freer movement of capital, I have decided that from April 1, 1994, I will waive the Property Transfer Tax and Stamp Duty on shares traded by non-nationals on the Securities Exchange of Barbados. Such trading, however, will not be exempt from Exchange Control and will be dealt with on a case by case basis by the Exchange Control Authority.

Exchange Control Fees

At present, Exchange Control Fees apply to a number of transactions, including applications to remit fees for medical expenses. Representations have been made for fees in respect of medical expenses to be granted exemptions and I have decided that effective April 1, 1994, such payments will be exempted from the 1 per cent Exchange Control Fee.

Surtax on Imports from Extra-Regional Sources

Mr. Speaker, when the licensing regime was dismantled and other non-tariff barriers were removed as part of the trade liberalisation programme, a surtax was imposed on certain extra-regional imports to provide protection for local manufacturers. This protection is necessary to give them a chance to make the appropriate adjustments and to make their businesses more competitive.

Its imposition has not been without some controversy and I am rather surprised at the deafening silence of those special interests for which protection is maintained particularly when the Government is accused of driving the small trader out of business. The surtax is imposed on goods which previously would have been on licence and which, theoretically, would not be available to Barbadians readily. It is not an imposition which should have any significant impact on the cost of living nor on legal trading activity. It is not intended to apply to products which are manufactured in Barbados, or, if locally produced, do not need protection.

That apart, I accept that there wili be problems to be ironed out and I accept full responsibility for the administrative difficulties which have ensued so far.

Although it is considered that the surtax should be phased out over a four year period, we have decided to allow an additional two years for those businesses which have special difficulties in adjusting within that four year period.

The procedure which I propose to recommend to Cabinet in determining if the additional two years protection should be granted is as follows:–

(i) Applicants will submit to the Ministry of Finance a proposal for an extension of two years;

(ii) The extension will have to comply with the CET Rules;

(iii) The applicant will have to demonstrate convincingly the potential for profitability of the industry by the end of the extension period by which time the protection would have fallen to that allowed by the CET rates alone;

(iv) The applicant will have to provide a complete business plan - including new investment, market surveys and financial analysis covering the extension period and three years beyond; and

(v) The case will be considered by a panel appointed by the Minister of Finance and will be drawn from persons capable of judging the interests of consumers, labour, the particular industry and the financial community.

Meanwhile, in implementing the Surtax, we have to make sure that the productive sectors, which may utilise some items to which it will apply, do not suffer any adverse effects. As a result, I have decided to proceed as follows:

(a) Manufacturing Sector

To waive the Surtax payable on raw materials and packaging materials imported for use in approved manufacturing operations;

(b) Duty Free Shopping Sector

To waive the Surtax on materials imported for use by the duty-free shopping sector in the development of new duty-free shops or the refurbishment of existing operations;

(C) Hotel,Sector

To waive the Surtax on those items which presently qualify for duty-free concessions when imported by hotels.

7.00 p.m.

In addition, the Surtax is being waived on the following items:

- 'Pasta products' classified under Tariff Head 19.02
- 'Pasta biscuits, cakes and other fine bakers' wares whether or not containing cocoa in any proportion' classified under Tariff Head 19.05
- 'Flour of Wheat' classified under Tariff Head 11.01
- 'Brassieres and brassiere co-ordinate sets whether or not knitted or crocheted', classified under Tariff Head 6212.20
- Girdles, panty girdles and co-ordinate sets whether or not knitted or crocheted' classified under Tariff Head 6212.10
- 'Corselettes' classified under Tariff Head 6212.30
- 'Brooms, brushes and mops' falling under Tariff Head 96.03
- 'Television receivers' falling under Tariff Head 85.26
- 'Prepared or preserved vegetables, frozen' falling under Tariff Head 20.04
- 'Preserved and prepared vegetables, not frozen' falling under Tariff Head 20.05.

In respect of the first two items, the waivers will be determined on a case by case basis and will not be granted whore the item is produced locally and requires continued protection.

Transitional arrangements are being considered on a case by case basis in respect of those importers who held licences for specific shipments prior to the gazetting of the Order imposing the surtax.

WAIVER OF DUTIES AND TAXES

On the issues of waiver of duties and taxes, Mr. Speaker, there is presently on the Order Paper Parliamentary Question requesting information about the waivers of imposts granted between April, 1992 and March 1994. That question will be answered shortly. But during the period in question, the ad hoc waivers administered by the Ministry of Finance totalled $7.2m as follows:

	$M
Manufacturing	0.8
Hotels	2.3
Agriculture, Fishing and Horticulture	2.8
Other	1.3
TOTAL	7.2

In addition, there are instances where the duties and taxes are waived on a continuous basis, for example in

the manufacturing sector, and these are administered by the Customs Department. Their records show that, in addition to the $7.2m above, they dealt with waivers over the two year period totalling $24.0m.

Contrary to the pervasive opinion, this clearly demonstrates that Government continues to provide health to entrepreneurs in the productive sectors and has foregone a substantial amount of revenue.

WATER CONSERVATION

As a result of the present difficulties being experienced by residents of certain areas in obtaining a regular supply of water, several persons have approached me about a special Income Tax allowance, as was done in the case of solar water heaters, for the installation of water tanks to reduce the dependence on the supply from the Barbados Water Authority.
7.05 p.m.

I appreciate the point that they have made about the benefits to be derived from the use of such tanks in water conservation efforts.

However, I do not consider it wise to reverse the changes which were made to the Income Tax Structure in 1992 and, instead, I am examining an alternative scheme which can be administered by the Barbados Water Authority and would still be an incentive to individuals to install water tanks as alternative sources of water for certain domestic purposes and for irrigation. The details of this scheme will be made known shortly.

REVENUE IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

The revenue loss of $2.3m associated with these proposals will be recovered during the year as we implement various measures to improve our efficiency in tax administration and expenditure management. Therefore there is no need to seek to recover it through an increase in other taxes.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Speaker, this is my longest speech so far. And I do not propose to say much more. There was a lot of kite flying last week and since it was near to Easter, I thought it appropriate to treat such activity as normal. The kite flying by the Opposition was about increased taxation, heavier burdens for the people and further hardship. That is their song. They have to sing for their supper. And one does not expect that song to end, even in the face of today's exercise.

Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to take the credit for being able to deliver the first Budget in many years which has not increased taxation or the cost of living and has spread modest benefits to all sectors of the community. That credit belongs to the fortitude of our leadership in difficult times, the sacrifice of our people, the commitment of dedicated public officers and technicians, the new spirit in the private sector, the maturity and vision of the Trade Union Movement. It also conforms to our commitments given in the Protocol and Prices and Incomes.

All of that could be easily shattered by wild, reckless policies pursued by those who do not have the interest of Barbadians at heart. Given the choice between quick-fixes and gimmicks, economic sleight of hand and back-raises and the glitz and glamour of hand-outs, smokescreens and illusions and a path of courageous economic engineering, commitment to change, prudence, incremental sharing of benefits and honest, pragmatic decision-making based on consensus, we have chosen the latter. That path, Mr. Speaker, has its hazards, because it requires citizens to re-think what Government is all about and how their representatives relate to them.

I do not see this Budget as a one-shot exercise in major social, political or economic engineering. It must be contextual and this Budget supports the goals which we articulated as being possible and likely since 1991. Many people did not believe us and still do not believe us. They are still looking under the bed for ghosts and monsters of the past. They still want to contrive nightmares of devaluation and social unrest. They still hold dear to their heart the goals of undermining the progress which this Government, under the leadership of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, has made.

Barbadians do not need any more advice gratuitously given by those who will not themselves lend a hand. There is an abundance of armchair gurus who have the answer to every problem, but when asked to put their shoulder to the wheel and hands to the plough, they retreat. At least the international institutions, when we agree with them, will provide resources. In that regard, there are many things that could be said about the international institutions and their role in this country and we have probably said all of those things already, But there is something that the institutions will always say about us, Mr. Speaker, we will not lie prostrate before anyone and permit ourselves to be politically or economically defiled. It is this lack of submission which has created for us detractors in high places.

In that regard, we have a mutually satisfactory relationship with the International Monetary Fund. They understand us and we understand them. They know clearly what we are prepared to do and when, and we know what they want us to do and when. On the basis of

that understanding, we hope to conclude our discussions on an Enhanced Surveillance Programme with them shortly. Thereafter we hope that substantial resources will be made available from the Inter-American Development Bank for financing of our adjustment programme. These resources will provide the comfort levels which we think are desirable in terms of our international reserves.

Unlike Members of the Opposition who travel to Washington and proffer their ideas to the institutions about Barbados but never report back, we have constantly let the people know what our discussions are about. There are no secret deals. We have put the plan before the Social Partners. We have laid our Structural Adjustment Strategy Document in the House today. We have published our Development Plan. The rest is up to us as Barbadians.

What we need now is the national resolve to tackle the issues of unemployment and this cannot be solved by crash programmes in the public sector. It cannot be solved by swelling the ranks of government corporations. Its solution lies in the creativity, ingenuity, dedication and commitment of those in the private sector, and that means at all levels of the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, I left University and started my first full-time job just over eight years ago and for me, like other Honourable Members, it is painful to go to a shop or drive past a street corner and see young unemployed Barbadians caught up in life styles which seem to lack purpose and direction and which bristle with danger and destruction. Some of them left school with me and are still lacking a stable job.

Sometimes, all they need is a start. We have to begin somewhere, and I urge our businessmen to give those youngsters among us who genuinely want work that one opportunity to land a job. I know that job attachment programmes exist particularly through the Barbados Youth Service programme. I know that there is a Youth in Business Programme. But we need a wider national programme to put our young to work.

Mr. Speaker, let me share an idea with you, and I hope the youngsters who may be listening to me can take it up. It is not novel, since I heard the late Errol Barrow espousing this years ago, and I consider it such a thoughtful suggestion as to merit repetition here. Some of our unemployed youngsters can offer their services to certain businesses for minimal cost in the first instance. Volunteering to work as a learning experience, an apprenticeship for just a small stipend to cover busfare, lunch and pocket money, and eventually through dedication to duty and conscientious effort, they may become permanent, full-time, fully paid employees.

Mr. Speaker, I know that some persons, including trade unionists, may say that such a situation would open itself to exploitation, but I believe it is a chance we must take, since it would encourage some of our businesses to be more amenable to increased employment in these times of leaner and meaner operations in commerce.

Mr. Speaker, one just has to look at our ratings in prestigious publications like the Institutional Investor or the UNDP country rating in the Human Development Index. We have been accorded, number one in the developing world and number 20 in the entire world. These are not small achievements. This is what others say about us. And they are right.

We do not expect praise and adulation for this from anyone but we certainly expect fairness. Those who seek to suppress these achievements to score shallow points are really underrating and ignoring the marvelous achievements of the Barbadian people.

I was heartened to hear the Barbados Hotel Association announce a programme of refurbishment with investment of millions of dollars for the improvement of our hotel plant as well as the other signals of potential investment which the BIDC, the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Finance receive on a regular basis. The prospects for us are bright.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we still have problems. Which country does not? I have hied to answer your questions and we, on this side, share your concerns. However, I am confident that the same success we have had with the stabilisation and recovery periods will follow as we look to the future. We will yet beat our breasts again.

With those remarks, and this recommitment on the part of the Government to our youth, to our working men and women in public and private enterprise, to the unemployed, to our Social Partners and to our social and economic institutions, Mr. Speaker, I commend this Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals to this Honourable House.

And I have great pleasure in moving the following Resolution:

> Whereas the Government by its astute management of the economy has been able to achieve a resumption of growth in real gross domestic product,
>
> And Whereas it has been able to contain the fiscal deficit to less than 1% without compromising the quality of the services provided in the public sector,
>
> And whereas the 1994/95 Budgetary Proposals are designed to improve on the achievements for 1993/94

by bringing further relief to the productive sectors of our economy,

Be it Resolved that this House note the outstanding performance of the Government during 1993/94 and endorse the 1994195 Budgetary Proposals.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second the Resolution and reserve my right to speak again.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that brings us to the point where it is customary to take a break and I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 5.00 p.m. tomorrow, March 29,1994.

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

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it must be said at the very outset of this presentation that yesterday this House was treated to the budgetary equivalence of the St. John Development Plan. For if ever there was a budgetary presentation which, in advance, excited the public expectation of its promise to change things and to create a brave new economic world in Barbados, it was yesterday's budgetary presentation.

These great expectations were to a large extent, Mr. Speaker, inspired by the hopes that the change of personnel at the top in the Ministry of Finance would have brought a fresh, bold new outlook and a decisive and daring change to the spirit and the manner in which our economic and financial affairs are administered. For to be sure, Mr. Speaker, there was a universal sight of relief across Barbados when the Prime Minister of this country, last year, created political history by becoming the first Prime Minister of Barbados to fire himself as the Minister of Finance.

We can all agree, Sir, that he was fully justified in so doing. When economic historians come to review the developments of the past five years they will have to record that the Prime Minister has presided over the worst economic and financial disaster in our modern history. They will have also to record that by the Prime Minister's own account, our economy was performing like Sir Gary up to 1989 but that with no change in economic leadership and despite clear and consistent warning, the economy so entirely lay in ruins by 1990, that if I may paraphrase a statement used by the Minister of Finance yesterday, Barbados has to prostrate itself before the International Monetary Fund and other international lending institutions and was politically and economically defiled by not only having to accept any and every kind of economic measures from these institutions but also to accept financial scraps thrown our way by bandits of ill repute.

Historians will also have to record that the economic mayhem over which the Prime Minister has presided, and from which he has fled, was caused in large part by his resolve not to allow his party to commit political suicide and his application, of a political philosophy that in charting this country's economic destiny, if I may quote him, "Take therefore no thought of the morrow for the morrow shall take thought of the things of itself. Suffice unto the day is the evil thereof'.

Economic historians, Mr. Speaker, will also have faithfully to report that the Prime Minister of this country promised the people of Barbados economic recovery from the plight his policy has led to after 18 months, but the 18 months came and went, and he left the post of Minister of Finance with this country wracked by the highest level of unemployment in recorded history. He left the post of Minister of Finance, with our major productive sectors, particularly agriculture and manufacturing, facing the possibility of extinction. He left the Ministry of Finance with a situation in which, except for a few large companies the vast majority of small and medium firms in this country were straining to maintain their financial survival. They will also have to report that he left the country in a position where virtually every household was straining to make ends meet and many were not succeeding. They will have to report, Mr. Speaker, that he left the post with our balance of payments position still precariously poised, despite the massive sacrifice that the people of Barbados have been called upon to pay in order to support the balance of payments.

They will also have to report that he left the post with the confidence of the international financial community in Barbados so badly shaken that despite the fact that we are supposed to have the highest credit rating in Latin America and the Caribbean, his Government found it almost impossible to raise a loan on the international market to assist in the rebuilding of this country.

Above all, Mr. Speaker, economic historians will have to report that the stewardship of the Prime Minister of Barbados has enveloped Barbados in a massive crisis of confidence. It is a crisis of confidence, Sir, rooted in the scandals, the confusion and the chaos at the very centre of the DLP administration. It is a crisis of confidence, Mr. Speaker, which has arisen from the breakdown of Cabinet Government and from the very well grounded perception that the Cabinet is going nowhere and that it is intent of taking this country with it.

It is a crisis of confidence engendered by the toleration of lawlessness at the very centre of Government, whether at the Central Bank or in the affairs of the St. Joseph Hospital, and a crisis of confidence, Mr. Speaker, characterised by the erosion of the spirit of accountability to the people without which no country can either be free or strong.

It is a crisis of confidence, Sir, arising from the sordid example set by this Government in cutting deals and accepting anything thrown its way with no questions asked and no answers given.

It is a crisis of confidence, Sir, arising because there is not the possibility in this country of any one accepting anything written in the Government's manifesto, of any one following the Government's bewildering toss and turns in its policies, and it is a crisis of confidence that has to do with the very clear perception that we are dealing with a Government that cannot be taken at its word.

In the final analysis, Mr. Speaker, it is a massive crisis of confidence arising from the fact that when push comes to shove the DLP will use the symbols of race and class to mislead and to divide our people as it is even now, Mr. Speaker, seeking to do even within its own ranks.

Mr. Speaker, against this background the people of Barbados looked to this year's budget to signal a clear and a radical departure from the recent dismal past because if there is one thing, and one thing of which we are sure, it is that we cannot afford to stand where we are.

The people also, Sir, entertained great expectations that the budget would address itself to the solution of the great and burning problem of unemployment. There was also the expectation that it would set out bold and daring new initiatives that would restore hope and confidence in the economy and to a people where the collapse of confidence is our greatest problem.

There was also, Sir, the expectation that we would have had from the new and youthful Minister of Finance a vision for the future of this economy; vision, Mr. Speaker, that challenges us to adopt a mirror image of ourselves as a people who can accomplish what people in other small resource deficient economies, faced with the same international conditions as we face, Sir, have been able to accomplish, namely strong growth, massive expansion of employment opportunities, robust foreign exchange reserves and investment opportunities, the building of a modem competitive economy, and the expansion of the horizons of social and economic opportunities for our people rather than the acceptance of the scaled, tired *status quo* that we cannot go forward with.

5.10 p.m.

The Minister, unfortunately, has chosen to adopt the *status quo*. When therefore I say that we had to present in this House yesterday the budgetary equivalent of the St. John Development Plan, it is to establish that yesterday's Budget, like the St. John Development Plan, promised so much but delivered so little.

No one in Barbados, Mr. Speaker, can truly believe that the path of re-stimulating our $3 billion economy, the challenge of creating the conditions for the restoration of confidence and the improvement in investment, the assault on the plague of unemployment and the transformation of this economy, Sir, into a dynamic, modem competitive economy can be brought about by a $2.3 million tax relief programme and a 4 cents per litre cut in the price of energy products. Nobody believes that, but this is what we were presented with yesterday.

There is a fundamental reason why we were presented with a Budget of this order. The reason is that yesterday this House heard the voice of Jacob but the hand was the hand of Esau. I ask you, Sir, to take that to mean that whereas the document may have been presented by the Member of St. John, the policies embodied in it and the concept of the kind of society envisioned, the plans for the immediate destiny of this economy and for this society in no way differ from those set out by the Prime Minister over the course of the past three years.

This brings me to the central issue that must concern us in this Budget in this Honourable House and must engage the focus of the people of Barbados across the length and breadth of this country.

Since 1991, the Gbvernment of Barbados has committed itself to bring about changes in our economy following policies prescribed for it by the International Monetary Fund and other institutions on the understanding that the so called reforms would be carried out and would be supported by Barbados having access to funds from those institutions. The IMF standby programme ended last year and it ended with Government finding

itself unable to fully draw down the full amount of IMF loans because it had agreed to a number of policies that it found itself incapable or unwilling to carry into effect.

Among some of those policies, Sir, were policies to increase the rents charged to tenants at Ferniehurst in your constituency and at Maynards in mine. Among those policies agreed to but not carried out were policies to increase the bus fares in this country. Among those policies, Sir, agreed to but not carried out were policies designed to affect persons' access to tertiary education in this country and matters of that character, Sir. The point is that the Government entered a programme with the International Monetary Fund; that programme ended last year without the Government being able to draw down the full amount of the IMF loans because it had agreed to a number of policies that it did not and could not put into effect.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, it was unable as well to draw down any of the loans from the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank although you will recall that the two previous Budgets presented to this House assumed that Government's operations were in large part financed by funds from these two institutions, namely the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank. Fundamental difference of opinion over policy in the case of the World Bank prevented the Government from having access to the loans of that institution, among which was the fundamental difference of opinion as to whether or not Barbados should devalue its currency. In addition the pace of reforms undertaken by Government in relation to the productive sectors of the economy was so slow as to disqualify it from meeting the pre-conditions that had to be met in order to be able to draw down funds from the Inter-American Development Bank.

In this kind of context however, Mr. Speaker, the international institutions have made it clear that the Government of Barbados is not going to have any access to any of their funds unless there is a presence of the IMF in Barbados.

The whole point and purpose of this year's Budget therefore, Sir, as represented in the Estimates of Expenditure and the Minister of Finance's presentation of the Budgetary Proposals has been to send a signal that the Government of Barbados wishes to continue to run the economic affairs of this country in accordance with policies agreed to and that will find favour with the International Monetary Fund in the hope and in the belief that in so doing the Government will satisfy the Inter-American Development Bank and perhaps the entire international financial community that it is performing in accordance with policies in which they can repose confidence and hence it is deserving of access to their loans.

If I may be more specific, this year's Budget seeks to do no more than to ensure that Barbados' economic and financial policies and Government's overall programme for the development of our society conform strictly to the policy agenda set for this country by the International Monetary Fund and that it enables the Government to enter an enhanced surveillance programme with the International Monetary Fund in the hope thereafter, Sir, as the Minister of Finance has indicated at page 82 of his presentation, that resources will be made available from the Inter-American Development Bank in order for us to finance our adjustment programme.

What does all of this mean, Sir? That Government is intending to enter a new programme with the International Monetary Fund called an "enhanced surveillance programme" under which, Sir, the country will continue to be governed by IMF policies without having any access whatsoever to IMF resources. For the immediate future therefore, Mr. Speaker, the economic and social development of Barbados will be undertaken under the auspices of the policies of the IMF and will be undertaken in accordance with their philosophy of development and in accordance with their view of the world and our place within it.

I want therefore, Mr. Speaker, to respectfully submit to this House that, before we as a people agree to put the economic destiny of Barbados again at the mercy of the International Monetary Fund as this Budget seeks to do, there are three basic issues that must be resolved.

5.20 p.m.

The frnt is, Sir, given that we have since 1991 witnessed the effects of IMF type policies in Barbados, can we say that those policies have worked and have succeeded to the point where they are worthy of being part of our future? That is the frnt issue. Have the policies of the IMF worked to the point where we can repose confidence in them as being the policies that we should carry with us into the future?

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, what is in it financially for Barbados?

Thirdly, given what we know about the contents of IMF styled policies, given what we know about what IMF type policies say in relation to the role of Government, say about the purposes and the contents

of tax reform, say in relation to the reform of our trade regime, say about our incomes policy; can we not conceive of a more bountiful future for Barbados operating outside the framework of the policies set for us by these three institutions?

Mr. Speaker, I want on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party, before I go into substantial discussion of these three issues, to say this, that on recent experience the IMF programme has not worked in Barbados and that in adopting it as the model for our immediate future the Government is committing itself to a bankrupt economic course, the principal feature of which is the prospect of low growth accompanied by a high level of unemployment. The Barbados Labour Party categorically rejects this approach as being relevant or appropriate to Barbados' circumstances at this time.

Secondly, Sir, when we look at what is in it financially for Barbados, it is clear to us that this Government is seeking to sell this country for a mess of pottage.

Thirdly, we believe that the best hope for Barbados at this juncture in our development lies not in adopting the policy agenda as set out by the International Monetary Fund. We believe that there are important reforms that can be undertaken outside the context of an IMF styled approach to Barbados' development that will allow Barbados to take advantage of the opportunities which it can grasp, because of the changes which have been taking place in the international economy and the world around US.

I want, Mr. Speaker, in a very simple way, to deal with these three issues I believe this House has to focus on during the course of this debate. Have the IMF policies worked to the point where we in Barbados should repose any confidence in the continued adoption of IMF styled policies as the basis for our future economic development? Secondly, what is in it financially for Barbados? Thirdly, given what we know about the content of the reforms proposed as part of the policy agenda of the IMF and IADB, can we not conceive of and conceptualise a different development approach that must and has to be implemented at this juncture, given the glorious opportunities that even now await Barbados as a result of changes that have taken place in the international economy?

Now, Sir, I deal first with whether the IMF policies have worked. One of the most disingenuous pieces of propaganda put before the people of Barbados is that the IMF programme of 1991 to 1993 has succeeded in stabilising the Barbados economy. That programme was supposed to stabilise the economy by restoring what the IMF and economists call internal and external balance to the economy. What do these big words mean, Sir? The restoration of internal balance meant that there *should* have been growth, and indeed the IMF programme of 1991-93 was based on the presumption that the Barbados economy should have been growing at the rate of between 2% and 3% over the course of the last three years; and that growth should have taken place within the context of stability in the job market and a stable level of prices. That is all that the concept of internal balance means. The external balance, as used by the economists and the IMF, means that our reserves should have been restored to such a position that this country could have paid its way in the world upon the basis of what we earn and upon the basis of capital inflows to this country prompted by the investment opportunities awaiting foreign investors in Barbados.

I say to this House, Mr. Speaker, that the experience of the past three years indicates that there has been no stability brought to this economy because of the past IMF programme. In the place of growth of between 2% and 3% per year this economy has experienced the most savage decline in the level of production experienced since information on this economy has been systematically recorded. Instead of 2% or 3% growth per year Barbados has realised declines of 3% in the first year, 4% in the second year and now the latest information is telling us that the decline in 1992 was 5.8% rather than 4% as was reported to this House when the Budget was presented last year.

In addition, we all know that the savage downturn in the level of economic production brought about by the first International Monetary Fund programme was accompanied by a rise in the level of unemployment that we in this country used to believe was only associated with countries such as Jamaica and Guyana

In relation to the stability of our reserves, it has to be established that although there has been some increase in Barbados' reserves coincidental with the implementation of the last IMF programme, the increase in the reserves was hardly related to our earning our way out of balance of payments problems, nor was that increase in reserves related in any substantial way to any capital inflows into this country related to real investment opportunities presented to potential foreign investors.

The trend that was observed in 1991 and 1992 was also taken into 1993, because when we come to deal with the 1993 situation, Sir, the Government is now reporting that the economy is estimated to have expanded by 1% and this 1% expansion in the economy is

supposed, in the Government's mind, to amount to a real recovery of the Barbados economy.

Sir, the most important aspect of that growth in the economy in 1993 is that the 1% growth the Government says was realised was 50% below the rate at which the Barbados economy was supposed to have been growing in 1993 in accordance with the statement that was presented to this House yesterday by the Minister of Finance. In addition, Mr. Speaker, it will take a flight of fancy for anybody to believe that a mere 1% growth in this Barbados economy will be enough to overturn the 12% decline that has been realised over the course of the past three years.

5.30 p.m.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, even though there was some resurgence in the fortune of our tourism industry, it must be recognised as well that the 2.7% growth in tourist arrivals last year, of which the Government boasts, was the lowest recorded by any Caribbean economy, except for that of Montserrat. And I would like, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to tell you what the facts are, because this economy is under performing.

Tourist arrivals realised by Anguilla in 1993 increased by 20.7%; by Antigua and Barbuda, by 14.3%; by Bahamas, 6.4%; by Dominica, 10.6%; by Grenada, 7.3%; by Jamaica, 7.7%; by St. Lucia, 8.4%; by St. Vincent,. 6.2% and by Trinidad and Tobago, 6.1%. - page 7 of the' Economic Report presented in this House yesterday by the Minister of Economic Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, take these 2 things in combination: the rest of Latin America faced with the same economic conditions as Barbados grew on average by 3%; countries in East Asia faced with the same international conditions as Barbados, grew sometimes by as much as 8%; China, faced with the same international economic circumstances as Barbados grew by as much as 13%, and the rest of our Caribbean tourism competitors, Sir, faced with the same conditions as Barbados, grew by between 6.1% and 20.7%. In the face of such the Government would have the people of Barbados believe that a 1% increase in the level of our overall production of goods and services in this country brought about largely by a 2.7% improvement in tourist arrivals in this country amount to an economic recovery.

In relation, Sir, to the reserve position last year, we would recall that there was a certain controversy in relation to the reasons for the decline in the reserves, and the factors responsible for the so-called improvement in December.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important point for this House to take cognisance of, because in the absence of a strong balance of payments position there is no justification whatsoever to believe that the programme with the International Monetary Fund has worked. The evidence now available to us, Mr. Speaker, establishes beyond any shadow of a doubt that Barbados' foreign exchange reserve position remains very fragile; the over a $100 million in decline in the reserves, recorded between April and November, were not due to seasonal factors and the so-called improvements in December, Mr. Speaker, were due entirely to book transactions having to do with the settlement of Caricargo's debt, the bringing to book of certain transactions surrounding the settlement of that debt with the Central Bank of Barbados in such a manner that left the Central Bank holding no more foreign exchange cash in December than it held in October, when the reserves, as the Minister of Fiance would acknowledge were supposed to have been in a parlous state.

Barbados' foreign exchange reserve position therefore, Mr. Speaker, remains fragile.

The IMF programme, Sir, also had a devastating impact on most businesses in this country. The Government must not believe that because a few large companies in Barbados, which started with the financial muscle to survive the strictures and the draconian policies of the IMF-type stabilisation programme have managed to survive and have done well, Mr. Speaker, that all is well with the private sector of the country.

Indeed, one of the real dangers that is now faced by the Barbados economy is the danger of economic consolidation. The danger, Sir, is that those few companies with the financial muscle and those few companies alone which have done well in the recent severe economic circumstances facing the country, will now find themselves in a position to entrench themselves even more deeply in this economy leading to consolidated ownership relationships in Barbados at the expense of economic enfranchisement in this society.

There is also the danger, Mr. Speaker, of a perpetual relationship developing between the Government of Barbados and the International Monetary Fund. I would like to draw to the Government's attention, Sir, the fate of Jamaica which entered a relationship with the International Monetary Fund in 1976, believing that continued reliance and dependence upon IMF-style policies was the way for Jamaica to go. Now we have a situation where that programme between the Government of Jamaica entered into in 1976 has extended itself for almost 18 years.

I, therefore, Mr. Speaker, must warn against any continued dependence upon IMF-style policies in Barbados because these policies have not shown themselves capable of bringing about economic stability in this country. The evidence, Mr. Speaker, is clear. The economy has not realised the growth intended by the IMF programme. The IMF programme has not brought real stability to our balance of payments, Mr. Speaker. The IMF policy has not restored balance to our job market and we are in danger of encouraging a perpetual dependence upon the IMF to the disadvantage of the Barbados economy over the long term.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the question arises: what is in it for Barbados financially? As I pointed out earlier, the programme that the Government of Barbados proposes to enter into with the International Monetary Fund is a so-called Enhanced Surveillance Programme under which Barbados will get NO funds from the International Monetary Fund but will be subject to the policies of the IMF. So, financially, Sir, we can expect no funds from the IMF under the new programme that the Government wants to execute.

The World Bank has already indicated that we can expect NO funds from them either, although a lot of the policies that have been put in place in this country over the course of the last 3 years have been policies agreed to between the Government and the World Bank as far back as 1990, even before the 1991 elections. And I want to repeat that. You can expect no funds from the World Bank either, although this country has had to make a massive sacrifice; that every household in this country and every business has been put under pressure as a result of the implementation by Government of a number of policies agreed to between the Government of Barbados and the World Bank as far back as 1990.

And what can we expect, Sir, from the Inter-American Development Bank?

5.40 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, in return for accepting the policies prescribed by the Inter-American Development Bank, Barbados was supposed to get U.S. $60m in foreign exchange spread over the course of three years. However, the Government of Barbados can expect to get no more than U.S. $35m from the Inter-American Development Bank if it succeeds at all in accessing those funds over the course of the next three years.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Government is committing this country to a development programme based entirely on IMF styled policies, World Bank styled policies, IADB styled policies that have not worked in return for no more than at the most U.S. $35m spread over the course of the next three years. How has this country been reduced!

As recently as 1990, Mr. Speaker, Barbados could have gone to the international market and borrow on its own accord $120m to assist in the building of this economy without having to genuflect at the altar of any international institution. But the Government would want this House, and the people of Barbados in general, to support a set of policies embodied in the Minister of Finance's Budget that would lead us to receive from these institutions no more than $35 million spread over the course of the next three years.

Therefore, Sir, I say to the House that the Barbados Labour Party is of the view that when we ask ourselves the question what is in it financially for us as a people, and we realise that all that is in it for us is no more than U.S. $35m spread over the course of the next three years, we say to this House and to the people of Barbados that it cannot be worth it. It cannot be worth it for the Government of this country to expect the households of this country, many of whom cannot pay their bills, many of whom are having the greatest difficulty in paying their mortgages, many of whom are having the gravest difficulty in finding the wherewithal in sending their children to school to put up with any more economic pressure inspired by World Bank, IMF, IADB policies over the course of the next three years for a mere U.S. $35m.

We on this side are also saying to the Government and the people of Barbados as well that the Government cannot expect the producing enterprises of Barbados, many of whom are facing bankruptcy, many of whom have had to down-size and send home people, many of whom cannot pay the bank, many of whom have lost confidence on the future of this country, to endure any more IMF, World Bank, IADB styled policies in return only for U.S. $35m over the course of the next three years. There is nothing in it financially for this country that can warrant the Government of Barbados to commit the people of Barbados, the private sector of Barbados and the households of Barbados to endure any more pressure from the IMF, the World Bank and the IADB over the course of the next three years.

Sir, what about the policy agendas of these institutions and this is the real question that this House must ask and answer - what do we know about the policies of these institutions? Is it not possible that Barbados, at this juncture, can independently conceive of an alternative set of policies that contrast strikingly to those of the IMF, World Bank and IADB, that we can, of our own accord, implement that would give Barbados a greater

opportunity of taking advantage of all of the possibilities that even now are being thrown up for us by changes in the international economy, and that would give us the opportunity to do what other small economies not under the influence of the World Bank, or the IMF or the IADB have been doing over the course of the last three years, expanding at record rates of growth, expanding their employment opportunities, expanding their reserves and widening the social and economic opportunities for their people?

I want systematically, and as simply as I can, Sir, to go through, point by point, the key components of the policy agenda that has been set for this country to point out where the weaknesses are, what the alternatives are, and at the end of the day to tell this House and the people of this country that there is an alternative that this country can pursue that would allow us to face the prospects of a brighter immediate future than that presented by the wholesale adoption of the programme implied in the Minister of Finance's Budget and embodied in the structural adjustment programme with the IMF and the IADB.

The first, Mr. Speaker, has to do with the role of the State. We on this side fundamentally disagree with the role prescribed for the State in the policy programme that the Government of Barbados wants to execute in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank and the IMF and it is based on a philosophy of development for Barbados. It is based on a realistic assessment of where Barbados has reached in its development and the role that must be performed by the State even where we have reached. It is also based, Mr. Speaker, on the best precepts of financial management.

Now, Sir, in accordance with what has been presented by the Minister of Finance, the programme of structural adjustment agreed to between the Government and the multilateral institutions presume that at this juncture in the development of Barbados the State must play a massively reduced role in our economic and social affairs. Indeed, Sir, if you were to believe some people, the only role that the State should play now would be to provide for law and order and sanitation. We believe on this side that there is scope for the State to play a creative role in the economic and social development of Barbados now and in the immediate future. We believe so fundamentally on this side.

Mr. Speaker, I want to develop this point. We are a country that is into our 28th year of independence as a people and the most dangerous thing that we should do now is to seek to compare the role that the State should be performing in Barbados at this time with the role that the State is performing in countries that have had 200,300 and sometimes 1 000 years of independent development of their societies and their economies.

When economies such as the United States of America and Britain were into their 28th year of their development, the State was protecting their industries through the practice of something called mercantilism. Mr. Speaker, when those countries were in the initial stages of the development as societies, the State was making massive investment in the building up of the infrastructure. When those countries were in the initial stages of development of their societies, the State was making a serious investment in the development of their educational and other institutions.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of the progress that is even today enjoyed in the industrialised world has to do with the tremendous role that has been played by a large State in supporting research, development and even military expenditure.

This Government, on the other hand, is accepting implicitly the notion that the Government of Barbados must play a certain ideological role prescribed for it by the International Monetary Fund. I want as carefully as I can, Sir, to explain what that role is. Many people believe that the IMF does not play an idedogical role but that is not true. The International Monetary Fund has increasingly since the 1970s performed a very distinct ideological role in the affairs of countries particularly in Latin America and that role has been to function as an international financial policeman making sure that the countries to whom it lends, places the highest priority on the repayment of their debt to the institution from which they borrow. I want to relate that to our own circumstances and I want to do it as simply as I can. It all has to do with the ratio of the fiscal deficit to GDP.

5.50 p.m.

We depart from the Government on the question of the size of the fiscal deficit that the Government should be allowed to have year to year. The fiscal deficit is just simply the difference between Government's revenues and its spending. When you hear the Government speak of a deficit of 1% of GDP, all it means is that the Government is allowed to spend $30 million more than it earns in revenue. Every 1% of GDP as a deficit gives the Government $30 million more elbow room to help to do, in Barbados at this juncture, what the advanced countries were doing when they were 20 years into their own independent creation of their economic and social destiny.

A zero deficit is a deficit which simply says that the Government of Barbados can borrow money to repay its debts but it cannot borrow money to undertake

any social or economic activities that may lead to advancement on behalf of the people of this country. Because a deficit, as defined by the IMF, is a deficit that excludes from Government expenditure any repayment by Government of the debt that it owes to people whether at home or abroad.

When the Government of Barbados entered into a programme with the IMF in 1991 under which it agreed to have a zero deficit, it was agreed with the International Monetary Fund that the purpose of the Government of Barbados should be to raise funds by way of loans to repay its debts but that it should not be raising funds to carry on social and economic activity designed to expand the economic and social opportunities for the people of this country.

This year, Mr. Speaker, again the Government of Barbados is following an IMF policy which says that the deficit should be no more than 1.3% of our GDP. I want to put this in context. On our side, from as far back as 1983, I stated a position to which I have remained committed to in public. This position is contained in a Paper that I presented when I was a Research Fellow at the University of the West Indies, a Paper that looked at Barbados' programme with the IMF in 1981 and I said then, Sir, that:

> "The fiscal content of the programme with the IMF in 1981 was to reduce the overall fiscal deficit from 9% of GDP to 2.5% of GDP in 1985. This is very much an equilibrium size deficit for it represents that level at which public spending can be sustained without disruption to either the internal or external balances of the economy."

From as far back as 1983 I was of the view that this country should not accept any programme from the IMF that says that there should be zero deficits or 1% deficit but that the prescription of a reasonable deficit of this country should be a deficit that allows the Government some elbow room in order to do creative things in this economy.

We on this side do not accept the Minister of Finance's Budget because the Minister of Finance has, within that Budget, a deficit which in 1991 his Prime Minister told the people of this country was too draconian for his Party to accept.

Secondly, we in the Barbados Labour Party do not accept the tax reform programme that the Government of Barbados has agreed to and has put in place since 1991. Let me explain why. The Government has, since 1991 undertaken what it calls Direct Tax Reform which the Minister of Finance claims to have been one of Government's major economic achievements.

Before 1991 we had a direct tax system in which people at the lowest end of the income ladder were protected and people in the middle and upper income groups in this society were allowed tax concessions in keeping with the activities they performed and the extent to which the activities they performed contributed to investment, the generation of savings and the generation of employment in the country. We had a tax system in which a man repairing his house and creating employment could benefit by way of tax allowances. We had a tax system under which a person employing a maid, or a person employing a gardener and helping in job creation in this country could benefit by way of tax relief. We had a tax system under which a person could claim f a the investments that he made in the building of a house, or could also benefit from his investment in new shares in a public company. We had a tax system in which a person could benefit as well by way of tax allowances from making investments by way of contributions to insurance policies.

The Government of Barbados determined to abolish that system and put in its place a tax regime that now puts the politician who makes a contribution to his political Patty, a politician also who is making a contribution to a credit union at the very apex of our tax system in Barbados. Let me explain why, Sir. When the Government brought the tax reform to this House the intention was to abolish most of the allowances not because they were too onerous on the Treasury but because they cost the Treasury too little. If you will recall, it decided to set a few tax rates and to reduce the threshold of income below which people would not have to pay income tax. The Government came to this House proposing that we would have basic allowances of $13 000 instead of $15 000 that you could claim for 2 children and that everybody whether you were rich or you were poor would pay the same tax rate. When that tax reform came to this House, Sir, it was suggested on the Floor of this House that politicians' contributions to their political parties should be allowed as a deduction and that was endorsed.

6.00 p.m.

It was also proposed in this House that contributions by people to trade unions should also be allowed and that was endorsed. What we now have, Mr. Speaker, is an unfortunate tax system under which a politician can claim his contribution to his political party but a person cannot claim the interest that they pay on the mortgage for owning a house nor can they claim for the investment that they make in the purchase of new shares in a company, nor can they claim for their insurance premiums, nor can they claim for the expenses incurred in the employment of a gardener or a maid. We therefore believe on this side, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that this country has been subjected to a bogus form of tax reform. What has happened in

this country is that the approach that has been used by the IMF in other countries such as Jamaica, has been implemented in Barbados without regard to our circumstances and we on this side feel that there is an alternative that must be pursued with the greatest urgency.

We feel, Sir, that in the same way a politician *can* claim his contribution to his political party as an allowance that a person who invests in the ownership of a house in Barbados must be able to claim his mortgage interest.

We feel fundamentally on this side, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that a person who helps generate jobs in this country by buying new shares m a company must be able to claim these allowances as tax allowances just as the politician who invests in his political party do, Mr. Speaker. And I want to say this. The major loophole in our own tax regime was the fact that some allowances were unlimited. All that was required of the Government was to put sensible caps on the allowances that people were abusing. I therefore give the commitment, Sir, on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party that we would go back, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to a direct tax regime that is as close to the one that existed in this country prior to 1991 with sensible caps on the amount that people *can* claim as mortgage interest allowances and sensible caps on the amount that people *can* claim as allowances for the repairs of homes, since those were the two areas of abuse of the tax system.

Mr. Speaker, I also want on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party, Sir, to categorically reject the nonsense that a thing called tax neutrality must be the philosophy that guides us in structuring our taxation system in Barbados. I had better explain what the concept of tax neutrality means, because the Minister of Finance has been using the concept as if everybody in the House and if everybody in Barbados understands it.

All it means, Sir, is that in the process of moving from one tax system to the other, that if the tax system results in the introduction of new taxes to replace an old one, the new tax system must give rise to the same amount of tax revenue as the old one that it replaced. So that if you move from one form of income tax to the other, tax neutrality simply means that the new form of taxes must give rise to the same level of revenue as the one that it was replacing.

Now we feel, Mr. Speaker, that tax reform in Barbados must be guided by something broader than that, for this country is ,over-taxed to begin with. If our tax reform is guided only by the principle of tax neutrality; that is changing the composition of taxes so that at the end of the day the new taxes give rise to the same amount of revenue as the old taxes, if you accept as we accept and the Government accepts, Sir, that the country is already overtaxed, tax neutrality, as a principle only means that the Government is giving the people of the country the very simple choice as between being beaten by a bull pistle as distinct from being beaten by a dog whopper. It is a simple choice, either you get beaten by a bull pistle or you get beaten by a dog hunter. That is all it means.

The principle, Mr. Speaker, Sir, of tax neutrality was what guided the Government in the structuring of its direct tax reform and we are saying, Sir, that it makes no sense to say that you have reformed the tax system to replace one set of taxes by another set of taxes that use the same amount of revenue if you understand that part of our problem in this country to begin with, is that the country is over taxed.

It becomes even more important, Sir, that we understand that the Government must depart from the notion of tax neutrality as the principle that guides it in reforming the indirect tax system and I will come to that, Sir, later in my presentation, when I deal with the VAT.

We on this side, Mr. Speaker, Sir, also fundamentally disagree with the notion of trade reform as has been applied by Government and as embodied in the programme between the Government and the International Monetary Fund. And let me again, Sir, be as simple as possible in speaking to this issue.

Sir, there is a feeling on the part of the international institutions that the best way to bring about economic efficiency in all types of economies is to cause our producers, small-scale as they are, to have to face free unbridled competition from imports coming from the rest of the world and that to do so, Mr. Speaker, the governments, such as the Government of Barbados, should undertake changes in their trade regime to reduce the protection that has historically been provided for domestic producers and to allow a greater level of competition to be the basis upon which efficiency is engendered in our local productive enterprises.

Now, Sir, the fundamental difficulty in this is, that there is no such thing as an international free market for goods and services, Sir. In France there is no ruch thing, Mr. Speaker, as a free market for goods. In France, Mr. Speaker, the French have made it very clear that they are going to be protecting their domestic agricultural sector from excessive competition from agricultural produce in the rest of the world.

Even as I speak to this House, Mr. Speaker, there is a tremendous controversy raging between the United States and Japan as regards the question as to how trade should be managed between the two countries and the extent of access that should be allowed by American producers under managed trade arrangement in the Japanese markets.

But our little economies are being forced to accept that the way forward for our economy is to dismantle all barriers to imports into this country, to replace licences that have hitherto protected jobs and industries in Barbados by surtaxes in the belief that by exposing our domestic producers to more efficient so-called producers abroad they will become themselves more efficient wholly upon the strength of competition with people who are larger than themselves, more technologically dynamic than themselves and who very often enjoy themselves tremendous subsidies and tremendous levels of protection by their own government.

6.10 p.m.

This Government has committed Barbados, Mr. Speaker, to a process of trade reform with which the Barbados Labour Party does not fundamentally agree. We do not agree, Mr. Speaker, that we should have trade reform as elaborated by Government in advance of anti-dumping legislation brought to this House to make sure that this economy is not flooded by cheap subsidized imports from the rest of the world. We believe, Mr. Speaker, that there are still some lines of production in Barbados which warrant some level of protection in order to make sure that jobs in Barbados are maintained at a satisfactory level and the Barbados Labour Party will not give its support to the trade reform part of the programme that has been embodied in the Minister of Finance's Budgetary Proposals. We believe, Mr. Speaker, that in the same way that major economies of the world continue to protect vital sectors of their economies in the interest of maintaining satisfactory levels of jobs, it falls to Barbados to let charity begin at home.

In relation to the incomes policy part of the programme between the Government and the International Monetary Fund, I must state a position on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party. Mr. Speaker, when the incomes policy was first proposed by Government, it was proposed that there should have been a wage freeze and that people would have been penalized by a National Productivity Board if they agreed to wage increases that were not in keeping with the spirit of the so-called incomes policy. The Barbados Labour Party led a political outcry against the original concept of the incomes policy and our outcry was based on a number of precepts and a number of principles.

The first was that we could not accept an across the board freeze of incomes and wages in this economy. We felt, Sir, that there had to be a threshold below which some level of wage increases would have to be allowed. We also felt. Mr. Speaker, that you could not have a wages policy nor an incomes policy without an active prices policy and we also felt that what was done in other countries of the world where an enlightened approach was brought to bear in the execution of an incomes policy should also have been done in Barbados, namely that an incomes policy for Barbados should have had within it an element of tax reform whereby year by year increased tax allowances would have been allowed to make sure that, even though people's incomes were frozen in gross terms, there take-home pay could have been increased as a result of the provision of increased tax allowances.

Those principles, Mr. Speaker, were embodied in the Incomes and Prices Protocol signed by the Government, trade unions and the private sector. What we have on this side to say, Sir, is that the only aspect of the so-called incomes policy that the Government seems desirous of implementing is the wage freeze, but the other aspects of the policy that would take the sting out of the policy particularly for the worst off in this society are not being honoured by the so-called social partners of this country. I want to refer to them specifically. On page 5, Mr. Speaker, of the Incomes and Prices Protocol, it states that "within the framework of the foregoing it is agreed and understood that there will be a general freeze on increases on basic wages and salaries in both the public and private sectors provided however that this shall not be made to apply in areas where wages are deemed by the social partners to be substandard." What that meant was simply that rather than an across the board freeze in wages and incomes in this country the social partners should have sat down, Sir, and determine the areas of employment in which wages were substandard and allow wage increases in those areas.

Mr. Speaker, a full year has passed and we on this side are yet to hear of any area of employment in this country that the social partners have deemed to be substandard as to warrant an increase in wages for the persons who are trapped in those types of economic depressions. I want to use this opportunity on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party to call on the trade unions of Barbados and the private sector of Barbados to give full effect to what has been agreed to and what must be regarded as one of the most fundamental protective provisions of that incomes policy by moving away from the precept that there must be a general freeze of wages in Barbados and identifying those areas of substandard wages in this country which clearly must be a need of serious upgradement in compliance with the provisions of Section 3(a) of the incomes policy.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the Incomes Protocol required that the social partners would set up a committee

to monitor monopoly prices so that increases may be limited to the legitimate cost increases subject to the terms of existing agreements.

Mr. Speaker, to date no committee has been established as far as we are aware by the so-called social partners to monitor monopoly prices in this country. As a result, Sir, we had the unfortunate situation in which the Government attempted to increase rents on the tenants of NHC. We have had the situation, Mr. Speaker, Sir, in which the Government of Barbados is now attempting to increase bus fares as well in conflict with the provision of this incomes policy. The Barbados Labour Party wants therefore to call on the social partners to make sure that the full spirit of that provision of the incomes policy designed to take the sting out of the wage freeze is fully complied with.

But there is a third aspect of this incomes policy that is so crucial that it is a great shame that the social partners have not forced action on the part of Government in relation to it. On page 7 of the incomes policy, Sir, it says that the social partners will immediately work together to consider and to examine indexing wage adjustments and tax allowances to increases in the cost of living. Now what that means, Mr. Speaker, Sir, is that since people cannot get increases in wages, the social partners were supposed to suggest to Government ways by which tax allowances linked and indexed to price increases could have been introduced in order to reduce the severity of the wage freeze that has been imposed in Barbados as part of the two year programme.

Now the other aspect of it, Sir, is this that in 1992, when the then Minister of Finance introduced his tax reform, he also indicated that beginning in 1994 tax allowances would have been indexed to the rate of inflation so that even if, Mr. Speaker, the basic allowances started at $13 000, there would have been the possibility that the threshold below which people start paying income tax in this country would have been raised year after year.
6.20 p.m.

That commitment was given to this House in 1992 by the Minister of Finance. It is embodied as a principle in the incomes policy. The Minister yesterday brought to this House a Budget without making any adjustments in tax allowances in line with prices in this country and without honouring the provisions of section (g) set out on page 7 of the Prices and Incomes Policy agreed to between the Government, the private sector and the Trade Unions. We are calling upon the Trade Unions in particular to recognise that they have an obligation to protect the poorest sectors of the society, and we are calling upon them to bring the maximum pressure to bear on the Government and on the so-called social partners in the private sector to make sure that the provisions that would make it possible for tax allowances in this country to be indexed to the level of inflation to be introduced. We are also calling upon them to make sure that there is an active pricing policy such that prices are not allowed to get out of hand, Mr. Speaker, and to make sure that persons at the lowest of the income ladder in Barbados are not subjected to the strictures of a general wage freeze in this country.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance yesterday introduced a Budget, one of the major elements of which was a reduction in the price of energy products. I want to say to this House that the 1994 Budget is distinguished for the way in which it totally ignores the Barbadian people and their urgent need for relief from Government taxation. There are many areas in which relief is needed, but none more so than in the energy sector. The cost of energy in Barbados is much too high and it militates against economic growth by making the cost of production in this country too high and too uncompetitive. The cost of energy also, Mr. Speaker, makes living for the ordinary Barbadian parent who has to take his or her children to school, or who otherwise has to go about the business of earning a living and raising a family too expensive, in circumstances where the cost of gasoline at the pump is $1.54 a litre, or $5.82 a gallon, as the case now is.

