
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 – 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, May 31, 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)
Hon. B. M. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A., LL.B.
(Hons.), (Minister of Foreign Affairs & Deputy Leader of the House)

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

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

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

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS

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

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

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

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

Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE, J.P., (Chairman of Committees)

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

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

Miss B. A. MILLER

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

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

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, May 17, 1994.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes of the Meeting of this Honourable House held on Tuesday, May 17, 1994 are ready. They have been circulated and I move that they be taken as read and confirmed.

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

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

PAPERS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Finance and by the command of the Cabinet, I lay the Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 2) Order, 1994.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill to amend the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation Act, Cap. 332A be read a first time.

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

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill to amend the **Tenancies** Development Act, Cap. 239A be read a first time.

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

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

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 81 asked by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South East is ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

The question that those Standing Orders be suspended for the remainder of the day's sitting was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 1.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT LAMBERTS PLANTATION, SAINT LUCY FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE WIND POWER PROJECT

Order No. 1 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Lamberts Plantation, Saint Lucy, for the purpose of the Wind Power Project.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution before Parliament seeks approval for the compulsory acquisition of 41 020 square meters or the **equivalent** of 10 acres of land at Lamberts in the parish of St. Lucy for the purpose of a Wind Power Project.

One may recall that during the early 1980s the Government of Barbados entered into an Agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank to conduct studies by means of a pilot project to determine the potential for generating electricity from wind turbine generators and for

transferring into the national Electricity grid the energy so generated.

Three sites were tentatively selected but because of its favourable wind regime the site at Lamberts in St. Lucy was selected as the best possible site for the setting up of such a project. Action was set in motion by the then Government to secure the land for this Project and initially Government gave consideration to a leasehold arrangement with Barbados Farms Limited who were the owners of the land.

12.30 p.m.

Accordingly, during the month of August 1985 Cabinet agreed that the 10 acres of land at Lamberts, St. Lucy should be leased for a three year period at the rate of \$5 000 per annum. However, during discussions with the owners over the lease agreement, certain stipulations were raised which made it economically more attractive for the Government to **seek** to purchase the site rather than to pursue the lease arrangement.

The proposal, therefore, to purchase the land was considered and approved by Cabinet in January 1986. Though agreeing to the purchase, the Cabinet directed that the price should be renegotiated to settle at a figure lower than \$60 000 asked by the owners, Barbados Farms Limited. Further negotiations ensued, Mr. Speaker, and finally in April 1992 the Cabinet agreed, on the basis of representation made by the **Ministry** of Finance and the Commissioner of Land Tax, that the land should be acquired at the purchase price of \$65 000.

Initial efforts sought to acquire this **property** through treaty. However, in March 1993 the owners suggested that the transaction be effected by way of acquisition through the provision of the Land Acquisition Act. Agreement was reached and subsequently authorisations required under Section 4 of the Act were signed. A survey of the land was carried out and the survey plan No. 1152 of December 1992 delineates the 41 020 square metres or 10 acres. This plan is available for inspection by Honourable Members.

Let me state that the wind power project was discontinued in March 1990. However, the Ministry of Finance subsequently received many queries from overseas companies interested in setting up a wind energy project, and to this end the 200 kw wind turbine generator is still on the site, along with the 100 metre high meteorological tower and it is now proposed to continue discussions with interested companies.

I therefore move, Mr. Speaker, that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, there are really a number of questions I would wish to **ask** the Honourable Minister of Agriculture. The Schedule to this is as brief as it could be and **the** Addendum is even more so. I constantly complain about the inadequacy of Addenda that come before us in **this** House.

The wind energy project at Lamberts, in the parish of St. **Lucy**, was a project **started** by the Barbados Labour Party, when it was in Government in the early **1980's**, as part of an energy policy. That was at a time, Sir, when there was actually a Ministry of Energy which pursued alternate energy sources and a whole host of other aspects of the national energy policy. On this side we are not aware that this **Government** has any energy policy. I would have thought that the wind project at Lamberts would have been something that we would have been in a position to show off at the recently concluded Global Conference, but the matter of fact is that this Government has allowed the Lamberts wind project to **run** down to nothing. We hear that there is a generator there. **Does** it work? Can it work?

