THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 - 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, May 1.7, 1994

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 **p.m.**

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. **WEEKES,** G.C.M., J.P., (Speaker)
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. 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)
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.**
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.Sc.** (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. G. W. **PAYNE**

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Zwan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, April 5, 1994.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes for the meeting held on April 5, 1994 are at hand and, in fact, have **been** distributed to Honourable Members. That is my understanding. I move, Sir, that they be taken as read and confirmed.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY YOUR HONOUR

Mr. SPEAKER: From Her Excellency the Govemor-General, May 5, **1994:-**

> "I shall be away from the Island from 7 - 29 May, 1994, on a visit to South Africa, the United States of America and Canada.

In accordance with the provision of section 29 (1) (b) of the Constitution, the Honourable Sir Denys

Ambrose Williams, Knight Bachelor, holder of the Gold Crown of Merit, will perform the functions of the Office of Governor-General during my absence.

As the Honourable the House of Assembly will not be meeting prior to my departure, it will not be possible for the usual formal message to be sent down to your Chamber. Will you therefore please bring my absence formally to the attention of the Honourable the House of Assembly when next it meets.

I have the honour to be,
Yours faithfully,

(Signed) Nita Barrow
Governor-General."

I am also in receipt of Accounts and Statements for the months of January and February, 1994 as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Housing, and by command of the Cabinet, I lay the following:

The 19th Annual Report of the National Housing Corporation for the financial year 1991-1992.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, by the command of the Cabinet I lay the following:

The Annual Reports of the Community Legal Services Commission for the years 1991-92 and 1992-93.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) Order 1994;

2. The Public Officers Loan and Travelling Allowances (Amendment) Regulations, 1994.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Honourable Minister of Labour, Public Works, Community Development and Sports, I am commanded by the Cabinet to lay the following:

The 15th Annual Report of the National Sports Council for the financial year 1992-93.

OBITUARY NOTICES

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to draw to the attention of the House what it already knows that a former Governor-General, Sir Hugh Springer, passed away while this House was in recess. I rise to pay a tribute to the life and work of this most outstanding Barbadian, Caribbean and world citizen. His life and times, and his work, were limited not only to the Barbados scene but also to the Caribbean and beyond.

I, Sir, did not know Sir Hugh during his early years as a politician and trade unionist but in my search for understanding of the currents and trends that have helped to form modem Barbados, I encountered him through speaking to other Barbadians who knew of his work and also through primary and secondary sources which are available to good researchers. I therefore found myself reading up the newspapers, talking to those who were alive at the time, and reading the books, including the history of trade unionism in Barbados, and consulting other sources.

Sir Hugh was a member of this Honourable Chamber at a time when it was not easy for persons of colour to break through the barriers that provided impediments for those who wished to get into the political arena. I am not saying that it is easy now because there are many hurdles. Those of us who are in that arena have to overcome many disappointments and many setbacks. Those of us who are in here now have been able to deal with these, and to gain a seat in this Chamber which must not be seen as a Chamber for honorific purposes, but one which provides each one of us with an opportunity to contribute to the public weal, the public well-being, and the public welfare. That was the role that Sir Hugh played in those early years, paving a way for those of us who would follow to help to create a greater measure of social justice and economic progress for the masses of people of this country.

There are others, Sir, who can speak more knowingly and from personal experience of his years as a trade unionist and as a Member of Parliament. There are also those who can attest to his contribution towards the building up of education in the Caribbean. He was, as I recall, a member of the Irvine Committee which helped to chart the path for the establishment of the University of the West Indies. He himself became the first Registrar of that University. Like other Members in this Honourable Chamber I am a product of that University, Sir. So it is with a sense of pride that I recall the contribution of this founding father who played such an outstanding role in the development of the University.
12.30 p.m.

While at the University, I had the honour to become President of the Guild of Undergraduates of the University of the West Indies at Mona. You cannot change the record. That is a fact. In that capacity, as well as in other capacities I had an opportunity to meet with Sir Hugh

both as Registrar and on those occasions when he was deputizing for the Principal of the University. It was customary and traditional for the student leaders to meet with the Head of the University to discuss any problems, or proposals, or developments which may be indicated for the good governance and the improvement of the University. It is during those meetings that I got an insight into the very sound and solid thought processes and views and opinions of this very outstanding Barbadian.

I encountered Sir Hugh again, Sir, when I was at Manchester, University, the Victoria University of Manchester and I formed and became a President of the West Indies Students' Association at Manchester. You cannot change the records. I remembered inviting him up to Manchester to deliver an address to this West Indies Students' Association. We had a very delightful evening at the residence where my wife and I were staying at that time. It was enlightening to get the viewpoints of someone who had been involved in the creation of educational and political structures in Barbados and the Caribbean and to hear him giving his insights into the past, the present and the future of West Indian society.

Sir Hugh has made a contribution in many other fields as well, not only as Registrar, but also as Head of the Institute of Education of the University of the West Indies which brought under his control the teaching arm of the University, its Extra-Mural Departments and other agencies. In those capacities he helped to create and develop the concept that education for Barbados and the Caribbean was an ongoing process in which all persons should be involved.

He himself was an author and he wrote a book on the West Indies Federation, the exact title I think is...

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: ..."Reflections on the Failure of the First West Indian Federation". That is still one of the most readable short introductions to the aims and objectives of West Indianism as well as the pitfalls and the failures and the problems that arose and led to the collapse of that short-lived experiment in federalism in the Caribbean. I still go back to it to fortify myself, in my own view that federalism or its variant confederalism represents a goal to which we should press on. I know that I share this with the other Member of the Prime Ministerial club in this Chamber, the Honourable Member for Christ Church South.

All in all his has been a life which can serve as a model for young Barbadians to bear in mind and try to emulate. One of his major themes was the theme of the pursuit of excellence. He had spoken on this theme on a number of occasions. I believe that if we seek to pursue excellence in the terms that he himself enunciated this country will know no limits to the achievements that it can attain, whether it is in the pursuit of economic excellence, in the pursuit of financial excellence, in the pursuit of environmental excellence, or in the pursuit of excellence in public discourse in order that the issues and the objectives of that discourse may be heightened and enhanced. Perhaps that is the outstanding theme, the pursuit of excellence which I would wish to commend to this Honourable House and to the country as a whole.

I would wish, Sir, to indicate in closing that he himself was a very religious person, that he was a man committed to family. Like most of us in public life, the cares of office sometimes took him away from family concerns much more than he himself would have wished. But in the end it was to the family that he returned. It is also very important in this year dedicated to the family that we should pay a tribute to his particular contributions towards family life.

12.40 p.m.

May I also, lest I forget it, pay a tribute to the very sound advice which he gave to me as Prime Minister whenever, on those regular occasions when I visited with him at the Governor-General's residence, and which again the Member for Christ Church South would be familiar with. Prime Ministers consult on a periodic basis with the Heads of State and they discuss matters of state with them.

On those occasions, the advice of Sir High Springer was always very sound, very practical, born out of a life that had been steeled in the experiences, not only of Parliament, but of institutions and the working of institutions, and he was well aware of the glue that was required in order to hold things together and to keep things together so that they would not fall apart.

In that regard, Sir, I could always count on a very non-partisan, non-political, point of view that helped me tremendously in shouldering the burdens and cares of office, Sir.

I move this Resolution of condolence, and in doing so, on behalf of myself, my wife and family, my Government and this Honourable House, I extend to his surviving relatives my deepest sympathy on the passing of this most worthy Barbadian and I would hope, Sir, that this our tribute here would be passed on in the usual way to his family.

Thank you, Sir.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the year 1994, this year, has already been distinctive for the large number of nation builders, ex-parliamentarians, and Barbadian statesmen who have passed to the great beyond and the most recent has been Sir High Springer.

Already many generous and well-deserved tributes have already been paid, some by Members on this side, particularly the Honourable Member for Christ Church West and the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, who have spoken in other fora with respect to the distinguished contribution to the building up of modem Barbados and to the founding and the strengthening of institutions in the region and in the wider Commonwealth.

Like the Honourable Prime Minister, I knew him briefly as Registrar of the University of the West Indies. I also knew him in his capacity as External Examiner for Manchester University in matters concerning West Indian affairs. He was, and it is not widely known, external Examiner for Oxford, for Manchester, London University and several other British Universities on West Indian matters. In fact when I defended my thesis which had to do with constitutional and political development in Barbados over the period 1946 to 1966, he was one of the external Examiners who sat on the pancl and I will return to that shortly.

His career is well-known, Mr. Speaker. Barbados Scholar after which he went on to Oxford and read Modem Greats and thereafter was to come back to Barbados as a Lawyer, a Member of the Inner Temple, but he was to throw himself fully into the life of the Labor Movement which was then in its very early days and that meant, not only, the politics of the Progressive League, but also the activities of the Workers' Union because in those days they were seen as siamese twins and for many years there was that siamese twin relationship between the Progressive League and the Barbados Workers' Union. For many years he was Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union.

He came to Parliament in 1940 and he was to remain as the Member for St. George until 1947 when he left and went to the University of the West Indies as Registrar - the first Registrar of the then University of the West Indies, which had only a year before been started.

The very interesting thing is that he was one of two Members of the lawyer class - Grantley Adams, later Sir Grantley Adams and Hugh Springer who identified in those early days, the 1930s, with the causes of the masses. Except for Henderson Clarke, in the late forties, he was for a very brief period to lend his support to the movement. The movement was starved of the support of middle class professionals in those days. But that was surprising for Hugh Springer because even in his days, as a student, he was the Treasurer of a pressure group - I forget the name - a group for the emancipation of coloured peoples in the United Kingdom in the late 1930s and they, as one of their aims, used to bring leaders of colonial people to London so that they could meet with the most liberal Members of the British Labour Party - Creech Jones, Rita Hendon and others who were Members of the Fabian Society and also Members of the British Labour Party at the time. I believe that it was in that context that he was able to organise funds and raise funds for Grantley Adams to come up to London and address them in the late 1930s.

His contribution in the period 1940 to 1947 was mostly as an organiser of the Trade Union Movement. He was instrumental in establishing the Caribbean Labour Congress on a regional basis but through his negotiating skills, his methodical organising manner, he was able to help the Labour Party, the Progressive League and also the Trade Union Movement to establish its early gains, particularly the right to negotiate on behalf of workers. He was a perfect foil and a complement to Sir Grantley who was the tribune of the people. He was the great mobilizer. But as far as discipline, hard work, methodical work and attention to detail was concerned, it is well-known that Grantley Adams was deficient, but that deficiency was well taken care of by the quiet methodical work of Hugh Springer. He was to leave Barbados and play his part in the region, particularly in the area of higher education. The Honourable Prime Minister has dealt with that aspect of his career and later on he was to move to the United Kingdom where he served as Secretary of Commonwealth Universities Association. While there, he also served as an External Examiner for several well-established, prestigious English universities.

12.50 p.m.

His career has been varied and distinguished and he will be remembered as a parliamentarian, scholar, trade unionist, educator, administrator and he will be remembered also, Sir, as a statesman. I came in contact with him at two very interesting points in my life. In 1962, Mr. Speaker, I went to Jamaica at the invitation of the Jamaica Youth Club Council to participate and to observe the Independence celebrations and while there it occurred to me that I had lost all interest in the Barbados Civil Service where I was a clerk for two years and I badly needed to get into the University. That was the very year that I had not applied. That was in August and I needed to get in by the beginning of the mid-year term in October. The family where I was staying in Kingston suggested to me that I needed to call Hugh Springer, a Barbadian, and go and see him with respect to gaining admission for October. I took my courage in my hand and called him and he asked me to come and see him. I must say that as he approached me on that moming I was a little fearful because he wore a somewhat stern demeanor and a little off-footing. But when once we started to speak, he immediately put me at ease. He took up the form and he called Lloyd Brathwaite who was then on campus who was in charge of the Department of Social Sciences while the others were on holiday. He asked him to make

arrangements for my admission and within a matter of weeks I was back up to the University of the West Indies. Many years after I had come to the end of my university career and had submitted my thesis at Manchester University, my professor told me a few days before...

Aside.

Dr. R. L. **CHELTENHAM:** Yes, I was not alone in the graduates of Manchester University which the Prime Minister has reminded me...that Barbadian Hugh Springer was one of the External Examiners. In the course of my interview, he said something very important. For many years in the 1940's, he served as a member of the Executive Committee and when the Bush Experiment came into being in 1946 he served for a few months as a member of the Executive Committee. But he said in the course of that interview that he was the author of that experiment and it has gone into history bearing the name of the theh dominant Sir Grantley Bush. He said that he very much looked forward to having the time to set the record straight.

I know that in his last years there was a former Senator, Mr. Wickham, who was working with him and writing his biography, and I do not know how far he has got, but I very much hope that task has been completed and that we will have the benefit of his memory, recollection and experiences. Too many of our distinguished citizens have gone to the great beyond and have left us no record of their experiences to help teach us.