I submit to the House, Sir, that the Member for St. John is not doing the Barbadian public any favour when he gives back a mere pittance of four cents a litre to the consumer.

But more to the point he must not come to this House and tell us that the obligations arising out of the Mobil Agreement causes him to delay any adjustment in the pricing of energy to the consumer. This is distinctly not the case. The reason why the price of gasolene in Barbados is so high and the reason why the Member for St. John has not substantially reduced the price are one and the same. It is not because of the Mobil Agreement, it is because the Government sees energy as a source of easy money and has decided that the energy sector must bear an unconscionably larger share of the tax burden in this country. As a result, Sir, we now have the most amazing situation in this country where gasolene prices at the pump were much lower in Barbados in 1981, when the average price of a barrel of oil was $34 a barrel, than it is now when the price has dropped to US$14 a barrel. about half the amount charged per barrel in 1981.

Mr. Speaker, it is instructive to look at the way in which Government taxes have since 1986 come to

represent a larger and larger percentage of the cost to gasolene and to energy prices in this country, notwithstanding the substantial decline in the cost of energy products in Barbados. Let us take a close look at the facts. When we left office in 1986 the price of a litre of gasolene from the Mobil refinery was 58.9 cents and the price at the pump was $1.15 a litre, with the consumption tax being charged per litre set at 45.43 cents. In August 1986 the price at the refinery fell to 34.12 cents a litre, the consumption tax was reduced from 45 cents a litre to 42 cents a litre and the price of gasolene was reduced then, as you will recall, from $1.15 per litre to 95 cents per litre, or $3.15 a gallon. Up to 1990 the price of gasolene stabilised at $1.15 per litre. But thereafter every price increase in gasolene has been driven by the taxation imposed by the Government of Barbados and by the Prime Minister of this country, even in circumstances where the price at the level of the refinery was falling.

Let me therefore give this House chapter and verse for the record. On October 9, 1990 the price at the pump was increased from $1.15 per litre to $1.27 per litre with the taxation element being increased from 42 cents in consumption tax a litre to 54.16 cents per litre. On 6th August, 1991 the price at the pump was raised from $1.27 to $1.35 per litre with the taxation element, the consumption tax per litre, being increased from 54 cents to 62 cents per litre. On 29th November, 1991 the price at the pump was raised to $1.41 per litre and the entire increase was due to the taxation, the consumption tax, which was increased from 62 cents per litre to 73.2 cents per litre. On 1st January, 1993 the price at the pump was raised from $1.41 per litre to $1.64 per litre, and this again was entirely due to the taxation, the consumption tax, which was increased from 73 cents a litre from the November 1991 figure to 91 cents per litre.

It therefore has to be clear to anybody who has just heard the evidence that the savage increase in the consumption tax per litre of gasolene in this country from 45 cents per litre in 1986 to 92 cents per litre in 1993 has been one of the chief factors responsible for the massive increase in gasolene prices in this country to the point where the price of gasoline in Barbados is almost twice as high as the price of gasoline in any other country in the Caribbean.

6.30 p.m.

What the public must be told, Mr. Speaker, is that the 4¢ or 5¢ per litre decrease being proposed by the Minister of Finance, is not a 4¢ or 5¢ reduction in the consumption tax being charged by Government. The Government intends to continue to collect the same amount of consumption tax per litre of gasoline in this country, notwithstanding the fact that it came into office in 1986, promising the people of this country that it was going to maintain low energy prices because it felt, Mr. Speaker, that low energy prices were part and parcel of the way forward in terms of making this economy more competitive.

I want to say to the Government, I want to say to everybody in Barbados who has a car and whose income has been cat-spraddled by the drastic increase in gas prices since 1986, that the utmost pressure must be put on this Government to cause it to stop treating taxation on energy products as a cheap, easy source of revenue for the Government and that it must move towards an economic policy which brings gas prices in this country in line with the gas prices that are charged in other Caribbean economies.

Now, Sir, I want to deal also with the question of an employment strategy for Barbados. The Minister of Finance in his outline of an employment strategy put forward the notion and I want to quote him as exactly as I can, Sir. He put forward the notion that Barbados' employment strategy should not be addressed by way of a crash programme in the public sector and at page 83 of his presentation, Sir, he spoke to the youth in these terms.

He said he wanted to share with them an idea that he had derived from Mr. Errol Barrow, which he regarded as being a thoughtful suggestion which merited repetition. His idea was that the unemployed young people of Barbados can offer their services to certain businesses for minimal cost in the first instance. And if I may quote him, he said that:

> "Volunteering work as a learning experience, and apprenticeship for just a small stipend to cover bus fare, lunch and pocket money; and eventually through dedication to duty and conscientious effort, the youngsters may find themselves becoming permanent, full-time, fully paid employees."

Now, Sir, a lot of things are attributed by the Democratic Labour Party to Errol Barrow and sometimes we must regret that Mr. Barrow is not here to defend himself, because I suspect that he would have dissociated himself from the words of the member for St. John. He would have told the House that the idea presented to the House by the member for St. John yesterday as having come from Errol Barrow was in fact set out in a letter to Dear Christine last Friday in the Nation newspaper, which I cannot quote, but which, Sir, my memory tells me said something like this:

This letter is unlike any –

I am using my memory, Sir. I have a very good memory, Sir. The letter as I recall it said:

Dear Christine,

This letter is unlike any that I have seen in your column and I hope and pray that you can assist me.

I am in pursuit of achieving my goal of becoming an accountant but I need hands-on experience. I am very good with figures and I love to manipulate numbers trying to solve problems.

Christine, I am hoping that someone in the accounting field would take me on as a protégé. I know that it is hard to find a job so I am offering my services and would only need an allowance for bus fare and lunch. The training does not have to be every week as I would need at least one day in every week to fulfill other obligations.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance presented this country with a Dear Christine approach to the solution of our unemployment problems. And I feel a responsibility to outline to this House what we in the Barbados Labour Party feel is possible as being the main element of the kind of employment strategy that should be executed in this country at this juncture of its development.

I start, Sir, from the position which says that the problem of unemployment is not one that is too insurmountable for Barbados to deal with. There are some economies like Mauritius where the people are no different from the ordinary Barbadian, where the level of unemployment is almost zero. And even as I speak to you, Mr. Speaker, opportunities are being created in the international economy that would allow Barbados, provided that the right mix of policies are executed, to move toward a state of employment that bears some relationship to that experienced in countries such as Mauritius and Singapore and other small resource deficient economies and I want to outline some of them, Sir.

I want first of all to say that this country must begin to take the fullest advantage of the opportunities that now has arisen in Barbados' favour because of the changes taking place in the international economy.

For the first time, Mr. Speaker, countries like Barbados that have made a substantial investment historically in the development of their human resources, find themselves having a comparative advantage over more natural resource-rich economies because the direction of change in the international economy favours economies like ours which have the skill content in order to take advantage of changes in international technology. And one area in which advantages can be realised by Barbados but where our full potential is not being optimised, is in the information processing industry which the Barbados Labour Party had the foresight to bring to this country in 1983 following the recommendations of the Boos Allen Report.

I want to cite, Sir, a paper presented on May 21, 1993 by Dr. Delisle Worrell, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank, entitled "Out of the Doldrums." It speaks, Sir, to the employment opportunities in the information services industry and I quote:

> "Information services is a rapidly expanding field with wonderful opportunities for a country like Barbados which has modem telecommunications and an educated labour force. Because we are so small, a minute fraction of the international business would make a serious dent in our unemployment."

6.40 p.m.

He said, Sir,

> "We should set out to attract ten firms a year averaging 200 employees over the course of the next five years. Government and the population should strain every sinew to ensure that this target is achieved. This would bring 10 000 new jobs directly, enough to take care of a substantial percentage of the unemployed and to provide opportunities for a large number of our school leavers."

Then he went on, Sir, and said:

> 'The handful of firms now operating in the information services sector are excellent examples of what is possible. However, at the moment, very few people in private sector organizations, Government, trade unions, and among the general public seem really convinced of the possibilities for employment in this sector. Unfortunately, inertia alone is sufficient to ensure that job creation in this sector will fall well short of potential."

Now, Sir, this is Dr. Worrell, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados, telling the Government of Barbados that the information processing industry which the document entitled 'The DLP's Structural Adjustment Programme" recognises on page 51, that was brought to Barbados in 1983 by the Barbados Labour Party, has the potential for the creation in the short-term of at least 10 000 new jobs provided the Government, the trade unions and the private sector of this country shakes itself out of its inertia.

We say to this House, Sir, that where the Barbados Labour Party is concerned, Dr. Worrell is speaking to

a committed audience, and he is pushing an open door. We are calling upon Government to do everything that is possible and that we give this commitment that a new Barbados Labour Party administration will do everything that is possible to make sure that the vast potential for job creating in the information services industry is realised and that the inertia that presently stands in the way of the country taking advantage of this real potential is put behind us once and for all.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, there can be no doubt that there is tremendous scope, not only for foreign exchange but also for employment generation in the offshore financial sector provided the Government were to put the adequate amount of resources behind it. From as far back as 1989 a Mr. Langer did a report for Government that recommended that there was scope for new activity in areas such as international trust and a diversification of the mix of financial services operating in Barbados. The Government has been slow in implementing the Langer Report.

What we have is a situation this year where the Government is spending, so the Minister of Finance tells us, over $106m on capital development but it is spending only $406 000 on the development of the offshore financial sector. In particular, Sir, the same Ministry of Finance that is spending, or proposes to spend $8.8m this year in tax administration, cannot find it possible to spend more than $406 000 to expand the possibilities of developing the offshore sector in this country.

I am calling upon the Government, if it is serious about creating new jobs in this country, to take some of the funds that are here earmarked for tax administration and expenditure control, some of the $8.8m and devote it towards doing what is necessary by way of promotion, the settlement of double taxation treaties, the bringing into this House legislation for thrusts to make sure that new jobs can be created in the offshore sector.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, it is clear to us in the Barbados Labour Party that you cannot have substantial job creation in this country unless all of the sectors of this economy are firing on all cylinders.

One of the main reasons why unemployment in Barbados has been so high has been because over the course of the last five years very often no more than one major sector of the economy has been performing well. We have therefore to go back to a policy where all of the sectors, including manufacturing, agriculture, construction, and the distributive sectors are firing on all of the cylinders.

In the case of manufacturing, Mr. Speaker, a job creating programme must require that the Government affords a more sensible level of protection to the industry, that the Government addresses the question of taxes on the inputs used by the sector and that the Government deals with the disadvantage that the manufacturing sector has faced from regional competitors in Barbados.

One of the reasons why the manufacturing sector has not performed well is because our manufacturers cannot compete against foreign competitors abroad and they find it almost impossible to compete against foreign competitors, particularly regional competitors at home. I say to the House that disadvantage has been taken of our manufacturers because the Government not being resolute enough in stopping our manufacturers from facing unfair competition, particularly from those regional competitors whose Governments have used exchange rate variations as one of the ways in which they give their products an unfair advantage in the Barbados market and we want to see that changed.

In relation to agriculture, we are of the view on this side that agriculture in Barbados has the potential of creating a large number of jobs as well for the future, but it will require that the Government have an imaginative capital development programme that restores to this country the level of capital spending on agricultural projects that is of the character of the level of spending that was realised in the 1970s and 1980s. Let me explain the point.

There is a lot of scope, Mr. Speaker, for increased agricultural production in this country and the lifting of agricultural productivity and the creation of agricultural jobs. I think of the Scotland District. I think of the repetition in the other parts of Barbados of what has been done in places like Gibbons Boggs through the auspices of the Integrated Rural Development Programme. But agriculture in Barbados needs to have the support of public capital formation.

The facts are that throughout the 1970s and 1980s, year by year, between $15m and $20m a year was spent by the Government on capital projects designed to help agriculture in this country. However in the course of the last three years Government capital spending on agricultural projects have sunk to a low of $5m. We can get agriculture firing again on all cylinders by the increase in Government capital spending on imaginative projects designed to lift agricultural productivity in the country.

Similarly, Mr. Speaker, we can get construction going again in Barbados when the Government accepts the

wisdom of a tax reform programme that restores sensible concessions for home ownership and house repairs.

The third element, Mr. Speaker, of the Barbados Labour Party's proposed employment creation programme is for Barbados to have in broad terms an imaginative capital development programme sponsored by the State. We do not accept, as I said earlier, the view that the State does not have a creative role to play in Barbados' development. We feel that there are important areas in which the State can contribute substantially to employment creation and I will give instances of some.

There is a need for the State, in collaboration with the private sector, to invest in a marina in this country to broaden the attractiveness of our tourism facilities. There is a need for us to have a look again at the waterfront development that was proposed by the Barbados Labour Party because it is intrinsic to the fullest realisation of this country's potential to become a service economy.

We feel, as I said, on this side, Mr. Speaker, that we must go back to investing in projects that can boost agricultural productivity like the Scotland Development Programme, the National Fruit Orchard Programme and other Integrated Rural Development Programmes.

I feel, Mr. Speaker, that the Government must invest money in Speightstown to promote heritage tourism in Speightstown.

6.50 p.m.

I feel as well, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that there is tremendous scope for a large series of eco-tourism based projects to enhance Barbados' environment. We cannot look to the private sector to do it. The Government must have the imagination to bring to bear in this country those kinds of imaginative capital development programmes, including imaginative projects designed to enhance the environment, to clean up the environment and transform gullies into areas that tourists can utilize. All of these things are possible and require an expanded role of the State.

Fourth, there can be no doubt that unless there is a special regime for small and medium sized businesses in Barbados that this country is not going to go forward.

It is to be regretted that in the course of the last few years, the preoccupation of this Government has been to create opportunities for large businesses in this country like at the Port. But no commensurate attention has been given to the creation of special regimes for small and medium sized businesses in this country.

Fith, we feel, on this side, that employment creation in this country can be enhanced and supported by the fullest utilization of all of the funds from the training levy for the training of the young people of this country rather than the present situation, Mr. Speaker, where the levy raises $12 million and only $2 million goes into the training of young people in Barbados.

Sixth, I have already said that Barbados needs an active technological policy that is designed to support research and development activities in the design of new products and new processes. We cannot assume that productivity increases will come unless we change our product and processes. I am calling for a technological policy for Barbados supported by State expenditure in much the same way as the industrialized countries of the world support research and development to improve their product.

Seventh, there must also be financial reform in this country. A large part of the problem in this society is that there is a large number of Barbadians with ideas but the key constraint holding them back is the access to finance in order to implement their ideas. Our concept of financial reform must embrace the notion that excess liquidity in our banking system co-existing with idle hands, and an underutilized idea is a sin and that we have to reform the financial system of this country, as has been done in the far Eastern economies, to make sure that people who have ideas and the skills but need the finance can get access to the finance.

Eighth, we need also, if we are going to support employment creation in this country to set realistic prices for energy and realistic prices for access to capital. I commit the Barbados Labour Party to an employment creation programme that is based on the notion that Barbados' production can be made competitive by the setting of realistic prices for energy and low rates of interest as has obtained in the Singapore economy, the East Asian economy and all of the other small economies where the rate of unemployment is next to zero rather than 25% as is the case in Barbados.

Ninth, I am also of the view that tremendous scope exists in this country for employment creation through the encouragement of sports and cultural based activities, across the world. Some of the most lucrative forms of employment for young people in particular are in the area of sports and cultural based activities particularly entertainment.

I give this House the commitment, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that a Barbados Labour Party Administration will be

looking to use all of the proceeds of taxes realized from gaming, the Turf Club, Lotto, whatever, that all of the proceeds that are realized from those gaming and gambling activities will be committed towards development of sporting and cultural based employment type activities in the country.

Finally, Sir, I fundamentally believe as well that the development of export culture and all that it entails is fundamental to the creation of a sensible employment programme for Barbados.

These 10 basic points that I have outlined are within the capacity of this country to realize. They are in contrast to anything that this Government has proposed.

The Minister of Finance has brought a Budget to the country, the only idea is that young people should volunteer their services to the private sector for bus fares and lunch. We on this side are proposing a dynamic programme to begin with, a dynamic 10 point programme embracing the high tech and the low tech, embracing an expanded and an imaginative capital programme by Government, encompassing financial reform, encompassing technological reform that we feel can put Barbados in the same position as countries like Singapore.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day it all will take confidence. It can only be realized if there is political stability in this country. I have as I begin to wind down this speech to say that the greatest to the economic survival and the prosperity of Barbados is...

Certain remarks made by Mr. O. S. ARTHUR were ordered, by Mr. SPEAKER to be struck from the Record.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: ...the political corruption, the lack of political morality existing in the Democratic Labour Party. We have a Prime Minister of the country who is concerned only with searching for destabilisers and plotters and enemies.

Cabinet Government in Barbados has virtually collapsed. This country has progressed hitherto because it enjoys a reputation for political stability. Barbados' reputation for political stability is being undermined because of the collapse of Cabinet Government. Political stability in this country is being undermined because this Government is lurching from one scandal to the other. It has lurched from the dope in the diplomatic bag for which somebody should have been locked up to CARSICOT, to the St. Joseph Hospital on which the last word has not yet been spoken, to this most shameful episode where a fairy godfather, an international bandit was put to the necessity of having to find a solution, Mr. Speaker, to Barbados' sugar problems. The lurching lurching from scandal to scandal to scandal in the Democratic Labour Party is undermining public confidence in the administration of our public affairs and it is reducing confidence in the management of this economy.

7.00 p.m.

We have a situation in this country where the Government is practising the principle of party paramountcy. The Prime Minister spoke about it in 1991 when he said that he was not going to allow the Democratic Labour Party to commit political suicide. We also heard the General Manager of the Democratic Labour Party say that on the eve of the 1991 election, Mr. Speaker, that the Prime Minister committed himself to the notion that he would be guided by Matthew 6:34 'Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought of the things of itself'. We have a situation in this country, Mr. Speaker, where the Democratic Labour Party would want the people of this country to repose confidence in it when time after time, Mr. Speaker, it puts itself in a position where it asks the people of the country to support its policies and no sooner than these policies are supported, Sir, than the very policies are repudiated by the Democratic Labour Party.

In 1986 the Democratic Labour Party indulged in a vast intellectual deceit when it asked the people of this country to vote for policies that it has subsequently repudiated. The Member for St. Michael South distinguished himself on the occasion that those policies were brought to this House by saying, "promises made, promises kept". However, two years after, the same Member for St. Michael South, Mr. Speaker, was telling the people of Barbados that those policies were thrust upon the Democratic Labour Party without the support of the Democratic Labour Party.

We have had the same thing in 1991 when the Democratic Labour Party committed itself to a bountiful Barbados, knowing that it had given undertakings to the World Bank by way of *Aide Memoire* to undertake adjustments in this economy that could not lead to a bountiful Barbados by any stretch of the imagination. We have a Democratic Labour Party that went to the people of this country promising things it knew were in conflict with the commitments it had given to the international lending institutions. As a result the people of Barbados have lost faith in this Government. The loss of faith is represented in the fact that they can no longer take the Government at its word. The people in your constituency who pay rent in Fernichurst, like the people in my constituency, cannot understand how the Government could want the tenants in the National Housing Estates to pay increased rents

when they had a situation at the Airport where the land to be rented from it by a private entrepreneur was valued by the Commissioner of Land Tax to be worthy of paying a rent of $80 000 a year but the Government decided to charge that entrepreneur only $33 000 a year for rent.

I want to repeat that, Sir, the people in my constituency at Maynards, like the people in your constituency at Ferniehurst cannot understand how the Government could reduce commercial rents on a property it is renting at the Airport for people to make profits from $80 000 as recommended by the Commissioner of Land Tax to $33 000 while it wanted to increase rents on your people.

The public servants in this country cannot understand how the same Government, on the eve of election, could find $30 million to pay the people at the top in the public service by way of a regrading but thereafter had to ask them to come, in 1991 to accept an 8% cut and then in 1993 to accept leave in lieu of the payment of increments, Sir. They have lost faith and confidence in this Government. The manufacturers of this country, Mr. Speaker, Sir, cannot understand how in 1988 and 1989 the Government could bring to this House tax concessions supported by tax increases, and thereafter year by year engage them in a roller coaster exercise such that they could know from minute to minute what Government's true intentions were.

All of these things, Mr. Speaker, have served to weaken the resolve of the people of this country. But worst of all, Mr. Speaker, the most shameful of all is the receipt by the Government of $150 000 from an international convict to break a strike in the sugar industry. On the occasion, Sir, that that experience occurred, we spoke on this side about the way in which Barbados had been reduced. We, Mr. Speaker, used words that you would regard as unparliamentary and I am not going to repeat them. But we asked on that occasion that there should have been a full disclosure because it was demeaning, disgraceful and unknown, Mr. Speaker, in the whole history of this country for a Government to accept anything like $150 000 to settle a strike without being concerned as to who the benefactor was. The Prime Minister then said he did not care who it was. He was happy that the strike had been settled and the Deputy Prime Minister made it clear that he was pleased, Sir, to accept the gift on behalf of the people of Barbados – no questions asked no answers given. I believe, Mr. Speaker, Sir, now that the full facts are known that the Deputy Prime Minister should resign and that the Prime Minister owes the people of this country an apology for reducing the people of this country to a state where we have to look to known convicts for handouts to settle strikes in this society.

I want to go further, Mr. Speaker. I want also to say that there is need for a serious enquiry into the circumstances that explain why people can just leave this country, vanish, Sir, as has been the case of two persons, a Mr. Matheison ...

Mr. SPEAKER: Now, withdraw that.

Mr. O. S. **ARTHUR:** I withdraw Mr. Matheison's name, Sir. A well-known former hotelier, Sir ...

Mr. **SPEAKER.** Let me make this very clear. I have always indicated that names of people, before they are mentioned in any debate ought to be communicated to myself. I have said that very clearly.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that the circumstances surrounding the departure from this country of a well-known hotelier and two well-known lawyers with close connections with the Democratic Labour Party.

Rt. Hon. L. **E.** SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, it is with great reluctance that I rise. I do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member in his presentation but he has said words to the effect that I said I did not care where the money came from so long as a matter was settled. I do not, Sir, recall ever making any such statement. Indeed, Sir, I was not in the country at that time and the Member should make a document of the House, the source to substantiate what he is saying.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I have already said the Deputy Prime Minister but I am astonished that a Prime Minister of this country could preside over an administration that could accept $150 000 from someone to break a strike in this country without raising any questions about the *bona fide* of the person. And I am saying that if the Prime Minister did not raise any questions he was negligent in his responsibility.

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

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I want the words withdrawn if he cannot substantiate the source of his statements.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has submitted to me his complaint in respect in a point

of order. Again I am going to be consistent in these matters. If an Honourable Member gets up and objects to a statement then the statement rests there otherwise if it is to be pursued the Honourable Member knows very well I have always asked for documentation on the matter. If that cannot be supported at this point in time, I would suggest to the Honourable Member not to pursue with that matter anymore.

7.10 p.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to pursue that matter neither am I going to ask if any Members of Cabinet spent a week at the gentleman's house in New Jersey, Mr. Speaker, or what was the purpose of the visit? I am not going to pursue those issues this evening.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I rise on a point of order and I am asking the Honourable Member for St. Peter – I am asking you, Sir, to ask him to withdraw the words which he used attributing to me statements that I did not care from what source funds came so long as a matter was settled. He used words to that effect. Unless he can produce substantiation for what he has said, I am asking him to withdraw those words through you, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if the Prime Minister wants me to withdraw the remarks, I will withdraw the remarks. But I am glad, Sir, that he cares about where the money came from and that he cares so much that he allowed his administration to accept $150 000 from a known convict.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now I am not going to permit that either.

Mr. O. S. **ARTHUR:** I am glad that he said that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The rules of the House do not permit another Member to speak of the conduct of another Member unless this is done in a particular way. Now your reference is to the Honourable Member's conduct in a particular matter and, therefore, I do not take that as a back-hand compliment. I am saying to the Honourable Member that the Right Honourable Member has objected to the statement and has made the point that he is not in any way to be associated with the statement by the Honourable Member and has asked the Honourable Member, if he pursues it, to produce the document or, as the Honourable Member has said, if not, that he will withdraw the statement and the matter will rest there.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, as I said, I have withdrawn the statement and I agree that the Prime Minister cared. But it is also still a matter of public record that the money was accepted by Government without the Government disclosing who the person was or apparently checking into the *bona fides* of the person who gave the money, but the Prime Minister cares.

It reminds me, Mr. Speaker, Sir, of a reference that was made to the Prime Minister in 1953 in *The Harrisonian* on page 15. It referred to a Mahatma Sandi, a devout moralist, as devout as moralists go, preaching but not doing. I want to make this a document of the House because in this particular case he was a devout moralist who cared about whom we were getting the money from and he is now preaching his moral, Sir. But as in 1953 he was not doing anything about it. I want to make this, Sir, a document of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: A document of the House. I heard that it is from somewhere. I did not hear what page, what year or all of that. I have not heard all of those things.

Mr. O. S. **ARTHUR:** Page 15 of *The Harrisonian* of 1953.

Mr. SPEAKER: I prefer to have the document in my hands.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I am making it a document of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. Can I have the document, Mr. Clerk?

Mr. O. S. **ARTHUR:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, public confidence in the administration of our public affairs has been shaken by what appears to be Government's toleration of lawlessness at the centre of Government. Public confidence has been shaken by Government tolerating within its midst a Minister of the Crown who will agree, Sir, that he has broken the law but that he is justified in breaking the law only because other persons had broken the law before. Public confidence, Mr. Speaker, has been shaken by the fact that the Central Bank of this country has been allowed consistently to act in defiance of the laws of this country. This year in the Auditor General's Report...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member said that there is a Minister of the Crown who he believes has broken the law. As far as I am aware, Sir, there is no Minister over here who has ever agreed that he broke any law and I object to the statement. There is no Minister over here who ever agreed that he broke any law.

Mr. O. S. **ARTHUR:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, now if Mr. Errol Barrow...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has risen on a point of order and it is dealing in reference to a Member of this House. The rules are very clear on references to Members of this House. The Honourable Member objects that he has not made that statement and, therefore, the Honourable Member cannot persist with that.

Mr. O. S. **ARTHUR:** I never attributed any statement to the Member for St. Michael West.

Hon. B. M. **TAITT:** On a point of order, Sir. As a Member of the Cabinet, I am saying categorically that no Minister in the Cabinet has ever stated that he has ever broken any law in Barbados. I am saying that the Honourable Member has to withdraw that.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member does not have to go any further because the only Ministers that we are referring to are the Members of this House. Therefore, if a false accusation is being made, according to a Member when on a point of order, the Honourable Member has to correct it or substantiate it. If he cannot substantiate it, I will therefore ask him to withdraw that statement.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if Mr. Errol Barrow were here, he would tell the Member for St. Michael West that he seems to have a mirror image of himself...

Mr. SPEAKER: But the Honourable Member...I am not permitting this. Has the Honourable Member withdrawn the statement objected to by the Minister? The Minister got up and said that he is refuting that statement.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if it is your judgment that...

Mr. SPEAKER: It is my judgment that if the Honourable Member objects to the statement...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I want the Member for St. Michael West to justify his actions in relation to the St. Joseph's Hospital on the grounds that breaches of which he was part were committed by these people previously.

Mr. SPEAKER: But that is not the point.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not need any point of order. I am saying to the Honourable Member that I have drawn to the Honourable Member the objection on a point of order by another Member. If the Honourable Member objects to that statement, we have agreed already that either the Member will withdraw the statement or that the Member will substantiate the statement by some authentic source. If the Honourable Member does not have it, I will ask that it be struck from the record and that there be no further discussion on it if the Member does not want to withdraw the statement or substantiate it by some authentic source.

Mr. O. S. **ARTHUR:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, as Your Honour wishes, but there is no source that I regard as being more authentic than my ears and the ears of the thousands of people across the length and breadth of Barbados.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is nothing authentic in here. I cannot take care of ears and walk with them. I cannot take that and I have already ruled that that kind of pattern of discussion will be ruled and the Honourable Member has now come to the end of his speech. Time has finished.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the Honourable Member standing on?

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR Mr. Speaker, Sir, I must take issue...

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the Honourable Member standing on? I will ask you to leave the Chamber. I will ask you to leave for the remainder of the sitting too.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, I am on a point of privilege. 7.20 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no privilege at this point. What I want to draw to the Honourable Member's attention is that whenever the Presiding Officer speaks there cannot be any rebuttal nor can I be enjoined in any discussion. That is what the rule says. When I speak you remain silent. When I make an order there is no appeal to anybody else. When I make a ruling there is no appeal to anybody else. Now, I said the Honourable Member's time has come to an end, television time.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Television time, not official time. That is the privilege on which I was speaking.

Mr. SPEAKER: Because you will not listen, you want to speak faster than anybody else. Television time has finished. Now, we can proceed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not finished yet. When I am finished speaking then I may allow you to speak. What I was saying is that we have come to the end of television time, and these interruptions came in, but the Honourable Member knows that he has unlimited time in this debate.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: May I have some order please? I think I am very clear on my ruling. I was courteous enough to say that the time for his speaking had ended and I did not get chance to say television....

Mr. O. S. **ARTHUR:** You said "time".

Mr. SPEAKER: Right. Television time. The Honourable Member knows we are operating under Standing Orders where the first Member speaks with unlimited time. I know that as well.

Mr. O. S. **ARTHUR:** But, Mr. Speaker, you told me that my time had ended and I was claiming my right and privilege in this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have made my ruling and I have explained the position to you. If you would only listen sometimes you will get the correct understanding. Now the Honourable Member may continue.

Mr. O. S. **ARTHUR:** Mr. Speaker, I was making the very serious point that Barbados' political stability that had featured so prominently as a factor in underwriting our economic and social progress has been threatened by the crisis at the centre of Government in this country; that the crisis manifests itself in the range of scandals that go unaddressed and unanswered; that the crisis manifests itself in the level of lawlessness that goes unaddressed and unanswered; that the crisis manifests itself in the breakdown in Cabinet Government as is now reflected by the composition of the members on the other side and that the crisis of confidence manifests itself in terms of the fact that nobody in Barbados can take this Government at its word, nobody can follow its policies.

I want to close, because I was about to close, by saying that there was a time in 1654 when a Mr. Oliver Cromwell had to face a Parliament where there was a similar breach of faith between the Government and the people, and the words he used then can be used in reference to this Democratic Labour Party administration, and I quote, Sir

> "It is not fit that you should sit here any longer. You have sat too long here for any good you have been doing. You shall now give way to better men. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go!"

I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move an amendment to the Resolution before the House in this order:

> WHEREAS the economy of Barbados has experienced little or no growth since **1990** as a result of Government's inept management;
>
> AND WHEREAS in an effort to contain the fiscal deficit the Government has introduced draconian measures as a result of which there is widespread unemployment:
>
> AND WHEREAS it is expected that the **1994-95** budgetary proposals would have been designed to bring relief to the unemployed and herald an improvement in the economy;
>
> BE IT RESOLVED that this House regret the poor performance of the Government during **1993-94** and regret the absence of positive and concrete proposals to stimulate the economy, provide jobs, drastically reduce unemployment and bring much needed relief to the poor and disadvantaged.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak, Sir. The amendment is to delete all the words after 'WHEREAS" in the first Resolution.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Mr. Speaker, for my short time in the House, even though I have had occasion to read many of the debates we have had, this year for me was the least informative and easily the most disgusting. The presentation of the Honourable Member was a display characterised by intellectual poverty throughout. I will concede that he made about three good points, which I will deal with, and I can only express my shock at the display by the Honourable Member before he took his seat. I do not believe, in all honesty, that a young man who aspires to leadership in this country should be setting that example to young people in this country. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West sat as leader of that party for many a year and we never saw such a display in this Honourable House.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am trying to get the reference straight. Are you making reference to the person or to what he said?

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: What he said. I have never said anything about a person. It is what he said and his display in the House. I have never been personal in attack in this Honourable House nor outside, and I do not intend to be that way.

I will start by trying to pick up the level of illogic that ran through the Member's entire presentation. The first piece of illogic is the realisation – and I have heard it coming from the Honourable Member's mouth already in this House – that structural adjustment was a necessity in Barbados. That is a given. The Honourable Member said we had come to the end of an era, of Operation Beehive, et cetera. These were his words, Mr. Speaker, or words to that effect, that we had come to the end of a developmental era and we needed a new strategy to take off. Therefore, structural adjustment is not being disputed, it is agreed by all and sundry that structural adjustment is a must in Barbados. The various countries, which Honourable Members are seeking to compare us with, have all themselves gone through structural adjustment for the last 10 to 20 years and some of them are still going through structural adjustment. Let me first deal with the Central American countries and some in South America.
7.30 p.m.

All of these countries are now emerging democracies and they are getting largesse and assistance from the United States of America. They are starting from a zero base and likewise the countries in the Far East. All of them are new emerging democracies which are now seeking experience for what we have been experiencing in the last 16 years. So it is obvious that any point of take off would be remarkable whereas we would now have gone the full continuum which is agreed by the Honourable Member and we must now seek a new starting point. That logic is obvious for anyone to follow.

I am saying that I have heard the Honourable Member taking that very point already. So I am shocked, surprised and taken aback to hear the Honourable Member's argument this evening which is based on faulty premises. He cannot deny that every country in South America and Central America received massive aid out of the United States of America, if only to stop the drug trade. We don't have access to that sort of funding so it is not fair nor reasonable, I would even say respectful, to argue that we could even compare our particular growth pattern with those countries. It is impossible to compare like with something that is not like it at all for want of a better term.

I have heard, and I have used it with particular care and caution, this talk comparing Barbados with Singapore and the new tiger democracies. We all know that Singapore was led by one man for the last 30-40 years, a benevolent dictatorship. We hear we have one in Barbados now. But one man has ruled Singapore for 40 years and Singapore is a country that has now emerged out of an almost feudal state. You cannot compare like with dislike. It is as simple as that. Not when it comes to understanding the premises and the parameters of any argument that you are trying to advance. I don't believe it is fair.

What cannot be disputed is that Barbados is paying its way. The Honourable Member has said so and has agreed that we have had no external financial assistance of any large measure for the last 2-3 years. The Honourable Member for St. John, the Minister of Finance, has indicated in the Budget and it is also in the Economic Report that our debt financing is now principally locally based, and in addition to its being locally based, our borrowings from the Central Bank is reducing. Therefore that gives a complete lie to the argument of the Honourable Member that there is no confidence in the economy.

If for 2-3 years we have had no great reliance on external financing and we have survived – nobody can say that electricity does not exist in Barbados that our roads are totally pot-holed, health services have collapsed, education has collapsed that the Police Force is out on strike etc. There are some difficulties with water but it is a matter of nature. We are not seized by what is commonly called by economists adjustment fatigue when the entire social superstructure collapses. It does not exist in this country, so that to advance the argument that there is no confidence in Barbados when it was admitted and agreed that we have had no external financing of any great measure for the last 2 years makes absolutely no sense. Coupled with the fact that we have not increased our borrowings from the Central Bank, it makes absolutely no sense to me or to any other reasonable person.

Now, Sir, the Honourable Member also argued that we have to build a modem competitive economy in Barbados. I quite agree with him, but tell me, Mr. Speaker, how can we build a modem competitive economy in Barbados without addressing the issue of class or for that matter the issue of race. I am not saying that you have to be racist, but you cannot address the question of fairness in the economy in Barbados without addressing those 2 issues. It is a virtual impossibility and we cannot be ostriches for the rest of our lives.

On the one hand, the Honourable Member is saying that we are raising the bogey of class and race,

but at the same time he is asking us to pursue rapidly the building of a modem competitive economy. Who will compete with whom and for what? That is a question that the Honourable Member must answer and come to his own conclusions. If he can exclude class and exclude race then I guess he will be greater than any human being on earth.

Another fallacy of his argument is that the Government fell prostrate to the IMF throughout the relationship. The Honourable Member said a part and parcel of the IMF programme would be a devaluation package, that bus fares would go up and National Housing Corporation rents must go up and other things had to happen. There has not been a devaluation. It is not on the cards, from what I understand. Bus fares have not gone up and National Housing Corporation rents have not gone up. The point I am making...

Asides.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: You may add "yet" for want of argument. If the Honourable Member's argument is to hold true then all these things would have happened up front. If the Honourable Member's argument is that we fell prostrate before the IMF and we did everything the IMF wanted us to do, then it is not possible to come and say that these things did not happen and at the same time expect us to agree with him.

It is all right to be loud and it is all right to be fanatical but it is a different thing to be mediocre and it is a different thing to seek to mislead people. That is where I draw the line.

He also said, Mr. Speaker, that this year's Budget conforms strictly to the dictates of the IMF but yet none of the things which we expected to happen if we had agreed with the dictates of the IMF did happen in this year's Budget. My understanding is that the enhanced surveillance programme is merely to facilitate our accessing international funding at a period of time when all and sundry would know that the majority of international funding escaped to Eastern Europe, to the very new democracies in Central and South America and in the Far East.

If it is necessary for us to access funding from the IADB by arranging a programme that is to last a year to 18 months when the IMF would not have a hand in the administration of Barbados, I can see no problem with it, considering the present circumstances. What the Honourable Member forgot deliberately, I believe, is that the parameter was already set for the developmental mode in Barbados. It was a given that the IMF programme in Barbados would have lasted 18 months and it lasted 18 months. Full stop. Increments are being returned, the salaries reduction came to an end and was returned to the people.

The argument as to what is the policy of the IMF for Barbados is an open-ended argument. You cannot compare the Barbadian situation, Mr. Speaker, with the Jamaican one. If Jamaica has been in an IMF programme since the 1960s or 1970s that is their problem and that is their business. They must know what they have to do to get out. We have gone in for an 18 month period and we are out. If we are moving towards an Enhanced Surveillance Programme well that is our business. If we say that it is for 18 months, it is for 18 months. There is no doubt in the minds of anybody in Barbados that when the first IMF Programme was ended under this Government it was for 18 months and that was a given. At the end of 18 months, goodbye IMF. Any new arrangement that is to follow can follow after that.

7.40 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is an economist. He knows full well in classical economics there are certain things which are also given. If there is high unemployment, it is a sacrifice which is made on a developmental continuum but, at the same time, inflation is low and prices are within reach of the majority of the people of Barbados. I will talk about unemployment as I go on. Our inflation rate in Barbados is less than 3%, a remarkable achievement for a taker of international prices, for a taker in respect of tourism and matters of that type, a remarkable achievement for a taker economy, but no credit is given.

No Honourable Member on this side, be he Cabinet or otherwise, can take joy from seeing X number of young men and women under a tree as we pass. As Minister of Education, I am aware of the fact that each person I see out there under a tree, a rough equivalent of $500 000 to $1 million was spent on that person to educate him up to adulthood and no country can sit back and allow its resources to be sitting idle in that manner. The Honourable Member is way behind time. The Minister of Labour will speak of special programmes which are on-coming in that regard.

I will not, Mr. Speaker, speak about what is stabilisation and what is structural adjustment. I think those things are given and fully understood. I just wanted to examine many things said by the Honourable Member because they were all very inconsistent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one other fallacy propagated by the Honourable Member is that during the IMF

Programme – and he should have known better because it is not likely in any period of stabilisation that growth in any country would have risen to any 3%, certainly not in a country when its productive sectors are declining and in the context of Barbados sugar was declining, manufacturing was declining and tourism was declining. It was not possible to conceive of any massive growth when at that very time the net transfers would have been greater out of this country than any net receipts. In other words, during the period of the Stabilization Programme when money was obtained from the IMF, we had to be repaying loans. We had to be repaying the IMF.

An IMF Programme is not like if you have a programme for 18 months and you have three years in which to pay it back. You have to pay back during that very structured time so it cannot be conceived that in the context of Barbados one can argue with any great strength of conviction that there would have been a 3% growth, which is a lot of growth for a small country, when the entire world was going through structural adjustment.

America had to be structurally adjusted. Steel works were closed down. Car manufacturing plants were closed down to the extent that America has restructured so that it is now far past Japan in every important sector of the economy. Japan has to restructure now. The car plants are receding and for the first time in the history of Japan people are being laid off, dismissed and sent home, so it is no fiction.

The great Soviet Union had to restructure in the face of world and international market forces and soup kitchens now litter the entire Eastern Europe. So what is the magic about this thing called restructuring? What is it? I would say that there is no fear in Barbados about this restructuring matter. All it means is that you reallocate your resources in terms of the supply of goods to satisfy your needs. That is all it means. There is no magic in it.

I started by saying that the Honourable Member himself said some time ago in this very Chamber that we had come to an end of a developmental period and we needed a new take-off point. What is also a significant factor for little Barbados, Mr. Speaker, is that our reserves are increasing and there is now a 1% growth in the economy. Nobody on this side quite enjoys the idea that, as I said, there is unemployment or that some persons are unable to pay their bills, et cetera. Nobody enjoys the fact that human beings undergo hardships, sometimes unnecessarily so. I think in the history of any country there will be periods when certain sectors of the economy will be called upon to bear a particular burden. There is no getting away from that. There will be times in the history of a country when the working class are called upon to bear an extra burden, when the middle-class are called upon, when the rich people are called upon, as in American with Clinton when he moved to tax the very rich. Nobody enjoys it but reality is reality and life is life so there is no getting away from certain points.

One other issue I want to deal with quickly, Mr. Speaker, and with which I somewhat agree with the Honourable Member is his position on the role of the State. That has long been my stated position. Barbados has not receded to the extent where the State is no longer involved in the education of our children, the health of our people or the collection and rationalisation of taxes, customs and agriculture. That, Mr. Speaker, is what I can call a propagandist approach to a very simple matter. That is all it is.

There has been no massive reduction in the role of the State in Barbados in any important activities, none whatsoever. But what the Honourable Member has deliberately omitted in his argument is that we are signatories to, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. As signatories to that, how are we in this little country, as I said already, long established takers of most things coming from the external market, how are we to combat these massive influences? Are we saying that we will see the end of CARICOM? I may have my own views about that as well but is that what we are saying? Are we saying that any relationship which we have with CARICOM that tends to open up our trade in respect of CARICOM will die if the Honourable Member assumes power in this country? Heaven forbid, even based on how he behaved in here this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I think I dealt some time ago with the issue of the incomes policy in this House of Assembly. The question of gasolene prices I have no doubt will be dealt with but I want to turn quickly to another issue that also concerns the Honourable Member. The Honourable Member spoke about Barbados being at the point where we are now making ourselves uncompetitive in terms of world trends. Only today I got a call from a person who is involved in the informatics industry who said to me things are happening. He got a call from an international concern in the United States of America linking up with him in Barbados as regards work to be done by him here using the fax modem to be shot back to the United States of America.

What I want to say quickly is this, Sir. Structural adjustment has not been lost on the educational plan or product in Barbados. It has not been. I am happy to know that many of the things that I have said throughout

the Estimates in this House of Assembly have been taken lock, stock and barrel by the Honourable Member for St. Peter and now being rolled up in a different cloth and made to appear as his.

My position as far as technical and vocational training in this country is concerned is already well known – that it has to come into its own and it has to be accorded the highest priority. If necessary, informatics, computer studies, computer programming, all areas of technical and vocational training to home economics ought to be provided for in the way that persons who achieve them can one day stand boldly and receive a Barbados Scholarship and should be as proud as anybody with three "A" Levels in Mathematics, Applied Mathematics and Physics. That has always been my view.
7.50 p.m.

As long as my watch is at the Ministry of Education I will be pushing headlong towards this direction. I am glad to know the Members of the Opposition are in favour of this. We have the TVET programme on stream at this very moment, Mr. Speaker, which will establish – the Honourable Minister of Labour will speak on it – linkages in our secondary institutions as well with special emphasis on Technical and Vocational Training hopefully producing high achievers in that regard.

Computer Training:

Right now we have started in primary schools. We have a pilot programme of 7 primary schools in which the children, the little babies are already into infonnatics. Twenty-two public secondary schools – thanks to one of the past Honourable Ministers of Education, the present Honourable Member for St. George North – are presently being trained in infonnatics and the use of the computer.

The Honourable Member is really a little behind time in terms of wanting to see us move in that direction. We are well on the way. Likewise at Erdiston there will be a special area designed for teacher training in that regard. We are well on the way in that respect. There is no doubt in my mind, Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Education and Culture that culture will also – I have already stated policy on that – be earning its keep not only for Barbados as a whole but the respective cultural artistes which we have in this country.

Already we have gone ahead and done a lot of work in the area of copyright and protection of intellectual property for many people and we are on the way in that regard. I have said before, and I do not have to hide my mouth in this regard, that we have had problems at the National Cultural Foundation. Those problems have been addressed and they are, by and large, solved. I have no doubt that we are ready for a massive take-off.

Sir, I want to deal with an area which has been remarkably omitted by the Honourable Member. The fundamental problem in this country – I have said that from the very first Budget Speech I was involved in – remains the servicing of the external debt. I am happy to know that we no longer have to service that debt by borrowing of foreign funds in the main. I said earlier if that does not speak to one's confidence in this economy by inhabitants, I do not know what else will.

It has always been considered to be the single most important constraint to adjustment in stabilisation and sustained economic growth, especially in Third World developing countries when one has to borrow to repay that debt. This year we are actually paying back less that we have paid before. I am quite confident that as this decline in repayment continues this country will be the better off for it as regards the provision of all other services.

I have said before, that the worst thing that can happen to a country is that while you have high debt services ratios your net inflows are in the negative. That is that your repayments exceed your inflows. Mr. Speaker, we have a projected expansion in this economy between 2% and 3% in 1994, 1995. I have no doubt that such a projection can be realized.

I agree with the Honourable Member that we have to find all ways and means possible to provide jobs for the many persons unemployed in this country. I also agree that the Ministry of Education is on the path of providing our students with the necessary knowledge and skill to upgrade themselves and to be part and parcel of the modem world. It is a nonsense to compare us to Singapore at this point in time. We can get there but there is a lot of work that we would have to do.

The very fact that we are now restructuring is in itself an indication of the good intentions of this Government. If we had no good intentions we could have allowed the thing to limp along, patch here, patch there and everybody may well be happy. There may well have been no unemployment but we may well have been patching a situation that would have collapsed sooner or later to the overall detriment of all concerned.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has 2 more minutes.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: Yes, Sir. What can cause Barbados to create **wealth?** That really, to use a modem term, .is the bottom line. What can cause the productive sectors of this country to have surplus capital for investment or for the payment of higher wages? What can we do in this regard? This Government and certainly the Ministry of Education and Culture *are* totally committed to promoting the art of discovery, totally committed to committing the framework that there be personal and collective enterprise, that the creative mind in Barbados in respect of the **informatics** industry or the cultural industry is given full vent and full encouragement, that invention technological or otherwise be the order of the day.

This Government is committed to setting up, establishing and maintaining the institutions that support these noble objectives. There is no doubt in my mind, I will never be a part of any dictatorship. I understand party paramountcy but it does not exist in this party. In all my life I have never heard all these things about persons...We **are** in Parliament, the bastion of **freedom.** We hear talk about a **dictatorship** and party paramountcy.

The newspapers write against this Government daily, lambasting us all wrongly, sometimes rightly. Then there *are* the call-in programmes. What dictatorship? People in this country can say whatever they like. They have always done it. You go down Broad Street and people are out there cursing politicians. The free institutions in this country **are** maintained and will continue to be maintained. But we cannot do anything to the negative of productivity. We cannot do anything that negates cultural, social and economic discipline and we must be prepared to take risks.

I will sit now, Sir. But I am co dent that across Barbados silently the majority of people still have confidence in this Government and in spite of whatever little tremors there may be, there is a stable and committed Government in Barbados. I stand with the young member for St. John, the young member from St. Michael South Central, the member for St. Michael East and other young members committed to the future of this country. 1 cannot say that for many members of the Opposition – the old brigade. We need this experience. I accept, Sir. We need experience and we need continuity. But the people of Barbados need not fear for the future. The future will be in good hands. Every freedom that is known in Barbados today will be continued and we will even try to expand on them.

8.00 **p.m.**

I want to clear one thing before I sit, Sir. Just give me one more minute.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot give any more time. Just speak the word quickly and sit.

Hon. T. C. ESTWICK: There has been some talk, Sir, about ...

Mr. SPEAKER: You cannot go into anything more.

SUSPENSION

Hon. B. M. **TAITT:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 8.45 **p.m.**

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

The question that the sitting be suspended until 8.45 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

Hon. H. B. St. **JOHN:** Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege of participating in a number of Budget exercises and I believe I can capture the expectations of the public of Barbados at Budget time and I want to say from the very outset that it is my belief that the public of Barbados *are* disappointed in the presentation and content of the Budget that was presented yesterday to us.

We must appreciate, Sir, that out there, there is a large number of people who are in real need and who expect from us as politicians that we would provide solutions to the problems that they have. The opposition has an important role to play in this respect and I wish to say, Sir, that the presentation today of the Honourable Member for St. Peter was in my opinion a constructive effort on the part of the Opposition to provide what the public expected of us, namely alternate solutions to those now being carried out by the Government.

For a long period of time this Opposition suffered greatly from a distortion of its record and of its proposals. As long ago as 1986 when we were in Government all of us who were Members of Parliament at that **time,** in pursuance of our duty, as a responsible Government, tried our level best to warn the public of Barbados that we were living in a changing world and that policies and programmes which were designed for previous periods had to change. And we felt then that the changes that

we were introducing and that we were attempting to educate the public of Barbados about were changes which would result in Barbados being able to weather the storms which we saw very clearly on the horizon.

We suffered a cruel fate. We suffered a fate for which today, in retrospect, we are convinced is a fate that if we had not suffered the public of Barbados would be in a completely different position from what they are in today.

We are convinced that this Government is unable to produce the policies and programmes which are necessary to bring Barbados out of its present position. And this conviction is based on the fact they refused to heed to the warnings of the experiences of other countries who have pursued the same path and we look around the rest of the Caribbean we find that we, in Barbados, are in a position in which we are expecting of our productive sectors a job which is virtually impossible for them to perform.

I am very convinced in my mind that the failures of our productive sector to perform are to a large extent attributable to the policies produced by the Democratic Labour Party. When I look at the facts I am more convinced the taxation policies in particular of the Government are to a large extent responsible for some of the uncompetitive nature of our businesses and I want to emphasise at the very outset, Barbados cannot attempt to make any meaningful impact on our unemployment problem until policies and programmes are introduced which are tailored to solve the problem of our productive sectors. No country, Sir, can have its productive sector in a position in which year after year there is no growth, little profitability. The only result of such a situation will be that those sectors will have to take steps to ensure they are saved the state of bankruptcy.

The tax take of the Government, it is interesting to review. I well recall the criticisms that used to be levelled at us when we were in Government about the magnitude of the tax take that we were extracting at that particular period of time. The true position is revealed in the statistics and it is that at no time during the 1980s was a tax take of 30% of the gross domestic product taken by a Labour Party administration. Whereas, under the Democratic Labour Party, from the years 1988 on the tax take not only reached 30% but exceeded that 30% in every year to date.