We find ourselves now in yet another situation where the private sector is expected to make work, and work profitably, a project which this Government **has** just found it impossible even to work at all. Barbados is cooled year round constantly by the **trade** winds. It is an advantage that the Almighty has gifted **to** us. In these days of the search for **alternative** energy sources, clean unpolluted energy sources, which can be part of sustainable development in our country, I would have thought **that** the Minister could get up this morning and report that in whatever **measurement** these things **are** measured that **X number** or **Y number** was added to **the** national energy grid. But this is not the case.

I think the House is entitled to a great deal more information than we are getting. It is claimed that the Global Conference was a great success. I do not know anything about that, Sir. What I do know is that I had hoped that coming out of **the** Global Conference we would have heard some talk about a clean air policy, or clean air legislation, or the promise or the hope of it in this country.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: We have unclean, polluted air in this country. Mr. Speaker, you only have to look along the major highways of this country where buses and other means of public transport pass and **see** what the exhaust from diesel engines does to plants and trees to begin to understand what it would be doing to our lungs. I would have hoped that this clean air legislation would speak to the prohibition of **smoking** in certain public places, among other things. We are either serious about this matter of the environment in which we live and the whole concept of sustainable development, or we are not.

Again, **under** the **Barbados Labour Party** much endorsement and encouragement was given to the use of solar energy in **Barbados**. The same could have been true and is still capable of being true in Barbados in respect of wind energy. The Minister **has** not told us anything about this. In fact, he has spoken but we **are** no wiser. I would be grateful, and I think **Barbadians on the** whole would be grateful, if we could get **some** better understanding of what is going to be the future of the wind energy project at Lamberts and what cost may be involved, because if this generator, which has not been generating for some years now, is not working, is it part of the arrangement that it should be put in working order before the project is handed over? Or is it that the people who **are** going to make this project a reality, whatever this project is, that they will have to bear that expense? In what way, both in the immediate and in the medium and long term will this be beneficial to Barbados? We are entitled to know this.
12.40 p.m.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to **delay** the House on the acquisition of this bit of land but the project which was referred to, so far as I know, was discontinued some considerable time ago.

Aside.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: The Wind Project, Sir, had been **assessed** by the technical people who had **proposed** the Project and arising out of their analysis they came to the conclusion that, based on what had been done, the continuation of the Wind Project was not desirable and so the Wind Project was brought to a reasonable end. It is not as though **the** Wind Project is going on and we have not brought **information**. **As** a matter of fact, I **am** almost certain that **that** information is public knowledge.

I just got up to **correct** the **record**. I **am** **sorry** that I do not have the details to hand but I just wish to correct the record.

On the question of a Clean Air Act, to the extent that Your Honour allows response, let me say that again it is public knowledge that comprehensive environmental legislation is in the process of being prepared. It is taking the usual steps of consultation, et cetera, and in due course that legislation will be brought before the House.

At a time when it will be appropriate to have a debate on the environment we will be happy to discuss the areas of the environment which it is proposed to bring under **better** control by new and appropriate legislation. That process is actually going on now. I thought the House would wish to have that information.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to the Honourable Member for St. Michael West for

having spoken because there seems to be an element of confusion pertaining to this **Project** which really needs **clarification**. I would refer you, Sir, to the Development Plan which has just recently been made a document of this House. It speaks in this respect at page 220:

"The Wind Turbine Project, which was completed in 1990, yielded positive results".

Then it goes on to say that private investors will be encouraged to operate wind farms. The issue that is being raised from this side is that early in the 1980s **the** country was made to believe that it was necessary for the sustainable development of this country for Barbados to broaden its energy use away from the dependence on **petro** based energy projects into wind and other types of energy projects.

This Wind Energy Project was conceived of as being a critical aspect of an overall national **programme** to diversify Barbados' energy use. Now, it is not enough therefore for the Government **to** be in doubt as **to** where the Project is because the Minister of Agriculture is telling us on the one hand that the Project was discontinued in 1990, but the Development Plan itself is saying that the Project was brought to a successful conclusion with positive results being accomplished.