I agree with the Right Honourable Prime Minister that the pursuit of excellence was one of the values, as it were, that characterized his entire life but I would mention two others. It seems to me that devotion to the welfare of his country is also another one. It is very significant that when he came back here after a full life in the early 1980's that he was anxious almost after the time he arrived to throw himself in again and to make some contribution. He was prepared to serve and indeed serve for many years as Chairman of the National Training Board. He took the job seriously almost as though it was his first job and he worked very devotedly and very seriously as Chairman of the National Training Board. He was always looking for opportunities to serve and it was very fitting that he should have ended up after a life of very distinguished service as the dignified Head of State, Governor-Generalof Barbados after having served for a short period in 1964 as Acting Governor-General.

But there is another of his values that I would like to identify and that is service. Not only was he a person of excellence and devotion to his country, but service is something we have got to remember. He set a first-class example in that respect. To his dying day he was concerned to serve and to search out any opportunity to serve. If there is one thing that can be said about his life, it was a life of incomparable and distinguished service to his fellow man.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that in time the country will establish a suitable memorial and that we would not allow a life such as the life of Sir Hugh to go unrecognized in that respect. I think it has been said by the Prime Minister that his life has a lot to teach us. I think that his service has been sufficiently distinguished and long and varied to this country and I hope in time this country will establish a suitable memorial.

I would also like to suggest at this time that we ought to remember Lady Springer who was at his side for all of his adult life and who herself behind the scenes made an important contribution to his own performance. So that without delay in any way of this tribute and repeating what has been said by so many others – I have just read a very generous tribute paid by the *Times* of London, 20th April, 1994. I would just like to indicate that we on this side fully support the Resolution before this House. We are happy to add our quota to these tributes which have already been paid.

Mr. R. L. MORRIS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to support the Resolution and endorse the comments made by previous speakers. I dare say that there would be very few persons in this House who would not have been influenced by the life and work of Sir Hugh Springer. The first nine decades of this century would have seen the establishment of the trade union movement as a well-recognized and accepted institution in our country. We would have seen the work of major contributors to the establishment of that institution. I think one would clearly say that Sir Hugh falls within a group of about 6 persons: Charles Duncan O'Neal, Clement Osbourne Payne, Clennell Wickham, Sir Grantley Adams and Sir Frank Walcott who contributed most at the leadership level of the labour movement and the trade union as an institution within that movement over that period. They set the standards and the examples that others would have to try to match in the future development of that movement and of that institution. Wherever Sir Hugh wrote about his own career, he attributed the motivation to his becoming involved to Clennell Wickham. Therefore, it is only fitting that the son of the great Clennell Wickham is the person to be the biographer of Sir Hugh. Because those who study the work of Clennell Wickham know that in fact he was a tower of intellectual strength, an activist of the first order in early Barbados using the *Herald* Newspaper as his forum. I think he touched everybody who was interested in the worth of the masses of people in the country. He certainly touched the life of the young Hugh Springer, who came from the kind of background where discussions by Wickham and others would have been normal in his drawing room.

1.00 p.m.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph has spoken about details of his life and his history, as a political historian himself, and he referred to his work with Dr. Harold Moody. The name of that organisation was "The League of Coloured People". Hugh Springer served in that organisation for some years in England and it is a quiet part of his life that he never made a lot of fuss about, because he was not a noisy person, but he believed very, very strongly in the negro movement, the movement of African people, and he devoted a lot of his life to that. You can see in the life of his daughter, Richild, for instance, the attempt to bring the art of African dance experience to the highest level, the level of excellence.

He was not one of the persons who would be out there shouting on a platform about negritude, about black power, but he and those who worked with him believed very strongly in the role of coloured people, as they would have been called at that time, and therefore he was part of that institution working very hard in Britain at a time when racial discrimination was certainly not at the stand it is now, it was at the height of discrimination. We are talking about the 30's and 40's when movements were being made in South Africa to institutionalise apartheid. He had been working with Dr. Moody and others to indicate that black people were people of quality and that they could reach every possible level. I think his biographer should spend some time on that particular aspect, the dignity that he brought to the African and the Caribbean personality.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph also touched on an area that is not much debated about Sir Hugh Springer, that is, his role in the Caribbean Labour Congress as it was then. When that Congress met at Harrison College in 1945 it was really Hugh Springer and Frank Walcott who did the work of organising the Congress, bringing hundreds of delegates from across the Caribbean to give the first structure to an organisation that was relatively loose up to that time. It started out as the British West Indies and Guiana Labour Congress in 1926. There were meetings in 1937 and 1938, but the really big meeting was held in 1945. By that time the difficulties were even greater than before in attempting to bring the movement together, because there were developments in Jamaica, for instance, where the leftist movement, of the four H's, had already caused problems within the Jamaican Labour Movement and was about to cause a large rift in the wider Labour Movement.

Hugh Springer had to give guidance in terms of where the Caribbean Labour Congress should go. There were those who maintained that in fact it should be a congress of trade unions and political parties and he insisted that it should be a congress of trade unions only and that in fact political parties, if they wanted to form a Caribbean grouping, should set up a separate organisation, but he maintained that the Caribbean Labour Congress should be a congress of *bona fide* trade unions and insisted that the trade union funds should not be used indiscriminately to support political organisations, that trade union funds should be for trade unions. He was very exacting about that. He wanted the two organisations to operate with their integrity intact. Persons could ally themselves with the organisations, but he wanted to see them as separate and distinct institutions.

I think the thing that comes over most about Hugh Springer is that he was not a person caught up with all the various "isms". He was a pragmatist. He believed in efficiency. Quite frankly I see a lot of him in a lot of people in this Parliament who play prominent roles, leadership roles, and so on. Even though they know what their major objectives are for the masses of people in this country, they do not feel they have to saddle themselves with all the "isms". They have a strong philosophy and a strong ideology of service, but they do not get bogged down in all those names that are so divisive, that sometimes when you come down to really defining them in terms of what they are supposed to achieve, not what the rhetoric is, there is very little difference in all of them. Sir Hugh was a pragmatist, he believed in doing what had to be done on behalf of the masses of the people.

I believe that his understanding of "the masses" would have cut across colour, would have cut across class, he would have considered the masses to be the "most" people, those who shared common factors and common characteristics. Once you identify with that group, then you belong to the masses. It had nothing to do with whether you were white, coloured or black, it had nothing to do with whether you were poor or what some people would have called middle class in those days, because reading the same Clennell Wickham he made it very clear that in the 1930's and 40's there were about 20 classes in Barbados. A carpenter did not think he belonged to the same class as a chauffeur and there were all sorts of distinctions based on what your job was. The colour gradations were very, very strong in those days. All of the progressive leaders recognised that did not make sense. You needed persons who had the standing in the community that would remove these gradations and bring people together.

For instance, when you had the development of the Workers' Union, the clerks wanted to be by themselves. They formed the Clerks' Union. They would have been middle class "brown skinned" people. Persons like Sir Hugh Springer and Frank Walcott worked very hard to integrate them into the Barbados Workers' Union under the banner of labour. They were all workers, whether they were using their intellectual powers or mental powers or hands. But again this would not be expressed in a dogmatic

way and not in the way that Marx would talk about the lump and proletariat and the bourgeois, *et cetera.* They would not have supported that kind of characterisation.

The other area I would like to talk about in terms of Sir Hugh's contribution, as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph said, was in relation to his role as a builder of the Union: drafting the Constitution, the rules and regulations, making sure that they went before the Registrar and were accepted. He was the person who set about purchasing the headquarters building, looking after the legal aspects. Sir Grantley Adams was the Moses, as they called him, the platform manager, the politician *par excellence.* Jealous of his power, and guarding it down the line, any challenger being brushed aside and destroyed, but it was Hugh Springer who was the builder. It was Hugh Springer who was the negotiator. When the dockers were brought in, it was Hugh Springer who went down there and ensured that for the docks he got the first agreement. In the foundries he got agreements, thus building up a record. If you go now to the Reports of the Labour Department from Year One right down, you can see the work of Hugh Springer, agreements coming all the time at you. Ideas like Holiday With Pay, making sure that they were negotiated into being before they became law, and so on. He has left us a record of Minutes, for instance; he understood the necessity of keeping Minutes, he kept them bound, because they are valuable, historical documents. One can feel his presence in the Minutes, the kind of work that he did.

Just as it was Wickham who fostered Springer, it was Springer who fostered Frank Walcott, who nurtured Frank Walcott's genius. I know there has always been a close relationship between those individuals, one based on mutual admiration and respect. When Springer decided that he was going to leave Barbados to take up work with the University, there were some people who felt that he was betraying the labour movement, some people who felt he should not have done it, but here was a man who saw a movement in a very broad sense. He saw education as part of that movement and he felt he had a role to play in moving people by quantum leaps forward through the institution of the University, through higher education. But he said he could afford to go at that time because he knew that he was leaving Frank Walcott behind. He knew. why he had brought Frank in. Even in those days when he had to go off to the Asquith Commission in the 1940's, on the planning sessions, Frank Walcott had to be filling in for him as well as Hilton Coulston who died last year. He knew that there was someone there to take up and continue his work.

1.10 p.m.

When he came back to Barbados in the 1950s, the Headquarters at the corner of Nelson and Fairchild Streets had been revamped by Sir Frank but he was the person who was responsible for its purchase. He gave a short history of his involvement in the trade union movement. He noted that when he was on the Isle of Man on vacation and he heard about the disturbances here he realised that he had to become involved, and when Grantley Adams came up to England he was there ready to meet and talk with him. He thought that the contributions of the union in the early days were to improve the dignity of the black man, to give him some pride in himself and a place at the table.

Again, when we opened Solidarity House in 1983 he was the person who was invited to deliver the feature address. Whenever he was called upon by the present General Secretary – and he was invited very often to come to our functions – he was always there. In fact, I missed him this May Day, but he was there the last time around and his only concern was that he wanted a ride home. "I am going to make sure I get there but can you arrange f a me to get back home?" That was his only concern. It had nothing to do with the state of his health because he was in fact a committed and dedicated trade unionist.

I speak to his role in the trade union movement. There is much that can be said about his role in politics and his role in education because, as I said, I believe that he perceived his role in the labour movement as being broad and varied. He did not believe that he would be held into any one institution. He had a tremendous contribution to make. As I said, I believe that a lot of us can learn from his life, his very quiet dignity that he represented in his being.

I believe that there are several young people who are suffering in this country because they do not know enough about these builders and these structures. I believe very strongly in the force and power of personalities, living and dead. I believe very strongly that when we have walking among us some very powerful persons who contribute to our country that we should not try unnecessarily to &value their contributions. In the same way I feel that when we have persons like Sir Hugh Springer and Clennell Wickham and Charles Duncan O'Neale and all of those that we must not make the error in believing that because we know about them that our children do.

There is a dark hole in recent history. People will tell you about the Arawaks and the Caribs and all the pioneers and buccaneers – a lot of wicked people, murderers who have been held up to us as heroes, all the ones that came down and destroyed. But the ones who have built and achieved we do not sufficiently modify our curriculum in a timely way that people get to learn about them.

It is time we take all the Drakes and Hawkins and all of them off the school curriculum and put on the Adams, the Springers and the Walcotts and so on. We have to

start writing our own history. You can call us revisionist historians, but the truth is that countries have always used history to dominate the minds of others. All of us in this Chamber came up knowing about Joan of Arc and Florence Nightengale and all sorts of foreign people and we have to be rewriting and recreating ourselves as we get older but in doing that, we have to do a lot of unlearning and taking on new figures that we have to follow. I believe that people like Sir Hugh, as soon as possible, we have to get the information on him and make them available to our school children so that they can have the appropriate models to follow.

It is not a pleasure to be speaking on this occasion because we are all sorry about the passing of a very great man. I think that although all of us have not spoken I think that all of us appreciate that we are coming to the end of an era. Some very really great persons are passing and I think we all know in here that we have a responsibility that when our time comes that at least those words that will be said might not match what may be said about those who have gone because they lived in different eras, but at least we hope that as we build we always keep in mind the foundation that has been laid by those before us.

I fully support this Resolution. He was a very great person and we extend our deepest condolences to his family. Thank you.

Mr. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. Speaker, somewhere a long time ago some poet suggested that the lives of great men remind us that we can make our lives sublime, and departing, we can leave behind us footprints in the sands of time. I believe that the previous speaker who just took his seat has been making reference to the need there is for us to use the occasion of the lives of persons like Sir Hugh Springer to set out the kinds of footprints which will guide the way for the youth of today and those children who are yet unborn as we endeavour to set the path for our country.

I am sure that much has been said by the previous speakers regarding the life and the times of Sir Hugh, and I would nut wish to delay the proceedings here by trying to go over what has been said before; but I would think it would be necessary for me to make some comments because of the peculiar situation which exists in that Sir Hugh was the first General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union and today it is my lot to serve in that position.

As I met Sir Hugh and dealt with him I have gathered two very important aspects of his life which I would wish to record here. One has to do with what I consider to be his concern for healing rather than his concern for apportioning blame. I remember, for example, when he was first appointed as Governor-General that there was a concern between the Barbados Workers' Union and the Sugar Industry over the settling of a dispute, and Sir Hugh was able because of his concern for healing, even though he had not been directly brought into the picture, to use his good offices to effect healing between the parties and thereby avert industrial dislocation.

Today I refer to much more than that. I refer to his ongoing concern that there should be a healing in the interest of history, in the interest of two organisations which he served faithfully, organisations which clearly had gone into different directions to the extent that the picture of Sir Grantley Adams had been taken down from the buildings of the Barbados Workers' Union. I recall his concern for seeing that that picture was reestablished and his often repeated question as to when and why insofar as that was concerned.