It is not too difficult to appreciate that such a situation would force us, in this country, into the position that we are in today. Now this Budget, Sir, must be looked at against that background. Every facet of the productive sector in Barbados was looking to the Minister of Finance for relief m this area and as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, they have been gravely disappointed. When it is remembered, Sir, that this Budget is likely to be either the last or the penultimate of this administration, one can readily discern that the reason why there has been no relief is because the Government is incapable of providing any relief.

9.00 p.m.

Now I want to say, Sir, that this problem of unemployment is a very serious one. I have been living in an area for 40 years. There was never any breaking and entering in that area until the last year or two. The crime situation in Barbados has increased greatly as a result of the large number of unemployed that there are in Barbados. We all know, Sir, that unemployment is no excuse for the commission of a crime. But discussing this matter with law enforcement authorities, one immediately recognizes that unless something is done very quickly to bring some hope to these young people one can only witness an escalation in this area where all of us in here I believe would like to see not occur.

Sir, the Government must take the blame for failing to introduce policies that would help to alleviate this condition. On this side, the Honourable Member for St. Peter outlined a number of specific proposals. These proposals in the form of reduction of imposts on manufacturing inputs cost relatively little to the Treasury. By removing these imposts, they place our manufacturers in a position in which they are able to compete not only with the rest of CARICOM but also with other exporters in the rest of the world.

I do not think, Sir, that it is appreciated that our system of industrial incentives in Barbados was a system that was designed to ensure that exports were the primary objective of manufacturing activity. There has been a change in that objective brought about by what we like to call the stubborn and wrong-headed acceptance by the Government of the theory that industrial incentives provide an anti-export bias.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East spoke of the situation in a number of newly industrialized countries of the world. He said that Barbados could not be like those countries, as I understand it, because of the fact that those countries were basically countries that were run by one man. I want to say, Sir, that it is my co rmed opinion that a study of the policies pursued by many of the Governments in those countries would indicate that those policies are no different than the policies which in the past were used by Barbados and which resulted in, certainly up to 1986, the economic growth but which by their reversal in the 1990-91

period by this administration has pushed Barbados to the position where our performance is out of tune with these countries.

Now a similar situation applies to agriculture. A small bit of relief was granted in this area with respect to agriculture and I think that I will spend some time on the policies relating to agriculture because it is important. I am not going to repeat what the Honourable Member for St. Peter has said. The Labour Party has a very clear and definite position with respect to agriculture and its role in the economy of Barbados. But I need to remind Honourable Members that the policies that have been pursued since 1991 by the Government and now reversed places Barbados back in the position in which it was, whereby agriculture inputs were to a large extent free of duties prior to their change.

I noticed, Sir, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East has spoken and I hope that he is able to persuade the Honourable Member for St. John that the same concessions that have been granted to agriculture have also been granted to the fisheries sector. The Honourable Member for St. John and the Minister of Finance did not mention that all inputs to fisheries production would be subject to the same treatment. Fishing lines and other inputs are very important to the fisheries industry in Barbados, a developing industry which needs far greater help than what the Government at the present is doing. I must make a plea again and everytime I get an opportunity to speak in this House I am going to do it. Because the constituents whom I have the honour to represent as well as the constituents of the next door constituency have constantly requested of me whenever 1 have the opportunity to point out to Government the importance of them having facilities such as ice and duty free and tax free entry of their inputs.
9.10 p.m.

I also want to speak of the tourist industry. I am disappointed in the speech of the Honourable Member in that tourism being of such importance in the economy of Barbados, the Honourable Member in his budget presentation not only brought no new policies in the form of additional resources for advertising or in the form of widening at the base of the concessions granted for inputs but also failed to bring hope in the area of announcing or at least of discussing one of the most important problems that is facing the industry and is likely to face the industry in the future, namely the problem of the lack of seating capacity, or the potential problem of Barbados' dependence on foreign carriers to bring tourists here when conditions are such that the airline industry is unprofitable.

No country that is so dependent on tourism can fail to have a policy even if it is a contingent policy in this respect. Barbados' problem in the tourist industry is to a large extent in the North American market a lack of available money for impact advertising and the lack of available money to encourage by matching funds marketing costs with tour operators.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter quite rightly pointed out that it is a matter of some concern to us in the Opposition that there appears to be an air of complacency and self-congratulation on the part of the Government over the fact that we were able to show a 2.7% growth in our tourism statistics last year.

The income from tourism will never increase by the extent necessary to drive this economy onward unless there is a serious improvement in the performance of our tourist industry in North America. Other countries in the Caribbean have been able to encourage tour operators and charters from North America by timely decisions on cooperative marketing programmes and by timely decisions with airline companies whereby great effort is made to ensure that we are in a competitive position with the rest of the Caribbean.

We know of the unfortunate confusion that exists in the Government in its tourism policy. The Government can blame no one but itself for its failure in this respect. It is not a matter of any great and extraordinary expenditure that is needed in this direction. It is a matter of will and it is a matter of a government pursuing a clear policy to ensure that this vital area of our economy is properly nurtured.

Mr. Speaker, we also have the other important area of the international service sector. Like the Honourable Member for St. Peter we are really surprised on this side that the Budget does not address in a meaningful way this area. The Barbados Labour Party, as part of its restructuring exercise, and I want to emphasise that – the Honourable Minister of Finance is constantly saying in here and elsewhere that the first time we heard anything about restructuring of the economy of Barbados is under the Democratic Labour Party regime in the recent past. Sir, it is now said that the Barbados Labour Party did nothing about it, that we only talked about it.

Sir, we did so much, that the Honourable Members' Government and Barbados are in a position today to reap the benefits of the infrastructure, legal and otherwise, which was introduced and passed in this House of Assembly by the Barbados Labour Party, with opposition by the Honourable Member's Party.

We need to go further, Sir. It is very important that new legislation to introduce new products is introduced.

It is also very important that a constant review of our infrastructural requirements and our support services in Barbados is undertaken. We repeatedly speak of the need for swiftness in decision making and we cannot fail...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has one minute.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: ... to emphasise that again. In my one minute, Sir, I want to say that I am firmly convinced in my own mind that only a radical change in the approach by a government in this country in these important areas of the productive sector will result in an improvement in our economy to the extent that a meaningful attack is made on the unemployment which I regard as the most serious problem that we have in Barbados. Thank you.
9.20 p.m.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, I wish to begin by responding very briefly because I do not want to waste a lot of time on it, on what I term the rather melodramatic conclusion by the Leader of the Opposition of his Budgetary presentation. He made a statement about what he termed the most shameful receipt by the Government of Barbados of $150 000 from an international convict.

Now, it seems, Mr. Speaker, that whenever the Barbados Labour Party thinks that an election is near, they need to make melodramatic statements on television time in the debate on the Budgetary Proposals. The Leader of the Opposition fell into that mould this evening and thought he would say that the Government received $150 000 from an international convict.

Mr. Speaker, the context of that was, as you will recall, that in order to pre-empt a strike in the sugar industry some money was paid into an account which was controlled jointly by the Barbados Sugar Industry Ltd. and the trade unions. The fact is that no money was ever paid to, or received by the Government of Barbados. That is a fact. I am stating the facts as they are. No money was paid to or received by the Government of Barbados so that when the Leader of the Opposition can make irresponsible statements like that we have to put all the comments he makes on any issue in the appropriate context. I am not going to spend any more time dealing with that aspect of the matter.

I wish now, Mr. Speaker, to turn very quickly to the comments of the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who just spoke. He said that he believed that he sensed what the public felt that they felt great disappointment with the Budget. He linked the fact that there were people out there in need and that there were a lot of people who were unemployed. Now these are facts. They are people who are in need and people who are unemployed. And one recognises that the problem of unemployment has to be addressed.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South quite skillfully links all of that and makes the statement that he perceives what the public out there is feeling, that they are dissatisfied with the Budget. Now, the two issues really have no connection because I believe that the public out there is very satisfied with this Budget which was presented by the Minister of Finance yesterday.

We know, Mr. Speaker, and all of us know that one of the most stubborn problems facing not only this Government but any Government of Barbados today, and a problem facing Governments in all parts of the world, is this problem of unemployment. How do we find an effective answer to dealing with the problems of unemployment? How do we deal with the problems of so many idle young people out there who want work and who, perhaps, are unable to find work. To make the point that this Budget does not even begin to address that issue is not being fair to the Minister of Finance because, let us face it, the problem of unemployment cannot be addressed and settled overnight in one fell swoop in one small action.

What one has to ensure is, the Honourable Minister of Finance made the point, that crash programmes are not the answer. They are not an instant answer to the programmes of unemployment because they do not provide a sustainable and a lasting solution to the problem. What has been happening? We recognise, and I think the comments have been made before, that there has to be activity and improvement in all the major sectors of the economy if the problems of employment are to be effectively dealt with. If there is construction going, there is a lot of activity in construction so there are jobs available in construction.

One of the problems about this country is that the construction industry is largely fuelled by construction in the public sector so that when construction in the public sector falls off then the whole construction industry seems to lag. That leads me to recognise a comment which someone made about the private sector in Barbados in relation to the construction industry when they said that one of the first things we have to do about the private sector in Barbados is to privatise the private sector because when there is no activity by the private sector most of the activity in construction tends to cease. Once you have activity in construction, agriculture, tourism, manufacturing services and the financial services sector, once you

can get activity going in these sectors then the chances for providing jobs in these various areas would improve considerably.

The point I am making, Mr. Speaker, is that the Budget makes an attempt to deal with improvements in these areas of the economy. We have been in a structural adjustment programme and the Minister of Finance in the course of the presentation of his Budget spoke about the medium-term economic strategy, which he has planned to improve the country's long-term competitiveness. At page 30 of his statement, the Minister of Finance talked in terms of improving incentives for investment in foreign exchange earning activities, reducing the extent of Government's intervention in the economy, enhancing incentives for private sector initiative and removing structural impediments in the economic system.

Now, in relation to improving incentives for investment in foreign exchange earning activities, there are clearly a lot of areas in which progress in those areas can be made. One of the areas identified by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South related to the financial services sector and the need for continually reviewing the infrastructure and the legislation in that area and ensuring that it was kept up-to-date so that we could remain competitive with our competitors in all parts of the world.

Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of reviewing the existing legislation governing the financial services sector to ensure competitiveness in that sector of the economy. The legislation relating to Foreign Sales Corporations I believe has been recently dealt with in this House. International Business Companies legislation is being kept under review and so is the legislation in relation to Exempt Insurance Companies.

There is, Mr. Speaker, new legislation which is planned in areas related to international trusts, limited companies, what have been called in some areas societies for restricted liability and in the area of limited partnerships. These are all new bits of legislation which will put new facilities at the disposal of those in the financial services sector which will make the whole financial services sector more attractive to those who wish to use the services provided in this area.

9.30 p.m.

The limited companies, Societies with restricted liability are a type of corporation which is not generally known in common law jurisdictions like ours. They are corporations which are more widely used in the civil law systems. We are part of the Organization of American States, part of the Latin American Community. We reach out to the Latin American communities for activity and development. We reach out to Europe. Latin America is one of those areas whose juridical system is based in the civil law, and so is most of Europe.

Those areas are areas to which this corporate type institution known as the Societies with restricted liability is well known. Business people in those areas would feel far more comfortable dealing with types of corporations which are well known to them. Our mission is to put on the statute books of Barbados companies of this nature so that persons and businesses who want to make use of these kinds of facilities would have a facility with which they are accustomed and which they can reasonably, easily relate to.

The point I am making, Mr. Speaker, is that I have identified the financial services sector to show that, in one important sector of the economy, positive steps are being taken to improve the environment for that sector. So that in the final analysis the opportunity for the creation of more jobs in that area will be provided.

One needs only to look at agriculture, see what the Budget does in relation to agriculture, to recognize that incentives are being provided there. The inputs I believe in relation to a number of agricultural products, the taxes on inputs in relation to a number of agricultural products have been removed. Consumption tax, I believe in relation to some of the requirements for the manufacturing sector has been removed so as to provide an opportunity for these industries to be better able to become competitive with those from overseas with whom they compete.

To say that the Budget does not address the whole problem of trying to make our industries more competitive therefore providing the opportunities for them to expand and therefore providing the opportunities for more job creation in these various sectors is to misunderstand what the Budget is intended to do. You may differ and take a different point of view with the extent to which one should go perhaps in providing incentives. But the point has been made by the Minister of Finance that this is not a one-shot Budget. I want to try to find the statement which he made in that regard. He made the point that changes cannot happen overnight. It was round about page 81 of the Budget when he said and I quote:

"I do not see this Budget as a one-shot exercise in major social, political or economic engineering. It

must be contextual and this Budget support. the goals which we articulated as being possible and likely since 1991."

The whole process of seeking to improve industry in the context of a structural adjustment programme which we are now going through has to be taken into account and also the fact that the country has limited reserves. We cannot restructure the industries completely overnight. Remember that we are in this position because of difficulties through which the country has gone in years back. We have not suddenly come to the path that we are in.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we need not look back and perhaps try to seek to apportion blame as to who was responsible for what. The fact is we are at a position today and the young people of this country are the ones on whom the ultimate burden will fall in the years ahead to deal with some of the problems which we have now.

I made note of a very useful comment. It is a message for young people in dealing with the problems which we face today and dealing with the whole concept of change. I do not remember the exact source which it came from maybe it is an anonymous source, but I have adapted it and it seems very appropriate on an occasion like this. It goes as follows:

'We cannot change yesterday. We can only make the most of today. We can set out to change the future. And when we have done our best, we can await the result with' confidence and look with hope towards tomorrow."

Mr. Speaker I say that to say this, that it has been heartening to me in the course of this debate to see the young people in this Democratic Labour Party in the Government on the frontbench with Ministers, the Honourable Member for St. John, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East able young men who have demonstrated in their presentations in the course of this debate how able, how skillful they are and how competent they are to deal with the problems of this country and to recognize those problems.

I would make bold to say that the public of Barbados on hearing these young men will be satisfied that the future of this country is in sound and secure hands. There can be no dispute about that. We ought always to give credit to the young people where credit is due. We talk about the problems of the young people who are having problems because of unemployment. Let us hope that the performance of members like the Honourable Member for St. John, the Honourable Member for Christ Church East will be an example to all those young people out there to show them that young people of this country can achieve, that they are persons of substance and let us hope that they can be examples not only to the many right thinking and straight young people in this country, but also the deviants and to let the deviants know that these are examples which they should follow and that they should forget their wayward ways.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South talked about the problem of crime and in what I thought was a rather simplistic analysis said that crime increased because there was a large increase in unemployment. That is over simplifying the problem. There is some increase in crime because of the problems of unemployment but that is not all. The Honourable Member has ignored the fact that Barbados like so many other countries in this world has fallen prey as well to the drug culture. We are not free from the drug culture and the drug habit in Barbados, as is the position in a whole lot of countries the world over, which is in a large way at the root of a lot of crime.
9.40 p.m.

Many people want to get rich quickly. There are a number of people who would not want a regular job of employment because they can get rich out of the drug trade. Those people are not interested in employment. They are interested in corrupting the young people of this community, and once the young people are corrupted, you find that those who are corrupted need to continue to support a habit and will do anything to get money to get illegal drugs. We cannot over simplify the problems in a simple statement about increasing crime being the result solely of the increase in unemployment.

Unemployment is a serious problem which we have to deal with but this Government is not closing its eyes to this significant problem which we have to face. We have not failed to introduce programmes which are designed to deal with this problem. The programmes have been identified by the Honourable Minister of Finance in his Budget and what we need to try to do is ensure that these programmes, in the final analysis, work.

Mr. Speaker, I think we need to give the Budget a chance to work. There are proposals in it. If one reads publications, it seems that the agricultural sector is happy about some of the measures which have been introduced in this Budget. I have not heard complaints from them. In fact what I have read is nothing but praise for the Minister of Finance in respect of his proposals in relation to agriculture. If we take agriculture, we see that the agricultural sector is happy with what is going on. There are some concessions made to the manufacturers. And

I have indicated what is happening in the financial services sector to improve the infrastructure of that sector so that we can make the nation more competitive in that area. All in all, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the Budget is a positive step forward in the right direction, bearing in mind that we are in the middle of a structural adjustment programme and this is part of the process of getting activity on the move once more because it is only then that this intractable problem which we face, of the unemployment of the young, can be dealt with. I have no difficulty, Mr. Speaker, in supporting this Budget and supporting the Resolution which has been moved by the Honourable Member for St. John and I am pleased to lend my total and committed support to it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George South.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, part of the recital of the Government's Resolution for this debate reads as follows:

> "And whereas it has been able to contain the fiscal deficit to less than 1% without compromising the quality of services provided by the public sector..." And it goes on, Sir.

It said that the deficit of less than 1% in the Government's performance has not compromised the quality of services provided by the public sector. Right away, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am suggesting that any Government that can make that statement in Barbados in the context of what is happening to Barbados today is a Government that is cynical and insensitive of what is happening to people in this country.

I do not want, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to wrap myself up into much of the technical information that has been put out in the Budget. I want to concern myself about the social services in Barbados and the suffering and the pain that people in Barbados are experiencing at this time and I am suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that nothing in this Financial Statement has sought to address the alleviation of the suffering and pain to which I fear. At a later stage, I am going to deal with and challenge the Minister of Finance, who in his Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, has come up with a new role of Government for the 1990s and beyond and in so doing he has established some very clear marks as to where the two political parties stand in relation to their philosophy.

I want also at some stage during this half hour to deal with the question of the preparation of Barbadians through education and training for the new international competitiveness that will be required in industry. And I want also, Mr. Speaker, Sir, to briefly at some stage to touch on the question of housing.

Now, the Barbados Labour Party has historically been the party that has provided a number of social services to this country. It does not mean, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that nothing has been done in relation to social services by Governments other than the Barbados Labour Party. But the Barbados Labour Party, from its very beginning, was an activist Government which sought to move the country away from the stranglehold in which it was held in the 1930s initially, when the persons who controlled Barbados at that time thought very little about the needs, the rights and the aspirations of Barbadians.

The Barbados Labour Party administration in its early days concerned itself as a matter of the utmost urgency to provide educational opportunities, health opportunities, public transportation, housing, welfare, labour legislation, rights of workers, because that was conceived then as the role of Government.

Now, I am quarrelling at this stage, Sir, and I put it as strongly as quarrelling, the Minister of Finance in his budgetary proposals sought to give a new definition of the role of Government and he said at one stage that what was required now because of conflicting pressures in Government between competing demands, he said that all that is required is a challenge of proportions which required the Government to refuel and redefine its traditional role. He goes on to say, Sir, we cannot continue to believe that the only workable model of Government is one which is largely centralised and bureaucratic. This does not signal Government in retreat but Government redefined.

In essence, Mr. Speaker, what the Honourable Minister of Finance is saying is that he has looked at the situation in Barbados today and the competing demands being made on Government and he has now made an ideological shift for the Democratic Labour Party Government away from an activist Government with clearly defined roles to one that is giving up much of the traditional duties of Government in this country to other interests. He says, Sir, that is not a retreat euphemistically, he is saying that it is only a redefining of Government. In my view, Sir, it is a total capitulation to forces of the neo-conservatives and the, worst part of it, Sir, is that the capitulation is not only to local neo-conservatives but the capitulation to neo-conservatism that is imported into Barbados. The Budgetary Proposals are all part of a whole and I agree with the Honourable Member who spoke before me that the Proposals are all part of a whole. But this whole suggests that Government must now abandon what has been a traditional role in a number of areas. Let us look at, Sir, the quality of services we hear about.

Nothing in this Budget deals with a social reform programme. We have been hearing about an economic programme which we may or may not agree with and we on this side feel very strongly about much of that economic recovery programme. But the social programme is not at all dealt with by this Government.
9.50 p.m.

We have a situation where in the field of education we need to gear our students or young people for all the dramatic changes that are taking place in the world community and all the highly competitive nature of the international environment. We find that the Government is making no new provision through the kind of human resources development that is necessary to gear us for that new situation is being made in the Budgetary Proposals or the concomitant document which we discussed a week ago of the Annual Estimates to meet this new and challenging situation.

We have got, Sir, a situation where the Government, instead of providing more resources for that area which is one that requires a lot of support, is introducing the concept of cost recovery in the social services. I will explain that, Sir. Cost recovery is only a euphemistic or a fancy term used for the imposition of additional fees and costs on those who consume our social services. You will see, Sir, that in the Development Plan for the years 1993-2000 which has been referred to by the Honourable Minister of Finance in his presentation that in the areas of the Community College and the Erdiston Teachers Training College that Government in the next 7 years has had an important input that is new in this Development Plan. This is the development of cost recovery. This means, Sir, that we are foreseeing that there will be additional cost for students both in the Community College and at the Erdiston Teachers' Training College. We also have a situation where students at the University of the West Indies can prepare themselves, according to all of these documents, for an early date to be paying fees for the first time of the economic cost for their education at Cave Hill.

There is a lot of reference made to the late Errol Barrow. He must be rolling in his watery grave at the thought that a party that has boasted for so many years of delivering free education to the people of this country is now moving into a new phase where tertiary education is going to invite a cost because of the arrangements made between the Government of Barbados and the World Bank. I do not speak idly, Sir. The Government has got into an agreement with the World Bank for the provision of a consultant out of funds from the Japanese Grant Facility for a Japanese consultant to come into Barbados to work with the Government on a cost recovery programme in all of the social services. That consultant has already visited Barbados and has started his work. We really have, Mr. Speaker, to determine whether the Government has a strategy in that area. Are they really planning at this stage to make students from the tertiary institutions to pay additional costs at a time when we recognise from what the Honourable Minister has said in his Budgetary Proposals and when people are being laid off from work, and these obviously are low skilled workers, there is a crying need for the emergence of new technical skills if Barbados is to move in the direction in which we want to see it move? Reference was made, Sir, to areas like the Information Services and at one point Telecommunications.

The Government has in the Annual Estimates made no provision at all – none for the payment of fees at the University of the West Indies for Barbadian students. Provision was made for the payment of the annual subvention to the University. I challenge the Government to show me anywhere in their Annual Estimates of Expenditure provision for the payment of fees for children at the University of the West Indies. All of this is important in the context of where are we going to go from now on. All the speakers of the other side have spoken about the need for competitiveness and for us to move from where we are to a new stage in preparing our people for their role in knowledge-based industries and for their role in the type of competitiveness that requires the use of their intellect. But while this is happening at the same time we are having the Government cut back on important areas of training and education.

I want quickly, Mr. Speaker, to deal with this question of the training and vocational education. There was legislation passed in late last year, I believe late August 1993, for the establishment of this technical and vocational education project. I have been trying to get the Government to spell out with some specifics precisely how this project will impact on what is being taught in the schools and whether there is a change in the curriculum to meet the new demands of the technical and vocational requirements and that has not been forthcoming. What has been forthcoming is the admission by the Government that the technical needs in Barbados are lagging far behind and that the respectability that is being given to people who are working and preparing themselves in the technical areas is not the equivalent of that given to those in the academic areas. All of this is in the Development Plan and I am not speaking off the top of my head. At this time we would have thought that they would have been spelling out in this Budget exactly what are the immediate plans to move the country away from the present school system and the training areas that have been the traditional roles that have not been producing the results into an area in which the Government by its own admission accepts is the area that we will have to move if we are to become competitive.

Sir, I want to deal very quickly with one or two points raised by the speaker who spoke before me; that is the Honourable Attorney General. He said that there is no evidence or that no money had been paid to the Government of Barbados for the $150 000 that was referred to by the Leader of the Opposition this evening that was paid by an individual of international notoriety. The Attorney General said that that is not true that money was paid to the Government. Now that is the worst form of sophistry unbecoming of the Honourable Member of St. Michael West Central. To say that the money was paid into a fund that was controlled by the Barbados Workers' Union and the BSIL and to suggest by that argument that it is not an act of shame, is really playing around with words in a way that I think is unworthy of the learned Attorney General.

10.00 p.m.

I, as a Barbadian, feel very hurt and upset at the words that have come out suggesting that the Government of Barbados has found itself in the position of a beggar of alms and that it is so small that it has reached the point where to use the words of the Honourable Minister of Finance it is now prostrating itself before international vagabonds to take $150 000. That is insulting, Sir. It is humiliating. It is an affront to every decent thinking Barbadian.

Instead of the Govemment talking around it and getting on with sophistry, it should give that public of Barbados a clear unequivocal statement as to what has happened because the word is now abroad on this sordid and squalid act. It goes also to the confidence that resides in the Government at this time. The people of Barbados will not be taken in by a lot of fancy words anymore. They have lost confidence in the Government for a number of reasons, many of which were articulated already this evening and I do not want to go into them in detail.

Mr. Speaker, what can people feel about a Government that allows the good name of this country to be tarnished in the way of which I have just spoken which would allow the charade of the last few weeks of the internecine warfare between the members of the Government. Who is on which side and who is plotting and who is pushing the knife into the back of whom and while all this is going on the energy that is being expended on this internal warfare in the Government could better have been devoted to the running of the country.

Mr. Speaker, what is coming out of the Public Service in Barbados is that there is a loss of momentum that the Ministries are marking time, treading water and the public officers do not feel the kind of leadership in departments that is required at this particular period. This loss of confidence is derived not only from those two factors but many others. I don't want to go into all of them but one of the most important is the question of what the Government promises and what it delivers.

There is a wide and deep chasm between the promise and the delivery, particularly in relation to the economic fortunes of Barbados. People want work. There are about 35 000 able-bodied Barbadians who cannot find work and the Minister of Finance comes in with a heavy document called a Budgetary Proposal and makes the facile suggestion that young persons should ease on to somebody and work for mauby and bread and fish, in the hope that at some stage they may get something more and they may not get sent home. That is the proposal of the Minister of Finance in 1994, that young people must find themselves in a situation where they have to beg somebody to ease on and work for nothing, just for bus fare and lunch, as he puts it, until things get better. If that is the plan for the citizens of this country, can you blame them if there is this total lack of confidence in Government today, Sir?

I want to raise a matter in relation to housing and I do not want to usurp what might be said by the Shadow Minister of Housing. I want to make a point in relation to the area of welfare. The Government's own paper says that there is a backlog of 400 applicants for welfare housing in Barbados. The welfare housers are old people, pensioners who have no resources other than their old age pension. There is a backlog of over 400 applications for housing.

The Government says that they need to build at least 125 immediately if it is to begin to meet this need. Yet the Government goes on in its own plans and says that it proposes to build 15 units annually between 1993 and 1994 and then between 1996 and the year 2000 it will also build 15 units annually. In short, the Government is saying that there is a backlog of 400 applications which it says deserves early consideration. It has set for 1994 until the year 2000 a target of 75 of those units, 15 a year for 5 years.

What are these pensioners who have no proper housing to do between now and the year 2000? They must wait on the promise of a government to provide a mere fraction of what the Government says is the need. When I speak of the difficulties that Barbadians are undergoing and the lack of co dence bred out of a lack of hope that gives some small indication of the point I am making.

In relation to house repairs, the Government says that for old age pensioners who are in need of assistance there should be at least 150 units done annually but it

proposes only to do 75 and says it will deal with the arrears towards the year 2000. I do not understand what it is the Government is congratulating itself about in relation to this Budget. What is it patting itself on the back about? The Attorney General talks in self-congratulatory fashion about two young men who are part of the Government and the Government will be in safe hands, I don't know when. In respect of the Honourable Member for St. John, he has done his job in relation to the Budgetary Proposals, but what frightens me is that he has made such a shift in his own personally expressed views on the role of government and the philosophy of ownership in this country and who should control and how they should control. In this document, to his shame, he has taken a C change where he is prepared now to hand over this country into the hands of a group of people who have served this country ill and he is prepared to hand it back to them.

What else does he mean by a redefining of traditional roles? What does he mean when he says that we cannot continue to do business the way we have been doing anymore or that the Government must only now have a role as a catalyst, a facilitator of productive enterprise. This frightens me because although I am not wedded to any ideological position in relation to the development of the productive areas of the economy, yet I share some of the erstwhile views of the Minister of Finance in relation to who should constitute much of the ownership of productive areas. I do not know, Sir, whether in saying these things it would make any difference to the Government because they have been moving from pillar to post with such rapidity in recent times that we do not know from one day to the other where we stand.
10.10 p.m.

I have heard the Government take a position on the sale of the natural resources of Barbados – I am speaking with reference to the National Petroleum Corporation and the oil and natural gas facilities in this country. I have not joined the debate up to this point because it was adequately covered by members of our side. Their arguments were solid both from the point of view of the technical correctness and also from the ideological position, the question of whether our natural resources should be owned by persons outside this country. I share the view that it would be again an assault on the sensitivities of Barbadians for the Government of Barbados to sell the natural resources of this country to other than Barbadians.

This document fortifies me in the view that the Government has lost direction in relation to these things. The Government has capitulated, as they said, that is, handed over important areas of Government activity for the last 50 years in Barbados. They have now buried the last remains of any socialist practice that there have been in Barbados.

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

Mr. L. R. TULL: I would like, Mr. Speaker, to jerk the consciences of those members on the other side, particularly the trade unionists, who have been in the vanguard and who have shared the fight for a better life of our people in this country, those who have fought the fight and have given their moral and other support to others who were in the fight. I would like to appeal to their consciences, not only to put a negative perspective, not to vote – I would not expect them to vote against it – of what this document has failed to deliver.

What it has delivered is not of any great consequence because nothing cataclysmic has happened. Nothing dramatic has happened. Nothing far-reaching has happened in this document. What it has failed to address as I said at the beginning is the social concerns of Barbadians, the erosion of the social services, the hardships inflicted on Barbadians on a day-to-day fact and the fact that there is nothing here to alleviate the problems of unemployment. Those are the things that are omitted and I am inviting anyone of good will to share the view that this document has failed the people of Barbados and does not merit the support of any of us.

Thank you.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to join in this annual exercise where, as elected members of Parliament, we are able to review and reflect on the performance of our country's economy and concomitant areas of action for the benefit of those who put us here and for the public at large. It is a distinct pleasure to have heard the Honourable Member for St. John, and Minister of Finance, deliver his first budgetary address in such a calm, positive and dignified manner. I think that sent the correct signals to those who would wish to see those signals because in our society we have to determine what our standards are and we cannot allow anybody else to set them for us.

Sir, I wish to address a few areas tonight. One relates to the position about the structure of our economy where it is now, where it was for the last number of years, using 1976, for instance, as a reference point, and therefore looking at two political administrations to some extent. If there are comparisons it is because the information provides that kind of comparison, although it seems to me that there are more similarities than there are differences in the way how the economy functioned under these two regimes.

I wish to look at a number of areas relating to employment that is fundamental. But before I get

into these areas I would wish to say that I am very pleased to be in the first budgetary address where there are no levies confusing and polluting these Budgets. I am so glad to be able to speak tonight against a background of a budget where levies have been removed, levies that we found polluting the crystal system of our country, levies that we objected to, and I am glad that this administration has found it possible to remove these levies. That, to me, is a signal achievement. It might seem small to some persons but to some of us it was a very important matter and I am glad that they are now removed.

I am very pleased too, Sir, to see that the amount of money that we have to be devoting to debt is being reduced. That is very important to me because it means that we are moving back to the path of self reliance and to the path of prudence. That is a massive achievement.

Just to background a little bit before I get into what I really want to say, by looking at the Economic Report for 1993. I wish to indicate that first of all I am looking at the Index of Industrial Production, Table 10, in which 1982 is the base year, 100. It is clear looking from 1982 right through to the present 1993 and the total in the All Industries – part of that Index, that in terms of performance by the two regimes, that this regime has nothing to be ashamed of in terms of the production of goods and services in our country, particularly the area of industrial production.

If you look at the area of total manufacturing in the same index, 1982 is 100. It reached a peak for the last administration of 103.2 in 1984. For us it reached a peak Of 110 in 1990. In 1992 it went back to 100 which is about the 1982 figure; but in between it has always been substantially more than 100. In 1993 it is down to 96.1. I think that is reflective of what we know to be the truth. What are we saying if we are trying to pull down this particular administration's economic policies? The facts are here. The truth is in the figures. The truth is not in what anybody gets up and says in terms of rhetoric or trying to sway the people out there.

Sir, let us look at Table 17, Composition of Selected Domestic Exports. When we are talking about whether the economy is working and all of .its cylinders going we need to recognise that during the last administration, it never happened,

10.20 p.m.

Sugar fired good once in 1980, $105 million. In 1976 it was $46.9 million. In 1977, $50.6 million. When this Administration demitted office in 1986, it was $57.5m. It was only one time that sugar fired off. All the other years it really was not performing. After 1987, $65.6, $62.9 million. In 1992, $61.6m. Who are we criticizing? Who are we pulling down? Look at all the other things. One area performed extremely well in the former regime, that was electrical components. That is when INTEL was there. But INTEL pulled out at the beginning of the DLP Administration and I will come back to that again. Because I need to remind people about the facts of the economy. Look at all the other selected domestic exports, clothing, chemicals, et cetera. There was no star performance in one Administration and a poor one in the other.

Look at tourism. The Honourable Members know the picture of tourism and what happened in the former Administration compared with ours. There were boom periods and there were low periods. Tourism went up and it went down.

What I am suggesting to the public of Barbados is that these two contiguous Administrations show, very clearly, that our economy has never functioned in a sustained way under any Administration. That it was therefore time for some kind of structural adjustment.

Let us look at the issue of debt because I have been accused of being emotional in looking at this issue. I was not then emotional, I am not now emotional but the press had to carry me then in print form. My position is a simple position about the debt. I am not casting blame on anybody, Sir. I am trying to look at the facts of the economic history of my country. Foreign debt in 1976 was $50.2 million. At that time our total domestic exports were $137.6 million. Foreign debt was 36.5% of our total domestic exports. By 1986 when the last Administration demitted office foreign debt was $553.5 million and total domestic exports was $425.7 million. Debt had gone up from 36.5% of total domestic exports to 130%.

Sir, the facts are, if you look at the continuing pile up of debt and the repayment that faces this Administration, the facts are here Table 31, page 63 of the Economic Report 1993. Can you recognize, my country, that in 1990 this Government was called upon to pay back $198 million in debt when the year before it was just $104 million? My country, can you recognize that in 1991 the debt to be paid back was $228.2 million and in 1992 it was $241.4 million?

My country, I want you to understand that this debt was being called in and we had to pay it back at a time when our total domestic exports had dropped significantly. Sir, in 1986, our total domestic exports was $425.7

million because of INTEL. In 1990 when that first $198.2 million had to be paid back, our exports were down to $253.9 million. INTEL used to bring in hard currency. When we were paying back $222.8 million our total domestic exports were bringing in $244.6 million. I do not care who was Prime Minister then; if your tradeable goods sector is not working, the domestic exports are down drastically and your debt repayment levels have skyrocketed like that, and then there are other things happening in the economy, I do not care who would have been Prime Minister then, it would have been a difficult pill to swallow.

I think it is totally unfair that we as politicians, for cheap political gain, should try to deride, pull down and destroy the characters of our leaders when we know the facts. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition is an Economist by profession and training. He has access to all of the facts. And he is a good Economist too. I would say that. The article he referred to that he wrote in 1983, I read that several times and I also happen to know that in that article he said that one of the reasons why the recovery in 1982 was successful, in a short period of time was because the Government shared the same philosophy as the international agencies and therefore they had no difficulty in implementing the policies of those agencies. Tonight, when I heard him inveighing against these same agencies, I do not know if he has had a change of heart or what. I invite him to tell me. I can remember reading that article. It was an analytical article about the performance of the Government at the time. I believe he advised the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that he should not do certain things coming up to elections in 1985 because he had seen the pattern in 1981, 1982 and he did not want these things to happen. He would have advised prudence. And now he is seeing prudence here but he is not respecting it.

I do not intend to spend any time discussing the Honourable Leader of the Opposition because I really want to look at the issue of employment I just want to say that the hard data on economics will show that in 2 regimes we could not depend on our tradeable goods sectors. They were problematic. Hard data will show that there was a lot of borrowing, trying to borrow our way out of problems rather than trying to adjust. Hard data will show that we reached a point in 1990, 1991, 1992 where it was impossible to maintain that borrowing against a background of falling reserves, and falling domestic trade and therefore we had to enter again, as the other regime did, into a programme with the agencies that are set up for that particular function.

But hard data will also show that having gone in there, that this Administration has successfully dealt with the major issues and can now move on to other things We employment, et cetera, the more entrenched difficulties. When we talk about recovery, when we talk about stabilisation we recognize yes, it is not that we are back in any safe moorings yet. It will take time.

When we look at the employment situation I wish to support all those who said that when they are looking at the demand side that we need to get the tradeable goods going. I am very, very supportive of that. There is no magic 'quick fix' about employment. We have to go out there and we have to earn our way in the world. We have to make sure that we build up our reserves. We have to make sure that we do not continue to expand our purchases of goods and services from outside when we cannot at the same time sell goods and services outside. We have to do that. Because if we worsen our balance of payments position further we are just going to make everybody in Barbados poorer. It is not going to help. We have to recognize that it is very difficult at this time to get investment coming into our countries.

The investment in the world is moving now not in terms of manufacturing and that sort of thing. You are talking of financial investment You are talking about people moving billions across the stock exchange and so on. There are not many investors now who are going to move a few million dollars to Barbados to set up a factory. That is not where the money is. They would go into the Dominican Republic or Haiti or somewhere like that with that kind of investment. They are not going to be coming here. Let us be realistic.

We are down to a situation of how soon, how rapidly, how efficiently and effectively can we get agriculture going again, that is both sugar and non-sugar, tourism, manufacturing, data processing, *et cetera.* In some of these areas like sugar, let us be realistic, if we do not do the tidying up in sugar now there is no chance of moving forward again. That is a big challenge facing us as a people. We have to do things in manufacturing. We are at the end of a cycle now in manufacturing. The garment companies are going out. There are very few investments in electronics. That is the end of a cycle. It started when we were young men, in the 1960s and so on, seeing all of these factories set up, Koves, Electronics, Mrs. Ram and so on. We are now at the end of that business cycle. Those things are going out.

10.30 p.m.

Operation Beehive, the Puerto Rican thing, Bootstrap and so on were based on the Arthur Lewis model. We are at the end of that cycle. We have tried it and it worked for a while. It is no longer available to us. What are

we going to do? Cry? Try to see if we can make it do what it cannot do? We have to move on. It is as simple as that. Look at the competition. It is not easy for us to compete with Trinidad, Jamaica and those countries with all of the devalued currency, low wages *et cetera.* Do not even start going into the Far East now and in Latin America. These are realities. That is why we have to push for productivity because we have to get out there and compete in the world. No crying over spilt milk and not casting blame on all of us in this country. We are trying our best.

Let us look at the supply side and I wish to go again to that economic report because it suggests to me on page 34 of the Economic Report that we have to be looking at the whole question of population. For the longest time, in Barbados, we were stuck at 250 000. That is all we heard all the time. The figures are not saying so anymore. The figures are showing 263.9 thousand. There soon will be 264 000 people in our country. When I compare, Sir, *on* this Table 2, a significant thing is happening. If you look at the population between 15 and 49 you are going to find there is an expanding population in Barbados. In 1980 that group formed 49% of our population. By 1990 it was 53.4%. So when we are talking about growing unemployment we must recognise also that there is a population shift and that part of the population where we have to provide jobs, is expanding.

I want to put a plug here, Sir, because it seems to me that the Barbados Family Planning Association has played a valiant and effective role at the macro economic level in terms of population control and I hope that we do not see in this particular financial year, or any time after, a cut in the subsidy that they get. I think that would be a bad thing. I want to make it clear, as far as I am concerned, the Government should be funding the entire operation of the Family Planning Association. I believe so very strongly. I see it as part of the economic infrastructure of our country operating at the macro economic level. I do not believe we should cut any funding that is provided for that organisation.

As a matter of fact what I would like to see at this time, just as you have the police outposts in some of our deprived areas, Gall Hill, Silver Hill and so on, in your own area, Sir, I would like to see a family planning clinic down there too. I understand they might be scared going in some times nowadays with this violence but let the police carry them in, they can operate outside the police post or inside the police post but I believe that one of the problems in poor areas is about family planning and I believe they should be expanding their services and we should be putting some money into that kind of project because, believe it, if you go into those areas, the Pine and other areas, my own area Wotton, Gall Hill, Silver Hill, *et cetera,* the last thing we want is an explosion from those areas. I would like to see the family planning in there doing their work. The police is at one level controlling behaviour afterwards but I would like to see population control taken significantly in those areas because *that* is important to further economic development. If we have more people we have to share the little we have with more.

A lot of my colleagues have already spoken on the issue of education and training and that is part of the supply side of employment but I would wish not just to emphasise training for the workers, but I want to emphasise training for managers. Training for managers and entrepreneurs is vitally important. If our economic institutions do not work it is largely not because of any workers at the bottom who are the first to be sent home, it is largely because those who are in control are themselves not fully equipped for the task of moving this economy forward. So that is the area in which I would like to see a lot of emphasis placed.

Sir, I want to look at another side of this employment situation and it relates to job security. I understand there has been some discussion by some agencies about looking at the question of severance pay. I understand there are some suggestions that workers should pay for their own severance. I understand there is some suggestion, Sir, that our Severance Pay Act should be dismantled and in its place some other thing is being suggested by these international financial institutions. Sir, it goes without saying, I do not support that. I supported a change in the measurement of severance pay because of the difficulty that the Fund was in. And to me you *can* send that up or down, depending on the economic circumstances, you can make those kinds of changes. I would not support any question of workers paying for their severance. It is out of the question. I would not support any situation either where the Severance Pay Act we have now is not taken first of all and looked at to *see* how it *can* be modified rather than throwing it out and coming up with a completely different concept. I want to say, Sir, these are matters I stand strongly by.

We do have a Severance Pay Act that is a bit cumbersome and we have always insisted that we need to look at it again but what we do not want, Sir, is for a situation to develop in Barbados where people can be fired at will again. In fact, Sir, I think we have to take a situation that if we are going into this kind of an incomes and prices policy that we should not only be talking about creating employment out there, but making sure that those who are employed now do not get fired at all. They should become bullet proof. Those who are in jobs, unless they do something very serious to breach that contract they should be working and employers should find it very difficult to get rid of them. There are some people who want to use the Severance Pay Act in such a way as to perform what is tantamount to unfair dismissal. Some of them are doing those sorts of things. I think, Sir, this administration is also on record as looking at unfair dismissals legislation. I think

it should look at it very carefully. We have a view on it in terms of how that legislation should come but it is time to get back to the social partners and look at the question of unfair dismissal legislation because I believe that job security should be fundamental in this changing environment. If you are moving towards productivity then that should be one of the fundamental underpinnings. I will be productive for you but I want to know that my job is secure and the only way I will lose it is if I do something to frustrate my own contract. I do not want you to get the opportunity easily to make me lose my job.

I wish, Mr. Speaker, to look at the issue of the prices and incomes policy as it relates to the whole idea of employment and so on because the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made a number of statements about what the Trade Union should do in relation to this prices and incomes policy.

Let me see if I understand him, Sir. He made the categorical statement that there are a lot of businesses barely surviving out there in Barbados. Do not mind the one or two rich ones but a lot of businesses are marginal. He said a lot of households are also marginal and then he made the statement that there must be a lot of people who are working for substandard wages and we must go and increase their basic salaries and wages. I would venture, Sir, to believe that the people whose wages are low are the ones who will be employed by the same companies and the same households that he would consider to be marginal so I would want to understand his logic that in businesses and households that are already marginal he will now saddle them with increases in basic wages and salaries.
10.40 p.m.

As an economist, he would know what the immediate impact of that would be, because employers would respond by reducing employment. That is what they will do. If he is giving me advice, I want him to give me good advice. I want him to give me sound advice. But I would like him to think also that we have already thought these things through and, therefore, when that clause was put in the Protocol, it was a protective clause that in case there is this group that develops then we will go looking to support them. The suggestion that we must go out there now and harbour all of these people and make a case to their employers that they must get an increase on their salaries and wages when already we know that the same employers who are going to be employing the marginal people and they themselves are marginalized, it seems to me that that calls for some thinking. It is not as simple as that, but things are never as simple as they appear to be. Even when that advice is being given, I believe that the giver of that advice knows that also.

Sir, I agree that we in Barbados have to be looking at areas of creating jobs for our young people. I will not repeat, but people talk about the area of intellectual services, information processing, et cetera. I believe that we have some of the best educated and best trained people in Barbados, except that Barbadians have this peculiar thing that although they love education and training, they then are afraid of it at the same time. Barbadians will tell you that you are a two school or three school fool. They send you to get the education and then when you get it you are not supposed to even show that you have it. You are supposed to then allow people who are not very well trained to dominate the situation and you are ashamed to say-that you have qualifications. I do not believe in that. I believe that if we train our people they should be able to use their skills all-over the world. I believe that our better trained people should understand that it is knowledge that puts the Japanese ahead. The countries in the world with raw materials and resources are the poorest countries in the world right now: look at Africa and Latin America. All of the countries with all the raw materials are the poor ones and a little country like Japan that does not have any raw materials or Switzerland that has brains...

Mr. SPEAKER: Two minutes more.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Those are the ones that move ahead and Barbados is comparable. We have nothing to be ashamed of and we should look at intellectual services and develop those services. Why do we talk about too many lawyers that are produced in Barbados? Let us export them. Export the knowledge then, but not necessarily to take them wholesale and carry them anywhere. I am just using lawyers as an example. But doctors, civil servants, technocrats or whoever, are going to be in vast demand in areas of Africa. Have we gone out there to seek to make that kind of connection? A lawyer does not have to go anywhere but he can develop his package of knowledge whether in video tapes or whatever and make them available, even consultancies and whatever in their particular expertise. Those are things that we have to be moving towards, Sir, and I agree with those who talk about technology. Yes, we have to move forward and there are areas that immediately strike one's mind. I would like to see where we are going to end up in terms of solar power by the research that is being carried out by Dr. Headley and others at the University. I really await anxiously to see where that kind of research is going to take us. Because I believe that these things are not being talked about sufficiently. I believe that they have vast potential for the future.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I am not all as pessimistic as others appear of where we are now and where we are going in the future. It is not going to be a very

fast change around and it is not going to be a rapid change. I think that we are on the right way and I believe that with commitment and fortitude of the Barbadian people and if their leaders understand their role, if they keep their hands on the tiller, if we learn not to run away when the problem faces us but to see every problem as a challenge and every problem as an opportunity, we will be able to take this little country of ours even further than it has gone before.

I thank you, Sir.

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

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, last year during the Crop-Over season there was a very popular record sung by a young man by the name of Adrian Clarke. That song which he sang was recognised as one of the masterpieces during that Crop-Over competition. One of the reasons why it became so popular was because it was a true story and an experience which was experienced by several young people in Barbados. I will attempt to recall some of the words and it went like this:

> "I am a young fellow, a father trapped with my little daughter and mother quite unprepared for manhood. I thought that I should get up and look for work. But no matter where I go, no matter where I look, all doors closed."

The chorus went like this: "I feel the pain."

Mr. Speaker, I am not one who is given to getting up and creating stories or one who incites people. I think that my style and approach to politics is one of reality. As the young people will say, I like to get real. The situation in Barbados today is not one which we as politicians should ignore. It is serious, very, very serious. No amount of words and no defense by the Government or anybody for that matter will convince me that the question of unemployment is not a serious matter. I want the Government to understand this that we are sitting on a volcano. All of us in this country stand to suffer as a result of this volcanic eruption.

I have travelled the length and breadth of this country and I have noticed and witnessed the young men chilling out under trees, on bridges, in old deserted houses and liming in parks because they have no job to go to. When I asked them if they want work, they said yes. But believe you me, Mr. Speaker, they really mean yes. I can see by the expression on their faces that they really want work. They want to be in a position like us who are fortunate and who have a job to be able to earn their own money, to buy their clothes, to feed themselves, to feed their young children, to help their brothers, mothers or their parents to provide a bit of savings for themselves that they can become meaningful citizens of this country.

10.50 p.m.

Therefore, I must say as a father, I too feel the pain. It is not a subject that I &light in discussing or debating. I want the Government and people to understand that it is a very serious situation. When we look at the unemployment statistics last year 1993 as compared to the unemployment statistics of 1992, it is frustrating. It looks hopeless to most of us who understand what is going on.

How can someone say to me that the young people can feel happy and be consoled over the fact that the economy is improving. That is not the way I feel. The young people recognise that although some attempt was made or that there has been a slight increase in the performance of our economy yet unemployment increased. It moved some 2200 jobs more in 1993 than was the case in 1992. In other words, there has been an escalation of unemployment.

I am asking myself where do we stop. How are we going to get that to reduce the level of unemployment? I have seen and read the Budgetary Proposals and I respectfully submit, Mr. Speaker, that those measures, the capital projects, will be inadequate to generate the type or level of employment to make me and this country feel comfortable. No mouthing by any Minister that 6000 jobs will be created this year will satisfy me. It probably sounds good to the mouth, good for the politician; but it is not really fair to this country, and I will say why.

When you consider that some 3000 to 4000 young people will leave school this year in a couple of months somewhere between May and June of this year and with job opportunities so scarce we have to add that 3000 to 4000 to the already 31 000 unemployed according to the Central Bank Economic Report. That is a frightening situation. I am going to say that the Government must not believe that the level of crime in Barbados and the amount of drugs or the drug situation cannot be linked to unemployment.

Let us get real. We know that the young people, because they have no jobs, because they see no hope of getting jobs, have not been seeing the type of industries, the sort of business investment to attract youngsters to work and, therefore, they feel that they should sit down. Why worry? Cool out under the trees and lime. As a result, relax themselves with some herb or cocaine or the like. Mr. Speaker, that is frightening to our society.

I would want to see Government address the question of unemployment and present a positive plan. Don't tell me about the Youth Service. The Youth Service has its limitations. Don't tell me about the National Training Board. Train them, yes, but I want to see that Government makes funds available to the young people who would like to be entrepreneurs, to be self employed, make funds available to them so that they can borrow and set up businesses and help to relieve the unemployment situation.

If that is the direction in which you are going and it has been identified, then I think we should pursue along this line. We realise the Government has not been able to attract investors sufficient to satisfy the job requirements and I am going to say that we have to understand why we are having social problems in Barbados. Take for instance people unable to pay their house rents, Why? Because the economy has contracted and people have been sent home and they cannot,find jobs but they are being pressured by the National Housing Corporation and landlords. Some people have to face the embarrassment. Even though I am not connected with some of the people I feel the pain and frustration and the embarrassment that is caused to these people when their furniture and everything that they tried to make themselves comfortable with, a radio, a TV, a suite, a bed, all of that, has to be taken away because through no fault of theirs, in most cases, they are out of work and cannot find work because there is none.

Mr. Speaker, I would have very little sympathy for persons who can find work and refuse to work and allow their rents to run into arrears. But I can see a situation where people cannot find work and have tried, but notwithstanding the fact that they have explained their situation, they have been embarrassed. Mr. Speaker, these are the things that I am concerned about, I feel that the Government must understand that it owes this country. It has an obligation to make sure that certain social welfare services are available and sufficient funds should be placed at the Welfare Department to take care of genuine cases. And that is not the case.