I am pleased to say today that thanks to the efforts of a former member of this Parliament and a former Minister of the Crown, Mr. Lionel Craig, we now have a portrait from which we are making a copy and as soon as that copy is completed by the Brooks Latouche firm of photographers we shall be having a simple ceremony at which we shall have Sir Grantley's portrait again grace the walls of the Headquarters of the Barbados Workers' Union.

My one regret, Mr. Speaker, is that though I have been working at this for some time, I was not able to complete it in sufficient time that Sir Hugh could have seen it in his own lifetime.

1.20 p.m.

His second concern, I think, was that for the Caribbean vision. As an Assistant General Secretary of the Caribbean Labour Congress, his vision was for a single Caribbean people and he fought very hard to bring that about. It is my view that long after he ceased to serve as the Assistant General Secretary of the Caribbean Labour Congress, and indeed, as the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, that he continued to work towards the singleness of our peoples within the region. We can see much of his work as we move from one level of attainment to another which was geared towards recognising the oneness in, our backgrounds and in our aspirations trying to affect unity.

Today the organisation which succeeded the Caribbean Labour Congress is still working towards integration, that is to say the Caribbean Congress of Labour. We are distressed to find that that vision of an integrated Caribbean is still yet to be realised. I think it must have been a source of sadness to people like Sir Hugh and those other architects of Caribbean oneness that, even though we were in the vanguard of this before other

groups of people, others have been able to reach some measure of understanding and accord, and we are still in the process of dealing in the fringes and have not yet been able to get down to the fundamentals.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Hugh administered the Barbados Workers' Union for six years, between 1941 and 1947 organising that institution and building it and setting the structures and framework within the organisation which has given it a permanency and a level of maturity that is the envy of several other organisations, political, cultural and social around the region.

When once Sir Hugh had passed on to another level of employment the mantle fell to Sir Frank Walcott who remained General Secretary for more than 40 years. What we therefore have is an organisation which, although more than 50 years old, has had only three General Secretaries in the persons of Sir Hugh Springer, Sir Frank Walcott and myself. I think that is because there has been that continuity in the first two that the organisation has managed to weather the storm.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that we have, as we look back at our organisation's achievement, to ensure that we honour persons like Sir Hugh Springer. It is my plan to have an appropriate tribute paid to Sir Hugh and an appropriate honour established by the Barbados Workers' Union to the work that he has done in that particular department. We have at this stage to gain the permission of his family before we can make any appropriate statement in that regard; but I would wish to say that the Executive Council of the Barbados Workers' Union has, in fact, directed me to make such approaches and in the fullness of time we hope to be able to honour him in a way that befits the contribution that he has made to the life of the working man and the working woman in this country.

The footprints of persons like Sir Hugh Springer are footprints which can guide those of us who also aspire to contribute and to make our efforts as vigourously as we can so that when our time comes persons may also be able to say of us that we have fought a good fight and that we have contributed in making our little corner a better and brighter place.

I thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I just wish briefly to be associated with the sentiments that have been expressed. I remember Sir Hugh from about age 9. Whenever he was in Barbados from Jamaica he always made it a point of private social duties to visit my parents. My father had been in due course involved with him and Grantley Adams in the days leading to the formation of the Barbados Labour Party. I remember him visiting us in St. Philip where we lived at Dodds at the time on many occasions between 1949 and certainly, 1958. Indeed, there exists a number of photographs in the family album that my mother has of his children and my parents' children as youngsters together.

I met him then, of course, when I was a student in London and he would visit from time to time. On his own I met him with Grantley Adams. It was my fortune for about four years on the trot to take around Grantley Adams in London, particularly from the Charing Cross Hotel where he stayed, to the West Indies Students' Centre to address West Indian students each year that Sir Grantley came on his way to Geneva to the ILO meetings.

Of course it is obvious that the personalities of the two men were markedly different. Sir Grantley was easy to talk to and easy to get on with and Sir Hugh, as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph said, was at first a little stem of mien and could be off-putting. But he had the facility to enable you to relax and in his quiet dignified way to share his experiences with anyone who was interested. In talking to him and Sir Grantley – of course, has played a very important role as a capitalist in my interest in politics. I make no bones about it, Sir. Cummins, Adams and Springer were for me heroes as a boy at school. I joined the Labour Party in 1957 while still a boy at school which as much was due to their influence as perhaps due to my interest in politics at the time.

I am told, Sir, that he was not at the Bar long enough to have made his mark as one of the leaders in law but undoubtedly he made his mark as an organizer and as a person committed to the development of the poor people of Barbados, the depressed and oppressed peoples of Barbados of the 1930s and 1940s.

I hear today statements that the life and times, and the life and work of people like himself and Adams should be committed in an historical document, a book, or whatever, that those behind us and the youth of this country should be enabled to know of the contributions. That is a worthy ideal. I hope it will come to pass. I have my doubts because the recent history of Barbados has been clearly aimed at snuffing out any contribution which people of the Labour Party made from the recorded history of Barbados. If there is a change of heart, I said I hear it. I do not listen to it. Since "Fab" Hoyos wrote the book "Some Eminent Contemporaries" nobody has ventured – that must be going on to 30 years now – to record even in a basic way the contributions of so many people who have contributed to the public development of Barbados. I have

spoken in here on this on at least 2 occasions before. I am not repeating it today. It is a matter of great regret but that is how we are, as a people. We are still immature. We are still unwilling to accept, in times of death, to speak the truth about people who have made significant contributions to this country. We have succeeded in alienating in young people and indeed the younger people from having an interest in public affairs.
1.30 p.m.

Those who attended the funeral of Wynter Crawford would have to feel thoroughly ashaméd of the turnout of people at that funeral of a man who for whatever his political antagonism was a builder of Barbados. He made a great contribution. We saw it too at the funeral of M. E. Cox. You could hardly fill a church. That is because we have behaved in here in the political divide over the years from 1961 onwards. There has been an attitude of destruction. It has been done on both sides and we have tom down the work, we have ridiculed the personalities and we are reaping the whirlwind now with a terrible reaction against public figures.

I just wish to say, Sir, that I have been a friend of the Springer family and particularly the children. We have been very close over the years not in the last 4 or 5 years but prior to that and I know that the family has suffered tremendously by this loss and other recent deaths. I would wish, on behalf of my family, to place on record my sincere condolences and deepest sympathy to the Springer family.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it might very well be the case that there have been Barbadians this century who have, in individual fields of endeavour, made a more lasting contribution to this country's development than Sir Hugh Worrell Springer. I think that when our history is faithfully recorded it will have to show that certainly this century there is no Barbadian who has, in as many fields, made a more monumental nor a more enduring contribution to this country's development than Sir Hugh. In the course of a lifetime Sir Hugh contributed to the formation of the Caribbean's oldest political Party which has endured and continues to endure. He assisted in a pivotal way in the establishment of one of this regions oldest labour movements and he has made a monumental contribution to the formation of this region's only University. I believe that when one analyzes the breadth of this contribution his role in our national affairs assumes a significance that has been assumed by that of Thomas Jefferson in the United States of America given the scope of the effort and the richness of the result.

I believe that Sir Hugh Springer stands out in our history not only in terms of his contribution in his many fields but in the stark quality of excellence that he brought to all of the matters in which he was involved. I certainly remember him even in his infirmities being ramrod, dignified and deporting himself in a manner that could only cause persons who saw him to recognize that in him there was the expression of greatness.

I, as a young politician, was the beneficiary of many of his courtesies, Sir. It would always be one of my fond remembrances that the first letter that I received when I was elected to the position of Leader of the Opposition was a handwritten note of encouragement from Sir Hugh Springer. I also must say for the records that on the Easter Sunday before he died he spared the effort, even in his infirmities at the time, to offer me words of encouragement when I attended, as I infrequently do, services that he frequently attended at St. Peter's Parish Church.

His was a life of undiluted excellence in the national interest. He deserves to be remembered as one of the truly great men of this country in this and any century on the strength of what he has done to build institutions that have endured, institutions that have touched the lives of the people of this country, all of us for the better.

I believe that this country has suffered a massive loss and that we ought, properly, to recognize the loss that we have suffered. And on this occasion speaking on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party which will stand eternally in his debt, I want to express the gratitude of the family of the Barbados Labour Party for the life and the work of Sir Hugh Worrell Springer and his contribution to the building of our institution. I want on behalf of the members of my Party also to record our gratitude for the work that he did as a Member of our Party in this Parliament. And I want also on behalf of the Members of the Barbados Labour Party to extend our sympathies to his relatives and his friends.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do associate myself with the tributes paid this morning to such a great statesman and late Governor-General Sir Hugh Springer.

As I listened to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas I think he was expressing the view that people Like myself find it difficult to make comments on such persons due to the lack of that kind of information to help you to form an opinion so to speak. My brief comment this morning has nothing to do with my gratitude towards the tributes paid this morning but I certainly will associate myself with them.

On behalf of my family and myself I want to extend my sympathy to them. I should also invite you, as the custom is, to stand for one minute's silence as a mark

of respect and passing of this Resolution which I will instruct the Clerk to pass on to the family.

Please stand.

The House stood in silence for one minute.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I want to give notice that the Reply to Question No. 83 asked by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East is ready. 1.40 p.m.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS FOR THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE ON MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to give notice of my intention to ask the leave of this House to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance. I understand the Clerk to say that permission has already been given by you for this motion to proceed, Sir, and at the appropriate time as set out in the Standing Orders or at such earlier time as the House may think fit I shall wish to proceed with my notice.

Mr. SPEAKER: In confirmation of what the Honourable Member has said, I have received his request. I have considered it and deemed it proper under the relevant Standing Order. May I say that Members should read their Standing Orders in respect of this matter. I am not sure the House will go to 6.30 but I am assuming that if leave is granted then the allotted time of 2½ hours will be permitted. At the same time I want to remind Honourable Members as well, Standing Order 35 limits a Member to 20 minutes of debate so that if the 2½ hours are expended without all Members speaking, that motion comes to an end. I also want to say as well that we are not debating a motion as such as is the customary style but we are debating a motion for the adjournment hence one does not expect a vote at the end of the debate.

The motion itself requires the leave of the House. It appears to me there is no objection. If there is no objection then it will be.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I did not hear what you said, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I am saying is that the Honourable Member is seeking the leave of the House and therefore the House is required to give that leave. I have concluded what I said and therefore await the House, whether there is any objection or not for the motion.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I want to suggest here that the 2½ hours after the luncheon resumption should be devoted to debating the particular matter of which I have no knowledge and which the Honourable Leader of the Opposition made reference, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is why I said very early it is not like the regular resolution. It is something that crops up and the House deals with it as it comes up. It is a matter dealing with the water situation in Barbados.

There seems to be no objection and from my understanding the House will debate the matter after lunch.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am going to move, Sir, the suspension of Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 for the remainder of the sitting. Normally, Sir, I would suspend Standing Order No. 18 but 18 controls, in a way, that particular matter so the suspension of that I will not now move, Sir.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection the Leader of the House: is introducing that Question Time be now taken.

QUESTION TIME

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

Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Question No. 83 reads as follows:

To ask the Minister of Labour, Public Works, Community Development and Sports:

1. Is the Minister aware that 1st Avenue East Terrace, Wildey, St. Michael is impassable due to flooding whenever heavy rain falls?

2. If the answer is yea, will the Minister state how soon appropriate action will be taken to alleviate the problem?

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, in response to the questions asked at No. 83, the answer to the first question is yes. The answer to the second question is, the Ministry has dug a new well and the problem has been rectified.

Mr. SPEAKER: Supplementaries. There are no supplementaries.

SUSPENSION

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, in that case I am going to move that the House be suspended until 3.00 p.m. today.

I beg to second that, Sir.

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. The Honourable Member for St. Peter.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely the crisis which has developed and continues to worsen particularly since this House last met in the water resources of Barbados which are supplied mainly through the Barbados Water Authority. Sir, if I may give a focus and a direction and a sense of urgency and a relevance to the debate, I want to establish the basis upon which the Opposition is asking this House to treat this matter as a definite matter of urgent public importance.

My chief reasons for seeking leave for this debate under Standing Order 18 have to do with the fact that:

(1) Public statements by the officials of the Barbados Water Authority have established the following as the functional position of that Authority. So that it is now unable to provide or to maintain full water supply throughout Barbados.

(2) The volume of water passing through its system is extending beyond the absolute limits of the Authority's capacity to service demands even if all of its equipment was fully in service and the water reserves were at high levels.

(3) Several reservoirs are now below the minimum levels required for everyday purposes and some are without water.

(4) For several areas of Barbados in which persons are experiencing continual and prolonged water shortages, the Authority can presently offer no relief and no improvement in service.

(5) Large numbers of water mains in many areas need urgently to be renewed.

(6) Immediate provision must be made for substantial capital investment in equipment and exploration.

(7) There is an immediate need to drill new wells and to provide additional storage and pumping facilities.

(8) There is substantial continuous loss of water through leak seepage, much of which has not been traced nor definitively calculated.

(9) The supply of portable water in adequate quantities being crucial to good health, the availability of water for domestic purposes being vital to general well-being, and the need for reliable water services for agricultural, industrial and commercial purposes being critical to the economy – all of these segments of concern are increasingly under the greatest threat from actual and projected failure of our water supply.

(10) The sudden development of the water crisis in Barbados beyond natural causes such as the shortage of rainfall is such that prompt emergency action to be led by the Barbados Water Authority in productive efforts is an unqualified imperative.

Mr. Speaker, my preamble establishes and recognizes that there is an aspect of the water problem in Barbados which has obviously to do with the fact that we are experiencing and have been experiencing a shortage of rain and a one in a fifteen-year drought in this country. But it would be a tremendous error for the Government to believe that the problem is a problem only of the shortage of rain and a one in a fifteen year drought. There are many districts in Barbados predominantly in St. Thomas, St. Joseph, St. Andrew and St. Peter and to a lesser extent in most of the other parishes in this island where shortage of water is proving to be a nightmare in the households. There are areas in rural Barbados where people have not been able to enjoy a water service for two months despite the fact that they continue to pay their bills. Beyond that, Mr. Speaker, it is a matter of fact that the ground water capacity of Barbados is now approaching the limit where the Barbados Water Authority is not now in a position to satisfy the increased demand that has grown in recent years. More to the point, Sir, there is now no water reserve cushion such that plans can be made satisfactorily for the expansion of this economy without the shortage of water representing itself as a major constraint to this country's development.

I make those two points early in my presentation because there is both a short-term crisis that has to be addressed which represents itself in the form of human suffering and there is a medium crisis and a long-term crisis that has to be addressed which manifests itself in the fact that for the first time in our history the availability

of an adequate supply of water can represent itself as one of the chief constraints to the expansion of our economy and our capacity to meet the basic needs of this country. It behoves us as a House, Mr. Speaker, to recognize that both aspects of this problem have simultaneously to be addressed. The problem of the immediate relief to the nightmare that is being faced by people must be addressed now and must be addressed by way of innovative solutions that seem unfortunately to be beyond the imagination of the Govemment and the Barbados Water Authority. In addition, we want to impress upon this House that the dilly-dallying by Government in relation to the articulation of a serious water policy that can ensure the people of this country that for the long-term our progress as a nation will not be held back the lack of water and that dilly-dallying must be brought to an end by forcing the Government in the course of this debate to articulate a forthcoming programme for the development of the water resources in a manner that has not been forthcoming from Govemment.

This debate is urgent also because Members on this side over the course of the last few months brought the extent of the water crisis to Government's attention. It is a matter of public record that as early as February the Member for St. Thomas brought to the attention of this House the problems that were being experienced by persons in his constituency in relation to the supply of water. In the Estimates debate as well we on this side sought to impress upon Government that the Estimates themselves were reflecting a lack of public commitment to spend money on what we perceived of at that time as one of our mapr socio-economic problems of the development of our water system in the context of the situation in which it was finding itself. In the Budget debate again, Members on this side particularly the Member for St. Thomas and the Member for the City referred to the crisis in graphic terms in the hope that by dramatizing the shameful condition that action would have been taken, but no action has been taken. We believe to the extent that the situation has worsened since those pleadings were made by the Opposition that we have now to bring this matter to some successful conclusion by having it occupy the attention of Parliament as a definite matter of urgent public importance.

I am obliged to you, Sir, for recognizing what all the rest of Barbados recognizes that there is no matter in Barbados now that is as urgent or definite nor as deserving of public attention as the action that is necessary to make sure that this country's water supply is safe, reliable and of a quality or quantity that can ensure us the maintenance of the standard of living that we have come to enjoy and that we want to perpetuate in this country.

3.15 p.m.

I want to talk about the two aspects of the problem as I understand them. There is a nightmare being faced by a large number of people, particularly in the countryside of Barbados, because what you and I have become accustomed to and continue to enjoy, an adequate supply of water, is no longer being afforded to them. Many of the efforts taken by the Water Authority to solve the problem are totally inadequate, slow, have not been imaginative and the situation faced by persons in all the areas can no longer be put on the back burner. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I want to go as far as to say that those persons in the districts who have faced a water crisis for the last three months should be given rebates by the Barbados Water Authority on the basis that they have paid for a service they have not received. I believe that justice would be preserved and maintained in this country if people were given back the money they paid to the Water Authority for a service they did not receive, and I am using the opportunity of this debate to call for that as an indication of Government's goodwill in the matter.

The broader problem awaits us as a national priority. The fact of the matter is that this country has had a situation in which the Barbados Water Authority has not since 1985 been publishing annual reports. One speaks therefore about the situation facing that Authority with reference only to sketchy information that is provided here and there. That situation has to stop. The first part of planning the development of our water resources is the institutional development of the Water Authority, such that its financial affairs, its resource management affairs, its personnel affairs are put in a fashion that would satisfy this Parliament that the Authority is of a character that one can identify is the form other public utilities in this country have assumed.

There are many important areas of the Barbados Water Authority that are shameful. As far back as 1979 there was a leak detection programme put in place by a company called Binney that has been discontinued. The staff that was assigned to that programme was reallocated to other purposes within the Barbados Water Authority. Today the Barbados Water Authority is not in a position to tell us what proportion of the water problem has been caused by leakage, precisely because a programme that should have been central to its activities was minimised, and in many respects cannibalised.

Mr. Speaker, the use of the finances of the Barbados Water Authority is also a matter that has engaged the attention of this House. We on this side want to press again for the financial resources of the Water Authority not to be locked up in Government Treasury Bills and Government Debentures, but to be deployed, as they should be, to finance the capital development programme of the Authority.

The bottom line, however, is that the ground water capacity of Barbados is now estimated at some 45 million gallons per day, and most of that ground water capacity

is already committed, or its future use is already planned for.

There are many developments crucial to Barbados' development in the future that will be water intensive. Among them is the development of the tourist industry. On present course Barbados has to think in terms at some stage of accommodating at least 600 000 persons a year. Our economic development planning, therefore, must now be infused with some element of water resource development planning, if plans to have 600 000 long-stay tourist arrivals are not to be compromised.

The urbanisation of Barbados, the building of homes in this country, is a matter that cannot be put on the back burner. It is to be anticipated that as these development programmes are put in place the demands on an already strained resource system will become even greater.

We are also being told, Mr. Speaker, of plans to broaden the facilities available to tourism in the form of golf courses. The Government needs to speak directly to the issue as to the extent to which those particular initiatives the Government deems to be important in broadening our tourism appeal can be realised in the context of the existing water situation, and if they cannot be made comfortable with the water situation, what alternative plans does the Government have in place in order to give effect to the policies it has enunciated?

At the heart of this matter, however, is the role of the Barbados Water Authority and the obvious institutional chaos that has been allowed to take place at that institution since 1986. This House cannot be satisfied with the fact that a Statutory Board in this country, governed by law, has not published an annual report since 1985. It is a scandal, it is a shame and it is indicative obviously of the kind of overall policy....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am going to indicate when the Honourable Member has four minutes more to go. I think he is bordering on that, so he would know how to adjust what he has to say in the next five minutes.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, at the core of this debate is a sense of chaos that has been operating at the Barbados Water Authority, which represents in itself basically in the fact that a statutory institution has not published an annual report since 1985; as represented in the fact that important aspects of the Authority's work, particularly matters such as leakage, are areas in which there is no clear information, although the information is necessary for better planning to take place. There has been a lot of "if-ing" and "but-ing" and "to-ing" and "fro-ing" by the Democratic Labour Party Government on water pricing, and this has been part of the chaos. You will remember in 1986 the "if-ing" and "but-ing" that took place immediately after the elections. We can also remember the lack of direction in a decision that took place two years ago on whether or not there would be metering. It is policy chaos, institutional chaos at the Barbados Water Authority and at the centre of Cabinet in relation to the Water Authority.

On this side we are charging as well, Mr. Speaker, that the financial resources of the Barbados Water Authority have not been used in a manner consistent with the development of our water resources, and the time has come for us to agree as a Parliament that that must be changed. It has to do fundamentally with Government's policy. We are staggered that a lot of Government policy having to do with the provision of social services, having to do with the broadening of our economic system and our economic structures has taken place without being informed by serious water assessment studies. As a result a kind of haphazardness is now about to enter into the execution of our national economic policies because of the haphazard nature attendant upon the manner in which our water resources have been developed and continue to be managed. That, too, has to stop. But at the end of the day this House has to be reminded that whatever else is said, water is a basic need and that the chief function of Government in a civilised society must be to make sure that people's basic needs are met. In this particular matter – and my colleagues will address it very directly – the Government seems to have abandoned a section of Barbados in relation to meeting the basic needs of those persons on a level that one can recognise as a civilised minimum level. I would urge Members of this House who want to get for themselves the feeling to a full extent of the problem that faces Barbados to go to places like White Hill and Hillaby and Indian Ground to see how Barbadians are suffering from the chaos of a Government that cannot put at the centre of its consideration the meeting of fundamental basic needs as the chief preoccupation of civilised government in our country.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

3.25 p.m.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Resolution before the Honourable House...

Mr. SPEAKER: It is really a motion.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am sorry, Sir. In substance, it is much the same, but technically I will refer to it as what it is: a motion. I do so with deep concern for the acute dislocation being experienced by large sections of the Barbadian population as a result of a scarcity of

water. Almost all Barbadians are suffering the current scarcity, but for some it is only a minor inconvenience, occasional low pressure and very occasionally too the absence of water at the tap.

For many people in St. Thomas and St. Peter and St. Joseph, particularly the western and northern part of St. Joseph, this water shortage has resulted in a hellish experience for them and a major dislocation of their lives. I have often complained in this Parliament that there are two Barbados and at the best of times many people in rural Barbados get a disproportionately small share of the resources. In bad times such as we are experiencing now, there are many districts in Barbados that get no water at all. I am referring to places like Mellowes Hill, Melvin Hill, Parks, Dark Hole, St. Sylvan's Village, Newton Crescent and Bissex Housing Area and more recently the district of Cambridge to mention but a few.

In the case of Newton Crescent or Bissex Housing Area they have not been having running water on other than a most occasional basis, like a dripping tap from 3-5 o'clock in the morning, for the last 3 months.

I repeat the submission made by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that it is not fair to ask those who are not receiving the service from the Barbados Water Authority of running water to be faced with monthly bills accompanied by a notice which says, "Pay or be disconnected." There is nothing more unjust than that. The people are not receiving the service and yet they are being asked to pay and further they are being threatened that if they do not pay they will be disconnected.

I feel that there should be a major discount, a major credit should be given to them and in some instances, they should be repaid because they have not been enjoying the service. It is a fact that the other utilities, Mr. Speaker, the telephone company, for example, if you have had your service disconnected for a period and that is reported to the telephone company they give you a credit for the period that you are without your telephone. Equally, the same is being done by the Barbados Light and Power and there is no reason why the Barbados Water Authority should fail to honour what is a just business practice. The fact that they are a monopoly should make no difference. If they do not provide the service they should not expect to be paid for it.

If you are not charging the people, you should let the people know; but thus far you have not told the people of Barbados that those who have not been receiving the service are not expected to pay. I maintain that justice demands that the people in rural Barbados in St. Joseph, in St. Thomas, in St. Andrew and St. Peter who have not been getting my water for the last 2-3 months should not be expected to pay and that the Minister should make that clear by the time that this debate is concluded.

Now, water is a naturally occurring resource on which civilised life depends. There is no doubt about that, Mr. Speaker, and over many years in this country we have come to expect that if there is one thing that successive governments in this country will do is to so manage and preserve our water resources so that we will all be able to rely on a reliable and consistent water service.

The experience of recent weeks have completely shattered that notion and we have the very painful and disturbing situation in which people have been without water for many weeks and the Government has shown insensitivity in the way they have handled the situation and in addition to that, they have not been able to indicate to the people who are suffering when this problem will come to an end.

I reject the notion that the low rainfall for the year is the prime cause of this problem. I am no expert, but it is within my experience that this is not the first time that we have had by mid-May little or no rain. After all, our rains come in May and rarely before and yet we have not experienced the problem of this scale in the past. There must be other factors to explain why it is that we are having this problem on this scale and to this degree.

It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that a minimum of 2 million gallons are being lost per day as a result of leakages, as a result of the failure of the Barbados Water Authority to replace mains, pipes, as their useful life span comes to an end. It is my understanding that the pumps are so out-of-date and in need of repair and the generators too that now that the water table has understandably fallen as a result of the absence of rain thus far for the year that the mechanical system is not able to lift the water.

Now if that is so, and the evidence seems to be that it is so, it points to enormous maladministration on the part of the Barbados Water Authority and on the part of the Government. It makes no sense to say that there is an increase in the use of water because it was always anticipated that there would have been a gradual and consistent increase in the use of water and to that extent, it was expected that a competent and efficient water authority would have been keeping abreast of the demand.

3.35 p.m.

The evidence is that the increase is no more than 4% a year and we should have been planning for that. All of our talk therefore of carrying Barbados forward in the field of diversification, in the field of additional services in tourism, golf courses and in the field of more houses, all of those promises would be idle promises, totally

misleading the people of Barbados, if simultaneously we are not making provision for an adequate supply of water. That is what the Barbados Water Authority has failed to do, and the Government of the day – because this is only a problem that has arisen in the Democratic Labour Party administration. If we do not have a reliable and adequate supply of water, it means that we will be putting a break on our own development and there will be a limit to how far we in Barbados will be able to progress if we do not have an adequate supply of water.