The Welfare does not have sufficient funds to take care of most of these cases. There has been a cutback in the repairs to senior citizens' houses who have worked hard and helped to build this country. When they need to get their houses repaired to shelter them from the elements, they are being told to wait because there are no monies. Mr. Speaker, this is not a tenable situation.

I want to turn to another situation that disturbs me. I have sought to get c cation on what is now mooted across Barbados is Government's intention to increase the bus fares. I want to let my feelings be heard loud and clear. I am not supportive of any increase in bus fares because anything at all at this time which would impose further hardships or strain on people, especially those who can ill afford it at this time, I am totally against it. I will not support it.

If there is a case being made out by Government or whoever is concerned with mooting this increase, they should take stock of themselves, examine very carefully and analyse the situation. No increase in bus fares will alleviate the problems at the Transport Board. You have to look at when you have an increase in bus fares you have more revenue; but there are some other factors that must be looked at. Are they carrying the same number of passengers? Will there be a fall off because people no longer travel as frequently because of the increase in fares? Are you looking at the question of the operating costs which include the number of buses that are for the road and need to be repaired. Are you looking at the maintenance which is a component of your operating costs? Are you also looking at the quality of buses, the age of the buses? These are factors you have to take into consideration otherwise it makes nonsense when you proceed in an ad hoc manner to increase bus fares. You must be able to justify your reasons for asking for an increase. Yes, I have heard the reason for asking for an increase in bus fares. It is because the Transport Board needs to break even or that Government is no longer prepared to make a subsidy to transport. I want to tell the Government this. There is no better subsidy to be given to, or no better Corporation to be given a subsidy than the Transport Board. Nobody in Barbados will quarrel with any Government that decides to subsidize the Transport Board. It is an area which is worthy of subsidy.

11.00 p.m.

I am going to say this. There needs to be better management of the resources at the Transport Board. I am saying all of this because I do not want the Government to proceed and impose hardships on people who do not really deserve it. I do not want the Government to make mistakes like this. Yes, if you are thinking in terms of reducing the bus fares in St. Michael, proceed. I too would welcome a reduction in bus fares but I have to be realistic. I have to look at the operating costs and I have to look at the intake of the revenue of the Transport Board. We have to balance these things. We must not pander to cheap political gains. We know and people understand that it might be a political move but we do not want to run in there and pay the price after elections. That is what I fear. Somebody will have to pay. It is time when we must sit down and think of prudent management and do not do things because we want to be politically expedient. It is wrong.

I am saying that you have to be prepared and I hope that the Government and the Minister listening to

me would understand. I will tell him that over half of the Transport Board's buses are older than 10 years and the life span of public transport is between 10 and 15 years. You have to think immediately of having proper up-to-date rolling stock otherwise you will find yourself like LIAT having to spend loads of money on maintenance and that is where your operating costs would be too high and prohibitive.

Now, you have to think. I want those considerations to assist Government in determining whether the public of Barbados should pay an increase. I will say something. It is not fair. If you are thinking about increasing, or as it was alleged – I saw it in the paper a statement attributed to the Minister. He said he did not make the statement but it was a direct speech. What I am saying is that statement said the longer the haul the more money you pay.

Now, I am going to say this. You must ask yourself. Why are you going to inflict a burden on the old age pensioners who happen to live in the country? I want, even if you contemplate an increase in bus fares, to take into consideration the old age pensioners and the indigent who have to travel on the buses because they too will feel the impact of any increase in bus fares. If you are thinking on the other hand of reducing bus fares in St. Michael, I want to tell the Government this, think about it because it is a foolish approach to the whole system of running an efficient transport system.

You are going to bring back your buses in St. Michael and do not forget that it was the present Government that took off the buses from the short haul routes. It was done by the present Government, a former Minister, not the present Minister. In his wisdom then he felt he should get rid of all of the short haul routes though they were said to be economical. Now you have a situation where the Government is scrambling to get back these short haul routes and I am going to say there is a danger.

It is best to understand things. You are going to put the existing buses that are not suitable for the short haul routes. They are bigger and cannot negotiate the routes. They have to stay longer in the queues coming from one place to another. The route taxis and the minibuses, as you know there is a system. There is an understanding among the drivers to let them in. There is no guarantee that'you will be able to break even or compete with them in terms of money.

What I am saying to you is you will find that you will be stuck with the buses once again in the St. Michael route. I will say this. One of the things that the route taxis and the minibuses have as a competitive edge is that they have conductors and there are smaller sized buses. You cannot put an omnibus, a bus in excess of 40 or 50 passengers, on a short haul route. Imagine that. You must think. It sounds well. Everybody wants to feel they are doing something but sometimes you pursue senseless policies which will redound to the detriment of all taxpayers. It is something that needs to be carefully thought out.

Do not rush because there has been a transport study and certain recommendations made. There were several recommendations and studies done in Barbados on the transport system. We do not need anybody to tell us anything. What so-called experts come in and tell us is what we already know. We need to sit down and understand the movement of people, where people have moved from one part of the country to another, to new housing estates, and see whether we can work along those lines. It does not make sense, as I have heard coming from the mouth of a Government official that you want to compete with the private sector. That is foolishness. In order to compete you must have something of similar size or built or whatever have you to compete like with like.

I want to understand what is really going on. Why should you ask a worker who lives in the parish of St. John or in St. Lucy to pay more to come to town for a job? Why should that be the case when you have an Incomes and Prices Protocol negotiated and signed by the three partners? They have said no to increases .but you are contemplating increased bus fares. I am expecting the union, as the union is in this tripartite Protocol, to stand up. I have already sounded the warning and the warning is similar to the one I gave when the Minister of Housing announced rent increases in December last year. I was the first person to get up and condemn that. I condemned the Minister. I went on record and said, "No way" that it was not the right thing to do. Thank God the Government backed off. Though I am mindful that it is on the back burner until 1996, so we know.

Let me say this. I am not one who is going to be convinced. I am no fool when it comes to this game of politics. You do not have to include it in a Budget. You can have a tax free Budget but after, like the increase in bus fare, they will come in the month of June and that means you have had a tax free Budget. The people swallowed that, hook, line and sinker but through the back door comes the increase. Now, I am mindful of that. I am not so gullible when it comes to politics. I want to be realistic. When we look at it again, you are going to have increases. We do not know what the energy cost may cause the water rate to move and we have to be mindful. Our electricity bill, all of these are things that

will jump and they are cost that you do not see. They are not transparent.
11.10 p.m.

But nevertheless at the end of the day you will see that you have had an increase and the so-called tax free Budget is not really a tax free Budget. We have to be mindful of these things.

I want the Govemment to understand this. Everybody out there is m t a fool. Unemployment is serious. Let us get down to the nitty gritty. Do not let us run away from it. Because the Opposition -voices its concern as far as unemployment is concerned, the Government gets edgy. What are you getting edgy about. It is a problem that has to be dealt with by your Government and by the Barbados Labour Party when it assumes office next year. We have to face up to it. We have to start planning. Projects must be put in place. I understand that the National Training Board has abandoned one of its programmes, according to the Development Plan, the Work Experience Programme. I am saying that is a big mistake. It is no longer in the Development Plan. My understanding is that there is something similar to that being conducted in the youth programme. What I am saying is that the two of them are totally different. I understand it very well. You cannot tell me that you have a special programme for displaced workers, persons who were laid off from the Transport Board and tell me that that is comparable or the same as the Work Experience programme. I was the person who knew about it. The Skills Action Programme was done in my time and was renamed the Work Experience Programme. Do not come and tell me that you are going to fool me on that. I do not buy it. It is not right. It is not true.

The Government has to understand and determine in its mind where it is going.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has 2 minutes more.

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: The educational system in Barbados must be changed to reflect the direction in which Barbados is going. We have to look at that. Where are you going? What are your projections for the next 10 or 20 years and adjust the educational system to suit.

Mr. Speaker, finally I hope that whatever position the Transport Board takes with bus fares, that they take into consideration the Ministry of Education. You have to sit down with them, sit down with the police, sit down with all the agencies involved with a view to having a smooth transition on a decision that will bring about a smooth transition not inconveniencing the children. Do not forget you would have to look seriously at what you are doing because the impact would be so great that you would confuse the public and throw this country in total chaos.

I hope with that bit of advice... and I am always accused of giving the Government too much advice but I can only speak from here and say what I feel. Because if it is done now it would make light work for those who succeed. My aim is to make Barbados a better place and that is why I make my contribution in that way.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER.. The Honourable Member for St. Michael East.

Hon. J. O. **TUDOR:** Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East, for some reason, always want to drag me down the wicket to respond to areas that he knows full well that I am not prepared to deal with as yet. But, during the course of my debate, I am going to make some reference to some of the comments that he made.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a late hour for most of the members in here. But it is an hour that I am now accustomed to working at this hour. My Secretary Mrs. Melwani and Mr. Frank Mullet will surely confirm that this is the hour that I usually get going. It certainly will be instructive that the task ahead of us is one where the Members who are going to be involved in the proper restructuring and organization of Barbados will have to put in long, hard hours. Tonight is a clear indication of the kind of time and hours that we are going to be putting in to make sure that Barbados is properly restructured and on the path to growth again.

I should like, initially in my address, to compliment the Minister of Finance for his presentation which was his first presentation as Minister of Finance and I think we will all agree that he has demonstrated a command for the Ministry of Finance and certainly has demonstrated that he is a stable and a very controlled individual and understands his responsibility as the Minister of Finance.

I would particularly impress upon his focus and attention on the youth of this country. Many Members will speak in this Honourable House as they will indicate, from time to time, that there is a problem among the youth in this country. There is a lack of opportunity. There are serious problems in homes where there are no opportunities. There is probably no other Member in this House that understands that more than this Honourable

Member. Because I have interviewed probably more members of my constituency than any other Member of this' entire House. I understand the pain, the hurt. I understand the punishment that people are going through in their homes, in their villages. I have seen it and I am among it every day. But it is a situation that I know I will never run away from. I am very grateful for the opportunity to be now presently serving in a Ministry which will allow me the opportunity to continue the kind of representation that I know is necessary for the proper restructuring of this country and moving it into the Twenty-first Century. I am very grateful for that opportunity.

With regards to the difficulties being experienced with the young people of this country, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East indicated that we should just give them funds and give them an opportunity to go and do some work. I think it is laudable that he would make a suggestion in that regard. But to give a young person funds without the proper training would make no sense. The Government clearly understands its role with regards to training and it will shortly be embarking on a programme which will be under the auspices of the TVET Council and which will identify areas of training that will be required in a modem Barbados. I think that funds will be allocated to persons who have been trained. The Council has in fact been set up and approved but I am not prepared this evening to indicate who the members are as yet. I will probably be doing that within the next couple of days. I will indicate to you that the TVET Council will be funded by monies that will be voted by Parliament for the purposes of the funds, monies that would be made available to the Fund out of the training levy established by the Occupational Training Act and any other monies whether from gifts, grants or otherwise provided for the purpose of the Fund. The Fund shall be used generally for the purposes of promoting and supporting training and the upgrading of skills for the labour force and more particularly for the following areas:

(a) To provide financial assistance such as grants and loans for training and skills upgrading.

(b) To subsidize the cost incurred by the employers in training and retraining of employees in accordance with the criteria established by the Council and to support training programmes in accordance with national priorities including training for retrenched workers and self-employed persons.

I respect the comment by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East. He means well but he clearly must understand that on this side we are also conscious of the problems that we are confronted with in the country and we will seek to be addressing them within the very near future.

11.20 p.m.

The Member for Christ Church East Central indicated that he had some concern regarding the question of industrial relations in the country. It is a fact and I am conscious of it that in the Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party we indicated that the enactment of an Unfair Dismissal Act to protect workers against unscrupulous employers should be pursued and I want to give the assurance to the Honourable Member, without any delay I will be progressing with plans to have the Unfair Dismissal Act protected,

I have had several reports of companies that are indeed not functioning in the sense of good industrial relations and I am concerned about that especially in this environment. The workers of this country, Sir, have a fear that they will be victimised, disadvantaged because they are aware the unemployment levels are high and there is a feeling that they can be replaced very quickly. I think we are sending a wrong signal to the society if we do not protect the workers and I am concerned about that. I would like an environment where people feel comfortable about what they are doing and there must be some trust in the system and the employers out there must be fair to workers because you cannot have development or productivity in an environment where the workers are afraid of losing their jobs. Nobody can perform properly in those situations.

I will be revising the Labour Laws and there will, of course, be strengthening of the Labour Department. The legislation regarding some private employment agencies will have to be looked at again. At present, and I am going to issue a warning, Sir, at present there are some private employment agencies that are seeking to earn fast income from unsuspecting members of the public by purporting to offer jobs that simply do not exist. There are many people doing that and it is not fair to the general public especially in this climate that we are in.

I am going to suggest to the members of the public that those persons who are interested, contact the National Employment Bureau at "Verona House" Bank Hall for confirmation as to whether these agencies are bona fide agencies or not before they start getting involved with them.

Sir, there is as I said before some deep concern about the youth of the country and my Ministry will be trying

to advance a Youth in Business programme and we are thinking of incorporating a lot of the successful community groups in the country into the Youth in Business Programme.

In my constituency, Sir, we have the St. Barnabas 4-H Club. The Ivy Community Centre has a group. These are all very positive groups and I am hoping that I can include them directly into the Youth in Business programme and I am hoping to interest young people to join those groups and work in a collective arrangement. I hope that we will be able to succeed in getting through to the young people in this country that they too should belong to the system.

I have made a pledge, Sir, to the disabled in this country and it is my intention to spend some time in ensuring that the disabled in our society are treated fairly and squarely in every sense of the word. I have recently instructed one of my officers to travel to Trinidad to attend an ILO conference in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Mrs. Lowe was accompanied by a Mr. Peter Serrao and Mr. Hope. They have recently returned, Sir, with a proposal for developing a national policy for improving the well-being of the disabled. They have also made me aware of the financial assistance which will probably be forthcoming from the ILO and they have indicated that financial assistance is available on request. I of course will want to make sure that we accept those funds so that we can use them in the interest of the disabled.

I have noticed since going into the Ministry, Sir, that there are several organisations for the disabled and I was wondering, and I am going to throw it out. There is the BARNOD Council for the Disabled, there is the Blind Workshop, the Council for the Deaf, the Mentally Handicapped. There are several of them and I am wondering if we could not probably interest them in forming an umbrella body and use that body in the same way that the Coalition of Trade Unions have come together collectively with each other. So I am going to throw that out to the bodies and hope that they will join into one umbrella body and negotiate collectively with Government's support and assistance.

On that note, Sir, I would like to turn my attention to a position that was held by the Democratic Labour Party and that relates to the question of housing the homeless in this country. There have been many people in this country sleeping on streets, steps and some of our roads. I believe that this is an area of concern for all of us and I know Honourable Members on both sides of the House will probably appreciate the caring attitude of the Democratic Labour Party. Consistent with the policy of the Democratic Labour Party, the Cabinet took a decision earlier that we would provide accommodation for the homeless and the Cabinet agreed to allow the Hindsbury School to be used for such a purpose, I would like to compliment the National Assistance Board for having established a relationship with the homeless already in conjunction with the Seventh Day Adventist and Sir Clyde Gollop. They have already started to house some of the homeless.

The police, Sir, will be, after the Home is set up, assisting those persons to go to the centre in the night and will be assisting with transporting them. They will make sure that they have somewhere to sleep and at least will be provided with a meal in the morning, again with the assistance of the Seventh Day Adventist people.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Home has requested of the Ministry and has received confirmation from the Ministry and from the Cabinet to name the Shelter in the honour of a Barbadian who is probably one of the most lovable and caring persons this country has ever seen - Sir Clyde Gollop. On Thursday there will be the unveiling of a plaque in the name of Sir Clyde Gollop Shelter for the homeless. I thank, Sir, the effort of the National Assistance Board.

I would like to spend some time, Sir, on the question of water in this country. There has been quite a significant amount of debate about the problems that we are confronted with in the country. I do not believe that we can continue to take a *laissez faire* attitude to the problems that we are confronted with in relation to water in this country.
11.30 p.m.

I have received several complaints from Members on both sides of the House about leakages in their respective constituency. I have received several complaints from individuals indicating to me that water is being wasted here and there and that there is a burst pipe here and there. It is true, Sir, that since the beginning of 1994 Barbados has suffered severe water shortages in several parts of the island. This difficult situation is the result of three distinct factors, Sir. The high rise in public water demand is, of course, the first consideration. The amount of leakage in the system and the consumer usage where we are familiar with the fact that many consumers are presently wasting water in significant quantities. I would not want to alarm the Barbadian public, but I think that the point must be driven home that in 1994, 90 per cent of our water stock has been used. If the present trend continues, it could mean that by the year 2000 we will be in a situation where we will be unable to satisfy the needs of Barbadians with regards to the present system of delivering water. That, Sir, is not a desirable position and maybe the message has to be sent very loud and clear to the Barbadian public that they are going to have to address their approach to using water.

I am aware while I was in Singapore some years ago that they taught you to wash your hands in five seconds and they taught you to have a bath in 90 seconds. I am referring to the discipline that has to be brought. I am making the point that this is a fact. They learn that in Singapore and we have to appreciate that these kinds of situations that make these countries successful because it is a collective effort on the part of the citizens of the country. I am not exaggerating. These are practices that people develop and I am sure that Barbadians can develop the art of washing their hands in five seconds. Many of us go under the shower and we shower the whole evening. I do not have much problem, Sir, because I do not have a lot of hair to wash. But we have to look to the future, Sir, in this regard.

The future suggests that to sustain Barbados' water demand for the long term it will be a major challenge for us. I am told, Sir, that Barbados is already listed by the United Nations of having less water resources per capita than a country like Jordan which is considered a desert. I will restate that today our ground water resources are almost 90 per cent used up or committed and by the time the three wells mentioned earlier which are at Buttals, St. George, Allendale in St. Peter, and there is another one at Porters. As we drive around the Scotland District, we see streams but they are all small and many do not flow throughout the year. Even then the soil conditions are not conducive to the erection of significant engineering structures. If attempts were made to harness these water resources, surface water potential might therefore be limited. The next best option, Mr. Speaker, may well be desalination and this technology, even not new to the Caribbean, is being practiced in Antigua, British Virgin Islands, Curacao, Aruba and St. Martins but the option is very costly.

Sir, I should conclude by indicating that there is a water resource and water loss study which is scheduled to commence later this year and we explore what possibilities lie ahead. Mr. Speaker, the other area that I would want to address briefly, and I think that I have already explained to the Honourable House during Estimates what schedule we will have for the roads, is the fact that we have been accused in just putting roads in our own constituencies. It is not a fair comment and we will be presenting a road programme which is fair and equitable throughout the entire country.

The Transport Board is the final area that I will deal with. I have to indicate to you, Sir, that I have been given a mandate to operate the Transport Board without a subsidy during the financial year 1994-95. I think that it is our responsibility to ensure in Barbados that we have a transportation system that satisfies the needs of Barbadians and is indeed run on an efficient and decent manner.

The system that we have at present is mixed and, even though we will not be getting into the business of running anybody out of transport, we have to look seriously at running a transportation system which ensures that the Transport Board, which the Government has taken a decision on, will be continuing to operate. We recognise, Sir, that we will need the assistance of the private sector but we will have to make sure that the private sector is functioning in a manageable and orderly manner.

I think that all across Barbados we generally accept, and I do not think that we will have a political divide in this regard, that there is a serious problem with the ZR vehicles in this country. I have no intention, Sir, of running any of the operators out of business. That is not my *modus operandi*. Neither do I have any intention of operating against the interest of the Prices and Incomes Protocol that has been set up in the country. Thirdly, it is not my intention to increase bus fares. I want to be clear on this. I am not running away from it and I will not be dragged into the question of what bus fares will be charged or what will not be charged Because a decision has not been taken and he is not going to take me down any wicket. We will sit with all of the social partners to determine what system that will allow us to earn the kind of revenue that is necessary to make sure that the Transport Board is viable and that the public of Barbados is not unnecessarily disadvantaged with the cost of bus fares.

11.40 p.m.

However, I will indicate that in any plan that is dealt with by my Ministry, the decrease in bus fares will have a 90% effect throughout the whole Island In other words, the advantage to the Barbadian people, 90% of the travelling public will see a decrease in bus fares once we have a proper agreement in place.

I am going to take every factor into consideration because as I said earlier I have a mandate to operate the Transport Board without a subsidy and I will be ensuring that we hit those targets. I will not be getting into the business of disadvantaging the travelling public. If there are areas in fact that the bus fares can be reduced to give the consumer a boost in his ability to move freely at a lesser cost which will be a help to them, I am looking to the day that I am able to offer my constituents a reduced bus fare.

It has nothing to do with politics. It has nothing to do with any political ploy on the part of the Democratic Labour Party, certainly not on my part. I am just taking a realistic, practical approach to the transportation system. I will not be "cowarded" to saying that anybody is going

to force me to say I am going to carry up bus fares and you alarm the public that bus fares will go up. These kinds of statements...

Mr. Speaker, I just want to conclude by saying to this country that we have gone through a difficult period in our history. I think we all acknowledge that there are problems that we have to face head on. There is a task ahead of us where we have to seek out opportunities for people in this country. I have at my disposal a number of programmes that will come on stream during this financial year. We expect to have the South Coast Sewerage Project on stream which is funded by the IDB. We expect to progress plans for the West Coast Sewerage Project...

Asides.

Hon. J. O. **TUDOR:** ...and the opportunities that will become available to the people of Barbados will certainly be welcome. I am going to make sure that we use all of the available resources to the benefit of the people of this country. I certainly would like to close by indicating to you that I will be supporting this Budgetary Presentation and I will be appealing for the good sense of the people of Barbados to continue and to recognise that the Government has a mandate that it has stuck to. It has not run away and it is not afraid of the cheap politics that is being played. We will be putting our hands to the plough with the new Minister of Finance to ensure that Barbados continues on the path of progress for the people of this country.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, we have had a very long day but I think it is fair to say that at the end of the day on both sides it seems everybody is in good spirits and probably we can have 2 more speakers. I don't know if we can have 2 more speakers in light of the new enthusiasm which I am seeing. The Honourable Member for St. Michael East will have to lead off.

SUSPENSION

Hon. B. M. **TAITT:** I beg to move that this sitting do now suspend until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: I would like to say something on the Suspension. The Honourable Acting Leader of the House has made the point that we have had a long day and he anticipates an even longer day tomorrow. I speak on behalf of myself and several other members of this Honourable Chamber. I speak on behalf of the people who are in the gallery and particularly on behalf of the reporters. This Chamber has been most uncomfortable over yesterday and today. Because we have airconditioning it does not mean that we have to freeze the Chamber to the point where people are uncomfortable.

I am a woman who has sat in this Parliament through long debates and I like to be on the Floor. On several occasions I have had to leave because I was shivering. Some of the reporters today have had pencils drop out their hands because they were so cold they could not do their job properly. I am asking if for the duration tomorrow, bearing in mind it is going to be an exceedingly long day, possibly longer than 12 hours, that the airconditioning be adjusted so that it is livable and so that we do not suffer the discomforts of today.

Your Honour is robed and wigged and bandaged. So are the Clerks. Not so ourselves. I would think that the first responsibility for comfort in here should be the responsibility for comfort to Honourable Members. I am asking Your Honour to use your good offices to make sure that we are more comfortable in here tomorrow both on the Floor, in the Gallery, in the Hansard Reporters' Box and in the Gallery downstairs as well.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I really am sorry to hear that the Honourable Member for the City has been at some point during the sitting discomfited by the arrangements made in the environment in here. I, myself, by circumstances which I did not create have had to remain in the Chamber continuously more or less from the inception of this sitting and I believe that because of different attire I might not have become as acutely aware of the discomfiture of which the Honourable Member speaks.

I feel however, that a temperature of 75 degrees cannot be uncomfortable in normal circumstances.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. **TAITT:** Sir, I don't know if the Honourable Member for the City wishes me to bare my chest, but I will not do it.

I do not know that we have had this problem in the past, but I will invite the engineers to pay some attention because it is not good for the system constantly to be switching it on and off. It is going to be very disruptive of the total system if we are switching it on and off. I think we should seek tomorrow to have a temperature that is acceptable.

I think Honourable Members should recognise that as one comes into the chamber when it is empty it will

have a tendancy to feel colder than it actually is but even the male members are complaining that it is a little cold.
11.50 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for St. George South is inveighing to let us go home. This is a very strange attitude for the Honourable Member for St. George South. Anyhow, Sir, I beg to move...

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already moved that but what I want to say is I was made aware of this problem today and I tried to see if it could be corrected but it seemed not to be something that could be done just like that. What probably needs to be done is I think Mr. Clerk may very well have to get in touch with those people who set up the system and try and get it adjusted. I accept the comments made by the Honourable Member for the City and I hope tomorrow she would be feeling much better.

This sitting now stands suspended until 10.00 a.m. tomorrow morning.
11.52 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East.

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege and indeed my pleasure to rise to give full support to the Resolution that has been presented by the Honourable Minister of Finance and Member for St. John. I am also particularly happy, Sir, to see what I consider the flowering of the seed that was planted by the founding fathers of the political party, which I have the honour to represent, as I witnessed the presentation by the Honourable Member for St. John albeit his first exercise at such a level. Equally, Sir, I would like to say that as I look across the political divide there are those whom we can consider as the children of the Errol Barrow dream in that together the Leader of the Opposition and the principal spokesman on financial matters for the Opposition Barbados Labour Party and the Honourable Member for St. John on this side would have come through the kind of dream situation that the late and revered leader of the Democratic Labour Party, Errol Walton Barrow, had for the young people and for the future of this country. I wish to say, Mr. Speaker, that the efforts made on both sides with a little difference speak well that the future of our country can be entrusted to those who will follow us as leaders in our country.

I should like, Mr. Speaker, to pay greatest attention in this contribution of mine to the matter of unemployment which so many people speak about but very often I regard much of what is said purely as lip-service to finding solutions to the problems that we see the young people of our nation having. That is not to say that only young people are unemployed, but I would think that the greatest impact of unemployment would be on the young people of our country.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition spoke of the possibility of reducing the level of unemployment through its impact on the information industry. While I agree with him that there is scope in that particular area, Mr. Speaker, I must also recognize that that is not a shilly-shally sector. Whenever we refer to the unemployed, we draw reference to those who are at the street corners, those who are under the street lights and those who are in the shaded areas of the communities in which they live. It is my belief, Sir, that we need to do much more than just to draw them into focus because they are unemployed and to use all other considerations as being able to produce a remedy for the situation in which they find themselves. In this particular regard, Mr. Speaker, I believe that leaders in this country be they political, religious, commercial or what have you have a responsibility to share in the task of providing scope and providing the medium through which our young people can be prepared for the world of work.

I am not satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that the majority of people who are unemployed are led to recognize that, while it is a difficult situation, they have a responsibility also in preparing themselves to meet the challenges that will come from day-to-day. The challenges of a changing world and a changing situation require them to be ever vigilant as to their capacity to meet those challenges. I think therefore, Sir, that the message should go out to all of those who would find more time to spend at the street corners and under the lights and, as references are made so often to their capacity for being involved in crime, that the presentation which was made in here earlier this week by the Honourable Member for St. John and the response which came from the Honourable Member for St. Peter should give them encouragement to prepare and organize themselves for taking up those challenges that must come. I say that these challenges must come because we live in a world where situations change. As people change, their thoughts and ideas seem not to be in the same vain as those who came before them. Certainly, as they change, they recognize that the challenges which they face seem to be greater than the ones that their predecessors had. So it is incumbent upon us as leaders of the day to recognize that we have a responsibility. Now this responsibility is broad-base, Mr. Speaker, because I do not believe that a Government per se of any political shade will have all the scope and the capacity to absorb the levels of

unemployment that we will find in our country from time to time.

I took this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to look at our situation in this country as it relates to our adult population and the level of unemployment that there was and still is. I want to go back to the period of 1976 when the Democratic Labour Party left office and the Barbados Labour Party took up office. At that period, Sir, we had an adult population of 164.5 thousand persons. We had a total employment figure of 85.7 thousand. By 1986 when the Barbados Labour Party left office and the Democratic Labour Party regained the control of the Govemment of the country, we had a total adult population around 178,000 persons which was an increase between 1976 and 1986 of about 14,000 persons. But the total employed at that point, Sir, had reached a figure of 92.7 thousand. By 1992 the total adult population had reached 188,000, that is about 10,000 over the 1986 figure but employment was at 95,000.

The purpose of my bringing this into focus, Sir, is for us to recognize that there seems to be an average level for the percentage of the population being employed over that period. I want to say, Sir, that even in a situation where you have a declining birthrate and, as was pointed out in the Economic Report, there is a marginal increase in the death rate, we would recognize how important it is for us to start to channel the resources of our people from an early age to determine what kind of Barbados they are going to be in when they reach the age for joining the work force. In that regard I think there is a tremendous responsibility right through the years of our young people, even from their primary education, to be able to monitor the way they are developing and to recognise where the greatest input of their talents will be of benefit not only to themselves but to the country, and possibly the world.
10.15 a.m.

I believe that unemployment, though a very significant factor, is at the rate which we cannot accept as being reasonable. It is certainly not acceptable and there is evidence that this Govemment is putting every effort to work to try to bring some respite, some solution, to the problem of unemployment, because we on this side believe that unemployment is not only a Government's business, but it is the business of the entire nation. If we as a country cannot find scope for the energies and the talent of our people, then the whole country is at risk

I want to follow on from that particular angle to look at the effort of the people who run business in this country. Mr. Speaker, when you go through the stores in Bridgetown you find a preposterous amount of imported goods, which are usually referred to as brand name goods, which are sold to our population at exorbitantly high prices, and the tragedy of the whole situation is, from my own assessment, that the majority of people wearing those brand name clothes are people who are said to be unemployed In that kind of scenario I recognise that *our* garment manufacturers complain that they are unable to compete even to meet the demand of our population. I am saying that the importers of this country have a responsibility to us as a nation, and to the young people who are seeking jobs, to recognise that it is not important for them to import expensive bits of clothing, but to support the industry f a employment by making sure they are supporting the manufacturers of Barbados. So that the complaint of the manufacturers ought not to be simply in the area of not being able to compete for export, but certainly no other manufacturers should be able to find a ready market in Barbados when there are so many people in Barbados who are unemployed and need to be employed with the support of the importers in this country.

My *call,* Mr. Speaker, is for the importing class in this country to recognise that they have a responsibility to our young people for employment. I look also at the importation of wooden doors and windows, from whatever source they come. We spend a lot of money on the importation of lumber. We have a large number of craftsmen in our country who can produce the same quality, if not better, doors and windows for local consumption. I believe that before we import windows and doors that our people ought to be given the opportunity to produce those goods for our consumption.

The gravamen of my contention on this particular matter is that there is a tremendous responsibility on the commercial sector in Bridgetown to help to relieve the unemployment situation, but there is another consideration, which I hinted at in the beginning, that our young people need to be trained in the art of producing good quality products. If you look at electronic goods which are assembled in Barbados, it appears to me that there is a good market, a ready market, a clean market for those assembled products, and it would seem to me that the reason why there is a ready acceptability for those products is because they have met a level of quality of production that befits the standards that people would require.

I see no reason, Mr. Speaker, why with the right programme, the right focus, where instead of spending your scarce resources of foreign exchange on the importation of goods that cannot in the final analysis provide employment for our people, that you try to channel some of those resources in an area where you can build a climate through the importation of machinery and equipment, if necessary, to get the kind of expertise that can train our people. I do not believe it is, but if it is necessary, there could also be some area of improvement in that regard.

I think, therefore, Sir, that we have to recognise that we must stop lambasting the Government for unemployment. The Govemment has a responsibility and a share of the responsibility, but there are others in our community, including the same unemployed, who have to shoulder their level of responsibility for their own good and for the good of the country.

Last year, Sir, I made a call for some measure of improvement for the people on whom we have spent a lot of money to train and to develop a handicraft industry. Many of those persons who have come good and are producing good quality products have had the difficulty of operating in a system where the visitors who come to our country and come through the Bridgetown Port ought to see them as the first group of persons that could attract them to spend their money.

10.25 a.m.

Unfortunately, Sir, I have seen no improvement in this regard; but to add to that problem there is now what we recognise is necessary, and I speak of the development of the duty free shops in the Bridgetown Port. I am not satisfied that persons who manufacture products of an indigenous nature to Barbados do not find scope in that particular setting to capture the attention of those visitors who come in by sea. At least, I would think that it is important that even some cooperative effort should be made for indigenous products of Barbados to be on show and available at the terminal at the Bridgetown Port and certainly at the Grantley Adams International Airport where people mill around.

When passengers come to the Airport, they do not have a lot of time to mill around outside of the departure hall and therefore whatever impact those persons outside of the departure hall may have would be minimised because the flow of traffic is not as impactful. Therefore, I believe that some accommodation should be given to the producers of Barbadian products in the hall even though we recognise that the impact of those areas is of a duty free nature.

I believe also that we have a slogan as a country, which I consider is a good slogan, that is, that tourism is our business. It follows that you are required to play your part. I wish that the playing field should be level enough that we have scope and opportunity to play our part. In this regard, I want to feel that those persons who have committed themselves to training, to gaining the expertise to produce indigenous products should be given that scope.

Some comments have been made by Members on the other side about public transportation. I do not wish to get into what is the bugbear for them about increased bus fares or reduced bus fares or whatever, I want to say that the public transport system in this country needs a lot of attention. I have a problem where for as many years as I can remember it has been difficult to get a proper system of transport servicing the constituency which I have the honour to represent.

Unfortunately, I cannot put total blame on the Barbados Transport Board and I am certainly not in a position to put total blame on the private concessionaires, but I have to make a call for the kind of organisation of public transport in this country that it is recognised that there are some newly developed areas and some older ones which require and deserve proper transportation.

The issue of public transportation must be an ever constant vision as to what changes are required to meet the needs and requirements of the population shift that occurs from time to time and certainly those persons who have great difficulty in going about their normal sphere of business and duty simply because the transportation arrangements are not as good as they ought to be.

I believe that none of these things are beyond us. I believe that the effort that is made by this Democratic Labour Party Govemment, though seriously maligned by many, is in the right direction. I had occasion again to make reference to the position that had to be taken by this new Administration of the Democratic Labour Party in 1986 and following on to 1991 to effect the kind of change that seemed to have been neglected in previous administrations between the mid-70s and the late 80s in order that Barbados could withstand the shock that has to be met because of the changing conditions of the world situation.

No amount of blame throwing or denying of blame can justify the fact that if we do not take the opportunity now to move after a restructuring and a re-ordering of the way things are done in this country, we will find ourselves sadly lacking for a period we may not wish to remember thereafter.

I wish to recognise that this is not a time, this is not a period for us to be divisive on the approach to solutions. We may not agree – I will accept that we may not agree and cannot agree on all areas, but we should take it as a national responsibility to relate to a movement that allows our country scope for growth, recognising how important it is to level ourselves...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has one minute to go.

Mr. L. L. **BRATHWAITE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

For us to recognise that it is important for us to level ourselves in such a way that we can meet the challenges that will come to us. Whether it is the resolution to the problem of unemployment, to the plight that the handicraft people are facing or the problem we have in the public transportation system, I want to register my call that particular attention be paid to these areas so that our people are much better served. I thank you, Sir.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East who was the final speaker last night and who is the Minister of Labour in these trying times spoke at length in support of these budgetary measures, in support of a budget which has been construed by supporters within the Democratic Labour Party as a tax-free budget. This same Honourable Member about 2 years ago spoke in these Chambers and he indicated then that he had no intention of supporting measures which wreaked havoc on his constituents.
10.35 am.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the Honourable Member for St. Michael East chose to speak last not because of any claim to seniority within the ranks of the Cabinet of the Democratic Labour Party because we would know better. I wonder whether he is probably still haunted by his criticism of the Prime Minister and the Government before being propelled to the front benches. I believe his strategy in speaking last was for us to fall asleep while he was about to speak and awake forgetting that he had spoken. In this respect, Mr. Speaker, he has succeeded, so the content of his presentation is therefore irrelevant.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am a little worried because this is the Minister of Labour. In these trying times where a number of people have been unemployed for a very long time, where the Minister of Labour will have to preside over, to some extent, the level of unemployment in this country, I would like to know if this is the same Honourable Member who went the length and breadth of his constituency distancing himself from the Prime Minister and the harsh measures of the Democratic Labour Party during the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme. Things have gotten worse. They have not changed.

Is this the same Honourable Member who was mounting a campaign to have the jobs of his constituents restored and the Prime Minister replaced? Is this the same Honourable Member? Is this the same Honourable Member who went to New York? He was not satisfied to go the length and breadth of his constituency. This is the Minister of Labour that I am dealing with. He was not satisfied to call for a no-confidence motion by his constituency branch in the Prime Minister. Is this the same Honourable Member, Mr. Speaker, who went to New York soliciting support for the removal of the Prime Minister?

Hon. J. O. **TUDOR:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. At no time did I travel to New York to be part of any plot or programme against the Honourable Prime Minister of this country.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, is this the same Honourable Member who said that the Prime Minister does not know what he is doing? I have not referred to any particular Honourable Member.

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

Hon. J. O. **TUDOR:** I am rising on a point of order. At no time, Sir, have I ever said publicly that the Prime Minister does not know what he is doing and I would like the Honourable Member to present the source and the reference where I would have said that. I would ask that he withdraw those remarks.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I never said what he said I said. I will challenge him to deny that he was quoted in the Press as making certain statements which would confirm that. I would also like to challenge him as to whether or not he did not make certain statements that he would be Prime Minister tomorrow.

Hon. J. O. **TUDOR:** Again, on a point of order. The Honourable Member is trying to suggest that I indicated that I want to be Prime Minister tomorrow. I was asked a specific question whether I aspired to become the Prime Minister of Barbados and I said if I could get the job done and get results I would do the job tomorrow. That is what I said and that is a good ambition.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, as I said, nothing has changed. I would also like to know if the level of communication between his party and the members have changed, certainly the economic conditions have not changed. I would like to know whether the Honourable Member in supporting these measures has realised that he is now the Minister of Labour and that he would have not only to report to the members of his constituency on his stewardship but to the entire country with respect to the comments, the insinuations and the slurs against his party, against his Government and against the Prime Minister.

Mr. Speaker, these Budgetary Proposals by the Honourable Minister of Finance and the Honourable Member for St. John have been presented against a background of high unemployment in this country, escalating crime, lack of confidence in the leadership of the Government, and growing instability and discontent within the ranks of the Democratic Labour Party. They are presented at a time when our restless young people are seeing the trivia and bigotry associated with power being played out by our leaders in the highest public institutions in this country in the form of greed, egoism, nepotism, selfishness, deception and corruption. While all of this is more pronounced this year, it has certainly been the pattern for the past three years.

We have been told, Mr. Speaker, to ignore the prophets of doom and gloom, the strife-makers, political hypocrites and bandits in our midst. At the same time we have been reminded that the decisions that were being taken by this Government were in the best interest of the survival of the rest of us and we were assured that there would be light at the end of the tunnel. During this time this Government blamed the productive sectors for the lack of growth in the economy but did nothing to stimulate them. It took 8% of the public workers' salaries, denied them their increments, sent home thousands of workers while reducing their benefits. Their Unemployment Benefits were cut and the time span within which they could apply for these benefits was reduced. Their severance was almost cut in half and it became, and it is still the case, very difficult as it has been during the last three years for new recruits to enter the job market.

Mr. Speaker, this year we are confronted with a different messenger, a messenger who, because of his youthfulness, even if it was his only asset, we thought would have brought a ray of hope to this country and to his generation. Mr. Speaker, we have been sadly disappointed.

10.45 am.

This Budget like the Estimates that preceded it has failed to address the main problem facing this country at this point in time. I refer to the problem of unemployment. Mr. Speaker, at the time when the Government is boasting about the 1% growth in the economy, unemployment has soared from 17% shortly after the Barbados Labour Party demitted office in 1986 to 25.5% in 1993.

The only consolation that the Minister of Finance can give us is a terse reminder that many developed and industrialised countries in the world face similar problems. He has failed, Mr. Speaker, in his presentation to let us know how Government intends to provide the climate and the opportunities for job creation. Mr. Speaker, this is unfortunate. I find it totally unacceptable.

There is a school of thought that has promoted the theory that it is not the responsibility of Government to create jobs. It would seem to me that when you take into consideration the record of the Democratic Labour Party Government during the past 3 years it appears as though this Government has been a convert to that theory.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of examples to show the anti-worker stance of this Government. I alluded earlier to the lay-offs in the public sector, the manner in which they were done. Persons were unceremoniously sent home, given notices and told that they were being terminated the same day without Wing told when they would get their severance. And even those who are promised severance have had long delays in the actual receipt of severance.

I am not surprised that the payment of severance to workers at the Transport Board, that money which was long overdue has only been paid a few weeks ago ahead of these Budgetary Proposals to make it appear as though Government has satisfied its obligations to such persons. Many of these people have not even returned to work as yet. Hence, when we are talking about the unemployment figure being 25% this is not quite accurate if we take into consideration that thousands of those very persons were exiled into permanent retirement. I am speaking of people working in the Ministry of Transport and Works in particular people who are responsible for keeping our roads clean, people who had not yet reached the age of retirement but people who are not easily employable. People who would obviously have spent the little pittance that they pot for severance within a short period of time. People who have not been employed since they were severed.

If we wanted to come to a realistic figure of the true unemployment situation in Barbados we probably would have to go another 10 points higher than the 25% that Government is projecting as the true unemployment figure in this country.

Secondly Government's failure to have proper consultations with the unions during this impasse and their failure to observe the rules of collective bargaining. A failure to give the necessary impetus to the productive sectors so that they in turn would be able to increase their profit margin and employ more people particularly in the manufacturing sector.

In the agricultural sector this year, the concession is only a token. Govemment is doing very little to put idle lands back into production and one could easily think of the Scotland District area which could be the bread basket of this country. No assistance being given to farmers in this area. No assistance being given by Government to ensure that idle lands are utilized by persons who have been displaced by the strictures of the past 3 years. Government's attitude to the social partners is another instance of the anti-worker stance of the Democratic Labour Party Govemment.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter has dealt at length with certain aspects of the protocol on the prices and incomes policy. I would only say here that Government, as the largest employer of persons earning substandard wages and I refer to persons like maids, general workers, these persons have not had the benefit of any wage increases since the implementation of the protocol on the incomes policy. These workers were specifically excluded under paragraph 3(a) of the protocol from the general freeze on increased wages.

We have not heard of any increases by Government to these workers. Over a year has passed since the implementation of the protocol. What has happened is that Government would seem to be aiding and abetting the private sector in this exercise. Because what we are seeing is that employers in the private sector have taken the lead and have kept some workers employed at ridiculous levels of wages.

One really questions the role of the trade union movement in this breach. They must be considered, by their silence, as being one of the social partners as collaborators in this exercise. I note that one of the Deputy General Secretaries of the Barbados Workers' Union who is the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central was quoted in the press a few days ago as claiming that he was satisfied with the workings of the protocol.
10.55 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, this certainly is not in keeping with what we are seeing as the certain measures that should be implemented in the protocol.

While I am on the question of unions, Sir, I am somewhat surprised to read a recent report attributed to the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central in which he said that the Government should be responsible for creating short-term employment for persons in these periods of difficult times.

Mr. Speaker, I said earlier there is need for Govemment to create, not short-term employment but full time employment and this, Mr. Speaker, is the same Honourable Member who, when he was the Member of the Democratic Labour Party, especially in the period leading up to the 1986 election, accused the Barbados Labour Party of giving people substandard jobs, weeding the roads. At least those jobs were permanent until the workers were unceremoniously laid off as part of the strictures of the Government's structural adjustment programme.

Mr. Speaker, one would have hoped that with the laying in the House of the Development Plan, we would have seen in this document some hope for employment in this country.

Mr. Speaker, emphasis in the Development Plan is on increasing the quality of the labour force to achieve a higher level of productivity in the protection of goods and services.

Mr. Speaker, we have no quarrel with that but productivity cannot exist in isolation from Government's responsibility to create a climate of job creation. Nowhere, Mr. Speaker, in the Development Plan, and I have read it from cover to cover, not like the Member from St. Michael East, and nowhere is it stated in this Development Plan that the question of unemployment will be tackled even though its reduction is one of the objectives in the area of labour and unemployment.

Mr. Speaker, Government's failure to allocate more money from the Training Levy to ensure that all retrenched workers can join the labour force in these difficult times ... We do not have the figures on the number of people who have been laid off in both the public and private sectors, who have been able to establish their businesses and who have been able to rejoin the labour force. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that Govemment would be embarrassed by these figures because of the fact that enough money has not been made available for training of these thousands of people who have been severed both in the private and the public sectors.

Again, Mr. Speaker, another example of the Government's anti-labour stance is the fact that they are claiming that labour costs rather than taxation is the principal factor undermining competitiveness in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, in this respect one wonders whether the emphasis on productivity is genuine. It is aimed, Mr. Speaker, at enhancing the country's competitiveness in both the domestic and international markets. Is it aimed at

this, Mr. Speaker, or is it borne out of the fantasy of a self-styled political scientist who has conjured up visions of being remembered as the local architect of record levels of economic growth?

I would like, Mr. Speaker, to deal with a few matters relating to my constituency St. Andrew, a constituency which has been neglected by this Government. I do not believe that they have done this simply because of the fact that a Barbados Labour Party representative happens to represent that constituency. Mr. Speaker, the roads in St. Andrew have been a source of concern for some time. Since I was a Member of these Chambers, Mr. Speaker, I have been promised, year after year, that the roads in St. Andrew would be repaired. I will repeat again, not a single tenantry road in St. Andrew has been repaired since 1986.

I would like to know from the Minister of Public Works whether or not this Budget has any hope for the repairs of the tenantry roads in S t Andrew in the areas of Belleplaine, Orange Hill, Chalky Mount and those areas, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has one minute more.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: It seems as though this administration is only interested in St. Andrew when a resident is accused of some statutory breach of some regulation as happened recently when a Minister visited the sand quarry and certain action was threatened against a local resident.

The water problems that have been plaguing this country are in some measure a blessing in disguise to the people of St. Andrew because we have been experiencing problems with water long before the rest of Barbados and I would hope that some good would come to the people of St. Andrew by this water shortage.

But I have some words of advice for the Prime Minister before I go, Mr. Speaker. You may recall last year that in my presentation on the budgetary proposals I warned the Prime Minister who was also Minister of Finance that he had lost the confidence of 5 Parliamentarians on that side. Honourable Members on that side, with the exception of the Honourable Member for St. Philip South became a little bewildered when I made the comment but we now know who those 5 Members are. My advice to the Honourable Prime Minister would be, notwithstanding the fact that it is a little unrealistic but in order to avoid a dishonourable discharge from the rest of the Members over there, cancel the Global Conference, call the elections, Mr. Speaker. At least by now he should know his friends from his enemies and his enemies are not over here.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

11.05 am.

Mr. W. W. HALL: Mr. Speaker, let me at the onset congratulate the young Minister of Finance who presented his first Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals two days ago. The Minister of Finance is a fertile amalgam of the young and brilliant and even his few detractors, Sir, have been forced to admit that he did a good job and that in the corridors of power there is a breath of fresh air pervading. Mind you, Sir, he warned last week that there will be no ease at this time and I can understand his position. Like everywhere else in the Caribbean and further afield, we have seen countries in rather straightened circumstances. We have seen devaluations after devaluations in countries like Jamaica, Trinidad and Guyana and with that we have seen an escalation of crime in some countries. Even in Bermuda, Sir, last week it was reported that the policemen were asked to work for another two hours per day, which we here are not particularly unfamiliar with since this happened about a year or two ago in this country.

Sir, it is about 15 years now that we have seen both direct and indirect taxation policies by successive Governments in Barbados. The Democratic Labour Party introduced a stabilization programme, structural adjustment programme and income policies. This is between 1991 and 1993. I voted for these measures so 1 am not chickening out I just had to make that very clear. Since 1986 in this Honourable Chamber, I have voted for the policies of the Democratic Labour Party, therefore, I am the fvst to say that. Now my position, Sir, all along has been that Barbados has a high wage cost and that meant that the stabilization programme and indeed the structural adjustment programme were to my mind designed to prepare Barbadians to be more competitive. That is my view, Sir. We sought to encourage as much productivity as possible. That was the name of the game, Sir. In so doing, Sir, these measures which I must admit were harsh, and in some cases, some people have said draconian. But I have always held the view that the measures were taken reluctantly so that we could get the country back on stream. Sir, the reduction in the size of the labour force in the public and private sectors was a measure taken. That is number one. Number two – there was the 8 per cent cut in salaries in the public sector.

Mr. Speaker, the civil servants opted to have the 8 per cent cut. Some did not but the majority did and this was to my mind, in an attempt to assist the Government to maintain the existing rate at which the foreign

exchange was purchased. That is Bds. $2.00 to U.S. $1.00 or thereabout. The Prime Minister at that time gave an assurance that he would restore the 8 per cent at a given time. My position was one of concurrent because I know that God does not lead you where he cannot sustain you. Therefore, I felt that, if you had promised the civil servants in this country that you would give them back the 8 per cent although it was $37 million, they should have been given back the money. Now that has caused quite a lot of comment in very enlightened areas. But I can only give you my view and to tell you that is how I felt about it.

Sir, the third' thing that we did was that the increments were frozen in order to effect a further reduction in Government's expenditure. Those are the three measures that I remember off the top of my head. Now the incomes policy was an agreement by the social partners, that is the Government, unions and the employers. They entered into a social contract with a view to keeping the incomes and wages frozen for two years. It was clearly understood, Sir, that there would be some measure of productivity gains and, if and when employees were able to achieve such, these gains would go towards the worker.

Mr. Speaker, last year I said and I will say it again that these were very harsh decisions and my constituents in Black Rock and the contiguous areas felt it, Sir, like any other constituent in Barbados. I still feel that we had to make this decision, but their backs were to the wall and mine too by extension. You are quite familiar with that, Sir. If your constituents' backs are to the wall and you are a good representative, then of necessity your back is nearly through the wall. That is how it is, Sir. My constituents do not have mendicant attitudes. They do not walk around begging for bread. Sir, they are very proud people and we try our best in the constituency through our office secretariat to make sure that whenever they have a need, they can come to their constituency office and they will be taken care of. The usual things of lights, roads and the other normal things are taken care of by every representative. This is nothing new, Sir. I do not believe there is anyone who would make a point of not doing what I consider to be his duty. Therefore, Sir, I felt that we had to make those decisions to survive the financial battle field that we find ourselves in. Sir, I will again say that everyone knew that these measures would be painful. Sometimes you think that you have to take those sorts of measures so that in the long run all will be well, and the enhancement of life of all Barbadians will be assured.

Mr. Speaker, you may recall at that time there was a lot of talk about devaluation. That is true, Sir. There was a lot of talk all over the place about devaluation, and many times the quarters from which those thoughts emanated, and being a neophyte in financial circles, one sometimes felt a little uneasy about this devaluation. If there is one thing we would want to Q is to make sure that we do not devalue our currency. I will tell you, Sir, that 30 years ago the Jamaican dollar was higher than the American dollar, it was worth Bds. $2.40. I have just returned from Jamaica and a Barbadian dollar is worth $16.50 in Jamaica. This is to say that the average worker, the domestic, works for a mere $350 or Bds.$20 per week. It also means that in the hotels you pay the same U.S.$200 per room that you would pay in Barbados. Hence, Sir, when I talked about wage costs earlier on, I would just say that even in the tourism industry, you would find that the cost component in Barbados is very much higher than a place like Jamaica. I think that on most occasions has been our problem.

11.15 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, our major challenge is to restructure the productive sector and increase the level of productivity so that Barbados would experience export led growth. That, to my mind, is something I think we need to do. We also need to increase our foreign exchange earnings, expand the level of employment and improve the quality of life for all Barbadians. The platform presently exists for expanding economic growth and development during the coming years, and I will say this to you, Sir, that people who were suggesting only a few years ago that they should have a vote of no confidence in the Government, are the ones now who have actually said that the young Minister's proposals for agriculture would bring back profitability to the industry. We see too, Sir, the young people of this country, through the agency or organisation, the Barbados Youth Council, have joined hands and said that the young Minister has done a good job. They are lauding the efforts of the Minister.

Mr. Speaker, my position is this. We are in a situation where we were told beforehand that we would not have any great ease, or little ease, or no ease at all. We were told that, and so he has kept his word. Sometimes Chancellors of the Exchequer and Ministers of Finance the world over may never let you know one jot of what they are doing, but this young Minister told all Barbadians not to expect any ease this time.

Sir, I will not dwell too much on the other aspects of the Budget, because the newspapers are all there on their front pages telling you what are the proposals, and you will get expert comments, as usual, on what are the effects of the Budget. I would say that the young Minister of Labour in his presentation last night, recognising that his Ministry, which is rather big, a social cement Ministry on one side, and a real-real cement Ministry on the other side, when you start building bridges and roads and things like that. I do not think he would have had enough time to have dealt with the area of unemployment, as to how we have been dealing with it.

There has been some talk that the Minister of Finance in his budgetary proposals did not address the problem of unemployment. I just wish to say that when I was Minister of Labour in 1987 the first thing I did.....

Aside.

Mr. W. W. HALL: I was Minister of Employment too. The first thing I did was to have a task force, a broad base committee, which would go into the likely ramifications of the matter and report back. It was very clear, abundantly clear, Sir, when they reported, that the position in Barbados was one where you should have self-employment and going along the cottage industries side. That has been articulated for nearly eight years now and this has been done.

In the Ministry of Labour, Sir, in terms of employment, the Youth in Business, where the young entrepreneurs are given help in terms of how they go about getting their business. There are about 70 youngsters who are given training in computer services, small business training, access to financing and preparing for business plans. These young people, in a programme led by Miss Maxine McClean from the University, have been doing a good job. This programme comes out of the Community Development Department and in the Centre at Bush Hall last year there were over 600 graduands. A myriad of trades are being taught there. The problem with the Bush Hall situation is that a lot of the youngsters who were liming in Bush Hall Yard Gap were not in that programme. They seem to wish to get into agriculture. They wanted to use their hands and get into something like that, and I hope that the Ministry would do something to allay the fears of some of these young people.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned a training fund and he was right, but I am telling you that when TVET comes on stream, in a matter of a week or two, I suspect, Sir, there will be a separate training fund which they would be managing and I think that will go a long way towards alleviating most of the problems we have had. This TVET organisation is a co-ordinating body of private and public sector people. It supersedes the Training Board, which is now called the Barbados Vocational Training Board. There will not be any duplication, but they will do the planning of all the vocational training.

Sir, the partnership of the Youth Service and the Barbados Vocational Training Board is another area where the vocational skills are taught and the occupation diary I alluded to in the Estimates is a marvellous piece of work. The field work was done by Michael Archer and Cyrilene Simmons and this lists about 84 of the trades that youngsters would like to get some information on.

I would also like to say that the Report on the National Commission of Youth in Barbados 1993, under the chairmanship of Dr. Farley Brathwaite is now in, and they have given many suggestions and made many recommendations on the problems of youth in Barbados. I think that is something the Ministry could now work on.

I would also like to mention the U.S.$580,000 for institutional training at the Women's Bureau. This is for allowing ladies to start their own businesses in co-operation with the Advisory Council for Women and Women in Development. This is another area I think will bear fruit.

Mr. Speaker, another area in that Ministry is the fact that in 1989 the United Nations passed a Resolution proclaiming 1994 as the International Year of the Family. 11.25 a.m.

In Barbados, the policies they are developing are designed to ensure that families do things together, worship together, work together, play together and stay together. That is important, Sir.

We feel that strong and cohesive families must be seen as the greatest preventative measure against instability, against crime, drugs, alcoholism and juvenile delinquency. I believe this is rather important because the breakdown of family life is one of the areas in Barbados and perhaps of the world, that you find troublesome to development.

I wish to say too, that in rebuilding the walls of our family life throughout the world and, indeed, in Barbados, we have to recognise that too many people are so busy working, mother and father, that they have not been able to look after their children as perhaps your mother and mine looked after us. They are very busy. Not that they neglect their kids or that they have not given them the necessary things of life; but kids need more than that. They need parental guidance and they need to be assured of the love necessary for a child.

Sometimes in the best of families in Barbados you find that they are rather surprised that their children fall on the wrong path and go on drugs. This is really the reason. You have influential friends, big houses, fame and fortune; but I think the idea of your family life is rather more important and necessary.

Only two days ago, while I was watching cricket from Trinidad there was a youth programme on CBC

and a young lady was talking about integrity, and about youngsters. She interviewed about 6 youngsters in Grenada, not Barbados, the West Indian kids in our neighbouring countries. When she interviewed them about what are the problems in society, they said that morals were decaying, that kids must change their attitude to the elderly, to crime, to respect for parents and authority, and their attitude towards God. Those were the youngsters dealing with themselves. They are saying that they need to do that.

I say, Sir, what is the mirror image, what example are we the adults giving to these youngsters who see themselves that way? It is very important in that Ministry where you have responsibility for looking after the young not only at play but certainly at work in terms of their moral values.

Mr. Speaker, the time has gone rather quickly and I wish to say that even leaders of great countries are looking at themselves. When I was in Jamaica only last Wednesday I happened to look at the television in the hotel room, and there was this young person interviewing the President of the United States of America. They said to him, "Tell us what you have done in the two years you have been there. What have you accomplished?" He said one thing. "Spiritual growth." He said that he is just an honest struggling believer struggling to find the guidance of God. I will tell you something, Sir. In his political campaign he put people first, and that was a mistake. I think what you do is put God first, and I think that if the President of the United States of America feels so it is all right.

It is also noteworthy that only two months ago when I was in Washington, the Vice President of the United States of America said that whenever he has a problem that is too big for him, he is not afraid to say that he will get on his knees and take it to the Almighty. The young people of today are saying these things about themselves and then they are looking at us. 1 say this because this week I looked at the newspaper here in Barbados, and I was amazed to see that out of 6 young people all 6 of them had negative views on politicians. They don't care anything about us, Sir. We now have to care about ourselves and be careful how we behave in here too. With your permission, Sir, I know that you will look after that, but if you put it on TV people will tend not to read Hansard and they will wait to see what is happening.

I am a believer in having the debates on television. I feel that when we are in here we can remove our masks and bridle our egos and leave the labels on the door, and then get the people's business done.

In conclusion, I personally feel that someone has to strike a note for politicians. On both sides of this House we have decent, honest, honourable people who should be role models. Yet if you roam Bridgetown or any town, Oistins or Holetown, and you ask them their opinions of politicians we seem not to be rating very high. I think that that is not something that we must brush aside. I think there are honourable people in here who are role models. It is not to say that Barbadians do not particularly like role models. Sir, they are warming towards that golden icon of West Indian cricket, that embodiment of cricketing genius, in Sir Gary Sobers. The children, 6 000 of them are shouting and wishing to have a hero, elevating our people.

I think politicians should be like that too because politics is a noble profession. I think that is what should happen.

I am committed to the Democratic Labour Party and my decisions are based on conviction, not expediency, and after 18 Estimates and 18 Budgets, I am no political scientist, but I have studied human behaviour in this political system and it seems to me that some people in politics, like in other fields, are too scared to give their opinion to others, or too frustrated. I just wish to say that I am not afraid at all to give my opinion to anyone. I like to do it decently, but I am also willing for other people to give me their opinion of me. Now, that is something that one has to learn to do.

I feel, Sir, that what we have to do as leaders is to make sure that we lead effectively. I mean all 28 of us in here, the 27 men and one lady. If we are the type of leaders that our children and our families and the school children want to emulate, it would be a good thing. I would like to say, as far as I am concerned, I wish to be true to my conscience at all times, and I wish to be able to make decisions as far as anyone in Barbados or anywhere in the world is concerned, and to tell them to their faces, not behind their backs, but eyeball to eyeball. I need to do that, Sir, because I believe that in this country and throughout the world politicians seem to have no chance. We have a system but it seems very wrong to me that we sit in here year after year and we are the ones making the laws, and Cabinet is in charge, the Government sets the agenda and the Opposition should oppose. There is nothing wrong with that healthy system, but yet I find that politicians are the most maligned people.

I am striking a chord for them because I think something better could happen. I am very sorry that time has run out but I needed to say that and to say to all Barbadians, that what we really need to do is to use this Budget to make sure we can be able to occupy the crease (a cricketing term) so that as soon as times get better

all of us will benefit. I think that is the position that the young Minister was putting forward 2 days ago, Sir.
11.35 a.m.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, there stand before this Honourable House two Resolutions, the one as introduced by the Honourable Member for St. John purporting to congratulate the Government on astute management, suggesting that the quality of services delivered in recent times has not been compromised. indicating that some relief has been granted to the productive sectors and congratulating Govemment on an outstanding performance. The other, in my respectful view, more realistically tuned to the goings-on in Barbados suggest, quite clearly, that the economy has not performed well, that there exists widespread unemployment, and there is little or no light at the end of the tunnel.

Mr. Speaker, I have no difficulty in associating with the latter Resolution as it stands in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Peter for it is, in my view, something of a gross exaggeration that the Barbados Government has performed outstandingly.

I am also extremely weary, Sir, of the suggestion that this economy has in recent times been governed by astute management. In support of my submission, I refer you to pages 9 - 15 of this document which I understand is already a document of this Honourable House. It is called the Barbados Economic Report for 1993. But before I consider that Report, Mr. Speaker, let me indicate what this side of this Honourable House would look at achievements in the area of the economy, if such achievements had indeed been recorded.

What Barbados needs now is a massive increase in the national income and in the Gross Domestic Product. What Barbados needs now is export led productive economic activities which would earn Barbados foreign exchange. What Barbados needs now is a diminution in taxation on the productive sectors. What Barbados needs now is relief to that grisly spectre of unemployment which has been blasting our youth and our women in particular.

Against those requirements of this economy, Sir, and against the background of the recent economic occurrences that have occurred between 1992 and 1993, if we use the Economic Report as an indicator of the performance of Barbados' economy, we will notice the following: Cassava production declined 63%. Eddoes production declined 37%. Except for beef, livestock production declined 5%. Exports, the vehicle through which we earn foreign exchange declined by $10 million. Manufacturing down. Vegetables and root crops declined 12.7% and what little growth was achieved is lower than even. the lowest growth among other Caribbean countries. Non-sugar and fishing declined 5%. Sugar, for many years our principal export earner, and still having the potential to occupy a permanent place in the economy, down 10%.

Sir, a word about sugar. We on this side have, over the years, done two things. We introduced two major policies in respect of the support of the sugar industry. One was debt relief and the other was a price support. We also in our time during the period 1981 to 1986 in particular, had put the lands belonging to the Agricultural Development Corporation, now called the BADMC, now called the Barbados Agricultural and Development Marketing Corporation, of the estates of the Agricultural Development Corporation into sugar production. Today what we have is a situation where. the projection for the next income year is that the production of sugar by BADMC lands will not be anything more than 20% of total national production.

What we have, Mr. Speaker, is a situation where sugar production on Government estates has declined over time, where there. is no prospect of anything positive being done to promote sugar to the maximum of 80 000 to 85 000 tonnes and where there are other rumblings in the sugar industry that cause grave concern. The sugar fanners tell me that to this day they have not been given the last of their payments for 1992. They tell me that. I want the Government to tell us what provision will be made to pay the sugar farmers the outstanding debt due to them for the year 1992.

In the sugar industry too, Sir, there is concern whether the management contract given to Booker Tate is well advised. Let me say a few things about Booker Tate, Mr. Speaker Booker Tate, in all respectful submission, has no experience in managing high cost sugar industries. This has been borne out by the Booker Tate experience at Monimer and Foam in Jamaica, two estates which, when managed by Booker Tate, did worse than any estates in Jamaica

Barbados, Mr. Speaker, has a high cost sugar industry. Before Booker Tate came in they produced a report which was predicated on an exchange rate adjustment. It was also predicated upon the theory that Barbados had too many sugar factories. I do not know if three can be too many. It was also predicated on the assumption that Booker Tate's management could give the necessary injection to the sugar industry to get it going. What we want to hear is this. What cost Barbados will incur by having Booker Tate? What long-term technical expertise Booker Tate will leave us? What optimum

level is Booker Tate capable of operating and whether that aspect of the Booker Tate Report that suggested an exchange rate adjustment will truly be taken seriously by the Government?

What is more, Mr. Speaker, in respect of the sugar industry, we call on the Government now to exploit the 300 years sugar expertise that we have and get Barbadians to consume their own sugar again. It is against the grain of the Barbadian psyche for Barbadians to be dealing with Guatemalan sugar and now latterly Guyanese sugar. We would want the sugar industry to be given the necessary economic nourishment to permit Barbadians to use their own sugar, of course, too to export a substantial amount of that sugar with the aim being to earn foreign exchange and to make sure that the sugar industry remains with us.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I want to pay attention to a matter which has not yet emerged in this Budget debate. It has to do with the level of economic and financial investment in Barbados today. Last year at this time we knew that investment had declined by over 50%. Therefore, if investment had declined by the level, it would follow naturally that any impact on the economy by having a low level of investment would definitely be reflected in a lower level of national output. We do not know, certainly there is nothing I have seen to indicate what the current level of investment is, but there are no indications out there in Barbados that would suggest that investment in the period 1993/94 has taken off at any level that would be likely to produce positive effects on this country.

We are therefore asking the Government to provide the correct economic climate for investment to proceed normally. We need investment in agriculture. We need investment in the manufacturing industry, we need investment in tourism, we need investment in many other services. But how can we persuade both Barbadian and foreign investors to invest in Barbados against a background of virtually mass resignations from the Cabinet and indications from the Prime Minister, that there exist plotters, bent on destabilization in a situation where the Prime Minister from his own words seems to suggest that he was intimately familiar with these plotters? How can he sensibly expect that investors are going to have the co dence to invest in this economy when Ministers pull out and make statements reflecting on the competence and on the ability of the Prime Minister to manage the affairs of this country.

11.45 am.

One problem facing Barbados now, Mr. Speaker, is the question of an insufficient confidence existing among investors in this economy. And who would have thought that the investors when unemployment stands at such a high level as to see about 35 000 people able and willing to work unemployed? Investors will always look at the question of political and social stability. And even though the learned Attorney-General indicated last night that linked with crime was the evolution of a drug problem, the drug problem itself often comes from the question of unemployment I have seen what unemployment has been doing to our young minds. I see young, brilliant minds in Barbados retreat into a feeling of abject frustration. I see young brilliant minds seeking some chemical tree upon which to lean. I see young, brilliant minds make cynical remarks about the future of their country. I see young brilliant minds unable to earn their keep in their own country. This question of unemployment has to be addressed in the same manner as the Member for St. Michael South East suggested. This question of unemployment is now a burning and urgent national issue and no amount of wishing that it would end will suffice because there is nothing in the Budgetary Proposals to suggest that we have any robust plan to tackle unemployment.

There was the suggestion by the Honourable Member for St. John that young people should go out and say to the employer, give me enough for sardines, give me enough for a Ju-c, give me enough for bus fares, give me a little out of pocket. That by itself goes nowhere towards addressing this critically and fundamentally important and urgent economic and social problem.

At this time too, Barbadians are concerned as to the competence of the Government in particular the Ministry of Public Works where Barbadians are all over Barbados saying yes we are praying that water comes through the pipes. We know we have a problem. We thank God for the day before, yesterday and today. We want to know what plans the Water Authority has for sinking more wells, since it is widely believed that in several areas of Barbados with the potential for throwing up water and the Government sits back and uses old-fashioned equipment, old-fashioned machinery and outdated techniques to exploit our water resources.

I thought m, Mr. Speaker, as I address my mind to this particular matter that we should have heard something from the Honourable Minister of Finance in respect of measures aimed to stimulate foreign reserves more. I thought we would have heard what action would have been taken to increase our exports especially against a background of a recent report that Barbados may turn to London to borrow $20 million to booster our foreign reserves. One of the areas in which the Opposition will always be divided against this Government is in the

area where the Opposition believes that in respect of foreign reserves you should earn your foreign reserves rather than borrow money to boost the foreign reserves.

It is in a situation where this noble country – the best country there is, notwithstanding the doings of the Government against itself – would want to hear what plans Government has for getting money from abroad, if indeed there was any truth to that $20 million loan. To what extent Government has any plans for Government sponsored capital projects. To what extent our foreign reserves are in a healthy enough state where we may not need the loan. To what extent the Government will itself do something for an area of the economy that has been badly neglected and I refer, of course, to the area of the manufacturing industry. The farmers say thanks. They got a little ease in respect of the duties being removed by this Government on factor inputs and raw materials.

But you would recall, Mr. Speaker, if you were in the Chamber that some weeks ago it was this side, through this humble spokesman that was bagging the Government, on behalf of the farmers, to ease the heavy burden of taxation on the farming community. I vividly recall, and the Record of this Honourable House would show, that in my first intervention in the Estimates debate under the Head of Agriculture I made a call to the person who was addressing agriculture, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture for the stamp duties and the consumption taxes on farming inputs would be removed.

Although some ease has been granted to the farmers we want the manufacturers to be restored to their proper place in the economy. There have been two serious developments in manufacturing in recent years in Barbados, in addition to other developments which Honourable Members who have spoken before me on this side have referred to. One development is that Barbados is recording a decline in the interest shown by foreign investors who have capital to invest. These foreign investors are going elsewhere. The other development in the manufacturing sector, Sir, is that Barbadians themselves are showing a keener and keener interest in manufacturing and the Government has so far not only failed to remove the fiscal disincentives to manufacturing, the Government itself has failed to provide the venture capital necessary to get an indigenous manufacturing industry and an indigenous manufacturing sector going in Barbados. If Barbadians are willing to invest in their country and are not assisted, and if Barbadians who are ready to take a chance and invest in the economy are not granted incentives it would lead to frustration, it would lead to cynicism and, ultimately, it would mean that the economy will not benefit since the money that they were going to risk and the expertise would not have been available to the country.

I want too for some spokesman on the Government side, familiar with the proposed sale of Heywoods, to tell this Honourable House if it is true that a top rank member of the Democratic Labour Party, often the willing recipient of Democratic Labour Party largesse, did not go down to Heywoods and tell them that by the end of May Heywoods would be closed and their jobs would be on the line. I want that matter addressed in this debate. I live close to Heywoods and several workers at Heywoods are my constituents.

Even though you would tell me, Sir, that for me to call a name would have meant that I would have had to submit that name to you before the debate, the fact of the matter is that a very corpulent and huge person intimately connected with the St. Joseph Hospital was the carrier of that very bad news when he told them that come May Heywoods would be shut and they would have to look for jobs. I cannot call names but the man's corpulence, his unorthodox ways speak for themselves. He is very well known. He is close to the St. Joseph Hospital. He is not a Minister of Government nor Cabinet Minister, nor any politician who takes part in elections, but he is close to the scenario in the Democratic Labour Party. I believe at one time that he volunteered to give evidence before the Public Accounts Committee.

I would have hoped that spokesmen on the Government side would have told us to what extent the economic enfranchisement that so many of their Members often address in their speeches and in their various theories, to what extent the question of economic enfranchisement would have been addressed especially in the context of the privatisation of a number of Government businesses, Sir.

But, before I conclude, there are areas of this Budget that need to be looked at closely. I suspect that the Honourable Minister of Finance said that this in not any one shot exercise.

11.55 am.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has about 8 more minutes.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Very well, Sir. I suspect that the Honourable Minister for Finance indicated that his budget would not be any one shot exercise. That is all well and fair. We do not expect that with Ministers leaving the Cabinet so often that the Prime Minister would want

to do a dismissal now. I rather think he will be around at least another year if elections are not called. But the Honourable Member for St. John should have looked at the penultimate budget of the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Two years ago in this Honourable Chamber, the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South referred to something called structural adjustment mitigation. Now in the time when the Barbados Labour Party was honoured to occupy office in Barbados between 1976 and 1986 there was a particular continuity in the presentations made in budgetary proposals by the Barbados Labour Party. We are hearing the Minister say this is not a one shot exercise but we are seeing no evidence of its link with the Right Honourable Prime Minister's budget of year before last when the Right Honourable Prime Minister said he was prepared to introduce a policy of structural adjustment mitigation. Perhaps the policy has failed so dismally that the Government is not now prepared to contemplate it any more. But let me, Mr. Speaker, address my mind as a Member of the Opposition to the question of mitigation.

Mitigation of a structural adjustment programme, Mr. Speaker, should entail the enrichment of the social services. And when I say the enrichment of the social services, in a situation where a structural adjustment programme leads to widespread unemployment, leads to a virtual freeze on wages, leads to an increase in user fees, an increase in text books fees, an increase in school meals and such like one would have hoped, Mr. Speaker, that we would have had some policy in the area of mitigation of the social services which Barbados has been accustomed to.

In this administration we have seen the virtual collapse of the sites and services programme, a programme which I believe Members of this House on this side would have been associated with some years ago. If any Member of this Honourable House, either on this side or that side, applies to the Ministry of Public Works for a street light, a short letter comes, street lights will be considered when funds become available. And this has been happening since 1991, Mr. Speaker.

There are areas in my own constituency in Road View and Lower Carlton, Bakers and Weston, where street lights are needed and we are seeing no street lights. There are areas in my constituency on the West Coast that are flood prone and all I get from the Ministry of Public Works when I apply for relief for my constituents is that no funds are available.

In addition, Sir, to what I am asking for in the name of the good people of Barbados we have not seen under this administration since 1991 any positive plans for b w cost housing. This is another area within the social services that needs addressing. We have seen a diminution, almost to melting point, Mr. Speaker, of the welfare services. We have seen, Mr. Speaker, the policy where old age people and other indigent people in need of National Assistance Board houses, we have seen that policy more or less collapse and my respectful submission, Mr. Speaker, is that in any situation of structural adjustment and even an enhanced surveillance programme, certain social amenities must exist for the people of St. Michael East, for the people of St. George North, for the people of St. Philip South, for the people of Christ Church East Central, for all Barbadians, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, when I look at the presentation made by the Honourable Member for St. John, I was reminded very much about the presentations that preceded him by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that you in the great days of your youth were a paramedic, namely a pharmacist. So you can permit me to use medical terminology. Let us liken the economy unto a patient. The predecessor of the Honourable Member for St. John did not diagnose properly. He administered medicine which was bitter and which did not work. The patient nearly died. The Member for St. Michael South decides I am no competent doctor, I will move out and appoint a younger doctor in the name of the Member for St. John. The Member for St. John comes, a youth scarcely half brought up and looks at the patient, scratches his head, and says, let me observe. So the economy becomes a patient under observation. The medicine and the surgery required to stimulate the economy are lacking. The current doctor, in the name of the Minister of Finance, has not yet shown himself competent to deal with the issues.

By contrast a political alchemist in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Peter stands ready, Mr. Speaker, appreciative of the condition of the economic patient both at the level and diagnosis and prepared, Mr. Speaker, to bring about and 'to effect a remedy. Unfortunately the Honourable Member for St. Peter must stand in the waiting but he is ready and willing and would to God that that day comes soon when we will be allowing the Honourable Member for St. Peter to administer the economic affairs of this country.

I have no difficulty whatsoever, Sir, in associating myself with the Resolution as brought in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George North.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, I have no problem at all in supporting the Resolution brought by the Minister of Finance and the Honourable Member for St. John.

Sir, in this half hour allocated to me I would like to spend it on 5 areas, as we in this year 1994 contemplate moving into the 21st century. These 5 areas, Mr. Speaker, will include the question of youth employment and training. I would also like to respond to a few comments made by Members on the other side. I would like to deal also, Mr. Speaker, with some specific areas within the Financial Statement and Budgetary proposals. I would also, Mr. Speaker, like to make a few points about the future of the Ministry of Health and indeed my last comment, Mr. Speaker, will be that I would like to issue an appeal to the Opposition, to those of us over here and to the people of Barbados as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, on the first point dealing with the youth employment and training I take pride that I can say that I know something about dealing with youth. I have done it for many years. When we talk about TEC-VOC and TVET and all of those things, I myself know what it is to pull together about 100 children from communities and deal with them in what we call "a meeting hall" to try to give them some training. So giving training to youngsters, as far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, is something that was always there and indeed in this special time needs to be intensified.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of what we are having now among the youth in the country, I am sure all Honourable Members in here will agree that in our various constituencies we find it is easier to communicate with the girls than with the boys. We find that more girls will come for advice on training and as a result of that – although there are more females out of work, that is because of the population mix – we find that more girls are willing to accept and will find employment

12.05 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, this is something that has concerned me over the years and during my tenure in the Ministry of Education that is why I set about to implement and to introduce plans which would bring about the concept of technology in Barbados. Mr. Speaker, I tried to deal with it at all levels such as primary, secondary and tertiary. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that in 1987 the accusation in the local Press which at that time, believe it or not from teachers, Press and electronic media that I was attempting to make robots of the children of Barbados. Now I happen to know, Mr. Speaker, that some of those same teachers have had training in the area and they themselves have purchased their own computers and are now considered experts in the technology when you hear them speak, and they themselves are now singing the praises of technology.

In the area of primary, Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Education spoke yesterday, it is generally known and we need to let the young people of Barbados know that in all of the new primary schools provision has been made to give them the exposure at an early age when there is no hesitation and no objection and indeed at that early age they deal with it as though it is just another toy. There is no fear. Indeed, in one school in St. George North, there is an association where the youngsters in that school directly communicate on subject matters of geography and what have you to a sister school in Toronto.

Mr. Speaker, all we are saying about the technology and the training is that we have to start from young. We cannot bend a tree when it is grown and I maintain that, if we continue to do this, we will find that the children will gravitate towards technology as though it was a cutlass, hoe or a fork.

In the secondary area, I again support the Minister of Education. During that period I sat about to ensure that all of the 22 secondary schools were equipped with a computer lab, albeit small at that time. This was due to the limited funds that were available. These all need expansion. I will be the first, Mr. Speaker, to say that each one should be expanded to at least 64 terminals to give more children and more classes more direct access for the whole process of learning and assistance with their particular homework. I, therefore, will call as I have done before on the PTAs and the private industry to adopt a school to assist them in this enhancement of the technology.

At the tertiary level, Mr. Speaker, work has been done at Erdiston where labs have been created and classes are being held and bulletin boards are established where those who are affiliated with the lab can stay at home and, whether they use their modems or whatever, they can look at their bulletin board and call in like one would call for their messages. That is in existence today, Mr. Speaker, at BCC. We also have labs and classes where more young children and adults are being exposed to the technology. The same is true also at the Samuel Jackman Polytechnic where there are labs and classes.

Mr. Speaker, we have what can only be described as that state of the art of the equipment and let me say at this point, there are those who are quick to say that something is obsolete because of the advancement of the technology. We are now talking about Revolution 4 with Revolution 5

coming and I hear that Revolution 6 is in the planning. Anytime you hear that there is a new version someone will say the old one is obsolete. Mr. Speaker, we in this country do not have the funds that we can turn away everything as soon as it arrives in Barbados because back in the plant something is developed the following day. We have to understand that.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy that in the current Estimates and indeed the Estimates in this Honourable House from the year 1988 there was acceptance to the new technology and every year I insisted that some funds were placed in those Estimates for the provision of equipment to enhance the technological training within the school system even in tight financial times. We went further and we have established in the Ministry of Education an Education Officer whose sole responsibility is for technology to work with the teachers. Indeed, we have reached the point where we have computerized all the records for all of the teachers within the school system and all the student rolls within the secondary schools. I put it to this Honourable House, Mr. Speaker, that that can only enhance and assist in the development and improvement of the students and give the teachers themselves an opportunity to analyze the weaknesses and strengths of the students within the system.

Mr. Speaker, yes we have a plan to be put in place for training. The students' interest is there and we know that the students and the teachers will assist us in the development of that plan.

Mr. Speaker, to refer to a few comments made by the Opposition. If I were to summarize what I have heard so far, in general I would say that they are admitting that there were no additional burdens within the Budget. They are also saying that we have not given enough. Mr. Speaker, we cannot continue to spend more than we earn. The concept which has been permeated in this society is that you can go and get something with little or nothing down and then, when you cannot pay, the fellow comes and says that he is going to take it down and put it on the truck and take it to the store. In other words, if we are going to spend all of the time, I put it that the Government must pay.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter attempted to give a lecture. First he started off, and I will dissociate myself with his comments, but he was not sure of how he would make his points when he spoke about current affairs at the St. Joseph's Hospital. I challenged him already to state any questionable affairs that he knows of and I will deal with them. Regarding the cut of the $2.3 million that he mentioned and 4 per cent reduction in fuel, Sir, I am sure he waited really to hear the increases as the Honourable Member for St. John was delivering his Statement. He spoke of the IMF and suggested that people start paying for tertiary education especially at UWI. Mr. Speaker, I have said in this Honourable House and we have committed ourselves to the finances of the students at the University of the West Indies through 1993-96 and we deal with them on a triennial basis. This sounds like IMF and Shorey on the same wave-link and you are entitled to your view. Each one of us is entitled to our view.
12.15 p.m.

He also stated, Mr. Speaker, that the State must play a greater role in the affairs of the country. That is baloney. All over the world now it is accepted that the State cannot and will not accept additional burdens, because in the end the State has to go back to the same people and ask for money in taxes to pay for whatever plans it introduces.

The other point, Mr. Speaker, he is suggesting a more direct tax regime. Simplicity. Direct tax regime means one and only one thing, taking more tax directly out of your pay cheque.

Another point he made, Sir, was controlling goods coming in but no cheap goods to be coming into the country. If we use what we produce here we will have to do without anything that is coming in, but that is taking us back to the point of increased controls, the very thing that people on the other side have been stating over the years, that we should not put controls on people. In other words, what he is saying is spend, spend, spend and tax, tax, tax.

The Honourable Member for St. Andrew said we should cancel the Global Conference and call elections. What irresponsibility! I will deal with that a little later when I close.

The Honourable Member for St. James North said there is no improvement in the sugar industry. We have heard all reports that there is improvement already where we have just started, in the first year. He also asked that we give a listing of new wells. The Honourable Member for St. Michael East gave that information last night. It so happened that the Honourable Member for St. James North was not in his seat.

Mr. Speaker, a few references directly to the proposals as submitted by the Minister of Finance. The Minister made the point that capital expenditure is expected to fall by $19 million or 15.8% below the 1992-93 figure. He said the largest area of decline is in capital transfers from $39 million to $22 million and it reflects reductions in transfers to domestic public financial institutions and contributions to international financial institutions. We

must note, however, that although he is saying he has done this, and that we have to do this, we are still dealing and will deal with some specific important projects in Barbados.

On page 28, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance again made the point that history will prove that this country, this Barbados, faced with great difficulties made the right choices. The decisions were taken at the right time. Heaven help us if we had not taken those decisions at that time.

Moving along to page 39, just to select a few, the reform of the indirect taxation system next year will also have revenue neutrality as a central theme, and he pointed out that Government is prepared to let economic growth be the main factor which increases revenue inflow. They are the objectives. He further stated on page 41 that the fiscal programme for 1994-95 is going to be just as tight as that for 1993-94. He said that before he said it in here, Mr. Speaker, because he said there is no room in the present circumstances for excessive spending. What he is really saying is that efficiency, the use of the same modern technology, to which I made reference earlier, and productivity will have to be the key elements of the forward driven economy.

On page 42, Mr. Speaker, the Minister pointed out the various areas where money will be spent, and 1 will just select a few. In the Primary Education Programme, we will continue to upgrade the primary plant. The Barbados Community College Hospitality Institute, we will continue to train people for the growth in the tourism sector, which is currently driving the economy. The South Coast Sewerage Project, we will protect the health and the environment of the people of Barbados. The Geriatric Hospital Upgrade, we will bring it up-to-date to deal with the older folk, those who have worked to build this country. The new polyclinic in St. John, we will expand the service to the districts in St. John. Under the Second Road Rehabilitation and the Other Subsidiary Roads, I hope that the Minister of Transport finds some money to deal with three outstanding roads. I am not going to beg him for more, I am going to tell him about three I have been talking about all along – those at Applewhaites, Jones at Lower Estate Road to Salters and Sweet Vale. They have been listed for too long and I hope the Minister of Public Works will pay attention to those.

Mr. Speaker, on page 47 he said we need to modernise the way we do things. Again, this is tying back to my first comment about the introduction and training of people. Improving our office space for professionals, better systems for managing information and all those things that are mentioned. I say that with the current training going on for the last few years the students are being prepared to take on this responsibility. All we have to do is to give them the opportunity, give them the chance.

On page 48 he mentioned some of the changes that will come about as a result of the entire exercise and alterations to the Financial Administration and Audit Act. Only a week or two ago I had occasion to make reference to that, because I saw where we need to have these changes, because the present rules delay action on the part of officers who are willing and ready to grant the services to the people of this country, so we had to address that and I am glad that he included that.

Mr. Speaker, on page 64 the changes to insurance. I am happy to hear about these changes. I recall in 1976 addressing the Life Underwriters' Association and I was bold enough then to say that Barbados should introduce term insurance. I was castigated, all sorts of things were said about me, about my coming back and introducing things into Barbados, that Barbadians would not buy term insurance. I am happy to know that they now have term insurance. I am glad that the Minister has brought in changes to the paid up capital shares in insurance companies, in ihe deposits and in the settlement of claims.
12.25 p.m.

I believe, however, that in the settlement of the claims the Minister of Finance should be a little more careful and probably have a few more options. I think he needs to look at some of the options in that area. In other words, the summary is here for all to see.

Mr. Speaker, all I have said before and all that is tied into the document submitted by the Minister of Finance we will see as it relates to Health that we will start the South Coast Sewerage Project. Hookups will be done as the system is put in place as they dig and lay the sewerage the homes will be connected so that we do not have as we had before, laying the pipes and then going back to try to connect the homes.

Certain areas high up in the Worthing area will be subject to what is referred to as the no-dig so there will not be the great disruption in the highway. We will complete the study on the West Coast Sewerage Project and a solid waste decision will be made, including a decision on the future of Mangrove.

As I said earlier, we will continue to upgrade the Geriatric Hospital. We will use the same technology to increase the efficiency at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and at all the Polyclinics. Indeed, we have already installed

the equipment. Only yesterday morning I met with the technicians and the technocrats who are doing the systems work to get those systems on the go and we will restart the work at the Polyclinic in St. John.

The Eye Care Centre built by the Liars will be complete and become operational. This is the year we will continue to galvanise the support f a a Barbadian to become the Director of PAHO. The Minister of Foreign Affairs can confirm that we feel that we have a pretty good chance at achieving this.

I would like to issue my appeal in my last 5 minutes to the Opposition Benches, the Government Benches, to all members of the community of Barbados. In April, contrary to what the Honourable Member for St. John said about cancelling the conference, Barbados will be on show.

Mr. SPEAKER.. I think you said the Honourable Member for St. John.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: The Honourable Member for St. Andrew is the one who said that we should cancel the conference.

Mr. Speaker, we will have guests and like good hosts we have to treat the guests in an air of cooperation. We should do it, not for us, but for the future generations. I say to the four young men who sit on my right, not the Honourable Member for Christ Church West who is now occupying that particular seat, but the four who normally sit on my right to the Honourable Member for St. James North and the Honourable Member for St. Andrew who is not in his seat, to the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central and those of that era that they have to set an example for the future of this country. All the others on that side and many others on this side will soon have to give way. We have to plan for the 21st Century.

I speak Mr. Speaker as the senior citizen in this Honourable Chamber. I take pride that very soon I will have the opportunity to apply for my national insurance. The Honourable Member for St. James North who commented knows that his dad sat next to me at Combermere School in Roebuck Street and we remain friends up to this day.

Mr. Speaker, we have to put down our political missiles in April of 1994. We have to put down our confrontation in April of 1994. We have to put down our campaign in April 1994. We have to come together as one in April, over there, over here and in the wider community, in the villages and in the terraces. There are problems, yes, in political circles. There are problems in communities and in the country as a whole; but I say that what we have to do is to gird ourselves for unity in the next period. If we m choose, we may fire away and then await the verdict of the people. I am much obliged to you, Sir.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I think that we have done well so far. At one point during the proceedings I thought of asking Your Honour to put back in the item of Congratulatory and Obituary Speeches which would have allowed Your Honour to send to the Speaker in London condolences – for the English team. I mean when you get bowled out f a 46... Of course we would have sent congratulations to the West Indies. You see, I think the record of Parliament should show that on this historic day, the third day of *our* Budget, history was made when England made 46 and the West Indies bowled them out and saved us from a technical difficulty because many people were still concerned as to how they would see this debate. That is the relevance of what I am saying. So the West Indian bowlers obliged us.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Some old ladies in my constituency did not know how to turn it on. *They* did not even know what is UHF.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2 p.m. this day.

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

The question war put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

12.35 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. **SPEAKER:** This sitting is resumed. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Mr. H. &B. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, like the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, I have spent many moons in this House listening now to some 23 Budgetary Statements and Proposals on a continuous basis. I want to say that I am not surprised that there has crept into the politics of Barbados a deep cynicism among people about the political process. It begins right here with the Budgetary process.

Barbadians have the occasion only once a year to see and hear their representatives in Parliament debate and discuss their most important business. We still have

not yet got into the 21st Century to recognise the technological and other changes which have been made in the world and to recognise that communication is such an important factor that politicians can only make sense to people when people can hear and see their politicians without any great inconvenience. It is significant that it is only at Budget time that we feel ourselves mature enough to transmit the proceedings of this Parliament so that all Barbadians and those in the region and beyond will have an opportunity to hear and see the people's business being done. I have raised this matter in Parliament before. 1 have raised it too when I was leading the Opposition the whole question of combining the Estimates and Budgetary process to make more sense of this exercise.

My distinguished successor, the Honourable Member for St. Peter, has followed up on this matter and has suggested to the Government, as well as suggested through the committees of this House by letter, that we should combine that process and it is part of the inertia which has surrounded the political institutions in this country that we are today once again debating the Budget after we have spent five days looking at the figures dealing with revenue and expenditure which, after all, probably is the most important part of the Budgetary process.

It would have made more sense to the people if they could have heard their representativesexplain why and how the money was being spent and for what purposes, but we have been denied that because the process is so arranged that we have not yet got into the 21st Century. I want to preface my remarks on this Budget to say that the set piece ritual is not doing the politicians any good. I was therefore not surprised to hear some of the ordinary people in the street making the comment that why do we not consider them sufficiently mature to let them see in an open way what we are doing about their business.

Mr. Speaker, it is not only in this regard that we are archaic. It is also in regard to some of the excuses which we now give the people about our proceedings and procedures. This year is no exception. We have had from the Government side the stoic excuses, just as we have had them over the last four years, and this year's stoic excuse is that nothing can be done whilst we are in the process of structural adjustment and that the people must put up a bit longer with suffering and pain and that hopefully, that suffering and pain some day will come to an end. I say that is the comfort zone for those who have no real comprehension of what structural reform and structural adjustment means.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Members for Christ Church South and St. Peter spoke of the fact that several years ago we began the process of structural reform and if you f for instance, in the offshore sector itself, that is an outstanding example of what we set about to Q to anticipate the problems that were going to come to this country. None of us can doubt that there is need f a structural reform but what I am saying is that we mast not use this need as an excuse for political inertia.

One of the lessons which I have learnt, and which I hope the people have leamt from the last four years in particular of the Democratic Labour Party rule is that political inertia has taken the place of policy initiation. What we have therefore as a people to Q, and I am speaking directly to the people of Barbados, is not to accept the excuse that the world has gone through a recession and that we have reached where we have reached because we could not avoid it. It is not so. That is a patent lie from whatever quarter it comes.

The people were early told and warned, both in and out of this House, by the Opposition and by writers of the gathering storm which would bring harm and pain unless urgent corrective action was taken. There are lessons therefore which the people of Barbados to whom I am speaking must learn from this economic crisis.

The first lesson that we as a public must learn is that if Barbados is to move forward, we must understand clearly how we came into the mess we are in. I say that the economic mess was caused by the squandermania of the Democratic Labour Party Government, particularly during the years 1989 and 1990, and also I say arising directly out of the election of 1986. We must therefore learn as a people, we Barbadians, that when we are choosing our Governments we must not throw caution to the winds and believe that the day of reckoning will not come for the people of this country.

The second lesson we must learn as an electorate is that although the electorate does not want to hear bad news, yet the electorate must not shoot the messenger that brings bad news if that news is true for the result will be, as has happened in this case, that the electorate will bear deprivation which has come on us all and the suffering which now sees some 30 000 odd people, almost 25% of the work force of Barbados, out of work.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Honourable Member f a St. Philip South when he said a few days ago in this very House that in our lifetime at least half of those people are unlikely to find work if the present policies, and I add this, pursued by the Democratic Labour Party should continue. That is the tragedy of not listening to the truth when it is spoken. People can no longer believe that we must

be going to an election in a sympathetic mood, that you must have sympathy f a X because, poor fellow, he needs a pension, or have pity for Y because poor person, they after all have not got a profession. Those are not the considerations any longer. The considerations must be whether the facts are correct and whether the alternatives being offered are better.
2.15 p.m.

I urge the public of Barbados, as we go into the fourth year, to learn the lessons well. The third lesson that the public should learn from this economic crisis is that those who sent the economy into crisis must not be relied on in future to get the economy out of crisis. I am going to repeat it. Those who have sent this economy into crisis cannot be relied on and cannot be trusted to get the economy out of crisis. None of the promises which they made. I remember listening to the Rime Minister, it will be a short, sharp shot he said. In 18 months it will all be over. In the third year you would be in a growth rate of between 2% to 3%. He said that all of the harsh measures which were necessary would be removed back to normalcy and we would all be in a bountiful Barbados today. We have passed those 18 months.

We are into that third year now 30 months. We are into that third year. We have not reached the growth rate. We have not stabilized the economy. But what we have done is to have thrown some 25% of the work force into a position that there is no real future ahead for them. The people must be reminded and they must understand that it was incompetence in the management of the affairs of this country that destroyed our fiscal position, run down our foreign reserves, reduce the principal economic sectors to tatters, destroyed jobs and opportunity for job creation and put the exchange rate under pressure. That is a summary of the last 3 to 4 years of this Democratic Labour Party Government. It is a summary of their achievement.

The fact that nothing substantial has been done towards structural reform and structural adjustment in the economy is no less due to the incompetence of the Democratic Labour Party. I remember, in this House, drawing to the Rime Minister's attention that he had on his desk a copy of the Howarth Report on tourism. I drew to his attention that he had in his hand the various Reports on restructuring of the sugar industry. I drew to his attention that he had a study done of the manufacturing sector and what was necessary to put it right. The Maxwell Stamp Report. This went on for years and years with promise and no action being taken.

One of the things that is required if Government is to perform creditably is that decisions must be made and they must be made timely. The experience of this Government in the manner that it has approached matters lead me clearly to the conclusion and any right thinking person to the conclusion that he has been the most disastrous Prime Minister when it has come to dealing with economic matters.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is another experience that is even more undermining of the people's confidence in their democratic institutions and in their faith in their politicians. There is another lesson, I contend, of a more fundamental nature which we have to learn and it is that political incompetence of the level witnessed in this country since 1987 in particular will eventually undermine the very democratic structure of our governmental system.

There is no doubt that the people are worried. They are concerned. They are dumbfounded about the future of our political and democratic institutions which we have inherited from England as part of our political heritage. I say this against the background of a situation where, in the last few weeks, we have witnessed the resignation – from the Cabinet of the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South – of 3 senior Ministers.

We have witnessed, in this House, the resignation earlier from that Cabinet of another senior Minister, the Minister of State and Economic Affairs. We witnessed some years prior to that the resignation of one of the long-standing members and even a foundation member of the Democratic Labour Party the then Minister of Finance, followed by others. We have asked ourselves, in minding the people's business – I have to tell the young neophytes who have got elevated by this process – I have to say to these young political neophytes that it is the people's business. It is the people who want to know how can we be serious that you have got from one Government and under one Prime Minister such a mass resignation coming from senior members. Are we going to explain this, Sir? Are we going to explain this away by saying that there are attempts being made to destabilize the Government by the aristocratic and the plantocracy? That foolishness is not taken seriously by the man at Deacon's Road corner, by the woman at Dayrells Road corner, nor is it taken seriously even by the man and woman opposite or near to Ilaro Court.

The truth is that the idea of collective responsibility which has become part of the fundamental democratic tradition of our country is being challenged in the style of Government of the Right Honourable Prime Minister of this country. I regret to know that he is not well and

he is not here at the moment. I cannot help but make this statement to the people of Barbados because it is too fundamental.

If we are to preserve our democratic traditions then the Government must follow the principles that we hold dear. I want to remind the Government about the principle of collective responsibility. I am quoting here from a statement of Lord Salisbury as long ago as 1878. He said:

> "For all that passes in Cabinet, every Member of it who does not resign is absolutely and irretrievably responsible and has no right afterwards to say that he agreed in one case to a compromise while in another he was persuaded by his colleagues. It is only on the principle that absolute responsibility is undertaken by every Member of the Cabinet who, after a decision is arrived at, remains a member of it, that the joint responsibility of Ministers of Parliament can be upheld and one of the most essential principles of Parliamentary responsibility established."

Mr. Speaker, I have been in this House and I raised it with the Right Honourable Prime Minister why it was that his Government should get up in this House and disavow the measures which were implemented by the then Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, Dr. Haynes, arising out of the 1986 Budget. And I said to the Prime Minister as early as 1988 that it was dangerous treading on the Democratic position of this country if the Prime Minister himself would get up in the House and say that was a measure introduced by Dr. Haynes and seemed to suggest to the country that the others who sat in Cabinet with him did not accept collective responsibility for it.
2.25 p.m.

The Prime Minister's response to me then was that there are conventions and conventions and I say we have come full circle today. When a Prime Minister feels that his Ministers have to bring to the Cabinet the approval appointments of persons to head statutory boards and the appointment of board members but in his case he only has to bring them for noting. Therefore he must be higher and more equal than the other Members of the Cabinet. That is a dangerous trend for collective responsibility and it undermines the very foundation of Parliamentary Government.

The budgetary process is only one of the rubrics of maintaining democracy and accountability but so too is the manner in which the Prime Minister deals with his Cabinet and it is a matter for great regret that that most important issue is now to be brushed under the carpet if we listen to the Democratic Labour Party and we are not going to discuss with the people why this has happened, how it has happened and we allow cynicism to creep into the political process. I say therefore that one of the biggest challenges confronting Barbados today is the undermining of our democratic positions and I blame none other than the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South for this. I think it is a great tragedy that he did not do the right thing in the circumstances, not only to explain why such a large number of his senior Ministers have left him, that the correct thing for a Prime Minister to do in those circumstances is either to call an election or to move aside and give way to somebody else who is much more acceptable to the country and to the party as a whole.

It is not easy for politicians to face these realities and it may take him some time still but in the meantime, Sir, the people have paid the price and it is that price that they will continue to pay until we can have a change of Government.

I would have expected too, Sir, the Ministers, not only to make a formal statement but to carry right into the Parliament itself the reasons why. Make the Ministerial Statement right here on the Floor of the House, Sir. Keep up the tradition so that the House will know and the public know in right manner why they have had to leave the Government.

I said in the meantime the people have suffered. None of us can be in doubt about how the people have suffered. The people have lost so much in a period of 3 to 4 years, Sir. The loss of income tax concessions for home ownership, for home improvement and for home maintenance. The reduction in their personal income tax allowances from $15 000 to $13 000.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you will recall, you were in the House then on the other side, when the Democratic Labour Party Opposition said that the minimum standard necessary to keep people above the poverty line was $15 000 a year. How come if in 1986 that was the minimum amount, this Democratic Labour Party could reverse it and now start taxing people from $13 000? So the people have lost.

We have had an increase in the minimum rate of income tax from 20% to 25%. We have had a restriction of income tax allowances for two children only. We have seen the taxing of pensions. We have seen phenomenal increases in land tax. We have seen increases in water rates and, Mr. Speaker, Sir, when you can get the water because once again the incompetence of this Government has not allowed it to plan properly to repair timely and to replace the water mains of Barbados. And we find ourselves today, where in St. James, where in parts of St. Michael, where in parts of St. George, St. Peter, St. Andrew, St. Joseph, even

within the constituency of the Honourable Minister for Finance, St. John, people cannot get a basic necessity and a human right - water on a timely and proper basis. That must be incompetence on the part of the Government. They have to take the blame for it, Sir.

Now, Sir, we have also seen increases in the tax on fuel oil from 2 cents a litre in 1986 to 9½ cents a litre today and the consequential increase in the cost of electricity. When they came in it was 2 cents a litre under us. The Honourable Member for St. Peter ,in his most brilliant speech to this House on the budget yesterday spent some time in showing how that cost turns up in a loss of jobs and preventing economic activity from taking place so I need not dwell on it, Sir.

But we have also seen under this Government the doubling of the tax on gasolene from 45 cents a litre in 1986 to 91 cents a litre in 1994. As a consequence a price of $5.80 at the pump which is at least 1½ times, Mr. Speaker, I say, the price of anywhere else in the Caribbean. That is legacy of the Democratic Labour Party Government.

We have seen the dramatic increase in the cost of insurance. The Honourable Minister has spoken about his plans for the insurance industry but none of those plans are going to answer the immediate needs of the lady in Clapham Park who phones me and complains of the phenomenal increase that has taken place and we do not know what the Government has done about that.

We have seen the reduction in the pay of civil servants and we have seen close to some 10 000 people sent home, the freezing of wages of salaries and the deprivation of increments to the public servants. That has been the picture.