They tell me, Mr. Speaker, and I would like the Honourable Minister to explain this, that the amount of water available for extraction in Barbados per day is something like 45 million gallons. I am also advised that the daily consumption is about 30 million gallons a day, so why is it that with a surplus of 15 we are still experiencing this distribution problem? Agriculture is not the answer because agriculture is in decline in Barbados. There is no agriculture, neither sugar agriculture nor non-sugar agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, before I make some comments with respect to what may be done to increase the supply and what in particular ought to be done in relation to the short-term needs of the people in rural Barbados, may I just say that there are two immediate concerns in addition to the one we have mentioned about the need to credit the people, or to insist that they do not pay for a service they do not get. There are two additional concerns.

The water tanks have been coming out sometimes as late as midnight in places like Bissex, Melvin Hill, Mellowes, Hillaby and so on, to name but a few districts. The people are given no notice, when the radio stations would be happy as a public service to let the people know that the trucks will be coming out, let us say, between 9.00 o'clock and 11.00 o'clock kindly make yourself available, the route they will be taking is X and Y. No public relations whatsoever is done and these tanks come out, insofar as they come quite often at 12 midnight and 1.00 o'clock in the morning. The people are given no notice. Many of them are asleep and many of them miss the opportunity to get water.

In addition, there have been occasions when the taps come back on dripping for two hours. often between 3.00 and 5.30 o'clock on mornings, occasionally, not all the time and here again the people are given no notice. They are not told through radio announcements before they go to bed, get up at 4.00 o'clock, 5.00 o'clock to take advantage of the hour or so when the running water would be available.

Now, we do not have to go to Jesus College, Mr. Speaker, to be able to address the public relation demands of the situation. You do not have to be that learned and educated to appreciate that this is a basic requirement of the moment. That is why I say that the Water Authority and the Government have been approaching the problem with a total insensitivity, an indifference, a lack of care, but for the people out there in rural Barbados who are experiencing this problem it is real. It is nightmarish. It is painful. It is dislocating. It is something incomparable as far as their experience is concerned. The Minister has to show that he is on top of the situation and that he can indicate to the people what sort of relief they can expect and when.

I am concerned about another matter relating to the trucks. For a long time some of the trucks have broken down, two of perhaps four. They have never called on the Sugar Industry Ltd. at an early date. They never called on the Pine Hill Dairy at an early date. They never called on private owners of tanks, C. O. Williams and others, at an early date, and not until recently have the Pine Hill Dairy tanks been put at their disposal, a further illustration of the insensitivity and indifference of which I speak.

But something more is happening, Mr. Speaker. Quite often there are angry exchanges between the truck drivers and the suffering residents with respect to where the trucks should position themselves to facilitate the suffering residents. At times the truck drivers in anger refuse and bypass certain districts because of exchanges that took place a few days before and there is nobody around to supervise them.

On Saturday I took the matter in my hands and directed some of them where to stop, and how long to stop in places like Melvin Hill and Mellowes. What I am saying is that senior men in the Barbados Water Authority should be out there on the ground helping to administer the distribution of the trucks. None of that is taking place. The tragedy is that the Barbados Labour Party parliamentarians have to be taking blows for what is essentially a DLP problem of maladministration.

Now, Mr. Speaker, 60 inches of rainfall in Barbados on average...

Mr. SPEAKER: Four more minutes.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM:... can give us some 350 to 400 million gallons of water a day. The most of that runs off and is evaporated so that the amount that. percolates and is filtered is no more perhaps than 55 million gallons. These are the statistics available to me, plus or minus maybe 5%. The point I am making is that the water that falls in the Scotland District is not converted to domestic use. That is outside because of the special

geological structure of the coral formation of the country. I concede that it is going to be more expensive to take advantage of that water than to take advantage of the water that falls within the coral formation. But the time has come when something has to be done in order to expand the quantum of water available for daily use. It means we have to use that water that is available in the Scotland District. To say that it is going to be an expensive proposition is not to begin to address the problem. How much is it going to cost and how much water we can add to the available water supply if we use the water in the Scotland District? They are among the solutions the Minister has to address and let the people know what advantages, at what costs can be realised from addressing that particular issue.

But in addition to that, the sheet water in Christ Church which is not of good enough quality to be used for domestic purposes can be used for irrigation purposes on a widespread scale and that has not been sufficiently used. There are 2 sources of water which can be used to the advantage of the consuming public, one for agricultural purposes and one for domestic and other purposes in the Scotland District. But there are perhaps medium-term and long-term answers. What we want to hear out of this debate from the Honourable Minister responsible for Public Works including water is, what is the Government going to do in the days and weeks ahead to ensure that that nightmarish experience which the people in rural Barbados are experiencing becomes a thing of the past? What is he going to do to ensure that hope is restored to those people and, above all, that water begins to flow through the taps in their homes? We expect him to give us answers before this debate is concluded, Mr. Speaker.

3.45 p.m.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful for this debate. Errol Barrow once said in this House that sometimes if you do not beat your chest and talk about the things that you have been doing you would not get any credit for it and people would forget.

It was in February this year that this problem of the poor supply of water to rural Barbados was raised. I brought it in here. Thankfully the *Advocate* newspaper on page 2 following that day carried a vast spread of what I had to say. The CBC-TV, despite any criticisms I had for them – each time I have spoken in here and I have spoken 3 times between February and March 30 on this – has carried the Labour Party's position and the position particularly in relation to St. Thomas. St. Thomas was very badly affected as far back as February and by the time we had come to Estimates the Honourable Members for St. Joseph and St. George South also highlighted the problems of their constituencies in here. This side ventilated the problems from early. On March 30 in my contribution to the Budget Debate I said these words:

> "I want this Government to hear now that I am calling on them, to reduce the rates on water bills of the persons in those districts who have been suffering not a diminution but loss of service for the past 2 months. I speak of my constituents from Welches, Warrens, Shop Hill, Edgehill, Welchman Hall, Porey Spring. All of those areas where we have not had a proper water service and my constituents are still going to be asked, at the end of the month, to pay a bill. I am asking the Minister to consider, if necessary, give a directive to the Barbados Water Authority to go and look at those areas, evaluate the matter and see if relief cannot 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."

That was March 30. More than 6 weeks have passed.

I have not heard the Minister responsible respond to that call for a rebate on the bills of the people who have not been receiving a water service. I heard him sitting down from his seat trying to suggest that he might do it. I want a clear statement later on today, Sir. I asked for this since March 30. The Leader has reiterated today and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph. That is the view of the public too because last week I saw on television a night, I think the people were being interviewed in Apes Hill, there were about 7 of them, and to a man each one said, "We are not getting any water, we are not paying any bills." I want them to know that if the Water Authority gets so drunk as to put them in court I would go and represent them free.

The reasons have been explained why we feel that a rebate should be given. Other utilities do it. It is time that this utility the Water Authority comes under some scrutiny. I am not saying put them under the Public Utilities Board Act but they may have to be regulated. Because their conduct in the past 8 years has been nothing short of a disgrace. There is an Act, Cap. 274A which in Section 25 mandates not any discretion, it says they must:

> "The Board must as soon as practicable after the end of each financial year and in any event not later than 5 months after the end of that year, submit to the Minister a report containing, in respect of the Authority.
>
> (a) a detailed account of its activities during the preceding year; and
>
> a statement of its audited accounts."

They should be laid in here and published in the *Gazette*. For 8 years they have refused to comply with Section 25. They cannot comply with the law and want people to pay their bills for not getting the service. They must be

joking. The human suffering that has been occasioned to people in rural Barbados does not need any expansion from me. My 2 colleagues have spoken eloquently about it. I have drawn it to this House's attention. I have been calling the Water Authority. As soon as I get calls at my home particularly from people in various parts of St. Thomas I call and beg them to send a tank. It is clear, from what the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has highlighted that the incompetence of the Authority has prevented them from developing even a simple public relations programme.

This is a crisis. It has to be fought and managed like a crisis. Thus the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is saying that there should be proper advertisement on television, if necessary, certainly on radio as to the hours when tankers would be available in various districts so that people can be alerted to receive the service. But they have not even been able to manage that far less a capital programme.

I would want the Minister to answer, in relation to St. Thomas, and tell me how many new wells have been dug in St. Thomas in the last 8 years? How many reservoirs have been built? How many miles of new pipe have been laid? He cannot answer that because they have had no consistent plan for capital development. St. Thomas is only an example of what has happened throughout rural Barbados.

The problem that this present crisis highlights is one that I wish the Minister to explain. How is it that for the most part the parishes of St. Philip, Christ Church, St. Michael, St. James have not had any serious problems of water? The most populous part of Barbados where the poor people live, where the country people live, they are the ones that are suffering. I want to know if it is a deliberate plan to treat the people in rural Barbados worst than they treat those in the suburban and urban Barbados. I do not know because the way in which you behaved in respect of the dump at Mount Stinkeroo, I believe there is some kind of plan to treat the people who support the Labour Party in those parishes badly.

3.55 p.m.

Sir, this water problem is more serious than just a question of not receiving water today or water tomorrow because there have been several complaints about the deterioration in the quality of water. I have had previously, not in this year, to draw to the Water Authority's attention the quality of water in some parts of St. Thomas. Right by Bridgefield pasture there are three houses and there was a time, year before last, when those houses were receiving something in their water like oil. Oil in the water. That has been reported to the Authority. There has been a time when the people in Sharon and Shop Hill, this year, have been receiving water that is white.

There is a lot of concern that the quality of water is being affected by the quality of the mains from which the water is being piped. A lot of the mains in Barbados are old and rotten. Proper planning would have foreseen that there was a time when you would have to replace those mains by new mains. Unfortunately over the last 8 years very little work has gone on in that area of replacing worn and rotten mains. Certainly a lot of work has got to be done in the country. There has been some replacement of mains in St. Michael but in the country the evidence will clearly show that there has been little replacement of mains. And the people of Barbados are worried about the proliferation of stomach cancer. People are asking questions as to whether some of the ailments which have now become very common are not related to the quality of water. I have not spoken about it before because I do not want to scare anybody but people are asking that question.

Sir, this side is not only criticising. We are hying to make suggestions as to how the authorities can improve the distribution of water to all of Barbados. It is clear, Sir, that they have had a new capitalisation programme and an immediate capitalisation programme. The Act allows the Authority in section 19 to borrow amounts required by it for meeting any of its obligations or performing any of its functions with the approval of the Minister.

I would like the Minister to give active consideration to authorising the BWA to borrow a substantial amount of money now against what is being held by the Government in respect of debentures to start a proper programme of exploration, a proper programme of additional well digging and a proper programme of laying new pipes throughout the island and putting down reservoirs.

The Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister must see this matter as one of the highest priorities. This is a question now of real sustainable development, sustainable development of small people in a small island. We can spend the $50 million a $60 million on Sherbourne for the people to come and talk. They have gone. The development of Barbados is being held back in the words of the Honourable Member for St. Peter. We are not able to sustain the development because of the problems of water. Water is not only a basic need, it is essential. Without it we cannot live. We have now, as a matter of crisis management, to shift resources from wherever else they were going and divert them into a proper capital programme for water resources development of Barbados. I am calling on the Government to do that.

Now, Sir, we hear all kinds of excuses being given on the media about the water situation. There was a time when we used to see on our television screen "Don't use sprinklers". That was very important because the use of sprinklers indiscriminately resulted in a depletion of

the water resources and is today still a contributory factor to the present crisis.

I would wish the Minister to tell us when the Water Authority has advertised and warned against the use of sprinklers. You can gazette the thing and you can gazette it in two weeks or less. That is no impediment. It is being said up there that they cannot do it. Nonsense. Tell them so.

One final point, Sir. You will hear the emotional talk about golf courses and it is clear the three parties were committed to golf course development. If the three parties have been committed to golf course development there is a fall out from the use of water. Nobody has said that the Chief Town Planner and the Water Authority have been provided with schemes for recycling water used on golf courses and in houses and so on. I am not going into those details in one minute. The only point I want to make is this. Down at Westmoreland the people building the golf course have put down 3 or 4 wells. Now, Sir, those wells are producing only 10%. The people are using only 10 per cent of what the wells yield. I want to repeat, Sir. There are four wells at Westmoreland. The Westmoreland Golf Club or whatever it is called – "Coronation People" – are using only 10 per cent of the water yielded by the wells. They have offered to the Barbados Water Authority the other ninety per cent. Do you know they have not taken it up? They have said in other words to come in and bring your equipment. Use the equipment and use the water being produced by the wells. Do not forget that we have a right in Barbados to commandeer the Water Authority... 4.05 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not work for Pemberton. I do not work for no big white people, I work for the little black man from Porey Springs. I do not have no retainers from none of them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Time. Time. We are pressing for time.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir, I am winding up. This is a serious thing, Sir, because there is a provision in the law for the Water Authority in cases of emergency to commandeer the use of wells. Here are people offering the use of their wells to draw ninety per cent. Have they taken up that offer yet? I want the Minister to reply because this is a serious point.

Aside.

Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Water Authority knows that it is true. I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. John.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the comments of Honourable Members of the Opposition on the problem which this country faces regarding the availability of water. Somehow the impression seems to be creating itself, aided and abetted by the skillful language of the Members of the Opposition, that there are two kinds of citizens in Barbados. There is one kind of citizen who is specially being provided with water, gushing out of their taps and being pumped to them at all hours of the day and night, and that there is another category of Barbadian citizen who is being deprived of water. The reason why I understand this so clearly, Mr. Speaker, is because unlike Honourable Members on that side who I consider to be "huff and puff" politicians I invited the Barbados Water Authority officials to my constituency in the area of Edge Cliff which has been without water for seven weeks, not just this year. But Edge Cliff has been without water nearly every year for the past 7 years during the dry season.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: All right, I am going to explain the difference between me and you because you know my business better than I know yours. I invited the Barbados Water Authority to Edge Cliff and they sat down with the residents and, even though I am not entirely satisfied with the explanations they have given, nor will I be until they start to listen to what to technicians is anecdotal "wisdom" but which sometimes can replace some of the high flown theories which they have about the way things should work. But I nevertheless felt that the explanations which they provided to the residents of Edge Cliff, while they do not provide any comfort for them, helped to clear up their minds that there are not two Barbadoses as somebody said. It is not true to say that there are persons in Barbados who are being spited either for political or other reasons which I am saying is the impression the Opposition wishes to give by this debate. In fact, it appears as though the problems which the Water Authority is facing with regard to making water available to all of Barbados are genuine problems which need some creative, and urgently creative, solutions.

I want to make that point because it concerns me – and when people from Edge Cliff call me at home on a morning, I explain to them that I do not get water in Mapps, St. Philip either. Fortunately, I lived in Trinidad long enough to know how to bathe out of a pigtail bucket. A white pigtail bucket is the kind of bucket that I am now bathing out of in the morning. But the point is that after 6 o'clock in the morning there is no water in my district and the water does not come back on until 8 or 9 o'clock at night. That is explained, as I understand it, because

of problems which they are having at the Hampton Pumping Station. The pressure is low and they have had to divert water and there are other kinds of problems that exist. I think that our citizens have to understand that it is true that there have been lower levels of rainfall and that all cannot be solved by any action taken precipitously by a Minister of Finance to free up resources...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, that is what one of the Members over there called for as though access to $30 million, or however much Honourable Members on that side have calculated it to be, would suddenly solve all of the problems including agricultural diversification and all of the other wild suggestions which have been made by Members of that side and which they feel will be soluble by making those funds accessible. That cannot be the only problem that we are facing in Barbados or it certainly is not the problem which can only be solved by access to those resources. The Government has undertaken with the assistance of the IADB to have the water resources study done. But this is a phenomenal year in terms of the shortage of water to a large number of those districts, even though, as I say, an area like Edge Cliff and there may be some other higher level areas in which water has not been available.

This is what I will say about the Water Authority now, and I will say that about all Government Departments under successive Governments. Very often they do not feel that it is their duty to go out to the public and to explain to the public why they are facing problems, and instead of slamming down the phone in people's ears when they call them to find out why the water is off, what time the water truck is coining, what problem is being faced, some of our public officers need, in my view, to be more attentive and understanding to the problems which our citizens face.

Half of the resentment which, in my view, Barbadians feel about not having the water comes from the fact that when you pick up the telephone and call numbers to ask ques'tions, people slam down the telephone in their ears or are indifferent to the problems they face. But it is not only the public sector, because it also happens in other public utilities, and I suppose it is a reaction or a development that has taken place because of the kind of society in which we live, where people are used to having these things at their finger tips and when, therefore, they are not available, the persons who provide them feel that if you cannot get them now, you had things good for so long, that is your business.

But they have a duty to explain to people why these problems are being faced, and I believe that rather than the huff and puff attitude, and prancing up and down at contrived public appearances, particularly those held last weekend and before, to make this water problem more of an issue, and particularly a political issue, which it is not a political issue, that persons on that side imbued with the knowledge, both technical and the other wisdom that they have acquired over years of involvement in politics, imbued with their strong historical understanding of how Barbados has developed, should seek to bring the technicians on board into their communities and help explain why we are facing the problems we face. But perhaps the Water Authority needs to speak to some of those Honourable Members over there first, because their first cry in all these kinds of problems is to suggest that there has been some corrupt act, act of inefficiency, act of monumental incompetence, act of indifference, misfeasance, malfeasance or some other kind of questionable moral act by a Member on this side.

4.15 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: If you want to put that in the record, I will put that in too. And *mala fides* by some Member on this side in depriving certain people from certain amenities which other citizens enjoy on a daily basis. That is what this exercise, Mr. Speaker, is about. I am saying that is what this is prompted by. It is a political sham by an Opposition trying to pretend that it is so concerned about some select group of people who they seem to want to suggest that the Government is consciously shutting off their water, spiting them and acting indifferently to the problems that the people of Barbados face. Even though the Water Authority has a lot of explaining to do – and I hope it does that explaining soon – I want to go on to say, Mr. Speaker, that I will not participate in any exercise in which the Opposition seeks to give the impression that there is some kind of spite work and indifference by the Government in relation to this problem.

There is no household in Barbados, least of all our own households, where they have been affected by this problem, where the absence of water is not causing considerable hardship and for which we as politicians on both sides feel the same pain as those persons who experience that hardship. They call you, they express concern. Some people's crops have been wiped out, some people are losing livestock. We know that these problems exist. Nobody has denied it, there is no indifference, because on a daily basis one is faced as a politician with these concerns which people bring to you, as I have said, particularly in an area like Edge Cliff, where for the past seven years there has been a major problem with respect to access to water, particularly the Edge Cliff Gardens area, not on the main road.

I have only intervened, Mr. Speaker, to say I am sure the Minister will provide adequate explanations, but I hope the Water Authority will intensify its public education programme and that they will ensure that they have properly trained customer relations people working and answering telephones, instead of the people larging off at a desk and slamming down the telephone in people's ears or telling them there is nothing they can do. And, Mr. Speaker, that Honourable Members of the Opposition will not continue in this debate to use this as an opportunity to seek to point fingers in the wrong direction and that they will seek instead to help our citizens to understand that issues relating to water conservation, issues relating to sustainable development, as the Honourable Member for St. Thomas raised, issues' relating to the kind of planning programme that we have for Barbados, which have to be based on the availability of water, are too important to be dismissed in this light-headed, off-hand manner in which accusations are being thrown around which are not in the best interest of a serious debate on issues like this, and which, if our citizens do not have access to water in the next few weeks because of worsening conditions, will only seek to exacerbate the situation more and will seek to give comfort to a few misguided people who know better but do not wish to put their best foot forward in helping to solve what is a problem for a large number of Barbadians.

With those few words of correction, Mr. Speaker, I do not have to say one way or the other whether I support it or not, but I support efforts to ensure that particularly in Edge Cliff, St. John, and other areas of St. John, and the residents of Mapps, that we have access to water in a short time.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the concerns expressed by Honourable Members on this side about the indifferent, incompetent manner in which the crisis in relation to water has been handled. I personally deplore the conduct of the last Honourable Member who spoke in here and said that the serious and grave concerns which were raised on this side by Honourable Members was a political sham. I deplore also the fact that the Honourable Member is so patently inconsistent that on the one hand he calls it a sham and on the other hand he says he shares the pain suffered by those large numbers of households in Barbados who do not get water. That is what I call sheer, political hypocrisy.

Now, Sir, one of the reasons for my concern is the fact that this Parliament has been treated with the same degree of indifference by die Barbados Water Authority over the last eight years as they are now treating the public of Barbados. I have before me a document of the House, namely the last Report that was laid in this House in September, 1986, the Annual Report for April 1, 1985 to March 31, 1986 of the Barbados Water Authority. In that Report, at pages 16 and 17, paragraph 5, the Water Authority as then constituted made it abundantly clear that after a 20-year programme starting in 1970 and culminating with this Report, Barbados could be proud of the fact that 92% of all households in Barbados have water service connections with virtually all households on the island having ready access to piped water. The Authority has been operating within an appropriate well-defined 20-year plan for water system expansion and it has been effectively designed, implemented, operated and maintained. That is the glorious heritage that the Honourable Members on that side received, and today what we have is a situation in which from then until today that good work has been squandered by the Authority.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, that Report has been signed by Neville W. Boxill, Dennis K. Yearwood and what looks to me like a Kellman and the date of the Report is August 14, 1986. According to the Report, the Water Authority consisted... They have the members in here. You can read it very carefully.
4.25 p.m.

The basic position at that time also was that the Water Authority at page 21 had assets of $192 million.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Even if I quote it, you would not understand it.

The Government of Barbados debentures – $4 million. They had cash in hand – $3.8 million. That is $7.8 million. They had Treasury Bills at cost – $16 million. That is $23 million and they had accounts receivable of $12 million. Sir, that was an Authority with resources available to it and it had already carried out a 20-year programme resulting in 92% of the households of Barbados having access to water. That was the position.

Now I feel, Sir, that as Members of Parliament, we would be failing in our duty if we did not seriously condemn the administration, not only for squandering its heritage but for treating this body with such gross contempt that they have not given to us and rendered periodic stewardship of their incompetence. I would like to know whether the Prime Minister, as an avid observer of Government, does not view with great concern whether this is not a great case study to put to the Academy of Politics.

This is a very serious thing. Here is a Statutory Board that refuses to comply with its statutory obligations. According to the Honourable Member who just spoke, when you ring up the Authority, you are greeted with a

reply from the staff which is reminiscent of the grunts of a pig, That is what the Honourable Member said. The Honourable Member said that the people slam down the telephone in your ears. What are we going to do about this body? Parliament is useless if Parliament does not have some kind of mechanism to deal with this. It is not a question that they have been doing it for years. It is a question that this Parliament must decide in its mind whether it is going to permit this situation to continue.

Not so long ago, I read an article which I had to draw to the attention of Honourable Members that they say in the United Kingdom politicians are now regarded in a worst light than real estate agents and second hand car salesmen. The people regard them as competing for being the biggest tricksters. Sir, I am not in that category. I am not in that.

I am going to say, whether the Honourable Member for St. John likes it or not or calls it a political sham or not, that the Board of Directors of the Water Authority and the Management of the Water Authority are deserving of condemnation and that the Minister should take it in his hand. He owes the public an obligation to dismiss them. They want firing. The people at the Water Authority who are in charge of it want firing because they treat Parliament with contempt. They treat the public with contempt and they have not demonstrated that degree of competence one expects from them.

I want to make it clear that at Enterprise in Christ Church, and in other areas, we do suffer. We suffer from lack of water too. What I would like to draw to Honourable Members' attention is that I have seen evidence of incompetence in relation to the follow up by the Water Authority of legitimate information provided to the Water Authority about leaking mains.

On Enterprise Main Road there has been a leaking main. I have seen it. I have telephoned. I have given the information. It has taken sometimes 2 weeks for them to respond. They come and they do it and when they fix it here, it opens another place. It is obvious that the pipe in that area cannot stand the pressure of the water or the traffic. Now why is it that an Authority that has not so long ago had over $30 million available to it cannot replace a section of that pipe. It is an obvious solution. Now that is one of the things we must talk about.

Sir, I want to say that I cannot finish without condemning again that irresponsible speech made by the Honourable Member for St. John. He must not come in here and seek to condone this iniquity and abuse us on this side because we are doing our duty. We are feeling for the public. We know that he has now reached the stage where he does not have to feel for anybody. He has reached the stage that he has attained his heights and he does not have to feel for anybody. But I will remind him of what the Honourable Member for St. Andrew used to say, "When you go up, you come down too."

Sir, I hope that as a result of this responsible act, of the Opposition that serious steps will be taken as a matter of urgency. This is a matter of urgency. The public has lost confidence in this institution. The public feels with justification that the institution feels that it is not accountable to anybody. This institution must be accountable. That is the problem Sir.

It is our duty as politicians to bring these matters to your attention, Sir. I am calling on the Minister to ensure that the relevant reports of the Authority are brought to Parliament and if those reports are not brought to Parliament, then the Minister is deserving of the only treatment that you can give him. I know that it maybe a difficulty. I know that in the present context that maybe difficult. I know that the Minister may feel that he has a monopoly now – he has power.

Therefore Sir, I associate myself with those who have done their duty by bringing this matter to the attention of Parliament and I join with them in the call for urgent action on the part of the Government to ensure that this Authority understands its grave and serious responsibility to the public for efficient management of this very vital and necessary resource in Barbados.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would just like to mention that there are 3 speeches left. So I am saying to Honourable Members that they must know how to deal with it. I am asking Honourable Members to sort it out.

4.35 p.m.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, as the representative for the constituency that has been hardest hit by this crisis, I must associate myself with the comments which have been made by Honourable Members on this side. I am somewhat disappointed by the Honourable Member for St. John, a disappointment endorsed by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South, in calling this motion a political sham. I note that he spoke about the people in Edge Cliff being affected for the past seven years but it is very interesting to note that the people in Edge Cliff come from an area that supports members on this side. He certainly did not speak about the other members in the other parts of St. John.