The Honourable Member referred to by the Prime Minister as young David, shows his enthusiasm as he comes to the House for the first time with his budget, Sir. Obviously he begins by saying he *can* do very little. He has to hold the line because he has a bad economic legacy bestowed upon him and I put to him the questions he posed in this House in 1989 - Wednesday April 26, 1989 speaking on the Budget, Sir. He said:

> "Why is it that an entire economic debate - page 3776 - *can* take place in this country in here without reference to important questions like Caribbean economic integration, greater sharing and redistribution of wealth in Barbados, the question of land reform not just diversification particularly in the rural sector and the promotion of greater efficiency and public accountability in the Public Service". I ask the Minister: How come his Budgetary Proposals have nothing in them f a the redistribution of wealth and greater equity in the system between people? How come the only boast this Government *can* make is that in 7 years in office it has merely distributed 29 acres of land to farmers as part of land reform? How come when we are dealing with the problems of the sugar industry I do not hear from the Government anymore decry that I used to hear from the Member for St. Michael East, not this one, Don Blackman about the poor black people who want land? Do you know why we do not hear, Sir? It is because this Government talks but this Government never does. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

2.35 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member f a St. Philip South.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to start my presentation in this Budget debate by congratulating the Honourable Member for St. John on being appointed Minister of Finance and on the presentation of his first Budget in this Honourable Chamber, which I felt was delivered well. In saying that, Mr. Speaker, I wish to state up front that I realize that the Honourable Member is in a position not of his making in which he is circumscribed, limited and almost in a straightjacket with no room to manoeuvre because of what went on before him. I wish, Mr. Speaker, as well to congratulate the Honourable Member for Christ Church East and the Honourable Member for St. Michael East on obtaining and acquiring the post of Ministers. Regardless of the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, anyone who has a chance to serve his country and especially in a position as a Minister, I deem that as something to be honoured. So I congratulate those two gentlemen as well and I wish them well.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to state a few words about party politics as existing in this country today and I will be very brief. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party have served this country well. I am of the view, Mr. Speaker, that the stability of this country owes a lot to the stability of those two parties. In that respect, Mr. Speaker. I do not believe that any person should set out to destroy either one of those parties. Of course, there are times when we would like one party to be the Government or the other party to be the Government. But I believe that, since the stability of this country rested a lot on the fact that we have had stability in both of those parties, nothing should be done to destroy either one of those two parties.

Let me say why I have made that statement, Mr. Speaker. I have voted against the Democratic Labour

Party on four occasions and I have no doubt that I may have to vote against them again. But the point that I wish to make, Mr. Speaker, is that on three occasions I voted against the Party because I felt that the measures that were being introduced were against the people of this country and I voted against them, On the fourth occasion that I voted against the Democratic Labour Party, Mr. Speaker, was in the Budget last year and I will say now why I voted against the Budget last year.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of persons do not understand that, in this Budget debate although you are debating the Budget when you come to vote, you are voting for a Resolution. The Resolution last year, Mr. Speaker, said to me in Paragraph 1:

> "Whereas despite the difficulties which are being experienced in the international economic environment, the Government through its various policies has been able to bring stability to the Barbados economy."

I felt then that the Barbados economy had not stabilized and I felt that it would be dishonest of me to have supported that Resolution as it stood and I voted against the Resolution. It is as simple as that.

Mr. Speaker, I move on. Within the past two or three weeks immediately after three Ministers of this Government resigned, a statement was made in this country that the Honourable Prime Minister was locked in a life and death struggle with the planters and merchant class. Mr. Speaker, let me say this. I do not care who made the statement but the point that I am trying to get over is this. Any person who could not speak for the Democratic Labour Party and me when Errol Barrow was alive cannot speak for the Democratic Labour Party and me now that he is dead. Let me say this, Mr. Speaker. Those persons have to understand that you cannot make statements and leave them hanging because those statements give the impression that people who have killed themselves for this Party over the past 35 or 40 years, have suddenly become people working for planters and merchant class. The other three persons will have to answer for themselves. I cannot answer for them. I can answer for me. I am not working for any class. I am working for the people of this country. I am not interested in white, black, green or blue.

Mr. Speaker, let me say this. I can speak with authority. I am not only black in colour. My name is Blackman. I would have to be the epitome of what is black. So nobody can teach me about what I should do about black people or how I should love them. I will tell you why they stopped, Mr. Speaker, when they talked about planters and merchant class. That argument used to work back in the fifties because in the fifties Barbadians saw planters and merchants as one colour and the rest of us another colour. Now if these fellows want to come out and state the colour they are talking about, they should say that, but to just leave it as planters and merchant class when we know that today there are many coloured people who are planters, who own plantations like Mr. Morris, like Mr. Power from St. George. Lots of black people own plantations. There are a lot of people mw in the business sector of my colour, like Leo Leacock and Lloyd Alleyne. So those people who keep talking 'about planters and merchant class want to hi& behind that, because they dare not come out and talk about white and black. As far as I am concerned, that argument has been settled since the 50's and it is not going to work anymore. We have to get away from that.

2.45 p.m.

I just want to set the record straight, Mr. Speaker. That person who made that statement and left it hanging, if the intention was to give the impression that myself and the other 3 persons who have resigned are now working on behalf of any class, I will let that person know he cannot speak for me now that Mr. Errol Barrow is dead because he could not do it when Mr. Errol Barrow was alive.

Mr. Speaker, let me get now to the matter we are dealing with this afternoon. The Budgetary proposals in my view have been framed in a situation where Barbados has to keep the reins on because it wants to enter into an enhanced surveillance programme with the IMF and therefore it has to get the approval of the IMF in order to borrow any funds on the financial market.

Mr. Speaker, let me state my position. We have just come out of an IMF 18-month programme. That IMF 18-month programme was described as follows, by the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister on Tuesday September 17, 1991. He described it at that time like this. This was the Supplemental Budget. He said:

> "This is a strong package which should send very powerful messages to the capital markets indicating that we have taken positive steps to grapple with our problems and that they can lend with confidence to Barbados."

This was in September 1991. He was taking those measures at that time so that the financial markets would have confidence in Barbados and lend with confidence.

The Prime Minister went on. He said:

> "This is a tough programme which will cause pain and suffering."

We have finished one programme and we are thinking about going into another. We have to look to see if the last programme was successful as is being claimed.

Mr. Speaker, let's start with the reserves. We have heard that the stabilisation programme has worked. We hear it over and over like a broken record. The stabilisation programme was to stabilise the reserves. It was to stabilise the fall in the productive sectors in this economy. Mr. Speaker, what are the true facts? Let us take last year alone and deal with the reserves.

For the 3rd quarter of last year the reserves fell by $72 million. This fall was so great that it forced the authorities, meaning the IMF and the other authorities to lower the reserves target for this Government in the 4th quarter. But, Mr. Speaker, in November of 1993 which was the following month there was another steep fall in the reserves of $43 million. So that is a $72 million fall in the 3rd quarter, $43 million fall in November. In January, the Minister of Finance said that the reserves increased by $71 million. So here it is. A fall of $72 million, a fall of $43 million and then the Minister of Finance said that they increased by $71 million. This statement was not confirmed by the Governor of the Central Bank in a subsequent press conference.

So here is the scenario of the last 6 or 8 months with regard to the reserves. July to October down - $72 million. November down $43 million, December according to the Minister of Finance up $71 million. Mr. Speaker, does this evidence show stability or doesn't that show extreme volatility in the reserves of this country?

I am saying. here today the reserves of this country are never going to be stable until our productive sectors generate the reserves or most of the reserves that we need in this country.

Let us look to see how stable the situation was by looking at what took place with regards to the Central Bank during the stabilisation programme. September 1, 1991 the savings rate raised to 7%, August 1992 reduced to 6% and this year in March again moved to 5% after last November putting it at 4%. So you can see that even the Central Bank had to shift its interest rates up and down in consonance with the up and down movement of the reserves.

On that one point of the reserves it would appear to me that the stabilisation programme has not worked. The position with manufacturing, with construction, with tourism with all the other things in this country during the stabilisation programme has shown that they have not stabilised. I am saying today that in my view the stabilisation has not worked as is being claimed for it. What we have to ask ourselves is, is it sensible, having gone through an 18-month programme with the IMF, to be eager to go into another programme with them which as far as I can find out seems to be an open-ended programme. What is more, this new programme we are planning to go into with the International Monetary Fund is a programme where they are overseeing almost every single thing to do with the Barbados economy.

They will be overlooking external payments position, current account balances, capital flows, management of international reserves, interest rates, government spending, aggregate demand management, everything that one would have thought that our Minister of Finance and our Minister of Economic Affairs should be looking at. We now have to go into a programme with the IMF in control.

Mr. Speaker, we have to decide if we need to go into another programme which limits the Minister of Finance from releasing the levers on this country. Mr. Speaker, I leave it to the Minister of Finance and to his colleagues in the Cabinet to determine whether they still believe that we should go ahead and enter this programme with the IMF.

Mr. Speaker, I will now go through some of the concerns I have with regards to the present Budgetary Proposals. The first one deals with the reform of the indirect taxation.
2.55 p.m.

On page 32 of the present Budgetary Proposals the statement is made by the Honourable Minister of Finance:

> "Our most notable achievement to date has been the rationalization of the direct taxation system which came into effect at the beginning of July, 1992."

Mr. Speaker, I am going to read here a document written by one of the big boys at the IMF. I will make it a document of the House. His name is Andrew Crocket. He says:

> "While the Fund seeks programmes that are specific in describing the policy measures to be implemented, the actual choice of measures remains that of the member. So long as the aggregate impact of the fiscal stance is consistent with the required moderation in demand, the staff is not authorised to insist on the manner in which it is achieved."

It goes on:

> "It is always clear that when questions of specific taxes and expenditures are under consideration,

the staff's role, is advisory, and that the ultimate discretion belongs to the member country."

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you why I have read that. When the direct taxation system was introduced in Barbados, I made a statement at that time that I had my concerns about it. Let me tell you why. Some of the measures in the direct taxation reform have been diametrically opposite to the philosophy that is practised by the Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party. If the IMF is telling me that the last word as to which tax you manipulate or change rests with the member country, I want it explained to me why did we go ahead with certain taxes that were diametrically opposite to what the Democratic Labour Party has always stood for and what the Barbados Labour Party has stood for.

Let me mention more. Mr. Speaker, the World Bank persuaded the Democratic Labour Party Government to drop the top rate of tax from 50 to 40 and at the same time - now, remember, that top rate of tax was the tax on the people getting $10 000 a month, $8 000 a month, $20 000 a month because there are people in Barbados getting $20 000 a month. That top rate of tax on the people who are getting that sort of money was dropped from 50 to 40. At the same time the claim to the lowest people fell from $15 000 down to $13 000 and the tax rate went up from 20 to 25. You understand that, Mr. Speaker?

You drop the rate of tax on the people getting $20 000 a month from 50 down to 40 and at the same time the person who is getting $240 a week you carry up that person's tax rate from 20 up to 25. Now, Mr. Speaker, the Democratic Labour Party that I have always believed in would never have done that. This Democratic Labour Party under Errol Barrow was a party that looked after poor people but that is what this Government was persuaded to do. This Government did not understand that the World Bank and the IMF at that time were following typical Reagan and Bush policies which said you give back all the concessions and the grants to the big fellows and you hope that it trickles down to the fellow at the bottom and they call it "trickle down" economics. As Clinton pointed out in the last elections it never trickled down but we fell for that, dropped the top rate of tax on the people getting $20 000, $10 000 and $15 000 a month but carried up the tax on the people at the bottom. No Democratic Labour Party that I supported all my life would have done that.

Mr. Speaker, let me go further. You have a situation where even in the incomes policy, and this is what I find hard to understand. Here it is you have an incomes policy that says you are getting $8 000 or $10 000 or $20 000 a month therefore for the next two years you will get no increase but at the same time you tell the gentleman who is getting $8 000, or $10 000 a month that he is not getting any increase for the next two years. You turn around and tell the girl who is getting $120 a week at Tansitor, Beltronics and CDS, or the maid, that she cannot get any increase either. You understand? You really believe the Democratic Labour Party that I believed in would have done that? Errol Barrow would have put a ceiling and said if your salary is above such and such you will get no increase but those people below that amount would have to get their increase. For anybody to tell me in here that $120 a week is a good wage he would have to get his head examined. That is the point I am making.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to go further because that is not all. You have a situation in Barbados where only the lowest people in the Civil Service get increments. The Permanent Secretaries and so on do not get increments, but increments have not been restored to the lowest. What people have to understand is that increments form part of a person's salary. When the Government advertises in the newspaper for a clerk or stenographer, it states specifically that the salary is such and such a thing, plus increments rising by such and such a thing. That is how it is stated so that is part of the salary. That is a condition of service.

The Democratic Labour Party, Mr. Speaker, seemed to have forgotten certain things. I will turn quickly to page 38 of the present Budgetary Proposals because this is another point of concern to me. It says:

"Labour market rigidities, especially the high level of severance payments, meant that many firms had built up an excess supply of labour which they could no longer maintain on the payroll as the recession continued."

Well, Mr. Speaker, I never thought that I would ever hear the Democratic Labour Party of which I am a member state that "labour market rigidities especially the high level of severance payments". I am going to recommend that every single member of this Democratic Labour Party go back and read the debates in 1982 and 1983 when the then Prime Minister, the Honourable Tom Adams, was attempting to interfere with the severance payments. They should go back and read the speeches of the Democratic Labour Party spokesmen at that time on this severance.

3.05 p.m.

To say that the high level of severance payment is part of the labour market rigidity is a joke. The high level of severance payment is paid when some person works long in a firm. Labour market rigidities

in Third World countries are caused primarily because of the immobility of labour.

If you are working at BET you are not going to give up your job hoping to find a job at the telephone company. That is why you do not have that rigidity in the United States of America because they change jobs in the United States like how we change shirts or pants. That is what happens. They go from California to Miami and from Miami to New York at the time and change jobs. In Third World countries the rigidity is because you cannot move. Therefore you have to stay. The fact that you stay at BET for 27 to 30 years or 35 years is not part of the rigidity. That happens because the system is rigid. If you move, you cannot find another job. I am saying to penalize a man or to state that labour market rigidities especially the high level of severance payments meant that many firms had built up an excess supply of labour is incorrect.

Mr. Speaker, am I to believe that if a fellow is working at BET for 35 years, that suddenly that 35 years has made the labour market in Barbados rigid? Should not his 35 years at BET count for anything? You remain at BET for the 35 years precisely because you know that if you move you would not find another job.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has one more minute.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: To state this, Mr. Speaker, is not really following the concept of the Democratic Labour Party. I am recommending that every single Member of this Party read those debates of 1982-83. Read what the Democratic Labour Party's spokesmen said then.

I have seen many symptoms of this Democratic Labour Party turning 180 degrees. I have said it in here before and I am going to repeat it. This Democratic Labour Party has to come back to what it was. Come back to what the people of this country always knew of the Democratic Labour Party. Come back where people believe that the Democratic Labour Party believed in the upward mobility of the people in this country, moving the lower class to the middle class and the middle class to the upper class. We have to get somebody to take us back to that philosophy. We have sadly let the people down.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to lend support to the 1994 Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals and, in so doing, to congratulate the Minister of Finance for his outstanding presentation. To my mind the acid test in the quality of a policy maker - and this goes for Cabinet Ministers - is his or her ability to sift through myriad details, to listen to the advice of his or her advisers and not to lose sight of the critical policy issues. I believe, Mr. Speaker, in this regard that the Minister of Finance has scored high marks.

The Democratic Labour Party was faced with a situation - contrary to what the Honourable Member for Christ Church West would lead us to believe - of a downturn in the international economies. We were faced with a contraction in export agriculture and export manufacture and we were faced with a decline in the production of saleable goods. These facts cannot be refuted and, therefore, we had to take firm and drastic measures with respect to the restructuring of the economy.

Our position was, to my mind, exacerbated by the fact that the 1976 to 1986 Administration did not deal with the question of restructuring as they could have done in early 1980s. Instead they entered a programme of massive overseas borrowing based on the gains of this Administration over the period 1%1 to 1976. That is why we had, to use common parlance, to take the bull by the horns and to enter into the sort of programme that we have entered into.

I can say that today there is no other Caribbean country which has undertaken, with the success that we have done, the level of restructuring of an economy. It is often said and I believe there is wisdom in the adage that in order to advance, in order for there to be sustainable advance we have to take a tactful retreat. I believe that we have retreated between the years 1990 and 1992 and we are now, as a result, in a position to advance and the advance although it is modest in terms of the 1% growth in the economy in 1993 and the 3% forecast for 1994, it is yet growth and it shows that we have picked up a growth pattern.

Barbados and Barbadians have caused the rest of the developing world to ask a number of questions. How come a little country like Barbados has been able to arrive at policy positions with the international institutions which protect their vital interests? Where is the devaluation that we heard so much about for the past 3 years? How has this country been able to maintain the level of social services that we have done in regard to education, in respect of health? Where are the informal sectors that usually spring up in times of economic crisis? These are questions that we can ask and we can ask more. How has the country maintained its credit worthiness among Caribbean and Latin American countries? To my mind we are on a growth path and we shall keep on that path.

I want to submit, Mr. Speaker, that the central flaw in the Opposition's argument today has been the notion that the weaknesses in the Barbadian economy first raised their heads in the late 1980s. I want to reject that out of hand. I believe there is an abundance of evidence which shows that as early as the 1970s there was a marked absence of economic diversification in Barbados. As far back as the early seventies. And this was compounded by the fact that there was illusory progress as far as export manufacture was concerned and this can be borne out by the evidence of our indebtedness to the CARICOM multilateral clearing facility.

3.15 p.m.

We, Mr. Speaker, have put in place in this Budget through the Minister of Finance, a number of measures which are aimed at returning the country to prosperity and I want to turn specifically and deal, in the time allocated to me, with agriculture.

Now, at page 68 of the Proposals the Minister of Finance has waived the consumption tax on machinery and spare parts as well as the stamp duty on raw materials and packaging materials for use in manufacturing.

At the top of page 69 it says "in view of the importance which we have assigned to the agricultural sector in the economic recovery, I have decided to waive the stamp duty on inputs including hatching eggs and packaging materials far use in the agricultural industry and to waive the consumption tax on machinery and equipment, including spare parts."

This move, Mr. Speaker, is welcomed in the agricultural community. The Honourable Member far St. James North tried in his contribution this morning to take credit for these waivers. But for the past year I have been in on-going discussions with the agricultural community who have made representation to me and I in turn made representation to the Minister of Finance and that is why these measures have been taken. So the Honourable Member for St. James North cannot take any credit for these measures. What I would say, Mr. Speaker, is that the agricultural sector is now in a position to take off. It is over to them. The measures have been put in place, the removal of the stamp duty on hatching eggs they have been asking for, for the past year should be seen as a stimulus to the poultry industry and it should result in a reduction in the cost of poultry meat. It should also have a spin off effect on the demand for local feed for the poultry industry.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South, as he is so often wont to do, lamented the fact that these measures were not extended to the fishing industry. But these measures are already in place to a large extent on an ad *hoc* basis. They are dealt with in an objective fashion when the necessary representation is made to the Ministry of Agriculture who in turn liaise with the Ministry of Finance and an accommodation for the most part is reached as far as the fishing industry is concerned.

The Honourable Member for St. James North, I have to deal with him, Mr. Speaker, since he is the opposition spokesperson *on* Agriculture. Firstly to my mind, as usual, his presentation was characterised by the usual hyperbole. He even referred to the Leader of the Opposition as an economic alchemist.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the shorter Oxford English Dictionary. We are talking about an economic alchemist. This refers, Mr. Speaker, to the chemistry of the middle ages and the tenth century. It is limited to the pursuit of the transmutation of baser metals into gold, but gold into brass for the most part. So what he is in effect calling the Honourable Member for St. Peter is a brass man. So it is in that context that I now deal with the contribution of the Honourable Member especially as it relates to the sugar industry.

Now, I do not intend to deal with the question of race or with the question of the ownership of the sugar industry. I think that enough has been said about that and I leave that to the historians. I know that debate on the sugar industry has ranged far and wide and all I would want to say is that, as I said in the Estimates Debate, despite the provision by successive Governments of debt relief for the industry, despite the preferential prices which were obtained on the world market, we still found ourselves in a precarious position and a decision had to be taken to restructure the industry. We entered into a restructuring programme and we placed, to a large extent, the future of the sugar industry in the hands of Barbadians, in the hands of persons whom some of us thought would never be in a position or could never run the sugar industry. I am going to come to the successes of the BAMC in a short while but there are some points that I have to make before I get there.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition said that the Government was spending $5 million in total on capital projects. I want to submit that over the next two years we are going to be spending $20 million on the agricultural sector through the CDB loan. I believe that we have come up with a strategy over time and I take the point that there must be a gestation period during which you would see minimal growth. I take the point it is going to take time to return the industry to 75 000 tonnes of sugar – probably 4 or 5 years. But we are on the right path and already we have more than exceeded the budgetary targets in

respect of the production of sugar at today's date. There is going to be no success unless we reduce cost in the industry and increase efficiency.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that there must be at least a 25% reduction in the cost per tonne of sugar and of sugar cane if the restructuring programme is to be successful. The aim of the Barbados Agricultural Marketing Company is to return the industry to a position where it can be self-sustaining within the next five years.
3.25 p.m.

A lot has been said and I believe that I will not have time to speak on all of the issues on what the Government has been doing for the small farmers. But the small farmers stand to gain to a large measure by the efforts of the Barbados Agricultural Marketing Company. We will be making available to them loans in order to assist in the rehabilitation and the cultivation of land. As a matter of fact, $1.8 million has been voted in this year's Estimates for the non-indebted plantations and the small farmers so that they can be part of the entire restructuring process.

I do not have time, Mr. Speaker, to deal with all of the other issues relating to sugar. I would want to say that the BAMC has already shown success and the factories have operated without the usual stoppages and pick-ups. The sucrose level of the sugar has increased. The BAMC has been able to go out to tender for inputs for cultivation and again small farmers should benefit from that. As I have said, we have successfully completed the CDB loan for the industry. We have been able to foster harmonious labour management relations and this is obviously going to redound to the benefit of the industry. These are some of the successes already of the Barbados Agricultural Management Company.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, when one considers these achievements that have been made in a short time, there is hope and room for more than guarded optimism. This is against a background of the fulmination of the former representative for St. Michael South Central and now leader of the NDP who three years ago could be found during the marches trespassing in the precincts of Bulkeley's factory and someone who has misrepresented a constituency for 12 years then all of a sudden became the new saviour of the masses. But I will not spend anymore time on him. You leave him to me, Mr. Speaker. I will deal with him in the fullness of time.

Sir, I want to move on in the five or seven minutes to a number of issues engaging the attention of the Ministry of Agriculture. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the Division of Consumer Affairs and Price Control was switched to the Ministry of Agriculture about 4 or 5 months ago. We have just finalized a number of trade liberalization policies which I would want to recount. I would want to start by saying that there is no denying the global tendency of Governments to open their economies. But at the same time, Mr. Speaker, my Government felt that we had to come up with a list of items which would have to remain under the licensing regime without adversely effecting the productive sectors and that is what we have done. On the basis of this list of items which would remain on the licensing regime, will be items for which there is great local production like primary agricultural produce. We have made sure that the agricultural industry does not suffer and that there are certain primary products which remain under licence.

There are also some items which we have kept on licence which need to be imported but they must be controlled for environmental and health purposes. I will give you the example of jet skis. We have for a number of reasons to keep those on licence and to control their importation. The impact of the trade liberalization policies on the Price Control Division will mean that more time can now be spent on the policing of the prices in the various supermarkets. It means that we can now closely, in association with the Barbados National Standards Institute, monitor the quality and standards of products and goods which reach the public.

I shall soon be introducing, Mr. Speaker, to Parliament legislation to deal with consumer protection. Within the next 12 months, consumer protection legislation will come to this Parliament in order that the complaints of the consumer can be handled in a swift and effective manner. We have been liaising in the Ministry and working closely with the Caribbean Law Institute in this regard and a Bill has been &awn up and submitted to Cabinet, who in its wisdom and I agree with the recommendation, which states that there should be public discussion on the Bill and hopefully that will be coming to Parliament shortly.

With respect, Mr. Speaker, to the question of vending activity in Bridgetown, you will recall that the Democratic Labour Party in its 1991 manifesto entered into a social contract for the creation of self-employment opportunities through the renovation of markets and the establishment of a vendor's mall. We are now in a position to undertake the renovation of the Cheapside Market. We have also erected the Palmetto Mall and the upper level of that mall should start within reasonable time. We on this side, Mr. Speaker, through our clearly enunciated policy are satisfied that vending has become an important sub-sector in our economy and whatever that can be done to assist the vendors will be done. But vending must be carried out in a controlled environment.
3.35 p.m.

I think all right-thinking Barbadians will agree that vending in upper Broad Street has reached uncontrollable proportions and that is why we had to take certain short-term measures and indeed certain medium-term measures. Twenty-three vendors with permits have returned to their stations at Ricketts Street and Marhill Street and on the Duncan O'Neale Bridge and the 56 without licenses have been relocated to the forecourt of the Fairchild Street Market. In the medium-term, the renovations of both the Fairchild Street and Cheapside Markets will provide more space for the vending activities.

With respect to the Fisheries Division within the Ministry, the Government remains cognisant of the fact that the development of a vibrant fishing industry is central to our economic development and we have embarked on a number of initiatives which would improve the fishing industry and which would increase the fishing catch. I speak of things like the new Fisheries Act, of the training which we now offer to fisherfolk, not only fishermen, but training in fish handling, new fishing techniques and maintenance of engines and also to the question of fish vendors in the handling and processing of fish.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South has been making remarks on the other side. I know you don't hear remarks, Mr. Speaker, but let me tell him that his constituents have made representation to me, the Oistins fisherfolk, for a number of improved facilities. When I paid a visit to Oistins Fishing Complex we highlighted all the needs of these fisherfolk. Now that the requests have been met and their needs s ed I have not - I don't want any credit - but at least I thought we would have heard that there has been the installation of a chiller room, freezer at cost of $140 000; that there were repairs to the ice machine which right now puts out 2 tonnes of ice for the day boats and the fish vendors, that we have at the request of the fisherfolk relocated the filleting activity to accommodate more persons; that we have repaired the fendering on the jetty; that we will shortly be installing lights on the jetty and that we are going to shortly install a gate to keep out persons off the jetty as well as the fencing of the entire area. All of that Mr. Speaker, will be done within the next financial year.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has 2 minutes.

Hon. D. W. **BOWEN:** Mr. Speaker, there are so many issues to deal with in that short 2 minutes. I want to give the lie to an issue which has been making currency in the daily newspapers and indeed, it was highlighted in an editorial on February 28 to the extent that the Government does not pay enough notice or attention to the small farmers.

I want to say that our tractor cultivation scheme is still in effect; that the irrigation programme, the rebate on irrigation equipment is still very much alive; that there is still a grant of $202 per acre of 30% of cost, whichever is less, for establishing approved grasses. I want to say that we still subsidise livestock breeding services. 1 want to say that we have, through the European Development Fund project at Greenlands, opened a line of credit through the Central Bank at commercial banks of $4.5 million for small farmers of the Livestock Project.

There will also be a line of credit through the Barbados Agricultural Society of $450 000 for on-lending to small farmers. All of these are things we have been doing for the small farmer.

Mr. Speaker, the future of agriculture lies in on-going collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture and the private sector. It lies in the on-going resuscitation and revitalisation of the agricultural sector. It lies in the coming on stream of an integrated sea-island cotton industry. It lies in the coming on stream of the livestock development project and finally, to respond to the Leader of the Opposition, it lies in the Government making the Scotland District the breadbasket of Barbados. I thank you.

Miss B. A. **MILLER:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to start by making it quite clear to Your Honour that I have no intention of speaking to the Government's Resolution. I am speaking to the amendment tabled by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition where he speaks of the economy of Barbados, which has experienced little or no growth since 1990 as a result of the Government's inept management and that in an effort to contain the fiscal deficit the Govemment has introduced draconian measures as a result of which there is widespread unemployment.

Whereas it was expected that in this financial year about to begin on April 1, 1994-95 that the budgetary proposals presented by the Minister of Finance, two evenings ago, would have been designed to bring relief to the unemployed and herald an improvement in the economy, we regret the poor performance of the Government in the last financial year 1993-94 and regret the absence of positive and concrete proposals to stimulate the economy, to provide jobs, drastically reduce unemployment and bring much needed relief to the poor and to the disadvantaged. I speak to that Resolution.

In his budgetary proposals, the Honourable Minister of Finance said many things; but I would wish before I make reference to any of those things for the sake of putting matters in perspective to recall to this

Honourable Chamber what the said Honourable Minister of Finance who in 1989 during the Budget Debate was the Honourable Member for St. John said. Be delivered himself of many statements in the 1989 budget. He said that what we, meaning the Democratic Labour Party, are interested in and I am quoting from the debates of this House, April 1989 at page 3775.

> "What we are interested in doing in this country is not doing like the Barbados Labour Party and creating that full employment f a a year. We have to look at sustainable full employment something that must carry over from year to year."

He went on to say.

> "Why is it that an entire economic debate can take place in this country without reference to important questions like Caribbean economic integration."

3.45 p.m.

He spoke not a word of that two evenings ago. "Greater sharing and redistribution of wealth in Barbados", not a word of that in the entire economic debate coming from him two evenings ago. "The question of land reform, not just diversification", he said, "particularly in the rural sector, the promotion of greater efficiency and public accountability in the Public Service." All of that he said in the Budget Debate of 1989 when he was not yet a Minister of Finance. We did not hear a wordabout any of those things from him two afternoons ago.

He went on to say later in the debate "but I am talking about young people, of Barbadians having an opportunity to own land and to be involved in productivity, to be involved in agriculture, to be self-sufficient and to contribute to the development of this country and to create employment". I did not hear him with any of that two afternoons ago. He said he was addressing that to the young people. I heard him say two afternoons ago that the young people could go and beg in the private sector to get a job in return for lunch and bus fare.

He went further. He reverses himself. Listen to this. I am at page 3778 and the Honourable Member for St. John is still speaking in the Budget Debate of 1989. He said:

> "I am on the side of the debate, I can tell you, and anybody that comes in here advocating anything that smacks to me of interfering with that agenda, I will resist them to the end and in this regard, Sir, I give my full support to the Budget."

Well, Sir, according to his own words, he needs now to be resisting himself. But of course I do not expect him to do that. That is left for the Honourable Members on this side to do.

Mr. Speaker, in this financial year in its last days now, it ends tomorrow, we have had a long and difficult time, 1993/94 financial year. Since the Budget of 1993, we have lived through a time when in Barbados the rich got richer and the poor got poorer. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South was making the point not very long ago in his contribution. We have suffered through scandal after scandal. We suffered through the Guatemala sugar scandal. We suffered through the non-payment of increments. We suffered through the St. Joseph Hospital disgrace and I will have more to say about that. That book is not yet closed.

Last week in the Estimates debate in here, the other side, the Government, voted a further $4.1 million for St. Joseph Hospital and even now nobody has said to us what it is going to be spent on. Last year we voted $3.5 million and that does not say anything about the supplementaries in this financial year that have gone to the St. Joseph Hospital, all of that. We have sat by and watched helplessly as taxpayers, all like you and me, Sir, as our tax dollars disappeared in the bottomless pits that the Democratic Labour Party is wont to dig.

I remember in 1974/75 they were digging a bottomless pit up at Warrens. They said they were building a crematorium. They almost went down to Australia, nothing but concrete, taxpayers money in concrete. Now, in 1992193 and even back as far as 1991 we are seeing money pouring into a bottomless pit at Sherbourne, a bottomless pit at the Ministry of Education's new headquarters, the old Queen's College Building on Constitution Road, Sir, now full of bush and I believe it is a dormitory where Chinese workers live. The history of that is sad and shocking. They put one roof on and then they put another roof on top of that. Nobody has explained to the taxpayers or anybody in this Chamber why a single building needed two roofs, another bottomless pit.

Now, they have published, Sir, a Development Plan and I would want very quickly to go to the Developmenr Plan. I am quoting from the Development Plan for 1993 to the year 2000. This naturally will have to be rewritten by a Barbados Labour Party Government. At page 260 at Table 23 - 8 of this Development Plan just published by the Government, Ministry of Education, it speaks of a new Headquarters Building. Now, this money is not coming from any international agency. That New Headquarters Building was refused by the World Bank and the

Inter-American Development Bank as a project they would finance so it comes out of us, the taxpayers.

This is what I see, Sir, New Headquarters Building – Planned Expenditure for Fiscal years 1993/94 – nothing, 1994/95 – nothing, 1995/96 – nothing, *1996197* – nothing, 1997/98 – nothing, 1998/99 – $4 million, *1999,2000 – $3.5* million, a bottomless pit and every year until *1998* when they say they are going to start to spend money on it again, every year just as we did in this year's Estimates, we are going to have to go on voting money for security and, according to them, professional services although no work is going on. It is the most unsanitary, unsightly building site in the whole of Barbados, bush growing out of every crack and crevice, bush growing out of the guard wall. That is another bottomless pit just like the St. Joseph Hospital. The West Wing of this Parliament too, Sir, is another bottomless pit.

Now, Sir, we are living in a time when the Honourable Prime Minister tells us year after year how there is light at the end of the tunnel. My understanding now in the year *1994* is that we are living in a lighted tunnel. That is all it means. We are still in the tunnel. We are not hearing a word about getting out of this tunnel. We are in the tunnel with a lot of light and unhappily, without water and without sanitation services. That is where we are today.

I never thought, Sir, that I would live to see in the year *1994* that the Government of Barbados would have driven Barbadians, all of us, back to the standpipe. That is where we are at, regressing. Everybody else is progressing but we are regressing back to the stand pipe. That is where we have come to in Barbados.

This Barbados Labour Party left Government in *1986* and left in the coffers of the Barbados Water Authority *$22* million. Mr. Barrow saw fit to take it away and use it for other purposes. Is it any wonder that no forward planning, no water use planning could be undertaken by the Barbados Water Authority? Despite everything we are hearing about it, and this covers every Barbadian, we cannot hear what the solution will be.

3.55 p.m.

We hear talk about desalination but that has not been put forward as an alternative. It has only been talked about. Barbadians need to be asking themselves – if they are not and I know that several of us are – what is it that we are getting in return for our taxes. We are getting wage freezes. We are getting cutbacks in services. That is what we are getting in return for our taxes. The poor get poorer under this DLP Administration.

They like to quarrel with the figures for unemployment quoted by this side. This Development Plan on page *53* has this to say:

"LABOUR FORCE PROJECTIONS *1993* – 2000
1993

Unemployed *32.6*"

This is not me, this is not the Barbados Labour Party. This is their Development Plan and this is what it is saying, that in *1993* unemployed *32.6%.* This is like Land Tax Valuations. We know that, for the most part, the reality is higher than this. This is the least it could be for *1993 32.6%.* But hear now what this DLP Government is projecting for unemployment in *1994 31.6%* will be unemployed. In *1995* they are projecting that *30.6%* will be unemployed. In *19%* they *are* projecting that *28.1%* will be unemployed and it goes on like this.

Do you understand where we are at, Mr. Speaker, Sir? That the Democratic Labour Government, in its Development Plan to take us down to the year 2000 is telling Barbadians that in the year 2000 and the years leading up to it unemployment will be running in the thirties and the twenties. That is where we are at. You can find it on page *53.* Not our words, theirs.

We have in excess of *33* 000 people unemployed in Barbados at this time and I dare anybody to contradict me on that. Not only unemployment in the Government sector. There is unemployment rising in the private sector as well, Sir. I have the figures published by the Employers Confederation of Barbados which show me that unemployment is rising among the ranks in the private sector as well. There are lay-offs. There are dismissals. There are early retirements and they know that. And yet the Minister of Finance is telling young people to go to the private sector and beg for a pick in return for lunch and bus fare, the private sector that is downsizing its work force in Barbados today. That is what we have to live with, Sir.

The largest recorded number of persons unemployed ever in the history at any one time since we were keeping unemployment statistics. That is the case in Barbados today and there is no hope that it is going to look any better in the future as far as the Democratic Labour Party and its Development Plan is concerned. How can a Development Plan, by its very definition, be predicated on unemployment in the 30 000s and the *20* 000s.

But, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the other side has been boasting in recent weeks about how several private

sector companies in Barbados have been declaring increases in profits for the year 1993, increases over the year 1992. Ministers on the other side boasted that Banks Breweries, Brydens, BS&T, Bico and Courts have declared increases in profits. But they have not said anything to us about the decreases in the labour force in those companies. They certainly have said nothing about the bankruptcies particularly in small, corporate operations in this country. Huge and humiliating unemployment, Sir, is part of the price that 33 000 people who are unemployed in Barbados today more of them women than men and for that I take you, Sir, to the 1993 Economic Report. Again you do not have to believe me or the Barbados Labour Party.

At page 9 of the Economic Report for 1993 laid in this Chamber by the Honourable Minister of Finance two afternoons ago. It says that there are more women unemployed than there are men unemployed. That does not come as a surprise to me as a woman. Women in the work force and the labour force of this country are usually last in and first out. We do not hear a word about that from the Honourable Minister of Finance. The majority of households in this country are headed by women. We had a passing cheupse, I could not call it anything better than that for the young people. You know, go and beg for the little lunch money. As the Honourable Member for St. George South said the little bread and fish. But not a word about women. And in excess of 73% of households in this country are headed by women. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it would not do. It is not acceptable to us on this side.

The Honourable Minister of Finance indulged in some intellectual slide of hand - I know that you will not permit me to say intellectual dishonesty so I will not say that - when he told us about all those companies in the United States of America that were laying off people, as the Honourable Member of the Opposition likes to say, misery loves company. Oh poor Barbados. Everybody else is laying off so you would understand that we are laying off too. What he did not tell us is that the unemployment rate in North America never gets into double figures. We are up in 27% and 29%. The unemployment rate in the United States of America is 6.5%. Why do you not say that?

Further, Sir. Anybody who knows about what is happening in respect of unemployment in North America knows now that since what has happened in the Soviet Union that the United States Government is downsizing its military. Downsizing a military which has given skills and professions to every single member. Those people would come out and they will be retold and redeployed. That is not happening in Barbados. It was a stupid and a foolish analogy to seek to draw in here as though people in Barbados cannot think for themselves. What nonsense is that?

4.05 p.m.

Now, Sir, I can take on whatever he says when he replies. I want to ask, what about the 4 000 school leavers who are coming out in June/July this year? Four thousand more coming out to join the ranks of the unemployed. Who cares about that? Not the Minister of Finance. Not the Prime Minister. Do you really think, Sir, that any of those 4 000 school children, coming out in June and July can go to any of the Big Six companies, because you know the Big Six are riding in Barbados now, flourishing under the DLP.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, none of those 4 000 young people, boys and girls coming out of school in June and July this year can dare to go to any of these companies that they are boasting about and ask for a job. The Honourable Member for St. John knows that because he is saying, do not go and ask for money, beg for a little pick and they will give you sweet water and a little bread and fish at lunch time and they may pay your bus fare. That is what we are coming to in Barbados.

If you really wanted to believe that this Government was interested in young people and what would be their fate, you would think that they would put some money in training. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition made the point in his presentation yesterday that the Training Levy raised some $12 million but they only spent $2 million on training.

I go to their Development Plan. By these words they shall be dammed and condemned. I go to their Development Plan for 1993 to 2000 and I open it at page 256 Table 23.5 - Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Community Development, Public Works and Sports. Capital Projects - National Training Board 1993-94 - $1 million. That was last year. This coming financial year which is going to begin on Friday, 1994-95, not a cent for the Training Board. You can understand, Sir, why on this side we are actually afraid for those 4 000 who are going to come out now to join the 33 000 unemployed. Do you understand now clearly, Sir, why it is that in their Development Plan, not ours, they are projecting that unemployment will remain for the next 3 to 5 years in the region of 30% and 20%? You understand where that is coming from now because every June 3 000 to 4 000 are coming out of the schools. That is where we are at, Sir, for 1994.

Now, Sir, you have to ask yourself, where is the national pride of which we speak in that symbol above your head? Where is the national pride? The fact is, Sir, that even supporters of the Democratic Labour Party are today embarrassed and complain publicly about the disgraceful abuse of Parliamentary power. I want to say a few words about this, Sir.

In this last year we have been through, as I said at the beginning, some disgraceful incidents. We saw the Prime Minister and we saw the then Minister of Health usurping the role and function of statutory boards in this country. Open dissention, open warfare in the bosom of the Cabinet.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member. The Honourable Member said that she saw the former Minister of Health usurping the power of a statutory board that has been established. It is simply not so. I usurped no power of any Statutory Board at any time while I was Minister of Health.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this point has been made in here before. I do not wish to waste any of my precious minutes in this Budget &bate to go back to the St. Joseph Hospital debate and the usurpation of the power, the role and function of the Board of that hospital. I do not have time for that. I want, Sir, to get on.

We live in a country, Sir, where corruption stains our public life. The Guatemala sugar, the Government is doing business with a self-confessed convict, a man who pleaded guilty. He was not found guilty, pleaded guilty and the chapters are not closed on that one yet either. I give the Minister of Agriculture a little credit for moving fast from Guatemala sugar to Guyanese sugar but there are still questions I need to ask about that. Who the brokers are? Is the Government doing other business with PS Intemational. You remember that on the last Budget occasion in here, Sir... Melvin C. Fields is PS Intemational. That is who. We lived through in here, Sir, the St. Joseph Hospital much debated last December, Then we heard about a well-known hotelier who could disappear from Barbados and only a few days ago now we hear about somebody who could come and bring $150 000 and put it in the hands of the Government. And the Prime Minister is getting up to say he did not say that? I leave him to the tender mercies of the Leader of the Opposition when he speaks again. But I will say this, the Deputy Prime Minister, nor the Prime Minister came in here to say how they were regretful and how much they were disappointed to hear that a stranger, whose *bona fides* clearly were not established, could put $150 000 into a fund for the Barbados Workers' Union and the Barbados Sugar Industries Limited. I did not hear them come in here and say how regretful they were about that and what a terrible thing it was. Every cent that has to be spent in Government business has to pass through this House. That is what we spend over a week doing in the Estimates of Expenditure. That is what this Budget debate is partly about and yet we have no accounting for that $150 000. Do you mean then that anybody could come into Barbados and buy a stake? Could buy off a strike? But they cannot find anybody to buy out the unemployed.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we live in a country where the Government's priorities are seriously misplaced. Government spending has gone mad. Do not be misled by all this talk about Government expenditure is down. It is still twice what it was ten years ago. The cost of running Barbados, Sir, and I am quoting, and prepared to make a document of the House, from the Broad Street Journal of Monday March 21, 1994. It is not a newspaper. This discloses, Sir, that the rising cost of running Barbados runs like this: In 1985 Government expenditure was running at $661 million. Do you know what it is running at in 1994, Sir, $1 270 million.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just let me caution the Honourable Member here. The Honourable Member says it is a journal.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I did not say it was anything, Sir. All I said was that I was quoting from the Broad Street Journal.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well, if it is not anything then that cannot be accepted as part of the documents of this House.

Miss B. A. MILLER: You mean I cannot quote from a Journal in here, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: You cannot quote from a newspaper for that matter.

Miss B. A. MILLER: This is not a newspaper.

4.15 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: Whatever it is, it is not anything that we can use for authority.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Well, I will recommend that all Barbadians .go and get a copy and they can read for themselves what is in that. Mercifully, this is still a free country in that respect.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, people in Barbados need to understand how badly misplaced Government's priorities are. Can you imagine, Sir, ,that in the just concluded Estimates debate nearly a week ago that for the coming financial year the Health budget has been cut?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has one minute.

Miss B. A. MILLER: When the Honourable Minister of Health got up, that was the first thing he took up in front of him. He said early o'clock let me say that the Budget has been cut. Do you know what has been

increased, Sir? The vote for the Prime Minister's Office, hundreds of millions of dollars. The vote for the Prime Minister's Office has been increased. That is where the priorities lie in this country, that you will cut education, that you will cut health and you will cut all the social sectors. I have not got to the pensioners yet, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: You do not seem that you will get there either.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Sir, I want to get to them for one minute.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already given you two minutes.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Somebody else can get to the pensioners, Sir. Thank you, Sir.

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

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The people of Barbados have endured cruel sacrifices in the form of high unemployment and great hardship and I may add too an appreciable reduction in their standard of living in the last three years as part of the price that they have paid for economic stabilization and for economic structural adjustment. The people were told by the Democratic Labour Party administration that their sacrifices would not have been in vain and that the economy had stabilized and, to that extent, they were looking forward to some relief from the hardship which they have endured in recent years.

It is against that background, Sir, that the Budget was a major flop and a major disappointment. It was a very cruel let down to the people of Barbados especially the unemployed. We have no hope that any unemployed person will secure employment as a result of this Budget whether he or she belongs to the artisan class or to the graduate class. It has done nothing for prospective Rome owners. It has done nothing for tourism, the major sector on which we are still relying to turn around this economy. It has done nothing for manufacturing. There is not a constituency of interest in Barbados that can claim as a result of this Budget, Mr. Speaker, that they are likely to be any better off. That is why I began by making the point that the Budget has been a major let down, a great disappointment, and that the circle of despair in this country has widen and hopelessness has gained deeper roots.

Mr. Speaker, we in the Barbados Labour Party are convinced that, unless we get our people back to work in large numbers, there cannot be the beginning of progress in this country. We cannot lift ourselves out of the doldrums into which we have fallen in this country unless we begin to put our people back to work in large numbers. I was particularly happy that that was the theme that was addressed in the main by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Member for St. Peter last evening. He defined and laid bear a 10-point programme which constitutes the most refreshing framework and foundation for the way forward that we have heard in this country for the last five years.

I want, Mr. Speaker, to address that theme too and in particular to develop a point which with the passage of time he was not able to develop as fully as he would have wished. He has to do with the importance of making sure that rural Barbados once again becomes prosperous and viable and that for the most part includes that land area not entirely but in the main from Pico Teneriffe straight through to Consett Bay which we call the Scotland District and which represents something like one-sixth of the land area of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, we have too often in this country regarded that area as a kind of nuisance causing a drain on our resources. Too many bridges have collapsed after heavy rains and too many roads have become impassable. We have spent a disproportionate share of the revenue of the resources of the state on that part of Barbados. It has the potential to be a very important and productive area in the country both from an agricultural and a tourism standpoint.

We view it in the Barbados Labour Party as a human settlement in the first place where people have the same needs as people living in the other parts of Barbados. They need good housing too, Mr. Speaker. They need water in regular supply and they need electricity. They need community centres and playing fields. They need their water borne toilet facilities. Apart from being a human settlement, it is also a place that can become a very productive part of the agricultural sector of Barbados.

We believe, Mr. Speaker, that there could be much more cattle growing in the Scotland District area. We believe that much more fruit and foliage could be grown there. We believe that grown provisions and bananas can be grown in the Scotland District. But the farmers need a package for marketing support and for access to credit, assistance to ploughing the land, and technical support of an agronomic nature. That was the sort of plan that the Barbados Labour Party introduced and implemented in this country which was known as the Rural Integrated Development Programme in other parts of Barbados during the period of 1981-86. That was the time when we

were spending $15 million to $20 million capital investment in the rural agricultural sector of this country. We have now moved from $15 million to $20 million in capital formation to $5 million and less. We are projecting in the Development Plan that in the next 7 years we will have a decline in non-sugar agriculture in this country. We can avoid that. We *can* achieve the very opposite. We can have growth. It is not surprising that we have planned for a reduction, because as long as we are not doing well in sugar it is not expected that we will do well in non-sugar because of the close relationship between sugar agriculture and non-sugar. After all, non-sugar is rotated around sugar. If we put the Scotland District in use as an agricultural area, a resource that needs to be exploited from the agricultural viewpoint, we will be able to realize a dramatic increase in non-sugar agricultural output in this country. That is what we in the Barbados Labour Party are committed to.

425 p.m.

The Scotland District has much more potential than that. It is a place we must use for tourism and recreational purposes, both for Barbadians and for visitors. We have the primeval forest in Turner Hall which is not being used at all as a tourist resort. We have the 99 acres of forest at Joes River which is not opened to the public neither the Barbadian public or the visitors. We can extend the East Coast Road and we *can* do a lot more by way of nature walk trails in the Scotland District.

It has an agricultural and tourism investment potential which we in the Barbados Labour Party are prepared to exploit. Those who are listening to me in that part of Barbados want to make the point too that we recognise that the Scotland District constitutes a human settlement. People live there and they have needs. They have aspirations. They need an improvement in the electricity. They need proper housing and more toilet facilities and we in the Barbados Labour Party are committed to satisfy those needs and those expectations. In short, it represents an area which is ripe for major, physical and other developments. It is the area where the major developments will next take place in Barbados and we in the Barbados Labour Party are committed to that.

I want to tum, Mr. Speaker, if I may, to deal with tourism, a subject which has been very much in the news lately. I want to say at the outset that it is still the sector that offers us the quickest hope of realising a major advance in the foreign exchange earnings and in growth in our economy. Its potential must be realised. We must bring professional management. We must stop being unbusiness-like and that is why I condemn with such feeling the misuse of prime ministerial time recently when the Prime Minister involved himself in the appointment of the CEO, the Chief Executive Officer, when prime ministerial time would have been better spent in addressing some of the greater challenges facing the industry.

We have been talking about an improvement in tourism. We have been hearing that from the other side. We have been fooling ourselves. A broad picture of what is happening in tourism, especially if we compare what is happening in Barbadian tourism with what is happening elsewhere within the region, reflects that we are slipping back. It reveals that we do not have an air transport policy that can guarantee the bringing of numbers here for the future and it reveals that other competitors in the region and beyond are making giant strides when we still have not recovered our lost numbers from the period 1987-88 which was the high point from the United States of America to 1993. We lost 60 000 U.S. visitors in that period.

When we are beginning to boast of an increase in the figures over two months or so we have first to reclaim the lost numbers to make up lost ground before we start boasting of any improvement in our position.

The sector remains financially inviable and that is part of the reason why Barbados has not been able to attract any major new investment in hotel plant in recent years. Many of our competitors, St. Lucia, Jamaica and elsewhere in the Caribbean are attracting chains, massive new investment., US$30 million to $50 million and we in Barbados are not attracting any new investment in that sector.

It is a reflection of the fact that the sector, as I said, is financially unprofitable and that results from the high level of indirect taxation which the sector suffers. I am advised, and I have good reason to believe, that every input, every item used by a hotel in Barbados, attracts an indirect tax of between 50% to 100%. That is crippling and that is what we mean when we say that the Democratic Labour Party Administration is suffocating the industry. It is preventing it from realising its true potential because of a taxation policy that is insensitive, that is thoughtless and robbing the industry of viability.

Mr. Speaker, we need to meet the challenge of refurbishing the sector. Unless we remove the tax, the oppressive indirect tax, unless we bring a new deal for the small intimate hotels which are suffering so severely we will be doing nothing to improve and advance our tourism. There are large groups of hotels in Barbados owned by Barbadians on the south and the west coasts which are classified as small and intimate and which are financially strapped. Most of them are indebted to the Development Bank. Many of them have not experienced a rate

increase in the last 10 years. They are the hotels that are being exploited by tour operators. They are the hotels that badly need refurbishing. They are the hotels that could do with some marketing and management expertise and not a word has been said in recent years in this country about what is going to be done to help them. It is true that they are not part of the Big Six. It would appear that this Government is only committed to helping them these days.

The small hotels owned by Barbadians do need help. They are an important part of this tourism infrastructure and they are the types of issues we would have hoped the Prime Minister would have been addressing. That would have been a proper use of prime ministerial time. They are the sort of issues. How we are going to raise the money to refurbish our hotel plant, a bill that is believed to be well in excess of US$100 million. That is the sort of issue that we might have felt would have been addressed by the Minister of Finance two evenings ago. But not a word about that. Instead he treated us to thoughts of his that had not even been put before the Cabinet.

He told us how many millions would be spent in the improvement of tax administration; but if we agree that the most urgent need is to relieve our productive sectors, encourage and revitalise them so that more foreign exchange can be earned and so that more of our people can be put to work, do we not have our priorities wrong when we are emphasising the sort of issues that the Honourable Minister of Finance spent so much valuable time on?

Now, Mr. Speaker, the way in which this sector has been managed suggests that this Administration is not serious and there is a feeling that you can be unbusinesslike about your tourism and achieve results. In the last 6 months, we have seen 3 Ministers. It took nearly 2 years for the appointment of the CEO and that was done amidst the most vulgar, I would say, and acute controversy. That is not the way to create confidence. That is not the way to signal to tour operators abroad that you are serious about the business of promoting Barbados as a tourist destination.

4.35 p.m.

Concerning the CEO, I ask simply one question. To whom is he answerable? The Barbados Tourism Authority Board or the Prime Minister of Barbados? I ask that one question with respect to the CEO. I do not condemn him for he did not appoint himself. To that extent he is not worthy of any criticism but given the circumstances of his appointment, I am concerned to know whether he is answerable to the Prime Minister only or whether he considers himself and the Board considers him answerable to them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have been hearing a lot about all inclusive marketing strategies and there are some hotels in Barbados that have adopted that. Like everything else it is a two-edged sword and it has had its advantages and its disadvantages. But before I ask the question with respect to that I would like to know from whoever considers himself the Minister responsible for Tourism in this Parliament and on the opposite side, through the Minister of Finance in particular, to have a response as to what happened with the $1 million that Barbados spent last year in the U. S. market on a programme known as the Barbados Extra Inclusive. They went to the marketplace at the wrong time, as everyone who is familiar with the U.S. markets recognised. They did not have the support of the tour operators. That investment yielded not a cent and there is a major scandal as to the breakdown of the expenditure. I would like a Government spokesman to tell the people of Barbados what happened to that $1 million investment and whether the Government is in a position to provide the public of Barbados with a breakdown of the expenditure of that $1 million.

Now, even though this All Inclusive and this Barbados Extra Inclusive was only a variance of the All Inclusive it is very fashionable now and it has been drafted by quite a few hotels in Barbados. Critics of it recognise that it has the potential to cause a leakage in foreign exchange because a lot of the money is paid abroad How do we ensure that all the money comes here? Those who are involved in the ancillary services, a large number of people who are involved in the water ski operations, restauranteurs, taximen and so on can be excluded from their share of the tourism cake, as it were, if there is a widespread practice of the All Inclusive.

I want to know what is the Government's position with respect to the All Inclusive, whether they have a view as to how much All Inclusive should be allowed in Barbados, whether they think that it should be part of their regulation of the Ministry. I think it is an important point which has a meaning to several persons involved in the ancillary services in tourism, the taximen, restauranteurs and others. I think they would very much like to have an answer to that question.

I want to turn, Sir, to the air transport policy of this Government as it relates to our tourism. We in Barbados are seriously exposed. We are relying on BWIA. We are relying on American Airlines and we are relying on LIAT. An attempt has been made to sell LIAT over the last two years and it has failed. We know that $28 million odd is missing in LIAT. We know that the company has horrendous financial problems and we know that we are in danger at any moment of hearing that LIAT is no longer functioning because of its financial difficulties. LIAT

is important to Barbados but more important, if I may say so is BWIA and American Airlines.

American Airlines is downsizing. It is fair that they will reduce the scale of their operations, the frequency of their flights and so on to Barbados. They control important gateways, New York, Miami, San Juan. What happens if there is a serious downsizing of American Airlines to the point that significant numbers of would-be tourists cannot use that airline to get to Barbados? What happens if there is a further downsizing of BWIA? Already we know that BWIA in the last year has cut back its services from Stockholm and San Juan and there is likely to be further downsizing and contraction of BWIA's operations.

What is the DLP administration's policy with respect to air transport? Can we go to bed feeling assured that there is such a policy as would take care of these eventualities? Has the time not come, Mr. Speaker, for us to do something to help ourselves? Can we continue to rely on others to help us bring people here? What is the Government doing about the future of our air transport? That airway constitutes a serious potential threat to the viability of our tourism. I thought it was important enough to be mentioned in this debate this week. We must have our fundamentals right in tourism and generally in this country if we are to go forward

A part of getting our fundamentals right means that we must exude confidence. People must feel that Barbados is so well administered, is so serious and so free of corruption that they will want to come there and invest their money. It is a stable, secure and decent place. That is the reputation it used to have before the days when we lurked from one plateau of scandal to another, before the days of patent maladministration. We cannot begin to get our fundamentals rights unless we appreciate that confidence and the restoration of co dence is at the heart of our fundamentals.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the most recent evidence of the rnaladministration has to do with the water scarcity. It is a very serious and difficult problem we are experiencing in this country. We all took it for granted that our water resource management was in good hands, that our reservoirs would be regularly maintained, that we would build them as is needed to meet the demands of the future and that we were in no danger. The news that we are worse off than a desert country like Jordan is frightening indeed.

The point needs to be made again and again that unless we correct and lick the problems in the water sector we cannot move forward at the pace and on the scale which we would like to in this country. If our water supply is threatened it means that becomes a break on our development in tourism, agriculture, construction and several other areas that are vital to the future of Barbados.

When we recognise, Mr. Speaker, that the funds that used to be available to the Water Authority of some $30 million were taken away by the DLP Administration and put into the Treasury, such that the Water Authority cannot now put their hands on them as they would like to carry forward their maintenance programme, their replacement of piping, their investment in new reservoirs and so on. We must recognize that that is no more than the most recent illustration of maladministration in this country.
4.45 p.m.

I fear, Mr. Speaker, and I think that the people of Barbados have got to be told that this Democratic Labour Party Administration has lost its will to govern. There is no doubt about it that the Government is marking time. They have lost their will to govern. The injection of 2 new Ministers, 2 new boys has made no difference. They regard themselves as no more than time markets and stabilizers.

Asides.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Yes, They are marking time and think that their role is only to stabilize the ship for' the moment. This Government has become an oppression, a heavy dead weight on the backs of the people of this country, a blight across the land. We will get nowhere unless we have new faces, new men carrying a Barbados Labour Party tag in the corridors of power. We on this side are ready for that responsibility and I can only urge the people of Barbados to get ready too.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, let me start by saying that I have no difficulty in congratulating the Minister of Finance on the Budget Proposals and on his presentation and therefore I support the Resolution.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph finished his speech by saying that Barbados could not move forward, unless they have new men from the Barbados Labour Party. I do not see any new men over there. Obviously it is not a vote of confidence in the present constitution of the Barbados Labour Party membership.

Mr. Speaker, before I get into the main theme of my speech I should like to touch on just 2 items that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph spoke about. The first has to do with the Barbados Water Authority and the alarmist propaganda that is going out from some Members of this Chamber.

One would believe that there was never a time in the past in Barbados when any of our reservoirs went *dry*. Let me repeat, one would believe that never before in Barbados that we had had an occasion when any of our reservoirs went *dry*. If one realizes and has any indication of the water formation system in Barbados, you would understand that it is very stupid to associate the shortage of water at any time with anything but the rainfall pattern for that year and the usage pattern of the people of Barbados.

For a very long time, Mr. Speaker reports and tests have demonstrated that Barbados has a possibility of 43 million gallons of water a day. A maximum output of water of 43 million gallons. For a long time we have been using between 29 million and 30 million gallons of water a day. The water situation in Barbados has been known – most of it – to come from one or two sources, either the stream water or the catchment underground. Most of it is from the catchment and the main catchment areas *are* the Belle catchment area, Hampton catchment area and the one in St. Peter. The stream wells are the ones at Bowmanston.

It is very closely connected with the rainfall pattern for the year in that the catchment areas *are* replenished by a percolation of the rainfall through the coral into the catchment area which catchment area forms itself at the core of that impervious layer of clay where you have that interface of the fresh water and the salt water. We know therefore that any year you get a rainfall of less than 66 inches a year you are very likely to have water problems.

Associated with that is the natural increasing use of water in Barbados as you move from the standpipe into the waterborne system, into the individual water supply in the home. It is well known that 15 years ago when many people went to the standpipe that the individual consumption of water was low for the simple reason that you had to go and get it. But the standard of the quality of living in Barbados in the internal waterborne system people have gotten so accustomed to that that their management in the use of water has become many very, very careless. You have the ridiculous situation in Barbados where it is reported that the individual of water in Barbados is as much as 100 gallons of water per day per person.

I think the biggest problem facing Barbados today now is the problem of water management and water conservation and the sooner we realize that this is where we have to go the better. It is also true that the Barbados Water Authority needs some funds for them to continue to do their reservoirs and do their wells, as well as a continuous replacement of some of the pipes. This would happen. I do not want anyone to believe that the management of the Barbados Water Authority has broken down because it has not broken down. We have an extremely dry season this year and that has shown itself in the amount of water that has reached the water table.

The second point I would want to deal with before I get into my main point is the use of the Scotland District. I am in agreement with you that we cannot make use of the Scotland District but one has to be careful. The allocation of additional cattle in the Scotland District is a dangerous one. It is a dangerous one because you yourself might know or should know from having been Minister of Agriculture that we have had a lot of problems in that Scotland District as a result of over-grazing. The over-grazing in the Scotland District where the animals use the grass therefore exposing the very shallow soil assisted with terrific erosion in the Scotland District. You have to be extremely careful.

The Ministry of Agriculture had gone into the programme of a grassland programme in the Scotland District where they planted many acres of grass for the use of the people in the Scotland District. As soon as you did that, you had an increase in the number of cows down there and then they moved from inside those controlled areas to the slopes. They graze the slopes, leave the slopes without any coverage and you have erosion.

The second thing about the Scotland District is that they have the most difficult and tricky soils in the whole of Barbados. The Scotland mud. On top of the impervious clay in the Scotland District where that interface and there are many places where you have underground streams which cause a temfic slippage of the Scotland mud from the Scotland District clays. You know that this has always been a problem. Successive Governments have spent millions upon millions of dollars in reforming the Scotland District in which you push off the top soil, you went down to the impervious clay, you laid down pipes in the impervious clay, you led it to catchment areas in the Scotland District and then you replace and you did some nourishment of the soil and plant grass.

If you go to the Scotland District you would not believe the millions of dollars that have been spent in that district and the millions of dollars that *are* still being spent in maintaining the Scotland District. I believe, as you have said, that there can be an increase in the production of fruit in the Scotland District. There can be an increase in the production of foliage and certainly we can use it more for a tourism attraction.

But once again, you come to the point as I said earlier that the private sector people of Barbados must have the initiative and move forward. Government cannot be depended upon to do everything. I am talking about the

tourism industry. I am pleased to report that the image of Barbados as a tourism destination is not what people want us to believe. I very recently had an intensive interview with the Executive Director of the Florida Caribbean Cruise Ship Association in which we talked at length about the tourism product in Barbados. She has made some points which are true that the product is beginning to get tired, it needs refurbishing et cetera. But also what came out is that as far as the destination is concerned many people still come and see it as a premier destination for very many reasons; the physical environment, the environment of the people, the courtesy of the people and the way they treat the visitors to Barbados.

This brings me to the point that I must say that our land based tourism has, over the last couple of months in my opinion, unfortunately, began to see the cruise ship tourism as an enemy. We started to develop some hostility between the 2 which I think is unfortunate. It is unfortunate because there can be many harmonies between the two of those. The cruise ship people are spending something like $200 000 000 in bringing to the Caribbean shores some 2.5 million visitors.

4.55 p.m.

They are delivering to Caribbean destinations some 2.5 million people and research has shown that many travellers use the cruise as a way of selecting a destination for long stay. Therefore what we should do in Barbados is to see how much of those cruises we can convert from cruises to long stay and certainly develop that type of relationship between the two of them. All the indicators are that the cruise industry is going to grow. Right now there are about 97 000 lower berths in the cruise industry and by 1997 you are going to have 127 000 lower berths because right now there are ships being built to provide about 30 000 lower berth cruises and the Caribbean is still the preferred destination with 53.5% of all the cruises.

Of the North American cruise trade last year of 4.5 million, 2.5 came to the Caribbean, still the number one destination. So I would want to see that we, as part of the overall holistic approach to the industry try to have the development of the cruise industry and see it as a way of bringing people to Barbados to return as long stay visitors.

Mr. Speaker, let me get very quickly to the part that I really need to deal with and that is the section that I am responsible for. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker, at page 3 of his Financial Statement poses the question, what do we need to do now? Many people have been posing that question. Why? And when? And I want to look at those 3 questions according to the portfolio that I have responsibility for.

Mr. Speaker, before I get into that I think it is unfortunate that the Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Member for St. Peter, in his contribution made the statement that the Barbados Labour Party does not agree to the liberalisation programme being carried on and therefore would have to examine it before anti-dumping legislation has been put in place. Now, that would give the impression, Mr. Speaker, that this present administration has wantonly undertaken a liberalisation programme not understanding the implication for the manufacturers in Barbados and the region and not thinking about anti-dumping.

Let me start by saying there is on the statute book of Barbados at the- moment legislation dealing with anti-dumping but we are amending that legislation and it should be done very quickly. But to say that the Barbados Liberalisation Programme is very much to the timing of Barbados and the Caribbean is an unfortunate statement. That does not take into consideration the international climate of trade liberalisation. I say that because you cannot believe that Barbados is outside the trading ...I, on behalf of the Barbados Government would be going to Morocco to sign the GATT agreement on the 15th of this month. Now I say this because the timing of that Agreement is outside Barbados' power. These negotiations were going on for some 7 years and they were brought to an end and therefore we are part and parcel of that. Not only that but the globalisation of production, the globalisation of the whole area of business puts the kind of pressure on any country that you have to move with it. The argument about protection for small manufacturers as against no protection has been going on for many, many years and I am one of those persons who has always said that small developing countries need some protection because the major countries of the world, like America, have always been protecting their industries.

We also have to realise that that protection cannot go on forever. And even now, despite the fact that we have embarked on trade liberalisation we still have a place, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said, we still have limited licensing in place, we still have a surtax in place and that surtax was put in place to protect those items where there is a manufacturing capacity in the Caribbean and will be phased out over 4 years and in some places over 6, as well as set the licences for the sensitive product.

But let me say that despite that, under the new World Trade arrangement there would still be provision made inside that Charter under a special chapter dealing with net importers and developing members where you can protect your protection on manufacturing in case of balance of payment. In case of any influx of it you can still protect it so there are special provisions in the clauses. But we must understand that we are part and parcel of that globalisation and liberalisation and therefore it is not fair to give the impression that we have too much to say with the timing of the liberalisation of trading in Barbados. We have protected it as much as we could in the past and we will

continue where it is prudent to protect it in the future and the multilateral trade organisation will give us provisions to do that.

Mr. Speaker, manufacturing has gone through some difficult times over the last 3 years but I have seen some signs and as you will see, Mr. Speaker, for this year that the exports have gone up, we are projecting an export of $334 million which is a lot more than we have done over the last few years and this is as a result of the manufacturers accepting the challenge that you have to export. They have accepted that challenge and because of that they have now been increasing and improving the quality of the product. The marketing is a lot more aggressive than it has been in the past and I am saying that some confidence in the sector is slowly returning. There are still areas of need in the sector but this Budget could not have done everything at once and therefore I am certain that as time goes by the little difficulties and the additional incentives that we need for the manufacturing sector would be given.

Mr. Speaker, facing together with the whole liberalisation is fact that we, in order to protect our markets in Barbados, have to move our national standards institution into the area where they are doing a few things. First of all, we are going to introduce some mandatory standards which will prevent even some of our CARICOM neighbours from sending into our market products that are substandard when our local producers have to meet our trade standards. A product that comes to mind immediately is tomato ketchup. Right now we have many substandard bottles of tomato ketchup on our shelves competing against the local ones that have to meet the local standard and this is a disadvantage for them. We had a similar problem with toilet tissues where these are to come in 200 to 300 sheets. When we did the check, there were 250 sheets, et *cetera.* Therefore, the National Standards Institute would bring on board an additional 36 mandatory standards this year as well as policing them.

5.05 p.m.

The Member for St. Michael South Central made the point that now we have done away with many of the licences and price controls that the section that functions under the Ministry will be able to help us to police and do some consumer protection.

Mr. Speaker, also on the international trade front this year will be the review of the LOME Convention. The mid-term review for the LOMÉ Convention takes place this year in June. This is also very important for us because the Europeans are trying to change the game mid-term. The main area of contention that we have is the way of disbursement. In the first part of the Protocol which will be about $1.2 billion, countries were given regional indicative programmes and we knew what was programmed up front. The Europeans are now proposing to change the disbursement whereby they are disbursing an amount for a project and only if you use that amount they disburse an additional amount. Therefore, if the Europeans get their way, you would not know what type of inflows that will be coming from the LOME Convention because it is only when you have used the amount that you would get one, and this is also dangerous. All of us who dealt with it realized that 70 per cent of the decision making for disbursement lies in the hands of the Europeans. Do not let us fool ourselves that when we have a slow disbursement of funds that it is always the fault of the country. That is not true. Seventy per cent of the decision making has to be done in the European Commission. Therefore, the contention is that, if we allow them to move to this second stage of disbursement where they have already frustrated the disbursement level, it is very likely that the total disbursement in the second part of the Protocol can be very small indeed. We have to be represented on these reviews to make sure that that does not change.

Mr. Speaker, the area of employment definitely occupied a lot of attention in this Parliament. I have said before that no single Barbadian of goodwill can be satisfied with the level of unemployment in Barbados. But there are many reasons for that present level of unemployment and we now have to find ways of breaking out and generating employment for our people. One of the ten point plans, Mr. Speaker, which the Honourable Member for St. Peter spoke about was in the area of informatics and he gave the impression that we were not promoting vigorously the informatics section. This is not so. First of all, the accommodation for the informatics section is a lot more expensive than the normal industrial estate accommodation that we had in the past. It is almost office-type accommodation that we have to provide now because the rooms have to be air-conditioned. It is extremely expensive and we are providing it as fast as we can. It is the sector that has grown very fast and we have promoted it very vigorously. As a matter of fact, next week on Wednesday, April 6th. we will be promoting here in Barbados a project called "Infotech 2000" and that project is intended to allow 25 Barbadian companies that have gotten into the whole area of informatics to be marketed overseas by consultants that was arranged by the BIDC. We are bringing under that "Infotech 2000" project 25 companies, many of which are small with less than 10 persons and in some cases less than 5 with very little international experience. The range of services that these companies will be offering includes electronic publishing, software development, computer aid design, geographic information systems, data entries, *et cetera.* Having recognized that these companies could not pursue it on their own because of their size, the BIDC has introduced the project "Infotech 2000". Through this project a consultant firm in

the overseas market has been hired for an initial period of one year to provide promotional marketing and representational functions to sell the capabilities of these companies. The project will coordinate the establishment of multi-company work teams as well as contract negotiation and monitoring the standards will also be an important feature of the project.

Sir, we thought this was necessary because the present players in this area are big overseas companies that are here in Barbados and they are bringing most of the work themselves. We figure that in order to expand the area we had to get some small players into it.

Mr. Speaker, the BIDC for the past year has been trying desperately to bring as many industries to Barbados as possible and it can be said that they have met with some success over the last year. For argument sake, the total new investment brought in through the BIDC for last year was about $9.739 million with a projected foreign exchange earning of $21.178 million and employment of 332 persons. Last year through the BIDC's assisted estates employment was generated for 1,957 persons and of that amount of 332 persons was as a result of a new company and the rest was expansion in areas of existing companies. The company that comes to mind very quickly, Mr. Speaker, is CDS and this year it has taken on an additional 86 people. They have just introduced a training school and will be recruiting an additional 300 persons as soon as they finish the training school. This has a lot to do with the Ministry going and negotiating reduced rates for dedicated lines. The rates for dedicated lines have almost been half because we thought that Barbados was not competitive in the area due to the fact that the dedicated lines were more expensive than Jamaica and Costa Rica. Therefore, the 56 kilobytes lines are now half the cost which they used to be before as well as the T-1 lines are now a lot more inexpensive, and we have very great hopes in that area.

Mr. Speaker, we have concentrated very heavily at the BIDC over the last year on small businesses. I need to give some quick indication of what the small business sector has done over the last year because it is important for us to realize that the future of Barbados in getting some of our indigenous people into business will be through the route of small businesses. At the moment, as you know, we have a small business centre set up which provides for short-term office space that has been used since it was introduced. We have meeting room facilities and photocopying facilities are made available to them, fax, telephone and the library. We provide also secretarial services to them and design assistance for things like their packaging, letterheads, preparation of business plans for them and marketing assistance.

5.15 p.m.

We have been working extremely close with the revival of the new Small Business Association. So far since the opening of the Centre, there have been 321 consultations, 15 start-ups which generated some 61 jobs through the Small Business sector. We have held 3 small business seminars, 6 school seminars. There have been numerous public awareness programmes, newspaper articles, TV series and presently, through the assistance of the BADC, the Small Business Division will be taking part in SusTech '94 and the Village of Hope where they will be demonstrating their goods and we are providing technical assistance.

Most recently we have provided technical assistance to that young man who brought the ceramic figurine of Clyde Lloyd, a beautiful plaudit, first class quality.

For the year 1994 we are targeting an additional 20 new start-ups and hoping to generate through that section some 200 new jobs. So in that area you will see that in informatics and in small business we have been working extremely hard.

The other areas we have been focussing very carefully. The Government sectors have been going through a very difficult time. There is some hope on the horizon for them through the same trade arrangement in that the multifibre project agreement between 44 of the industrialised nations was reluctantly brought under the World Trade Organisation in Munich. As a result, it now comes under the Multilateral Trading Organisation. In the first year of that agreement, they have to release 19% of their textile business and in the 2nd year 16% and in the 3rd year 15%. So by the 3rd year the American garment industry and textile industry has to be opened up by 15%. The same with the European industry.

You can understand the immensity of that potential market and therefore we have to preen and get our manufacturers particularly in the garment industry to get ready for the opening of that market.

Very quickly, Mr. Speaker, in closing. The duty free sector, as you know, is now under the Ministry of Trade and I am pleased to say that it has taken on a tremendous movement. 1 took a walk down Broad Street today and I was completely surprised to see the complete transformation of Broad Street. This is going to continue. Pelican Village will be completely redesigned for the duty free section and there is an advisory committee made up of private and public sector persons to advise on it and they will continue to work on that vein.

The Cooperative Society was very much in the eyes of the public this year because of the break away of

some of the credit unions in formation of their own umbrella body. I am satisfied that all the requirements have been met and they have been registered and under the new legislation there is enough policing authority given to the Registrar to make sure that the movement is going.

I am going to end, Mr. Speaker, with an area which deals with one that has always been very controversial and very much attacked by the Opposition, that is the appointment of a Trade Commissioner.

Let me say that the result of that appointment is already being seen despite whatever has been said. The Trade Commissioner in the Ministry of Trade is an extremely hardworking, dedicated person who has been interfacing. Don't take it from me. Ask any person in the private sector what has been their perception of the appointment of the Trade Commissioner in the Ministry of Trade and you will see that they realise that he has facilitated many people in cutting through a lot of the bureaucracy and that the fruits of that will be seen very shortly. I hope that as a result of those programmes we will see very soon increased productivity, export increases, job increases, protection for our consumer and most of our human resource development in Barbados as a result of our efforts.

SUSPENSION

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 5.45 p.m.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative and Mr. SPEAKER suspended,the House accordingly.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the issue that has been drawn by these 2 Resolutions and amendments is quite empty because the Government is asking the House to note and I quote:

> "the outstanding performance of the Government during 1993-94 and endorse the 1994/95 Budgetary Proposals."

We on this side regret the poor performance of the Government during 1993-94 and regret the absence of positive and concrete proposals to stimulate the economy, provide jobs, drastically reduce unemployment and bring much needed relief to the poor and disadvantaged.

So the Government is congratulating itself for its performance last year whereas the Opposition is arguing and can demonstrate that that performance is not worthy of commendation. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the Economic Report which was laid on Monday by the very government that is congratulating itself will show that - I take some samples - Sectorial Performance of GDP at page 11:

> "Sugar continued its downward trend in 1993 falling by 10 percent to real value of $20.7 million."

Sugar which had been the mainstay of this economy for many years until we diversified and went heavily into tourism.

Agriculture in general, take vegetables, at page 13:

> "During 1993, approximately 1280 hectares of vegetables and root crops were planted, representing a 12.7 percent fall below the 1466 hectares planted during 1992."

Livestock and Dairy Products, page 15:

> "With the exception of beef, output in the livestock industry declined during 1993...
>
> ... Pork production fell to 1 890.4 thousand kilogrammes in 1993, 6.3 per cent below the 2018.4 thousand kilogrammes produced in the previous year. Following a 13.0 percent increase in veal production in 1992, output fell by 41.9 per cent...
>
> ... Mutton production fell by 4.5 per cent ... milk production by 12.4 per cent ... egg production by 8.8 per cent."

The only thing that did not fall in 1993/94 was the unemployment rate.

> At page 9:
>
> "The number of unemployed persons in 1993 was 33.9 thousand, compared with 28.7 thousand in the previous year. The average annual rate of unemployment continued to rise and was estimated at 24.5 per cent in 1993 as compared with 23 per cent for 1992."

The evidence tends heavily towards the Opposition's case that there has been nothing of merit for which the Government can congratulate itself in 1993-94. But should we be surprised because the prelude to Monday's Budgetary Proposals began last Sunday at a zone meeting of the Democratic Labour Party branches in Christ Church when the Prime Minister was photographed handing

something looking like the Budget to the Minister of Finance whom he called "Little David." I wonder if that was in recognition of a boy doing a man's job. There was some significance in the use of the epithet "Little". But if Sunday was significant, yesterday was also a day of significance because it was indeed uncanny how at a time when Curtly Ambrose had started to destroy the England Test Team the Leader of the Opposition was himself equally devastatingly clinical in his demolition of Little David's Budget.

5.50 p.m.

The great disappointments that have been spawned from this Budget are perhaps, first of all, its lack of a programme to move this country forward and, secondly, lack of solutions for the problems of unemployed youth in particular.

Sir, I said that the Budget was empty and devoid of a programme for moving the country forward. But should we be surprised? In 1989 at page 3774 of the House of Assembly Debates, the present Minister of Finance who delivered the Budget on Monday said these words about a Budget, and I quote "Sir, a Budget is simply a Budget" – like vision is vision and action is action.

I continue the quote:

> "It is an estimate or plan of income and expenditure that is made annually by the Minister of Finance: That is all it really is.
>
> But I believe that it has never been this all powerful tool in social engineering that we are being led to believe it is."

For him, therefore, a Budget is a Budget, an estimate of income and expenditure. It has nothing to do with social engineering. That was 1989. What did he say on Monday, March 28, 1994? The Minister of Finance, the person who had responsibility and the charge for giving in leadership to the financial aspects of Government, at page 81, at the top of this I quote:

> "I do not see this Budget as a one shot exercise in major, social, political or economic engineering. It must be contextual and this Budget supports goals which we articulated as being possible and likely since 1991."

Here the confused mind is conceding that a Budget is capable of being an instrument used for social and economic engineering. Now, what can we therefore say of a Minister who five years ago had no concept whatever of what a Budget was, how it could be used as a fiscal, economic and political tool and comes five years later being thrust in the cauldron of the Ministry of Finance and completely finds himself at variance with himself. What did we get on Monday? Rambling, emptiness, some words of empathy with the army of unemployed youth, but no hope for the future except for some coincidental elusion to a "Dear Christine" correspondent.

We got promises of studies and advisory committees but nothing by way of positive, assertive and affirmative action to get the country going. What do the young people of Barbados and the people of Barbados generally want? I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that they want jobs. They certainly want relief from the heavy social penalties caused by the structural adjustment programme of this Government. They want relief from the massive taxation that has attended us for the last eight years under this Democratic Labour Party Government. They want hope and a vision for the future that inspires them. For that vision the Minister in his Budgetary Proposals asked us to look at the Development Plan of the Democratic Labour Party. He said that in that we would find a vision for Barbados.

What is that vision? The Honourable Member for the City earlier this evening explained that in so far as relief from unemployment was concerned, this Development Plan which represents the vision of the Democratic Labour Party, portends a continuing unemployment rate in the vicinity of 22% up to certainly about the year 1997. I know in my own constituency the vision that the Democratic Labour Party has for the movement of secondary education is one of which they ought to be ashamed because in 1990 they started the development of the St. Thomas Secondary School. It is up there unfinished. Serenader sang about it last year "plenty steel in there" and they do not intend to do anything to the St. Thomas Secondary School until the year 1997 when they intend from this vision...

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Are you going to contradict your own figures?

Mr. SPEAKER: No interruptions.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Tell them to behave themselves, Sir. They do not intend to do anything according to this Plan which the Minister of Finance said represents the vision of the Democratic Labour Party until the year 1997 when they intend to spend $800 000.1 can read it, Sir, page 260 – "1993194 – $0. 1994/95 – $0. 1995/96 – $0," not a cent. They will leave it up there to languish and be subject to the vagaries of the elements and then it will cost twice as much for us to have to finish it because this is your last time in here. The public is thoroughly disgusted with you lot.

The St. Thomas Secondary School, like the St. Joseph Hospital, is a monument of deception and folly, a classic example of squandermania and myopia, shortsightedness. Take the St. Joseph Hospital. They spent $24 million on that and you know how many patients they are seeing a day down there? Six. The Minister of Health read out the figures in here last week during the Estimates for $24 million. Are you satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that your dollars as a taxpayer in respect of the St. Joseph Hospital have been well spent? You are in that field too. You are a Pharmacist. 6.00 p.m.

Are you satisfied that your dollars have been well spent $24 million just, to receive 6 patients? It is a disgrace. And then they come in here congratulating themselves. How could you have a big monstrosity like a half-finished St. Thomas Secondary School remaining there, unfinished when there are persistent pleas from the people at St. Leonard's for alternative accommodation. Can you not turn it into a polytechnic far the people from the north or some such similar institution? But they wanted to win an election by devising a strategy for high visibility projects. Put up anything. Let them see it going up before election. The electorate would probably believe that Government was doing something. Oh how have we been deceived by the Democratic Labour Party! I cannot congratulate them, Sir. They deceived us.

The structural adjustment programme was introduced in here in September 1991. It was to last for 18 months. The public of Barbados were asked to hold strain for 18 months and then all would be well. What did you get? The public workers of this country 25 000 of them had to take an 8% cut. After 30 months they are still holding strain. Worse than that there is a wage freeze. Their increments to which I say they were entitled as a right have been withheld and they are being offered lieu days. Take a couple days home and cool out. All of that followed a promise of a bountiful Barbados. This Government will not accept responsibility for the ills and the woes that have befallen the people of this country. That is the shocking thing about it. They never say, yes, we have made a mistake. They will not accept any blame. Even in my constituency - I raised it in here for the first time about a month ago - the serious water problems that are affecting Barbados. The response from the Government has been to blame it on the consumer wasting water. That is what they have put out. They have no capital development plan, not of any significance.

I want this Government to hear now that I am calling on them to reduce the rates on the water bills of the persons in those districts who have been suffering not a diminution but a loss of service for the past 2½ months. I speak of my constituents of Welches, Warrens, Shop Hill, Edgehill, Welchman Hall, Porey Spring. All of those areas where we have not had a proper water service and then, at the end of the month, my constituents are still going to get a bill from the Water Authority asking them to pay the rate. I am asking the Minister who has, so far, on this matter been very responsive to give Jack his jacket. I want him to consider, give a directive to the Barbados Water Authority to go and look at those areas - you have computers up there - and evaluate the matter and see if some relief can be brought to those people. It is unfair to ask them to pay the same rate not having received a service as those who have received a full service, during the period.

This Budget has brought nothing for the vast majority of pensioners. I know there was some relief in respect of the interest on bank accounts which would affect a proportion of pensioners who may have savings and so on. But the vast majority of pensioners have got nothing. Nor have the same public officers. From December 1990 public workers in this country have not got an increase. Pensioners have not got an increase in their pensions. It is fair, Sir?

I heard an Honourable Member today, as I was coming here, saying there was no devaluation. There was no devaluation insofar as there was no change in the fixed exchange rate. But there was a devaluation in the standard of living of most people in this country. The Government is only capable and able to mouth empty platitudes and do nothing by way of positive action.

While all this has been going on there has been a relentless increase in the level of crime. Let me give just one statistic. I do not have a lot of time. In the Bridgetown division for 1993 the figures for house breaking are alarming. In 1991 there were 525 reported cases of house breaking in the Bridgetown Division. Do you know how much there were last year? One thousand and forty-three. Almost twice as much. From 525 in 1991 to 1 043 in 1993 in the Bridgetown division alone.

I heard the Attorney-General last night. The Honourable Member, my friend from Christ Church South made a case that in times of high unemployment, one can expect a spiralling in crime. He saw some correlation between the two. The Attorney-General conceded that there was some correlation but he offered an additional reason. The additional reason was that there is clearly established now a link between drugs and spiralling crime.

Could you imagine that crime has mushroomed in the last 8 years to the point where the Honourable Member

for Christ Church East Central was saying last night that the Family Planning Association is afraid to go into certain areas because of the level of violence. They are conceding, on that side, the high incidence of crime. Their own Manifesto that they all heartily endorsed in 1986 at page 21 says:

> "A Democratic Labour Party Government will with the help of all citizens who care for this country and its young people wipe this loathsome scourge from the lives of all Barbadians. That is our solemn pledge."

They pledged 8 years ago to reduce crime and wipe out drugs in this country. What has happened? They have failed miserably. Crime has got worse.

When I hear the Attorney-General and see him he conjures up images with the nonsense he was saying. He conjures up an image in my mind of PC Broomes of MADD. I wish to say, Sir that the Labour Party is committed to a new penal policy. Our aim will be to develop a multi-dimensional approach to the treatment of offenders and correspondingly we will aim to establish and implement a range of diverse punishments, a varied regime whose focus will be to reserve imprisonment for the worst possible crimes while providing a core of facilities for punishing people more within the community than happens now or than is allowed by the law.

And while on that, Sir, I call on the Minister, the Attorney General, who is so concerned about drugs to implement section 34(d) of the Drug Abuse (Prevention and Control) Act 1990-14 which provides:

> 'The Minister may by regulations make provision for the establishment, regulation and administration of treatment and rehabilitation centres for the detention, education and treatment of persons addicted to controlled drugs;".

6.10 p.m.

That has been part of the law for the last 4 years. The regulations for the last 4 years have not been implemented and we cannot do as much as we should be doing for people involved in drugs because the inertia that attends that Government has prevented them from implementing Regulation 34(d).

I also wish the country to know, Sir, that shortly this party will be unveiling and exposing a youth policy. Just as we exposed a 10-point policy last night we will be dealing with a policy for youths in due course. And the kind of youths that our policy will be directed towards are not those mentioned by the Honourable Member for Christ Church East last night. He saw himself, the Minister of Transport, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Agriculture as representing and reflecting the epitome of youth in the Democratic Labour Party. God help us is all I can say.

All reports, all evaluations of the speech made by the Honourable Minister of Education are of one accord – brain dead.

In relation to the Minister of Transport, his speech last night, Sir ... I will have to give him this, Sir, his father and his cousin were wordsmiths of note and he lived up to the tradition last night. Twice he told us "he would not be cowarded". I understand him, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, in winding up I wish to say that at the centre of our problems in Barbados, social instability, political instability...

Mr. SPEAKER: You still have about 4 minutes.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Thank you, Sir. We have problems of social, political and economic instability and of these three the greatest is political instability. Barbados has been destabilised and the destabilisation has revolved around one man, the Prime Minister.

Sir, I just want you to recall the names of the refugees who fled, a Haynes, a Byer, a Miller, a Bourne. Bourne is still in flight, Don Blackman, Harold Blackman, a Trotman, a Hall, a Greaves, a Simmons, Sir. Ten persons who were colleagues of the Prime Minister of Barbados in his Cabinet some of them, over the last 7 years have fled, run away from him. Why Sir? And today and yesterday the back benches on that side reflect the absence of 2 former Ministers, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and the Honourable Member for St. James South. They have not been in here yesterday. I did not see them. All day those two benches have been vacant, Sir. All I will say, Sir, is when you have a case of 10 leaving you and you are saying that you are right, clearly what Sparrow sang about in 1959 is happening, ten to one has to be political murder, Sir.

And, you know, for the Prime Minister some names appear to be anathema. I can think of the name Blackman, he would not have anything to do with them at all – Courtney, Walter, Don, Harold, none of them. I want to tell him, Sir, that the Ministry of Tourism and the country

were recently destabilised by the resignation of 3 Ministers over what, Sir? The name Arthur destabilised the Democratic Labour Party to the extent that 3 Ministers went behind.

I want him to understand, he has not come in here all day. I am talking about the Prime Minister. I want him to understand. That is the contempt he has for us. He would not come in here at all.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think it is fair to say he has not been in here the whole day. He was here at some point. He was in here early. I am sure he was in time to hear the Honourable Member from St. Michael North East.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All right, Sir. If you tell me so, Mr. Speaker, I accept that and I apologise to the Prime Minister. I withdraw. He was here sometime early, Sir, but for the bulk of this debate he has not been here, Sir. I wish to say this, Sir, that just as an Arthur destabilised that Government, an Arthur on this side will so destabilise it that we will become the Government when the elections are called.

Finally, Mr. Speaker. Two weeks ago we were told that the Prime Minister was not well. He came back to Barbados and he promised that he would make a statement on national television about the plotters. He wanted 2 weeks to rest. I have not been too hard on him today because he is not well and he must rest. He has rested and he is going to speak in this debate. I challenge the Prime Minister to stick to his word as his promise. This is an occasion of national television. Name the plotters tonight. Name those whom you say have destabilised this country tonight. You have a golden opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to conclude by saying that no way can this party support the Budget of 1994. I have to go with my colleagues in support of the amendment to the Resolution. A Government that portends only more frustration and hopelessness to people cannot be supported but must go and who better to tell the country that they must go than their last Campaign Manager, Mr. Peter Morgan, in a letter to the ***Advocate*** and the ***Nation.*** He said, Sir, "enough is enough". And I see you nodding, Sir, enough is enough and I have had enough. Thank you very much.

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

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the last Honourable Member who just sat down appeared to be in the throes of such difficulty that he almost forced Your Honour to intervene. We had to let him know that he had some more time. I have never seen it in all the years that I have been here where a Member was in so much difficulty that he wanted to call time before you were ready, Sir. But I understand the Honourable Member's difficulty.

I wish, Sir, to start by indicating that I will support the motion moved by the Honourable Member for St. John, the Minister of Finance and I will reject the amendment offered by the Leader of the Opposition.
6.20 p.m.

As a matter of fact, Sir, for me it was a source of pride to observe and listen to the erudite and focused presentation of the Minister of Finance. When one has observed a young man from a youth up and see him come to fruition in the way in which the Honourable Member did when he presented his Budget, one cannot help but feel a sense of pride. His Budget had a message, Sir, which is not unclear to those who are unbiased. The Budget's message is that there must be consolidation of the gains from the stabilisation which we have effected during the last *two* years or so, that we must restructure our economy and that we must begin the process of rebuilding.

Mr. Speaker, what political party is better suited to the business of rebuilding and developing Barbados than the Democratic Labour Party? When in the 1960's and 1970's it was necessary to move forward by leaps and bounds, this Democratic Labour Party marched forth and filled the breach. It was this Party that recognized and provided the infrastructural arrangements for rapid industrialization, for rapid tourism development of this country and for rapid development and training of the human resources and the enhancement of the education of the people, especially the young people of this country.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have spent a substantial part of my adult life working in this area – the industrialization, the development of tourism and the enhancement and training of the human resources of this country – and I am proud of having been part of the process set for achieving those goals. As we come to the point where we are looking at a new approach or we have come to a different threshold for a change in the upward movement, I am proud to be a part of the process that has been going on. I was a little surprised when the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, chose to deal with the question of the politician in a manner that to the uninitiated ear seemed to be a put-down, as they say in modem language. It reminded me that for some considerable time there has been a sneaking attack on the political party.

Mr. Speaker, almost every country where there has been development there has been the political party in the forefront in one form or another. Almost every American registers as a Republican or a Democrat. They are not ashamed to identify with a particular philosophy which articulates how their country should be run. They understand that nothing of consequence in their country is achieved without some touch, however slight, of politics. In Britain, if you are familiar with the growth and development of Britain, the political parties have been in the forefront together with the trade unions. In France, everyone identifies with some political party. In Germany, everyone is familiar with a pólitical party either at one stage or the other. In every country that is worth emulation, there are political parties and people are not afraid or ashamed to identify with them. Why is it that some of the influence peddlers in Barbados always seem to be seeking to make Barbadians feel ashamed to identify with a political party? Mr. Speaker, why? We saw an attempt by the Honourable Member, Sir, I submit what I would call pander to the new rage. The Honourable Member for St. Peter must be very careful that he does not in his unbridled haste to assume power set the people up for his own destruction. Was he not an economic analyst at the time when the late Tom Adams introduced the concept of the political party deduction as an income tax concession? It was the Barbados Labour Party that brought it and he must have advised the then Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. Was he not here, Sir, last year when the Honourable Member for St. Thomas was in the process with the Prime Minister of putting together the reform in the approach to income tax? Was he not here when a prominent Member on that side urged the retention of this particular deduction? Mr. Speaker, decency requires that I do not mention which Honourable Member had asked for it. But, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Peter must have been party to and aware of the question of the retention of the political deduction as part of the concession in the income tax, plus trade unions and other institutions. That is found, Sir, in the laws of Barbados and it was entrenched in 1981.

Sir, when you see a politician start to suggest that they should all turn and attack the politicians, we cannot be surprised when the attack comes. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Thomas just a few days ago plaintively crying when an attack did come on the politicians. We cannot approbate and reprobate at the same time. We cannot say of ourselves that we are no good and then, when people say that we are no good, quarrel about people having said that we are no good. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. I do not wish to do more than draw to the Honourable Member's attention that picking on the politician as the point of departure to attack the Government is not necessarily the best technique that I have seen.

The Honourable Member for St. George South in his presentation, which I thought if I were in the Opposition I probably would go down that line as well, raised questions about the services. He and other Honourable Members suggested that the services have been diminished. As a matter of fact, Sir, at one point when I was hearing the Honourable Member for St. George South especially, I had to stop and check to see if he was making reference to some other country. I could not believe that he was still talking about the Barbados that has been identified across the world in reputable publications as being the most desirable place on earth to live among developing countries and the 20th most desirable place on the face of the earth to live among all countries.

Sir, I have here a document called the Human Development Report. It is published by the United Nations Development Programme. It was published in 1993 at New York, Oxford University Press. In this document, Sir, the human development index is identified and Barbados is at number 20. That story is sufficiently well known. Oh, yes. I am not claiming that it happened yesterday. I am saying that that country cannot be the same one that has been described by some Honourable Members.

Sir, the issue that has been raised had to do with what was happening with the social services in Barbados during the time of the stabilization over the last two years.

6.30 p.m.

I wish to say that it can be proved that during that time we did continue to spend on the social services. The Black Rock Polyclinic has been described by the Director of PAHO, Carlyle de Macedo, as the best he has ever seen. And he is the foremost Public Health Administrator in the western hemisphere. That is acknowledged. He came here and saw it and, as I said, he made a contribution to it. I believe when it was opened recently that that polyclinic was told by the Caribbean Coordinator for PAHO that Dr. Macedo would see to it that it gets the monitors and all the other things it needs to make it a model.

It cost $6 million. During the time of stabilisation. Sir, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital during the same time was bringing on stream an angiographic suite and was to have made provision for there to be open heart surgery at that Hospital by May of this year.

Asides.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Members are talking about services going backwards. These things were happening. It is not as though we have to read about them. They are there and for all those persons in Barbados who suffer the difficulties connected with cardiac problems,

the angiographic suite, the open heart surgery with the trained Barbadian personnel to do the entire process of by-pass surgery and eventually angioplasty are things that occurred during the time of the difficulty of which the Honourable Members are speaking.

It will happen by May of this year. The angiographic suite has done over 200 cases. They have been doing angiograms and hip replacements. Incidentally, the Honourable Member should be aware that they are doing hip replacements at the St. Joseph Hospital as well. The point is, Sir, that a hospital that has been developed to the point where it is regarded by those who know as one of the best in the western hemisphere, all things being equal, that hospital was happening during the time the Honourable Member is talking about.

There is no one who has been to the Geriatric Hospital from either outside of Barbados or inside Barbados who has not been able to comment on the quality of care, the quality of facilities that has been provided for the elderly in this country. The Honourable Member for St. Michael East was able to say that even in these times of economic difficulty they are turning their attention to the issue of homelessness. It means that the Democratic Labour Party's overriding concern for the underprivileged, its concern for the average man, for the welfare of the people of this country has not changed. The social conscience of the Democratic Labour Party is the basic thread that runs through all of the policies of this Government.

Mr. Speaker, it is sometimes interesting, the kind of comments which we get about the activity of the Govemment. When we observe that in the mighty United States 37 million people have no access whatsoever to health care. In Barbados there is not a single person who does not have access to proper health care, not one. And those who wish to choose may choose at will what kind they want. There is a principle which has been at work that if the service cannot be provided in Barbados the Government will pay to provide it wherever it can be provided anywhere in the world. There has been no change in that attitude to the provision of care.

How can Honourable Members come in here and raise the kinds of questions which they seek to raise about this business about the service deteriorating?

The provision of drugs in this community, Sir. There has been no reduction in the number and quality of drugs available through the Barbados Drug Service which was started by Honourable Members on that side and which is regarded as the best of its kind in the world. We can generously agree that it started under the Barbados Labour Party because when it comes to the people of this country and to the services of this country we do not believe on this side that there ought to be any divide. It is only certain members who seem to feel that they must divide on everything.

As for the question which the Honourable Member for the City raised about the absence of money. The Honourable Member for the City herself a registered lawyer has this penchant for reading and leaving, after she has read, a void in the sense of people who hear her about the facts of what she has read. The Honourable Member got up and read that for something to do with something in the Ministry – zero, zero. The fact is that if the Honourable Member had done a little more research... The Honourable Member said that there were no funds for training and she said zero, zero, zero in that classic style of hers... Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member had gone a little more carefully into the issue, she would have discovered why there are zeros in the particular place because the allocation of funds for the promotion and support of training and the upgrading of skills for the labour force as well as for the training of retrenched workers will be available by application of the Employment and Training Fund under section 13 of the Technical and Vocational Education Training Council Act, 1993–11, the Act we passed in here. The amount is available.

Mr. SPEAKER; The Honorable Member is on a point of order.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am being deliberately misquoted. I said that at page 256 of the Development Plan you will find under Capital Projects – it is not my fault if Honourable Members over there are not listening – National Training Board 1994-95, nothing. This is their document.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: All I was saying is that if the Honourable Member like any careful legislator had gone further behind the facade, she would have found that that particular agency has been transformed into a new agency called TVET and that the capital funds can be found on page 167, sub-program 03, Code 421403 in the amount of $693 795 this year for the transfer to agencies.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. No talking.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Every year, Sir, it is the same old story whenever I get up to speak they feel able to interfere, but I love them for interfering.

Sir, unemployment has been treated in here in a trite manner. They tend to discuss unemployment in what I consider a trite manner.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. I have allowed all the other Members to speak in an atmosphere of quiet. I think it is fair that the Honourable Member should be allowed to speak in a similar atmosphere. Don't let us have any more cross talking and that sort of thing. Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I am saying, Sir, that in this Honourable House and outside as well the question of unemployment is sometimes treated in a trite manner. Now, Sir, the same document to which I referred earlier, the Human Development Report, 1993 at page 36...

6.40 p.m.

This is recommended reading for all who are interested in the quality of life development this year. At page 36 it talks about jobs and growth. Here are some of the things which you can find at page 36. It says:

> "Many parts of the world are witnessing a new phenomenon, jobless growth even when output increases and employment lags way behind. Developing countries experienced 4% to 5% growth in GDP during 1960-1973 but employment grew only half as much. Industrial countries managed fairly respectable output growth during 1973-87 but in France, Germany and the United Kingdom employment levels actually fell. Informal employment has increased sharply in developing countries offering low wage, non-permanent jobs 'instead of remunerative employment.
>
> In the United States the recent economic recovery has been a "jobless recovery". Policy makers all over the world are searching for strategies that combine a high GDP growth rate with more job opportunities. No comprehensive programme has emerged but there are several measures that can contribute to an increase in employment."

Now, here are some of the measures they recommend:

> "Invest generously in basic education, relevant skills and worker retraining."

That is what this Government has set out to do.

They say, Sir:

> "Liberate private enterprise and make markets more accessible to everyone."

I do not think that they will flutter at that, Sir. The policy has been the liberalization of trade.

> "Support small scale enterprises and informal sector employment principally through a reform of the credit system, fiscal incentives and proper legal framework."

Again, a reform programme has been put in place.

> "Create an efficient service economy for the future by investing in the new skills required and removing international barriers."

My colleague, the Honourable Member, the Minister of Education, spoke at length about that today and indicated that that is precisely what we are doing.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The former Minister of Education, Sir. I mean the Minister of Health spoke at length today.

They said:

> "Extend employment safety nets through labour intensive public works programmes in periods of major economic distress."

I have just outlined some of them, Sir, that this Government continued to do. This Government has continued to do the programmes even though we were short of cash.

Mr. Speaker, let me tun now to a matter which.,. I do not believe the Honourable Member for St. James North is fully aware of what he said that we should cancel the Conference.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not the Honourable Member for St. James North. I am correcting that.

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I do not want to interrupt the Honourable Member but at no point today did I mention anything about a conference.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I am trying to say is that I was going to correct the Honourable Member.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is exactly why I intervened because I know it was the Honourable Member for St. Andrew.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I apologise to the Honourable Member for St. James North. I would not normally make

that error, Sir, but since they are so separate and apart from the rest of the Barbados Labour Party I get the two of them mixed up in my head.

It is my friend from St. Andrew. The Honourable Member for St. Andrew. I know that in his heart he did not mean what he said. He was merely making a dramatic gesture when he said we should cancel the Global Conference and call an election. First of all he does not wish an election with that crowd, and secondly, I know he does not wish to have the Global Conference cancelled. He provides me with the basis to report to this House and to the nation about the Global Conference to date.