Mr. Speaker, if you are going to tell me that if the entire livestock of people in a given area have been wiped out and those people have no means of a livelihood, and

is not a crisis, I would like to know from the Honourable Member far St. John, what is a crisis? If, Mr. Speaker, you are going to have people who rely on the little piece of land in their backyard for a livelihood and because of this crisis, or because of what has been taking place in the weather situation during the past few weeks they have been unable to earn a livelihood and that is not a crisis, I wouid like the Honourable Member for St. John to tell me what is a crisis.

Mr. Speaker, if you would take a situation where people without transportation - I say without transportation, who have been unable to use their bathrooms, and this is something that is happening throughout the length and breadth of St. Andrew far the past three months, if that is not a crisis, I would like to know from the Honourable Member for St. John what is a crisis.

If, Mr. Speaker, people in St. Andrew have been unable to take more than one bath - and I am serious - in a week - I could specify certain areas and I could give the Honourable Member for St. John names, people who have been unable to wash their clothes more than once a week, if that is not a crisis I would like the Honourable Member for St. John to tell me what is.

But, Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members on this side have spoken at length on this issue and I need not go over what they have said. But they have stopped short of calling for the resignations of the Honourable Minister of Public Works and the members of the Board of the Water Authority.

This crisis, Mr. Speaker, from what I have outlined to you with respect to the suffering of the people in St. Andrew, shows the importance, at this time, of the Ministry of Public Works. I have nothing against the Honourable Member for St. Michael East. Whether or not he is capable of handling his Ministry he would have to know that, but I think the time has come when the Rime Minister should understand that because of this crisis the Ministry of Public Works is a very important Ministry and also highlights the points which have been mentioned by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph when he was speaking about two Barbadoses, a point which has been scorned by the Honourable Member for St. John. But it is a fact.

We in the Barbados Labour Party have been calling for some time for a Ministry of Rural Affairs. This particular crisis shows up the need for there to be a Ministry of Rural Affairs to deal with this important crisis. It is one of the most serious crises we have faced, certainly within the past 7 years. If the Honourable Minister is allowed to continue in his station, if the members of the Barbados Water Authority remain in their position, and if this situation remains as it is in the next four weeks, Honourable Members will understand what I am saying.

Mr. Speaker, I would have preferred to speak after the Honourable Minister of Public Works because I can very well anticipate that he is going to talk about the rainfall. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas has made references in this House on past occasions to the water situation and he has alluded to it in his presentation, but I would like Honourable Members to remember - I do not remember the exact date - but two years ago during the rainy season, it was not during any dry season. It was during the rainy season that I brought a question in this House relevant to the water problems which were being faced by the people of Orange Hill and Apes Hill.

The people in Orange Hill and Apes Hill were suffering so badly during the rainy season as a result of the crisis at the time that they formed themselves into an action group. They held a series of public meetings, ignored by the then Minister of Public Works, whosoever he was, nobody took them on. They had a demonstration in front of the Barbados Water Authority. This was during the rainy season. It had absolutely nothing to do with the dry season. Honourable Members on that side would like us to believe that this is a dry season problem.

Aside.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: The Honour-able Member for St. Michael North would not have known about it because he was the Minister on paper. But nothing was done about it then. I do not want this Minister of Public Works to come and tell us that we are going through a drought and that is responsible for the situation we are presently facing. It is not true. The people of St. Andrew led by the people of Apes Hill, Orange Hill and more recently the people of Hillaby have been agitating for a proper water system far over two years. When I brought this question to this House, I was surprised that !he Honourable Member for St. Michael North was riot aware of the public meetings by those concerned citizens in Apes Hill, Orange Hill and Hillaby.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph made a very interesting point, an excellent presentation. In his presentation he stated that it is unfortunate that Opposition Members are now being blamed for the shortcomings of this Government. Those of us who have been in close contact with our constituencies would know what the Honourable Member for St. Joseph has been talking about. I visit my constituency at least twice a day and when you visit your constituency you, as the parliamentary representative for the constituency, are being condemned for the water situation forgetting that it is problem I

would say that has been created by members on that side and a failure, whatever the present Minister of Public Works has inherited, of the Ministry of Public Works to function in the way in which a Ministry of Public Works should function with a head who is always in his station. 4.45 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, we throughout Barbados, in particular the people of St. Andrew, St. Joseph, St. Peter, St. Thomas and Edge Cliff – I cannot say St. John because it seems as though certain parts of St. John are getting good treatment – are now suffering as a result of a lack of direction from the Ministry of Public Works in the past.

But when I brought that question to this House, and I am already on record as saying that I have no intention of bringing any question before this House again because Honourable Members on that side treat it with contempt. You do not get any answer. But the answer that I got and I honestly believe that that question was written for the Honourable Member for St. Michael North who was the then Minister of Public Works because...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member must not mislead the House. He just said you do not get an answer and then he went on to say "the answer that I got". I wish therefore to make it very clear that he is not saying the Government does not answer questions.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: The answer that was provided at the time was to the effect... This was 2 years ago. I am sorry that because of the urgency of this matter I could not have had the question to read it out just to refresh Members' memories. The answer that I got was – and I am speaking from memory, subject to correction – was that a new reservoir was being planned to accommodate the areas of Apes Hill, Orange Hill and Hillaby. That is the answer that I got in this House. I was given the assurance that that would be accomplished...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has 4 minutes more.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE:...within the next Financial Year. Two years have past. Nothing has been done. This was during the rainy season when the people in Orange Hill, Apes Hill and Hillaby were being affected. Nothing has been done. I hope the Honourable Minister of Public Works does not come and tell us anything about drought being responsible for this present crisis and we have to wait until the rains come in.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to get this whole issue with respect to the people in Orange Hill and Apes Hill in its right perspective. What they did – and I would say it is all part of the politics of deception as practised by the Democratic Labour Party in the past – was that they ran a temporary main from a different reservoir connected the people in Hillaby, Orange Hill and Apes Hill and it worked well for 3 months. Somebody else from some other area started to complain and they shut it off because they felt that by then the concerned citizens of those areas had disbanded and the situation erupted all over again.

You may recall, Mr. Speaker, that in the Budgetary Proposals, in my contribution, I stated that if it is one good that might come out of this water crisis is that hopefully the Barbados Water Authority may be able to look at the water problem throughout the island and in this way the people of Apes Hill, Orange Hill and Hillaby, not to mention the other areas would benefit because this water situation has affected St. Andrew in its entirety.

The Honourable Member for St. Joseph also made a few comments relative to the trucks which go around in some areas. I would like the Honourable Minister to monitor these tanks very closely. Because the complaints that have been coming in is that the tanks would come, they go into a specific area, they feel that they have to stay for just a few minutes and then they move off. There are certain areas that they do not go in. I would not like to say that if they feel, depending on who is the driver, it is an area that they have not been directed to go in they decide to ignore that area.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion I would again like to remind this Honourable House that this is indeed....

Mr. SPEAKER: It has been drawn to my attention that the Honourable Member still has not 4 minutes but another 4 minutes as well. You still have another 4 minutes.

Mr. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I should like again to remind this Honourable House that this is indeed a very, very grave crisis. It is discriminatory in some respects because when you realize that people in St. Andrew, in St. Joseph, St. Peter, St. Thomas and those areas are being very badly affected and then when those same persons happen to get a lift into Bridgetown and pass by the golf course in Westmoreland on their way to town, with due respect to the comments made by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, they cannot feel that they are part of Barbados, the same Barbados as referred to by the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, when they cannot get water with which to bathe and the plants are literally basking in the sun.

It is also a matter of grave concern in the rural areas. I have a daughter that goes to school at St. Andrew's

Composite and there are occasions when the toilets at these schools are not flushing. During the past few days I was pondering whether or not I should send her to school. It is affecting the School Meals, there is no water to wash up the wares. What they are doing now is packaging the lunches.

I cannot understand how the Honourable Member for St. John could say that this is not a crisis. It is a very serious crisis. The question as to whether or not this Government is in a position to handle the crisis, I doubt very much because if they could fool the rest of Barbados in the areas of St. Michael and Christ Church that are getting water, and are not being affected by this problem, if they could fool those people into believing that Members of the Opposition on this side are talking nonsense and it is a political sham well then, in the eyes of the majority of the electorate it will not be a crisis. This is what this Administration through the Honourable Member for St. John is hoping to do.

Thank you.

4.55 p.m.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I view this debate here this afternoon as an exercise in politics. It has not even been brought within the parameters of a Resolution where one can vote. It is just brought for the purpose, Sir, of talk and nothing more than that. But having said that, Sir, I want to say this. There can be no denial of the fact that we are in a serious situation here as regards the distribution of water in Barbados.

Honourable Members were quite right that there are some areas in Barbados where there is no problem but there are other areas in Barbados where there is a problem. But, Mr. Speaker, this is nothing new. This has been going on from the time I was a boy, especially at this time of the year. I well recall places like Boscobel and Josey Hill, particularly Boscobel, in the fifties no water for years. Sir, what we are going through is in fact something that we have seen before. So the question is not that there is a professional problem in Barbados and that all areas in Barbados are not getting water. At this time of the year, last year, the year before and the year before that you were always warned not to wash your motor cars, not to water your gardens, not to use sprinklers. Why, Sir, is this being done at this time of the year, every year? So do not try to make it appear as though this is the first time that we have a situation like this.

I will admit that the situation is worse on this occasion than on previous occasions but the point I am making is that we are always faced with a water problem every year at this time every year. What has made this so bad, and Honourable Members may not want to hear it but I will say it just the same, is that we are faced with worst drought conditions than we have faced, as far as I can remember, for many, many years. It has not been as bad as this for a long, long time.

There may be other problems as well. I cannot deny that, Sir. We have leaking mains. I believe we have old worn out mains and because of those we also have leaks. I do not know what is the percentage of water that is lost through leaks, but I believe it is fairly significant.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: He said 10% but I do not know if it is as much as that. I cannot put a figure unto it. But I believe it is fairly significant. It is not always easy to detect. There are some old mains, as the Honourable Member is saying, and it is not easy to detect when these mains are leaking. The point is, Sir, that we have reached a stage now where we have to look very carefully at how we use the water.

The Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, he says that the ground water reserves are approaching its limit. I have heard that, Sir, for the last 20 years – the last 20 years, Sir, when the daily supply was 28 million gallons it was said then the limit was 31 million or 32 million gallons. So the limit always moves and it moves upwards. Now we are in fact consuming probably about 40 million gallons a day, how could we consume 40 million gallons a day if the limit was 30 million. The truth of the matter is that we are not absolutely sure the precise figure that we have.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: What brackish water? There is brackish water in Barbados. There is no doubt about that. Yes there is brackish water but nobody is being supplied with brackish water as such.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The point is, many years ago she lived there. She has not lived in St. James now for a number of years. Well it happened in your time then. It was happening when you were in the Government if you want to say that. Why didn't you do something about it?

Sir, there is brackish water in Barbados. There is fresh water in Barbados. We are talking about potable water. I am not talking about brackish water as I understand it. My understanding, Sir, is that the supply of 40 million gallons a day is potable water. The supply of the 28 million gallons a day, more than 20 years ago, in the 1960s when I was in the other place in the Senate, we had at that time the report on the findings by Tullstrom

and others which apparently gave us a limit of over 30 million gallons a day but the fact is that there is a greater supply of water than that at the moment.

Sir, we have a consumption of 40 million gallons a day which, as I understand it, the whole of the island can take but the distribution is a problem.

About 3 years ago, Sir, there was a problem in the St. Joseph, Horse Hill, parts of St. George and parts of the St. Thomas area and I remember a well was sunk somewhere in the Applewhaites area. They had to bring in equipment from St. Kitts to do it and that assisted, Sir, in alleviating the problems to the residents in those areas. So do not try to make it appear as though the Water Authority has been doing nothing.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: That is a different matter altogether. If they are not reporting to Parliament, Sir, I believe they should. As a matter of fact, not believe they should report, if the law says they should report then they should report. That is a different matter altogether.

But, Sir, the problem is that we cannot panic ourselves into taking measures that in fact will redound in the long run not to the benefit of Barbados. We have got to think in terms of taking long-term measures and I honestly believe that the metering of our water supply, which hopefully will be done over the next couple of years, will assist considerably in the management of the water resources in Barbados. House owners have been advised over time, when they are building their homes to build water tanks. House owners chose to forget all of that, but the cost is one thing. They still build the $400,000 home but the water tank is the cost. But they are going to complain when they do not get a supply of water that they want to get when in fact they chose to ignore what they should have been doing in providing for themselves the water tank.

5.05 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: That is a different matter, Sir. There are lots of people who complain about getting water and these persons could have helped themselves.

Now I have heard the Member for St. Thomas talk about the quality of water. I do not know if he is right or wrong. But I know for a fact and, I do not want to put it in the context that he has put it, that since this Government has come back in that there has been a problem with the quality of the water supply. I know for a fact that those persons living in the Lodge Hill area for the past several years, and I think it is a bit better now, but from time to time the quality of water that is supplied to them has been looking like Coca-Cola. Persons could not wash their clothes and from time to time the Water Authority had to send trucks out. The water improved for a while and then again shortly after that it reverted to the poor quality of water that they had before. Here again we come back to the problem that we had. Many of these areas in Barbados have had the supply of water through pipes that have been years and years old particularly those iron pipes. I believe that the Water Authority has moved away from that kind of pipe and they are now using a plastic pipe which will reduce that kind of problem that they had over the years...

Sir, let me get back to the point where I started. I cannot blame the electorate of Barbados for those who are not getting water. It has been drawn to the attention of the Water Authority. There is a water problem in many areas in Barbados and that water problem will persist. There is nothing that any Honourable Member on the other side can do or on this side can do. There is nothing that the Water Authority can do until we can get a fairly adequate rainfall.

Mr. Speaker, this problem has only begun now in the season of drought.

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Okay. Put it this way, Sir. There may still be one or two problems somewhere in Barbados, but by and large the problem of water supply will virtually disappear when we get a very heavy down-pour of rain. There are some reservoirs that I understand are fairly low and they are low because they have not been replenished since we have no water to replenish them. The point that I am making is this, Sir. The replenishment will come from the rainfall. If we get a consistent supply of rain, then the chance of the problem persisting will be virtually nil. Let us try not to play politics with this particular matter.

Yes, we still have some leaks because of bad pipes. We still have the problem of persons ignoring the necessity to help themselves by installing water tanks. We still have those problems and in times of rainfall the water tanks are not necessary. That is probably why they are not supplied. As soon as the drought is over, then the problems that we are discussing now will virtually disappear until the following year when we have those same types of conditions again.

Mr. Speaker, I can understand the position of Honourable Members on both sides because we have a severe problem but we have to place the problem exactly where it is. It is not necessarily with the Water Authority why we are suffering at this time.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have indicated before. Just one moment. There is only one speech to be made within the allotted time. I think that I will give the Minister that opportunity to make that final speech.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to a number of queries even though the debate to some extent has used up most of the available time. I sense that the Members of the Opposition found it necessary to introduce this Resolution at this time and I am really not going to say for political prudence to the fullest extent. Because I think there is some degree of concern for people in their constituencies who are really being very badly affected, I think it would be irresponsible of them if they did not seek to represent their constituents. I certainly understand their concerns and would assure them that there is no deliberate attempt to deny their constituents any supply of water because it may seem as passing strange that the members and the constituencies that are affected are indeed represented by the Opposition. I think that we have to dismiss the notion that there is any deliberate attempt to deny the residents of St. Andrew, St. Joseph, St. Thomas and St. Peter water. They have to dismiss that. That is absolute nonsense.

Sir, I think that it is important for the public to appreciate that there were a number of comments that were made by Members of the Opposition, some even as ridiculous as the Honourable Member for St. Andrew who suggested that the lack of rainfall is not necessarily the problem even though, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael North pointed out, there is an adequate water base there, but the problem of servicing those areas is where it really lies in the country. I just want to explain briefly why that is happening.

The natural profile of the water resources that are associated with the catchment of water would be found stretching along the West Coast of our island from St. Lucy to Christ Church right along the St. Michael area. The filtering of water through the coral stone collects in those areas and you will find that the catchment areas are Alleynedale, Ashton Hall, The Whim, Carlton, Trents, Waterford, Codrington, Belle, Newmarket and Hampton where the natural aquifers are available for the catching of our water resource. The areas that are serviced like Hillaby, Apes Hill, White Hill, Farmers, Duncan, Porey Spring and so forth are serviced by the Castle Grant Reservoir having received water that is collected through springs that are underground, and these are running springs that depend very heavily on rainfall. They are not springs that form part of a natural aquifer. They are running springs, and we suspect that those springs continue into the area of the Belle where there is a very strong catchment area.

5.15 p.m.

The water extracted from the running springs is then transferred into the Golden Ridge Reservoir and transferred over to the Castle Grant Reservoir where it is distributed through the network. You would appreciate that if the level of water in that area is particularly low that we will in fact have a problem of distribution.

Even though the overall available water resource base suggests that there is enough water to *satisfy* the total demand, even though 90% of it has already been allocated, I think we must be fair and recognise that there is a genuine problem with regard to the distribution from Golden Vale and, I think by extension, the other ones. The Bowmanston area will service the other areas of St. John, but we have not had too many complaints in that particular area, except for Edge Cliff.

Sir, there is no deliberate attempt, and I think that very early we should note, as the Honourable Member for St. Michael North pointed out, that Barbados has been experiencing a long run of years with very low rainfall. In 1993, we recorded a record year and, certainly, for the last 11 weeks, at least since I have assumed the office of Minister responsible for Public Works, I do not believe that any rainfall has been measured at Bowmanston for the last 11 weeks.

Asides.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: Sir, they are attempting to put me in hot water but I will continue to deal with the problem.

A number of accusations were levelled by the Members of the Opposition. There were a lot of them and I will not be able to respond to all; but I will say that I believe that this matter is very important to all Barbadians, and if I am unable to respond to all of the concerns this evening I will prepare a precise and detailed statement of the precise problem that we are confronted with in Barbados and make it extremely transparent where all Barbadians can appreciate the problem we.are confronted with.

There was a sweeping accusation about the question of Westmoreland. We know of no record where the Wesunoreland group have invited the Barbados Water Authority to use 90% of the output from their wells. We do not know where that came from. But the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has an affinity to golf courses so he has more information than me. What is passing strange is that he paid more attention to that, only writing one single letter on behalf of his constituents from St. Thomas.

With regard to the....

Asides.

Hon. J. O. **TUDOR:** I will respond to that too because that is another sweeping one. You are trying to suggest that you are the only ones who are conscious; that if persons are not getting water that we will in fact bill them. The Board is conscious of it, Sir. I have asked them to prepare proposals for me so I will be able to determine how that particular problem may be handled. I will wait until I get those proposals.

Sir, the reports. I said during the Estimates and again during the Budget speech that I felt that it was wrong that the annual reports were not tabled in the House of Assembly. I took the responsibility and indicated to the House that I will make sure that those reports will be laid and I hope that can be done in the not too distant future. I think it is wrong that those reports have not been tabled and I certainly will make them available to you.

Now, the question of development within the Barbados economy is a question that we must pay some attention to. At present, we have allocated some **90%** or **91%** of the available water resource base in this country. We have to bear in mind that with limited capital and what available capital we have we have had gradually to increase the water resource base to service areas that are suffering from short fall.

It is true that the Barbados Water Authority has placed funds in Treasury Bills, in debentures, in Treasury notes as fixed deposits and those funds are being held for the Sewerage Project on the South Coast and the West Coast. Sir, you will know and all the other Members know of the importance of the sewerage project to this country and to the marine environment, both on the south coast and on the west coast. This is a tourist island and we will in the future depend very heavily on tourism, and most of us are aware of the significance and importance of that project to both the south coast and the west coast.

Those funds have been earmarked for that project, because we have as a matter of priority to protect our immediate environment around us. I will not go into any details because all of you know that it is a sensitive matter. We are a tourism island and we have to understand that without delay we must pay very strict attention to that programme.

I agree that if you have earmarked funds for that we cannot do that at the total expense of the ability of the Barbados Water Authority to distribute water to our own nationals. We have in fact allocated **30-32** million gallons for domestic use. We have allocated **8** million gallons for agricultural purposes. There are leaks in the system and with the golf courses that are coming on stream and we anticipate that they will have to be allocated as part of the Development Plan, we will have to look to allocate another **1.5** million or maybe **2** million gallons per day for that development, which does not leave significant room for further development of the economy outside of golf courses or for domestic improvement.

Sir, that brings me on to another question. If we decide to trap the water in the Scotland District, there are a couple of equations. At present, during the dry season there is no water that goes into that area The area I am speaking about would be in the area of Haggatts in St. Andrew, Greenland, Breedys, Bawden, Hoytes and St. Simon and that area of the Scotland District. That is the area that has been earmarked for trapping of surface water in those areas, but to direct water from this same system would be quite costly. We will have to find a new way to distribute from that point and we have to analyse the cost of doing that from that particular catchment area. We have to measure that against the likelihood, if we completely allocate the resource base, against the desalination plant which may in fact increase the water base by **1** million gallons per day depending on the type of plan you put in, or **2** million, depending on requirements.

I take the point that the Honourable Member for St. Peter was making that it is going to lock us in and the development in general in Barbados will be affected if we are unable to satisfy the increased water demand. It is a crisis.

5.25 p.m.

Now, you should be aware, Sir, that because we are at this point, this is not the first time we have come to this point. The trend in Barbados is as follows: In **1970** the average demand was some **19.2** million gallons per day. In **1980** it rose to **24.8** million gallons per day. In **1990** it rose to **28.9** million gallons per day and now it is between **31.4 - 32** million gallons per day. So it has been rising steadily and we have also been increasing the supply base on a progressive basis.

There are a number of plans that are on the drawing board which will attract new water resource bases. In the short time I have I will not be able to go into all of the details with the new supply bases but I assure you that in the short-term it is likely that we will be able to increase the natural distributing capacity by another **2** million gallons per day with supplies at Alleyndale, Bowmanston and one or two others. I cannot remember all of them at this time but I will make them part of the statement that I will issue.

There is a study that we have put out to tender. I am aware that six tenders have come in. It is the Water Resources on Water Loss Study. This Study should start in late **1994.** Unlike the **1978** Study, this latest study

should point the way towards the development of water resources beyond the ground water.

The other point I made was about the evaluation and whether we develop the water in the Scotland District which is the surface water or we decide to look at the desalination plant once we reach that point.

Sir, there are a number of things we have to incorporate and I think the focus we took two or three months ago on conservation of water is very important because if we must be able to suppress the demand, and in particular during these times, and even when the rain starts to fall because it would still take a while for those reservoirs to build up. We cannot relax and say we have satisfied ourselves that the rain is now falling so we can go back to normal. That is an error because even though we have a programme for conservation at that time, that programme should continue.

Mr. SPEAKER: Four minutes more.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: I was a little concerned because some of the remarks which were made by the Honourable Members on that side were fair remarks with regard to the distribution of water by the tankers. A number of my colleagues in the Cabinet and some other technical staff from the Ministry have been going out into the fields visiting residents and affected areas and the complaints we have received are very similar to some of the feedback that was given by Honourable Members on the other side.

Do not think that we are not conscious of the difficulties being experienced by the members. We are conscious that there are problems with the distribution through the water tankers. We are trying to prepare a precise programme. It is not easy because the distribution of water takes time. When you go into one area it takes a little while for the buckets to be collected, then you have to go to another area, and another area and the tanks become empty. They then have to come. back to Bridgetown or to wherever they get their water resources from, then go back into another area and it is time consuming. It is a process that goes on and on.

I think it is not fair, Sir, to condemn the workers at the Barbados Water Authority because they have been going beyond their call of duty. It is true we have had reports on one or two of them being a little discourteous. We have had reports on members of the staff at the Barbados Water Authority indeed being discourteous and we have sought to deal with that as well.

In the short-term, Sir, we are very conscious on this side that people are desperate for water. I have experienced it myself. I have seen it. I have promised the people of St. Andrew, St Thomas - in fact, they have told me they would be glad to see the Honourable Member for St. Andrew, Mr. George Payne. They have not seen him for a long time. He is like a drought down there. I cannot say the same thing for the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, if I have to be honest. They see him. But the Honourable Member for St. Andrew is like a drought. That is what he meant to explain when he was trying to suggest that rain falling is not the problem because he does not realise that he is in a drought.

Sir, as I said I want to prepare a precise statement. I want to be very honest and very frank with the public of Barbados. There is no intention to play politics with the water distribution. We have a genuine problem in this country which we are going to address within the available resources we have and nobody can suggest that we are not trying and are conscious of the difficulties being experienced by the people of Barbados.

I will take my leave, Sir, at this point.

Mr. SPEAKER: That brings us to the end of the motion for the adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am moving the adjournment of the House at this point. I move that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, May 31, 1994 at 12 o'clock noon.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Speaking on the adjournment, Sir, I believe I should draw attention to Standing Order 3 of the House that has to do with the election of a Deputy Speaker. For some time now the House has been functioning without the benefit of a Deputy Speaker and the Standing Orders of the House call precise attention to this at Standing Order 3, subsection 2. It says:

> "If the office of Deputy Speaker shall fall vacant at any time during a Parliament the House shall elect another Member to that office."

It prescribes at section 3 that the election of a Deputy Speaker shall be conducted in a similar manner to that of the election of the Speaker. This is a matter the House must pay attention to. It is a very important matter because we need in all our doings to make sure that the functioning of the House is in compliance with the Standing Orders of the House. I am raising this matter on this occasion to make sure that this situation does not go unrectified for any appreciable time.

I would like, if necessary, to recommend that...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member cannot go beyond raising the question. I think it is for the House to decide when it wants to appoint a Deputy Speaker.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I was not going to recommend a Member. You pre-empted me because you thought I was going to recommend the Honourable Member f a St. Lucy and you thought it would lead to problems on the other side.

Mr. SPEAKER: No. I thought the Honourable Member had made the point that he wanted to make.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: I really was about to recommend that this matter be treated as a matter of priority so that the business of the House can be conducted entirely under the auspices of the Standing Orders. I would like, if you want me to, to recommend the Honourable Member for St. Lucy for the post.

Mr. SPEAKER: You would have to talk to the Leader of the House.

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, May 31, 1994 at 12.00 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

5.35 p.m.

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Mr. Speaker also announced that he had received the Accounts and Statements for the months of January and February, 1994 as prepared by the Accountant General.

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