As of this morning, Sir, a meeting was held at Dover and all the persons involved in preparing Sherboume for the Conference I can state unequivocally on the basis of the reports from the consultants, contractors and those offering services at Sherbourne that the Centre will be ready for handing over, as agreed, to the United Nations on April 14, 1994. Indeed, Sir, a handing over ceremony has been planned for that afternoon, Thursday April 14, 1994.

Sir, the Barbados National Bank will be providing banking services. Gem Travel has won the tender far providing travel and activity services. The Post Office will provide postal services and the Hospitality Division of the Barbados Community College has won the tender to provide meals and services among other things.

Let me give you quickly, Sir, the other logistical arrangements. Liaison officers have been selected from both the public and private sectors and have already received intensive training and orientation. They will be deployed at the Airport, Sherbourne and at the hotels. Several meetings have been held with the Airport management, Customs, Immigration, Police, Liaison personnel, the airlines and ground handling services and detailed plans have been worked out to receive both the official and non-governmental delegations.

The transportation contract has been awarded. Accommodation has been blocked and individual reservations continue to be made on a daily basis. We still expect numbers in the vicinity of 2 000 to 2 500. In conjunction with UN Security elaborate security arrangements have been devised with the cooperation of the Royal Barbados Police Force and the Barbados Defence Force.

There is a social programme, Sir. There is going to be an Opening in the morning of the Conference on April 25 at the Sir Garfield Sobers Complex in the Gymnasium. There is an Exhibition of Sustainable Development technology. That is to be held at Terminal II. That is on stream. The NGO Forum and the Village of Hope will take place at the Barbados Community College as scheduled. For the substantive preparations there are two main things. There was a second Preparatory Committee Meeting in New York. There will be a draft programme of action which will be concluded as the "programme of action" for the Conference and there will be a "Barbados Declaration" which will be negotiated and finalised at the Conference.

There will also be a high level segment which will be open only to Heads of Government and Ministers. That will be held on the Thursday and Friday mornings. At this stage we have had indication from Prime Ministers and other Heads that they will be coming. I would not wish to divulge any information other than that at this time.

The Barbados delegation will be a national delegation. It will comprise not only Ministers in this Government but persons in the private sector and all the technical people who have been involved.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Why do you not wait?

Mr. SPEAKER: Now, do not respond to that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, the delegation will have representatives from the various parts of the Civil Service. It will have representation from the private sector through their organisations, the Social Partners through their organisations and yes, Sir, I have discussed with the Leader of the Opposition and I can say that the Government proposes and I think I can say the Leader of the Opposition has accepted that representation from the Opposition will be on the delegation, including the Leader and one other person. I have asked him. I can only say that because the Honourable Member has just raised the question and I think it is proper that I should say. I had no intention of speaking to this matter but the Honourable Member for the City...

6.50 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has 2 minutes more.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: ...raised the question so let me say that we have invited the Opposition to participate and when I have had discussions with the Leader of the Opposition, he has indicated that the Opposition is likely

to accept. That is a matter entirely for the Opposition but if they wish to know, those are the facts.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Government, in its foreign policy, has tried to establish clearly that the role of the economic development in Barbados extends to what we do in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To that end we have established in the agencies overseas focal points to deal exclusively with economic development. And as I have said elsewhere we shall be upgrading the Honorary Consulate General at Miami to a full Consulate General with a view to representing the south east of the United States and helping to do much of what we wish to do in terms of our own economic development.

I wish to congratulate the Honourable Member for St. John for giving the people of Barbados a Budget that took account of the measures which we took last year and made adjustments where it was necessary for those persons especially with the 12½ per cent withholding on pensions in excess of $20 000. That is something which pensioners would welcome.

Mr. Speaker, it is a joy to be able to participate in a Budgetary Debate where the people of Barbados *can* see clearly through the Budget that we as a country, although we have been buffeted by the same winds and storms that have blown across the rest of the world, and we have suffered economic damage, we have not been sunk and we are in a position, because we are buoyant to move on to the next port at which there will be calm and peace, growth and development.

I am grateful to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise in the context of the Amendment that I have brought to the Resolution before this House to conclude the Opposition's contribution to this Budgetary Debate. I do so under protest. The Rules governing the conduct of debate in this House and section 29 (2) say:

> "A Minister may conclude a debate on any notion which is critical of the Government, or reflects adversely on or is calculated to bring discredit upon the Government or a Government Officer."

My speaking now means that not 1 but 2 Ministers will conclude the debate on behalf of the Government in contravention of Section 29 (2). Mr. Speaker, if it is the intention that this House should be run like the Cabinet where one...

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to intervene at this point. For the benefit of the Honourable Member what has really happened is that the House has been placed with a choice, that is, the original motion and the Amendment to the motion which the House has to decide on. In the normal context of things the Amendment is usually placed first before the substantive motion. It is on this basis that the Honourable Member is speaking because it is the Amendment that is king dealt with first before the substantive motion. Therefore, in the circumstances, the only other alternative could be... And I did intervene when I think there were 2 Honourable Members who said they were speaking on the Amendment. You are speaking on the Amendment at the same time that the substantive motion was being debated. Clearly I established the fact that Members have the choice to speak on either one at the same time or, because of the Standing Orders, it would be difficult to have a separate debate on the Amendment in the context of the time that the Budget is debated. Because the Budget is debated on the basis of 2 days. Therefore the process would have to be that the Honourable Member is speaking on the basis that the Amendment is the first one we *can* dispose of because the House has, before it, a choice. I do not think it is fair to say that anything has gone wrong. It is just what we develop over the years.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of privilege because this is a very important and fundamental matter. I have been in this House for 23 years and have sat through Amendments on Budgetary measures.

The person who speaks that Amendment speaks before the Minister winds up. The Prime Minister cannot have a speech after him and then another Minister speaks. I have not been allowed, as Leader of the Opposition, the privilege of winding up on behalf of the Government without 2 Ministers speaking. It is fundamentally wrong in this country and in this House for that parliamentary procedure to be followed. It is undemocratic. I am very surprised, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is being allowed at this time. I really must, after 23 years, protest this form of procedure. I have never seen it in any other House. I never know of any procedure where a Prime Minister is going to walk in at the end of the debate and claim a right to speak after a person has moved an Amendment to the motion. It is wrong, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one moment. I made the point in respect of the 2 Resolutions. The Right Honourable Prime Minister is entitled to speak on any Resolution at any time. The point I am making is that the Prime Minister may be speaking in his capacity as a Member contributing to the debate.

Furthermore it has probably arisen out of the order of speeches that I have before me, which I was using the whole day, in which that order was presented to me.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes. But what I am trying to say is. I want to be understood clearly that the order of speeches was not designed by myself. It was on that basis that I used that because I always argue that there must be a consensus between the 2 sides in deciding on the order of speeches. Because whether the Prime Minister speaks last or first and that is presented to me then I accept that as the order of the speeches.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of privilege. Because this is being broadcast and there are people out there who would not understand and would be confused.

First of all any protest such as would be raised by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West would be, at the most, premature. The rules say that if an Honourable Member moves an Amendment or any motion critical of the Government that a Minister can wind that up. Are they to then decide which Minister will wind up? Are they now going to decide when the Prime Minister is going to speak? If the Prime Minister winds up that Amendment, because it is critical, the question of the substantive motion still stands. Because this House has debated both at the same time. It is straightforward. I do not understand why we seek to make a mountain out of a molehill but as a matter of fact this particular paper with the 2 persons listed after the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, was agreed to by the Leader of the Opposition. It was handed to him by the Clerk of Parliament yesterday and I asked them if it was acceptable and they said yes.

7.00 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, what I saw last night that the Member showed to me and the Leader of the Opposition behind your Chair in his handwriting was for the Prime Minister to speak before the Leader of the Opposition. I am surprised now to hear it otherwise, Sir.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: And talking about the Leader of the Opposition it was handed to him by the Clerk of Parliament last night. The handwritten thing was rejected. They wrote themselves. The Leader of the Opposition wrote on the handwritten thing and then subsequently we had it typed. This is the version which we saw last night. This is the only version, Sir. The only version we have is the one we saw last night.

Now, Honourable Members might have been tired but I do not think it is fair. I understand the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. He speaks of what he saw. Since then this two page document was typed.

Do not shake your head. You may not have seen it. This is what we had. It is the only thing we have.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going to permit any prolonged discussion on the matter. I think I have put it in its perspective and I think the best way to deal with it is how I dealt with it during the day. The list of speakers was given to me and I followed that and when there were changes to be made during the day I was instructed when those changes were to be made. No changes were made to me up to this point and I assume on the basis that we were doing the two measures before the House, that the amendment would come first and clearly the Leader of the Opposition had a right to respond to that amendment. And it is at this point in time that if the Leader of the Opposition wants to respond to it ...

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am having a lot of difficulty with this. In this place of all places we cannot be seen to be abandoning what are well known procedural rules of debate. In this debate the Honourable Prime Minister is only another Member of this Parliament. He is not the Minister of Finance. He was not mover of the original motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not dealing with that because I said to you that the list of the names that came to me said that. Therefore I was using that list throughout the day.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, we are saying on this side the list was lying. We never agreed to it. We would not agree to that.

Mr. SPEAKER: But now at this point it is very difficult for me to change my course on the events that took place. It is fair to believe that if that is the motion so be it.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of privilege, Sir. For the information of Your Honour, Sir, research indicates that on March 31, 1982 a similar situation arose. The then Minister of Finance led off the debate to the Budgetary Proposals. The first speaker on behalf of the Opposition was Dr. Haynes, the then Member for St. Michael South Central, and I have the last page of the debate and on page 1472, Dr. Haynes arose.

> "Mr. Speaker, I rise to wind up the debate on behalf of the Opposition Democratic Labour Party."

And then the Speaker called on Mr. Adams to exercise the final right of reply. Mr. Speaker, this is at page 1475.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the question at page 1485, these are the questions put by Mr. Speaker.

"Mr. SPEAKER: I must put the amendment first.

The question that the words proposed to be deleted stand part of the Resolution was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

So that, Sir, indicates quite clearly that if the Opposition moves an amendment that the person winds up on behalf of the Opposition and the final reply is then given by the Government.

That is my submission of the proper procedure. That is all I am suggesting to you, Sir. It is not that any one can possibly suggest that the Prime Minister, in his capacity as a Member of this House, if he wishes to speak is entitled to speak but he must speak before the final winding up on behalf of the amendment and then the final speech for the debate is given by the person who is winding up on behalf of the Government.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have no difficulty understanding what you are saying but you are not understanding what I am saying. What I am saying is that in all the years past, the speakers were given to me in a particular order. Now if the speakers have been given to me in this particular order it is always my contention that it must have been an agreement with both sides and that was how the matter should be fixed. I accepted that.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, another point I wish to draw to Your Honour's attention in furtherance of conclusion of this matter.

Sir, let us take for arguments sake that all they say, this document has been available and they have had copies of this continuously throughout the day. Mr. Speaker, that is where we are.

Mr. SPEAKER: So that I can only act in accordance with, the wishes of the House. I cannot overrule what the House has decided. If the House has not decided it then I cannot decide it.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, in the absence of an agreement the Leader of the Opposition is saying he did not agree to that order as between himself and the Prime Minister. In that event, Mr. Speaker, the only proper thing to do is to resort to what ought to be the proper procedure. In the absence of an agreement you have to ask yourself the question, what is the proper procedure?

I am submitting that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has just exposed to you, from precedent, what is the proper procedure where an amendment is moved. The person moving the amendment speaks immediately before the person moving the substantive motion and that is also the Prime Minister interposing in front of this gentleman.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand clearly what the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has said. I have been in here before and I have seen how it functions. But if the House decides to make changes then I can only do that. I have been in here before and I have seen how it functions. Now if one side is saying that they have not agreed and the other side is saying that there is an agreement, I am placed in the awkward position as to what the House wants.

7.10 p.m.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Throughout the entire day, I have lodged my objections to the Clerk and to the Officers of this House in relation to the sheet that was given to us this morning regarding the arrangement of speakers. The Clerk of this House is in a position, Sir, to advise you that I have consistently lodged my objection to it. I have drawn his attention to Section 29(1) which says: "That the mover of a motion may reply after all of the other Members have had an opportunity to reply except as provided in Paragraph 2."

In Paragraph 2, it says: "That a Minister may conclude a debate in circumstances where a motion is critical of the Government."

I have been throughout the entire day, Mr. Speaker, lodging my objection to the list that was given to us. Sir, since you are saying that we are putting one position and the Government is putting another position, I am saying to you that the Officers of this House are in a position to guide you as regards what the Opposition's position has been from the outset when we were shown the list.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, let us assume that all of that is so. Are they saying that if there are no other Members who wish to speak on the amendment...

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Prime Minister has a right to speak on the substantive Resolution. If there are no other Members who wish to speak on the amendment, he has a right to wind up. When he has wound up the amendment, that is the end of that. But the point is that we did agree last night. I wish it to be recorded, Sir, because I went down and told other Members. I do not understand this business that we have an agreement at one time and the following day we have no agreement. I find it unacceptable.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going to hold these proceedings any longer. If no decision has been made on this matter...

Aside.

SUSPENSION

Mr. SPEAKER: At this point before I make a decision, I probably will suspend for about 5 or 10 minutes so that I can clear this matter. This sitting is suspended for 10 minutes.

7.15 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. I think that I must make this point. Once again our machinery seem not to have functioned effectively and I think in the best interest we must do better in trying to get both sides when they make an agreement to have it properly placed before the House. In this case, I do not think that one can fault one side or the other but we need to strengthen that aspect of our parliamentary procedure. I think that the best person to deal with this at this point in order to find a solution to the problem is the Right Honourable Prime Minister himself.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, as you know, I am willing to facilitate the debate and procedures relating to debates in this Honourable Chamber so that our work can go forward as expeditiously as possible consonant with the Standing Orders and the dignity of this Honourable Chamber. In those circumstances, Sir, I am proposing not to make a substantive speech in this particular debate but will under your guidance, Sir, as you wish permit the Leader of the Opposition to make his statement. Thereafter, the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Member for St. John can reply on behalf of the Government and bring this debate to an end.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased that the rules of the House have been respected in this most important matter that has to do with the protection of the rights and privileges of Members of this Honourable Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to conclude as I said the contribution of the Opposition to this historic Budget debate. This Budget debate, Mr. Speaker, has been distinguished by a number of considerations. Under ordinary circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I would not believe that I would have the need simply to have to say that the Budget debate has been distinguished the fact that all Members on my side spoke and they spoke exceedingly well, Sir. They spoke with clarity and each addressed in a very fundamental way issues pertaining to the shadow portfolios that they have been assigned. I particularly on this occasion would want to salute the conhibutions of the two newest Members of the Opposition, the Member for St. Andrew and the Member for St. James North. But all of my Members spoke, Sir, and I do believe that through our contributions we managed to convey to the people of this country and to this House of Assembly the very clear perception that we have a disciplined, united and solid Opposition that has alternative policies to present to the people of this country.

This debate however has dramatized the shameful condition within the Democratic Labour Party. It has been characterized by a situation in which for the first time in many years persons on behalf of the Government found it either impossible or otherwise to contribute to the debate. The people of Barbados now are caught up in a situation where they recognise that one of the major crises facing this country is the crisis of political stability. Mr. Speaker, the people of this country are looking for a disciplined, united, organised, innovative party to be in charge of the destiny of this country. This debate has been symbolic insofar as it has given them a very clear opportunity to determine which party is united, solid, disciplined and innovative and which party is divided and cannot get its act together.

7.25 p.m.

I want to say to the Member for St. Michael South, who was so gracious not to speak in the debate to allow the Rules of the House to be complied with, that he has issued a challenge today. He said that when I am ready, he is ready. Mr. Speaker, the performance of the Opposition in this debate should not only tell the Prime Minister but should tell the people of this country that this Opposition, contrary to the propaganda of the Democratic Labour Party is united, innovative, disciplined and ready and I challenge the Prime Minister on the strength of what has happened in this debate to say that he can tell the people of this country that he has a party behind him which is solid, united, disciplined and ready.

The debate has also been distinguished by what has happened in relation to the discourse on the small issues and the large issues that this House has had to deal with. I would really like to refocus on the large issues first. In many respects, in my judgment, this debate has been cast in the format of a national economic referendum. In our judgment, Sir, the country has to take a clear clean decision regarding its immediate economic destiny and the type of model and the economic framework that will be used as a basis for determining this country's economy destiny. It is in the nature of an economic referendum. On the Government's side, we have argued that the Budget was a budget that was intended to establish that where the Government is concerned it has determined that the immediate future of Barbados' economic destiny must be governed under the auspices and under the rubric of an enhanced surveillance programme of the International Monetary Fund and in collaboration with other policies associated with that programme, but policies flowing from other multilateral institutions.

The central issue in this debate was the question as to whether this House and the people of this country believe that is the relevant way to go. The contribution of this Opposition and the burden of my presentation to the House was, that based upon recent past experience, based upon what is involved financially to the country, based upon the opportunities that otherwise exist, we in the Barbados Labour Party believe fundamentally that Barbados should deal with the referendum that faces the country by saying no to the multilateral lending institutions known as the International Monetary Fund, that we should cast out on an independent economic destiny.

I should just like as simply as I can to reinforce the central issue involved here, Sir because this central issue has not been seriously challenged by anybody on the Government side. We believe that there is no real value in keeping an economy indefinitely under the IMF. Indeed, our experience in 1982 was that we saw the International Monetary Fund programme standby arrangement for what it was, a confirmed line of credit that a country used as intended by the Articles of Agreement with the International Monetary Fund as a temporary expedient that a country came out of and thereafter having stablised its affairs cast off on an independent economic destiny. The advice that I rendered in 1982-83 to the then Minister of Finance is the same advice I am rendering to this Minister of Finance today.

You have gone through an IMF programme, now look to cast out on an independent destiny. I am saying Sir, that given what is happening in the international economy, the people of Barbados should feel that if the Government had any confidence in itself it should feel confident about seeing that we can do it on our own. Let me use history as a guide. After the 1982 programme we decided to cast out on our own. It was followed Sir, by 7 years of economic growth and a situation where our reserves each year grew steadily from over $100 million in 1982 when we entered the fund to over $405 million at the peak in 1989 before they were thereafter blown by the indiscretions of the Prime Minister.

I will go further, Mr. Speaker, the nature of the programme that the Government of Barbados proposes to enter into with the International Monetary Fund is merely an enhanced surveillance programme under which there are set policies and no funds will be involved. I say to the House, Sir, speaking in my capacity as a professional Economist, that there is nothing that the International Monetary Fund can do that the trained Economists of Barbados cannot do. All they will be doing is rendering advice as to how we should set fiscal targets, the rate of credit that the Central Bank should extend to Government, the rate of borrowing on the international markets and things of that character.

I have the fullest confidence in the expertise of the professional economists of this country that they can set targets, chart economic courses with the same kind of expertise, perhaps sometimes even more than the technicians of the International Monetary Fund There is therefore nothing in it for us, as far as I am concerned, from a policy point of view or from a financial point of view of our having an enhanced surveillance programme with the International Monetary Fund.

Mr. Speaker, I also have made the point that in relation to the role of the other institutions it is nothing in it for Barbados. Let me hammer the point again. The people of this country have already been made to make a tremendous sacrifice, as the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance will concede, for policies that the Government agreed to with the World Bank and has already implemented. Those policies were always understood to be painful policies the effect of which on the population of Barbados had to be cushioned by access to World Bank financing to take some of the sting out of the policy. What we have is a situation in which World Bank policies are already in existence in Barbados but there is now the guarantee that we will not have access to World Bank financing to take any of the pain out of the policies that they have forced this Government of Barbados to accept.

I think that it is unfair to the people of Barbados. The time has come, insofar as we are not getting World Bank financing, that we can now tell the World Bank that we

are not going to implement the policies they have forced us to accept from as far back as 1990.

The same argument holds, as far as I am concerned, in relation to our future relationship with the Inter-American Development Bank. There is a whole range of policies that we have already started to comply with, others to come down the tube, all of which will be painful and which need to be cushioned by access to generous levels of financing and the people of this country are being asked to endure massive pain in return for a pittance. Rather than have a cushion of U.S. $60 million, as was initially envisioned, Mr. Speaker, it has now been reduced to U.S. $35 million and there is no guarantee that the Government is going to get access to it. A lot of pain, no financing, Mr. Speaker, it cannot be worth it.
7.35 p.m.

I therefore say to the House, Sir, that where the referendum is concerned, that we the Barbados Labour Party, having examined all of the circumstances, fundamentally believe that at this juncture where this critical decision has to be made, in our judgement, it is preferable for Barbados to chart a course independent of the international lending institutions in the fullest confidence, not that our circumstances are the best in terms of reserves, but in the confidence, as far as I am concerned, that the changes that have been taking place in the international economy are changes that work to the advantage of a country like ourselves.

I must stress what those changes are. Historically the competitive advantage of countries like ourselves have been determined by the wage rates that we pay our labour or access to abundance of natural resources, The world in which we live is a world in which countries competitive advantage, and their capacity to go forward as nations, is more now determined by the skill of their human resources, the productivity and the ingenuity of their people.

I say to this House, Sir, that I have the fullest confidence that in this brave new world, the investment that has been made in building the skills of the people of this country historically by that side and this side, endows Barbados, with a competitive advantage over any country in the Caribbean and in Latin America.

I feel, Sir, that when I commit the Barbados Labour Party in this kind of referendum to the position that we must go forward independent of these institutions, I am making a statement of confidence in the capacity of the people of this country left to themselves to undertake their own structural adjustment. In this matter, this issue has not been seriously challenged by anybody on the Government side. I feel deep in my heart that the country can make it, that we can tell the IADB that we are no longer prepared to endure the kind of pain where people's salaries have to be cut, where people have to be told that in order to build reserves 10 000 people must go home, when in order to stabilise an economy unemployment claims have to rise by 20 000 people in a year, that such an approach is a bankrupt approach, that the approach that says that we must have growth with joblessness is a bankrupt approach for Barbados.

I am saying at this decisive moment in the history of this country we must say "No" to those institutions. That has been the central issue in this debate. It has gone unchallenged by the Government side. We on this side feel confident in our ability to carry this country forward and I am unapologetic about this. We fundamentally believe that although the reserves are still fragile, although Government financial position is still fragile, that if we on this side had to work with it that we could give Barbados the prospect of a brighter future.

From that point of view, Mr. Speaker, we feel that where the question of the referendum posed by this debate is concerned, that the Minister of Finance's Budget which sets the stage, as he will acknowledge, for an enhanced surveillance programme followed by an IADB type programme to be our future, is irrelevant to Barbados. It is a bankrupt approach to our immediate destiny and we say "No" to it.

Mr. Speaker, a large number of the small issues raised by the Budget have also not been seriously addressed by the Government. No single member on the Government side has advanced any serious proposal for the creation of one job and that is a fact. No member on the Government side has challenged the Opposition's position on the question of the formation of energy prices. Let me repeat what that is. Simply that prices of energy products in Barbados are too high largely because of the high element of consumption tax on energy products and that in circumstances where the prices of energy products are declining and are likely to decline, our economy could be given a greater competitive boost by Govenunent making an adjustment to energy prices larger than that contemplated by the Minister of Finance's Budget Show some confidence in the future of this economy by easing a little bit of the taxes in order to restore the competitive position of Barbadian producers whether it is in tourism, manufacturing, agriculture or any other sector that depends upon energy.

We are also saying, Sir, that all of that is possible if the Minister stops believing that he does not have

elbow room. The Minister of Finance does not have elbow room only because he has allowed himself mentally to be put within the straight jacket of the International Monetary Fund's approach to financial management affairs. The notion that Barbados' deficit – and again that has been a central issue in the Budget, that we do not believe that a Minister of Finance in Barbados must be so constrained as to have zero deficits or 1.5% deficits as is now the norm practised and preached by the Democratic Labour Party.

I will urge the Prime Minister to speak to his Minister of Finance because in 1991 he was then of the view that a deficit of even 2.5% was too tough. But his Minister of Finance is now telling us that a deficit of 1.5% is good for Barbados. If he was to open up his mind to the possibilities that could exist outside the framework of an IMF/IADB programme to recognise that we could have prudent, sensible deficits that give him more elbow room to ease energy prices a little bit, to ease the duties on manufacturing within the context of sustainable deficit, Barbados can go forward. We want in this debate to refocus that issue because it is critical to the whole question as to whether the people of Barbados can approach the immediate future of this country with a sense of hope.

Mr. Speaker, no one on the Government side has also done other than apologise for the timid approach to tax relief. Again, the $2.3 million approach to tax relief has to be seen within the context of Government's overall approach to the size of the deficit where the assumption is a 1.5% deficit. The Minister of Finance has more options available to him. I am saying therefore to the House that the key issue in this debate has to do with the fact that the Minister of Finance in our judgment from this side starts from a faulty premise.

I would challenge the Government to tell me of any other country in the world, including the United States of America and others, who feel that the deficit must be as small as 1.5% of GDP. I am not at all urging that the Government allow the deficit to get out of hand that would require massive access to Central Bank financing. I am not urging that at all. What I am urging is for the Government to see the need for a creative state as part of the way out of our present difficulties and as part of the way towards a better and more bountiful Barbados. Therefore, it becomes critical that this debate highlights the need for the Government to just relax these assumptions that are strangling initiatives in this country. That has been one of the fundamental issues in this debate that has not at all been countered by the Government.

In this debate, Mr. Speaker, as well, no one on the Government side has even spoken remotely to what the Government is doing by way of privatisation. It is a lack of confidence by the Government in its own policies. I say to the Government that if it goes back and reads its own Manifesto in relation to how the Democratic Labour Party left to itself to conceive of building this society, it would not do what it is trying to do by way of privatisation because it is in conflict with its own Manifesto. It would not do what it is proposing to do in relation to manufacturing, agriculture or tourism. If the Democratic Labour Party left to itself would not do what it is now doing, why should we on this side support the Democratic Labour Party in putting on the people of Barbados policies which deep in their hearts they know are not in this country's best interest? That in many respects is also what this debate is about.

7.45 p.m.

I thank the Honourable Member for St. Philip South for having the courage to speak as frankly and as honestly as he did in relation to the lack of virtue in Government's tax reform. I thank him for having the honesty to speak as clearly as he did to the question of Government's incomes policy and its direction. It was refreshing to hear a Member with the conscience and the commitment to say to this Government, I think we have failed the people, let us look for another course.

In this debate we have also challenged the Government to acknowledge that there is a political crisis. There is a serious political crisis having to do with the collapse of Cabinet Government. It is shaking the stability of Government and is affecting the investment prospects of this society. If the Government wants to paper over it, if the Government wants to pretend it does not exist, that is the Government's business.

But the people in Barbados, Mr. Speaker, Sir, see day by day, the crisis that is at hand and they understand that fundamental to that crisis is the way in which the Prime Minister construes of his relationship to the Members of his Cabinet and to professionals in the wider society. Sir, I cannot, in this House quote from newspapers but I would urge the Minister of Finance to read the ***Caribbean Week*** of March 19 to April 1 and read an article written by a person who, Mr. Speaker, cannot be accused of not having his heart in the right place, where the Democratic Labour Party is concerned, the former General Manager of the Democratic Labour Party 1991 General Election. He states in that article, as a matter of fact, something that in all of this disturbs me.

Mr. Speaker, how the Prime Minister seeks to treat the Members of his Cabinet is his business. It is a matter between him and the Members of his Cabinet. It is

for them to determine whether he will be allowed to treat them in an autocratic and dictatorial way or otherwise. If they like his dictatorship it is their business. We do not like it. We will protest against it particularly if it has, at all, to do with the way in which this House, as a Parliament, functions. But when the Prime Minister of a country takes it upon himself to call young professionals of this country and instruct them to withdraw their nomination for a post for which they are professionally qualified and, as the article says the unfortunate young man has no choice but to obey, then I say to this House and to the country that a sick, desperate approach to the governance of our affairs has now started to seep in and that we must rise up against it.

I protest against the prestige and the power of the Prime Minister of this country being used for the sordid and unworthy purpose of intimidating qualified young people in this country from seeking to give to this country the best of their talents. In all of this that is the part of it that is the most reprehensible and that is worthy of the strongest possible public condemnation. It is part of the political crisis because the professionals in this society cannot repose confidence in a system of Government where we are supposed to be trying to put productivity at the centre of our national development effort if a person is not allowed to give vent to his skills and his training merely because the Prime Minister of the country wants to exercise a veto by way of the use of political brute force. It is fundamentally wrong.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there were other matters raised in this debate that I need quickly to react to. I would just tell the Honourable Member for St. Michael West that I was not intending to pander to any political rage when I drew reference to the fact that our new tax system allows the politician to claim his contributions to the Party as an allowance. I was drawing reference to the illogic of the system in which the Government was faced with a situation of a long list of allowances and it took away certain allowances and kept some. I am saying that the system of taxation that we have in this country must be illogical and any responsible person would say it has to be illogical. If you had a situation in which a person could claim mortgage interest on their house as well as their contributions to a political party and that that system was reformed and in its place was put a system in which you can now continue to claim for your party contributions but that you cannot claim for your contributions to your house, that situation is illogical.

I feel proud of my stake in the Barbados Labour Party but I am satisfied that all the other persons in this country who cannot claim their mortgage interest feel as proud of their state as I feel in this political party. That is the issue which I say, Sir, is illogical. I advance the argument, not with a view of embarrassing politicians but to try to get the Government to understand that we must go back to a sensible system of tax reform that enables persons who are interested in dropping real stakes in this society to be able to benefit by way of tax concessions and that was my only intent in dramatizing that shameful condition that now obtains in this country.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has 2 minutes more.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, I feel that this has been a historic debate. It has given the country a chance to hear 2 contrasting positions in relation to Barbados' immediate destiny. We are saying let us go independent. The other side is saying let us continue under the auspices of the multilateral lending institutions.

As I close, Sir, I have to say from this side that when I see that other side and the way in which they are defeated I think of the words of Disraeli speaking, as he was then speaking, in observation of another front bench. He said then that when he sees the front bench on the other side he thinks of a South American seascape; I see a range of exhausted volcanoes.

I am obliged to you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. John.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker. Sir, I want to extend my gratitude to all Members of the House who participated in this debate and even those who did not participate but lent me their moral support from the outset. I think all the contributions on this side, contrary to the impression which the Honourable Leader of the Opposition wishes to say, were by and large constructive and responded to the major issues which were raised in the presentation which he delivered in response to mine. But I must say that had he not moved that Amendment he would not have had a chance to speak again and therefore would not have had the opportunity to redeem himself from the...

Certain remarks made by Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON were ordered, by Mr. SPEAKER, to be struck from the Record.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The end of that speech which he delivered yesterday was something to which all Barbadians, in my view, or about which they should hang their heads in shame. Because this debate has not proceeded at that level. In fact the Honourable Member for St. Peter is the only person for whom he felt it was necessary for the debate to take such a nose dive at

such an early point This opportunity of the Amendment gave him the chance to redeem himself, redeem that speech and perhaps reiterate some of the nonsense which was previously spoken yesterday.

I want to deal with him on his own words. Because I think I have an apology due to the people of Barbados and I will make it now. It is not a personal apology. When it comes to personal apologies, particularly at Budget time some people have earned their leadership in that way. It is not a personal apology. In fact when it comes to personal apologies, particularly at Budget time, some people have earned their leadership that way. But I do not intend to earn leadership by apologising to anybody and then hoping that people would feel 'sorry for me and catapult me into any position. I want to earn it on my record.
7.55 p.m.

The apology I want to make, Mr. Speaker, relates to the fact that I have accused the Honourable Member for St. Peter of delivering one speech in this House and in fact he now delivers two speeches: One as Shadow Minister of Finance and now one as Leader of the Opposition.

As Shadow Minister of Finance he tells us that the institutions have no confidence in this Government. They do not want to lend them any money. They do not like the Honourable Prime Minister. That the Minister of Finance goes to Washington and sits down in silence and listens to everything they have to say and that basically they have absolutely no interest in us. And as a result of that the people of Barbados have to suffer under an administration which is incompetent. So we had that speech for a long time, since 1991.

The second speech is the one which was delivered yesterday in which he now tells us, "tell the institutions to go away. Do not do anything they want you to do. Run a deficit higher than that of 1% of GDP, even though nothing has changed between 1991 and now. Well I cannot understand the logic of that but if there are people in Barbados who can, perhaps they will meet him when he leaves this Chamber tonight and tell him, well done, for that contribution to the economic debate in Barbados.

I want to go on to the issue of tax reform because we spent a lot of time in 1992 on this and regrettably I had to leave the country, after introducing two Bills in here, to travel overseas and was not able to contribute on the debate relating to the amendment to the Income Tax Act in which the Honourable Member for St. Peter spoke. Regrettably I cannot quote him because it comes from this session, but I am not an economist but on the issue of tax reform I want to take his own advice so I have to try and remember, from what I read, what he said.

What he told this House, as far as I recall, is that he wanted to suggest to the Government of Barbados that it must get people who are other than economists to advise it. Economists he said, as I understand it, can advise Government on the macro-economic effects of taxation but that taxation is a complex area ...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well he is an Economist and I therefore choose not to accept his advice on taxation. I would accept the advice of the other people whom he said should advise on it. He says people who understand that issue relating to taxation are more legal than economics. Well I am an Attorney-at-law, Mr. Speaker, by profession, so I would take my own counsel because if I have a choice between eliminating levies ...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of order. Since I do not want the Honourable Member to mislead the House, I would give him permission to read everything that I said.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just a moment. That advice cannot come from another Member. I determine that, whether he should read it or not. If the Honourable Member chooses to speak from memory or otherwise so do. If he wants to speak verbatim so do, but I cannot advise him what to speak.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is correct, Mr. Speaker, I did not come in here on a leash. I want everybody to understand that. So I do not have to take instructions from him or from anybody over there. But this party opposed levies tooth and nail and if there is one thing that we should get credit for and I heard in here today...

I must say to the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, I enjoyed his speech but I was very surprised that he took the position that the tax reform was anti-DLP policies because the very levies that we constantly opposed have now been removed and that was one of the principal planks of the Democratic Labour Party's objection to the policies of the Barbados Labour Party.

So we are totally consistent with our policy and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central said he is a happy man as a Trade Unionist because the Trade Unionists always opposed levies. You know why they oppose them, Mr. Speaker? Levies do not discriminate. The same man whom they said was earning under $12 000 and would be paying no taxes would pay levies. Today a

man earning less than $13 000 is paying neither taxes nor levies under the Democratic Labour Party Government. So, if I have a choice between giving the man under $13 000 over giving myself, because I was one of those people stung by the tax reform with house repairs and mortgage payment interest and all of those things, and I do not make a case for myself and I am not making a case for anybody else in here on that issue. You go and make your case now at Inland Revenue. We are social engineers and we have to determine that the people who must benefit from our policies must be those at the bottom and I agree wholeheartedly with the Honourable Member for St. Philip South on that. That is why he and I are really ad *idem* even though we come from different angles to get to the same point.

We are at the same point and I know that this tax reform provided relief at the bottom and that the disposable income of the average Barbadian increased as a result of that tax reform.

There is a report prepared by two young economists. I do not wish to lay it because I have only seen it today but it shows the total effective rates, comparing the old system and the 1993-94 position assuming the individual is married and has two children. In each category whether earning under $13 000, $15 000, $30 000, $50 000 or $70 000 or $100 000 the effective tax rate in Barbados has declined and that is unchallenged *so* if the Honourable Member for St. Peter wishes to make a case for the privileged he is entitled to. He is best making out my case and I am best when I make out the case for the people who support the Democratic Labour Party.

The average man on the Dayrells Road Corner that the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, arising out of his political sabbatical has now come to recognise, his words "their voices being heard in the Board Rooms of Barbados along with the Honourable Member for the City". That is the story. None of us sit on any Board of any major corporation in Barbados. Not one of us has ever sat on any, neither the Mutual or Life of Barbados or any thing like that. That is your role. I never had to represent the privileged against the workers or any other group and I am fortunate in that regard so I know who my support comes from and I join hands with the Honourable Member for St. Philip South and all the others on this side in making our case for the poor and underprivileged in this country. And you can continue to make my case wherever you wish to make it but this is not the place for it in my view.

I want to go on Mr. Speaker to the issue of the role of Government because the Honourable Member for St. George South ...I always say Mr. Speaker, he is definitely the wisest of all of them. But he cannot get his view point through in the Barbados Labour Party. When they took down his picture off the wall in the Barbados Labour Party Headquarters he should have taken it down to the Democratic Labour Party Headquarters and come to me as General Secretary and we could then talk about the role of Government. Because this Government has invested major funds and resources in every single productive sector and I am going to use the Honourable Member for St. Peter's words again to demonstrate that point. I came to the Ministry of Finance in March 1992. At that time there was no separate vote for the offshore sector. That money was spent a little bit here, little bit there, and it was left to the fancies of the Central Bank and the Industrial Development Corporation. Imagine in 1994 after we set up a unit to look specially at the offshore sector, we provided it with $406 000. And in 1992 not a cent in direct Government support. Today the Honourable Member can say in this debate, Mr. Speaker, that the Govemment is not putting enough resources in the international financial business sector. So we went from zero to $406,000 and I am hearing now that that is just a start.

8.05 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. Who was the Minister of Finance at that time?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of order.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The then Minister of Finance introduced the Unit to Barbadians just over a year ago and since then it has done considerable work.

They allowed the sugar sector to generate *so* much debt and they did so much foolishness with it, and for which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South said that his idea of restructuring is writing a letter to the Barbados National Bank. That is his idea of restructuring the sugar sector by writing a letter to the Board of Directors of the BNB. Not a cent in direct budget support from Government. That is what is called Government intervention and in 1994 the Government provided $20 million in capital for the sugar industry in direct support, $1.8 million in an incentive for the non-indebted plantations for planting, and between $6 million to $8 million in direct budgetary support to the sugar sector. That is Government's intervention in the productive sectors. There is no retreat. It is just that we are re-orienting those resources such that Barbadians can see their money being spent in areas that will give them returns instead of having them being frittered away like $30 million was done in CARIFESTA, on boats for the Defence Force to sail Prime Ministers up and down off the shores of Barbados, and on airplanes for the Defence Force. I can give you a whole list of squandermania which occurred under the Barbados Labour Party.

Let us go on now to manufacturing. I do not have to say a word about that because the Honourable Member for St. Philip North made it clear that Government is not retreating from its responsibility to the manufacturing sector.

So let us go to tourism. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South said not a word about tourism. Well, he did not hear it last year. Bds$9 million was spent in additional support for the tourism sector in terms of advertising and promotion in the various markets throughout the world. Is that a Government in retreat? Can that be Govemment redefined? That is precisely what it is. So that those resources are used in the productive sectors of Barbados. That gives the lie to all the statements that are made whether in this Chamber or outside giving the impression that the Government has done nothing. We have heard about C-turns and capitulation and I refute those allegations because they do not represent what this Government has done.

Let us talk about the fiscal deficit. The Honourable Member for St. Peter is an Economist. I heard the Budget very carefully in 1991 and I knew the pain as a result of it. So I did not sit in silence and get detached about it. There were two Budgets and the Honourable Prime Minister then indicated, not that a 1 per cent fiscal deficit was too draconian, but that the adjustment from a 9 per cent of GDP deficit to a 1 per cent was too draconian. That is what was said. An economist should understand those things. Because, really, if you have a 1 per cent deficit or a 2 per cent deficit, it is something that we can debate about. If you are bringing a deficit from 9 per cent of GDP down to 1 per cent of GDP, that is a massive turn around and adjustment in the fiscal fortunes of any country. That is why there was so much pain associated with the programme which the Democratic Labour Party had to introduce to bring balance to this country. I have heard the economist talk. I have heard him as Leader of the Opposition and as Shadow Minister of Finance and I cannot reconcile those three positions. I wish that I could and I will try my best between now and whenever he, according to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, chooses to destabilize this Government or practice his alchemy, according to the Honourable Member for St. James North, on the rest of Barbados. I know it by my definition. I do not practise either hat or black magic. I am not a witchdoctor so I...

Mr. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. It is that type that turns into gold. There is such a dictionary in town where he can find out, Sir.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, if he read the dictionary properly, he would discover that in changing base metals they look like gold but really they are brass. I said I do not believe or practise those things, but I do like to read about them. You cannot get me on that. So he will give Barbadians brass but tell them that it is really gold. I am trying to work it all out, Mr. Speaker. I am trying to unravel it.

We heard of a ten-point plan, I must tell you that when I read it I would like to commend the Honourable Member for St. Peter for reading all of the studies which the Democratic Labour Party generated and for allowing the Barbados Labour Party, not himself, for perpetrating a hoax on the people by suggesting that these ideas are theirs. Because if I were to take yesterday's newspaper...(Remind me to get back to the political contributions issue.)

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not going to read it. I am taking it I said. No, no, no. You would not find me reading a newspaper in here. I know the rules of the House too well. In any event, thank goodness it is the *Nation* Newspaper that I would read.

Regarding the manufacturing sector, the Honourable Member makes the point about protecting domestic manufacturing from the adverse effects of the exchange rate adjustment in relation to their competing territories in the region. But he did not say how he would do this. Whereas in the paragraph where there is talk of removing the takes on inputs and the duties...

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir. I have said to this House before on many occasions and recommended that the Government of Barbados should have used countervailing duties. So he cannot mislead this House by saying that 1 have not said how I would propose to do it.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, I know you did not say it yesterday. So tell the House that you did not say that yesterday if you are so quick to jump up. I am saying that I wonder why he did not say so. Well, he has now explained why. Okay, he said countervailing duties. We have opted not to go the route of countervailing duties because we understand that we also have obligations in CARICOM. I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has always told us how important it is to be a good CARICOM citizen. So we try to follow that precept. If the new Labour Party wishes to go the route of trying to mash up or lick up all of the harmonization that we have sought to develop over time, well that is their business. But we are going to play good corporate citizens and when we get mashed sometimes we will have to

accept it and move on. Because there are nobler goals at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker.

8.15 p.m.

He goes on to the issue of imaginative capital development programme which restores to this country the level of capital spending on agriculture. He talks about way back when people were spending $15 million in capital development on agriculture. This year alone we have nearly $40 million devoted to agriculture, some of which is reimbursable, it is true.

I am going to move on. We are told to increase Government's capital spending on imaginative projects to lift agricultural productivity of the country. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has indicated the projects which the Governmerit has on stream. We are told to get construction going again through tax reform. Now this is the fist time I am discovering that construction declined because of tax reform because the Barbados Labour Party was telling us that construction declined from way back in 1990-91 because of the economic conditions. Now we are being told that the way to restore buoyant construction is through tax reform. I cannot understand Mr. Speaker, how they come up and conjure up all of these illusions to make the people in Barbados think that they are suddenly coming up with some ten-point plan.

Government must invest more money in Speightstown. We have several private companies which wish to invest in Speightstown. In fact, one of the companies was willing to purchase Heywoods Hotel but you all said, "don't sell it to foreigners". You are annoyed if we discuss anything with foreigners. In fact, you get annoyed if we are discussing with Bajans nowadays. That is my understanding. We are not to discuss the sale of assets with anybody because they don't belong to us but we were discussing a project which would involve the purchase of Heywoods Hotel, the development of a marina in Speightstown, duty free facilities and the total development of Speightstown.

Anyway as I say, you say what you have to say and people draw their own conclusions about whether they can plan in an environment where an Opposition makes it clear that were they to win the Government that they would take back all of the assets which this Government sold. I heard that. The Barbados National Oil Company were told very clearly that if we sell it, the Opposition – and they did not say expropriated so I wonder how they will get it back – argued that they will expropriate it. How can we seek to have a sensible...

Aside,

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: ... that climate of investment cannot function in this country with an Opposition which is so subversive of the interest of restoring economic confidence. It cannot.

Eco-tourism. There are many projects on stream for eco-tourism. The Rt. Honourable Prime Minister just opened one somewhere in St. Thomas. It does not have to be Government all the time. We can facilitate those investments while spending on our productive sectors.

Development of an export culture. We have heard about that this evening from the Honourable Member for St. Philip North. Now we hear about reform of the financial system. We spent the past 3 years seeking to clean up the BNB, clean up the BDB, provide an environment for capital development, sell state assets and put them in a public enterprise investment fund to make them available for new investments into hotel refurbishing and in small businesses. That is financial reform and engineering.

They now come up with some kind of idea that you need financial reform. Those words sound nice if you are writing a journal or if you want to quote from the journal that you wrote years ago. You can write some now and save us that problem and let me make them documents of the House. That would be the answer. A regime for small and medium sized businesses in this country.

When I was trying to explain to this House what the funds from the Public Enterprise Investment Fund would be used to do, Members of the Opposition were saying that it is a slush fund into which politicians are going to dip for money. That is the kind of environment in which we are planning in this country. It is the height of irresponsibility and I am saying so.

On one hand, they are trying to tell you you cannot run the economy but they are also doing everything possible to make it difficult for any of your ideas at any level to be brought to fruition. But that is their job and we are not going to fight with them on them.

I want to go, Mr. Speaker, to parliamentarians' contribution because I said something at the beginning and you asked me to withdraw it and I will be very happy to withdraw it. I want the public to determine how politicians function on the basis of this. I sat down with the private sector with the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and some others and we came up with a tax reform programme. It was not the exact recommendation of the IMF. We made many adjustments and we laid the initial report and we brought the reform subsequent to that.

You can judge what happened and what was said. We did make changes but the principal point I want to make is that I had to leave here at 2 o'clock in the afternoon so I could not stay for the debate on the Income Tax Act and the Honourable Member for St. Peter didn't stay either but the 2 wealthiest Members of the House, and they are not on this side, are the ones who made the case to retain political contributions and others on this side agreed with them after. I have no problem with that. We were accommodating them.

The two wealthiest Members of this House argued. One argued that it was subversive of democratic traditions and he talked about democratic socialism as he always does even when he practises capitalism. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West waxed warm. He said people would find these provisions obnoxious to remove these concessions from the Income Tax Act for Credit Unions and political parties and talked about funding of political parties. All of that he said.

In response to that the Government said...

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order. The Honourable Member must reflect the debate. I objected most strenuously in the debate to the removal of mortgage interest, to the removal of repairs and improvements. I objected most strongly in the debate as well to the removal of the benefits to the Credit Unions and I also objected most strongly to the removal of the contributions to political parties on the basis that we must stop the corruption in the system where we accept money from people and there is no state subsidy to it. It was supported by the Honourable Members on the other side, including the Rt. Honourable Member for St. Michael South and the trade unionists in the House at the time.

So the Honourable Member must not cite parts...

Mr. SPEAKER: The point is made.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, only about three people spoke in the debate. It is on page 2444 but I cannot quote from it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has three minutes more.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: He was followed by the Honourable Member for St. George North who was making a point not about political contributions. He was then followed by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South who said he felt it was a fundamental tenet. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West said he was even writing an article on it for some journal.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, the Honourable Member must reflect the position. During that debate, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South and myself had to help the Government do its drafting and re-drafting of various parts of the Income Tax Act along with the Chief Parliamentary Counsel and the Honourable Member would know that. So don't say that they did not support it.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am only trying to find out what that is about. Do you want to be paid for it as well as get the political contributions tax deductible? But that's your job. The people sent you in here to do the people's business and you are telling me that you drafted something?

Mr. SPEAKER: A point of order. Two Honourable Members are on their feet.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member is suggesting to the public that I come in here and do the people's work and ask for...

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

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, I am making a point of order and I am saying it is suggesting improper motives and no matter how he believes that he is related to Tom Adams he must not believe that...

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please!

What I was trying to say to the Honourable Member was that I had no objection in your responding to the point made but when you extended beyond the point then it becomes no point of order.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I spoke in my presentation about ghosts under the bed but I was not really referring at that time to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and any fears that he might have. I know who I am. If he doesn't know who he is, that is his problem.

The point I want to make Mr. Speaker is – and I want to make it very clear in this debate – that we did not deduce any argument on this side first to have the political contributions restored. So that when the Honourable Member for St. Peter told the House that when the tax reform came to this House it was suggested on the floor of the House that politicians' contributions to political parties should be allowed as a deduction and that was endorsed, he should have said who said so. In all fairness to the people of Barbados he should have said that it was the Labour Party that suggested it and it was agreed to but he was not here nor was I.

8.25 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I have made my position clear in this debate. I think the public of Barbados can see the sham for what it is. We have our job to do. We have invested resources in the development of the productive sectors in this country. We have done tax reform. We have developed an incomes policy. This Government is working hard and no matter how they try on that side to throw barbs to us of corruption, disunity and all of the other things they say, we have a job to do. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the Democratic Labour Party will survive anything as far as I am concerned.

The second point I want to make is that at the rate that we are going, this party is going to be able to take credit in the 21st Century for all of the reforms which will bring prosperity, employment, development and a safe and secure future to all of our citizens.

I thank you on that note, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is that the words to be deleted stand part. I hope members understand clearly. If you are not so clear as to what is put you can ask the Clerk.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Sir, so that there will be no misunderstanding because there are some Honourable Members...

Mr. SPEAKER: It is the amendment that is going to be put first.

Hon. B. M. TAI'IT: Yes, Sir. There are some Honourable Members who have not participated in this kind of vote before. The question, as I understand it, will be that the words to be deleted stand part which would mean that the Opposition's words would become part of the Resolution and so we should vote "No" if we do not want it to be that way. Am I correct?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I just wanted to be certain. Put it, Sir.

The question that the words to be deleted stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative the House dividing as follows:-

Ayes: Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, Hon. B. M. TAI'IT, Hon. M. A. KING, Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, Hon. C. V. WALKER, Hon. J. O. TUDOR, Hon. D. W. BOWEN, Hon. T. C. ESTWICK, Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, Mr. R. L. MORRIS, Mr. E. E. GREAVES, Mr. W. W. HALL and Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN - 14.

Noes: Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Miss B. A. MILLER, Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Mr. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. L. R. TULL, Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. R. C. EASTMOND and Mr. G. W. PAYNE - 10.

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

Hon. B. M. TAI'IT: Mr. Speaker, we had hoped that this day would have given us the opportunity to go on the Easter break. However, Sir, there are a couple of matters, notably the Shipping Bill, which the Honourable Member has to complete. We had deferred discussion on that to allow the Honourable Members on the other side to participate. At this hour it would be a little unconscionable, given that the Reporters were functioning since 10 o'clock this morning, to seek to do anymore business.

In the circumstances I would like to thank all those Honourable Members who participated in the Budgetary exercise. This is an annual opportunity for Members to speak not only in this Chamber but to the extended audience in Barbados and beyond. I would like to thank Honourable Members for their cooperation to the extent that I received it during this debate.

I would also like to thank the Reporters, the members of the Press, the members of the Police and other security forces and all those who participated in helping to make this annual event a successful one.

I think also it was the first time that our colleague delivered the Budget and I think all Barbados would want to offer congratulations to him for the manner in which he performed both before and after.

8.35 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I now beg to move, Sir, that this House be adjourned until Tuesday April 5, 1994 at 12.00 o'clock noon.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly at 8.36 p.m.

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