The implication therefore, Sir, has to be, what are Government's detailed plans and programmes **to** build upon the positive results that **are** spoken of in the Development Plan to make wind energy an important aspect of our national resource?

Hon. B. M. TAJT: On a point of **order**, Sir. The Honourable Member for the City raised an entirely different point. My statement was in response to what the Honourable Member raised, that the Project was a pilot project and that pilot project was concluded. What follows now is a matter for private investment, but the project that the Honourable Member referred to was completed in 1990.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, this is an exercise in semantics because the debate has been triggered by the carefully chosen words of the Minister of Agriculture that the Project was discontinued leaving the implication that what we now **see** down at Lamberts is just a mass of old iron for which no positive use has been, or can be found.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in circumstances where the public has made an investment in a matter as important as the development of an alternative energy resource in this country, and in circumstances where the Government Development Plan is saying that the results were positive, we think the Government should popularize the fact that the wind energy is a real potential energy source in this country and that, therefore, we should hear **from** the Minister in a more forthcoming manner what exactly are

the plans of his Ministry to give effect to the full realization of **all** the benefits **that** can accrue from the **expenditure** of public funds in one time **period**.

We feel **that** the Minister's statement **has** been lacking and our intervention therefore is simply to get the Minister to tell the public what have been the results really of this particular experiment, and what the public can **realistically** expect in terms of public and private action in the immediate future. But the Minister's statement on the **matter** has **been** totally lacking and deficient and was not really designed either to **inform** or enlighten the House, **or** to give any directions as to where Government's policy is likely to be the trend

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. **Speaker**, it was never the policy of any Government, as far as I **am** aware, certainly this one, of either Barbados **Labour** Party Government **or** the Democratic Labour Party Government to electrify Barbados. That **has** never **been** the policy. What happened was that the Barbados **Labour** Party ...

Aside.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I did not say that you said **that** but I want to make this clear though. It has not **been** made clear. The Barbados Labour Party Government started a pilot project in the early 1980s. I think it was 1982. It was precisely that, nothing more, a pilot project. Now, the pilot project was intended to last three years. It was not intended to be an ongoing thing. It was a three year lease of land at Lamberts in St. Lucy.

The question then, Sir, is to **see** if, in fact, one can **use** the energy generated from **that** pilot project, and to **see** if we can use wind energy to electrify Barbados, not by the Government, but by the private **sector**. Government has nothing to do with electrifying Barbados. We have a Light and Power Company here. The object was to be able to sell the energy to the Barbados Light and Power Co., **to** put into the national grid to supply electricity but not to do it on one's own. If the pilot project was a successful project, that is, successful to those who used energy, the Barbados Light and Power Co., it would be hoped that they themselves, not the Government, would put up other wind turbine plants either at Lamberts or in and around Barbados. The **point**, Sir, is that the Barbados Light and Power Co., found it uneconomical, which is a fact, to use the energy supplied by the Wind Turbine Project.

The Project came **to** an end about 1985. This Government restarted it in 1987 and then it came to an end in 1990. We have to **see** it only for what it is, a pilot project. Hopefully, it would be able to provide electricity for Barbados. I do not know whether it will be successful or not.

12.50 p.m.

In terms of the private sector, Sir, it might be successful but costly to operate which is an important thing, Sir, so it stood there. The purpose of acquiring this land now is that if one were to have returned it to the private sector it will have to go back into agriculture. The purpose of acquiring this land is to make sure you have a base there **from** which the same kind of operation can continue. The same kind of operation with turbine energy can continue but of course not with the Government this time but from other persons who can see benefits **therefrom**.

Certain remarks made by Miss B. A. MILLER were ordered by Mr. SPEAKER to be expunged from the Record.

Mr. SPEAKER: Can I hear the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, in winding up the debate on this Resolution, let me say that I believe that my colleagues for St. Michael West and St. Michael North gave adequate response to the whole question of the project **being** a pilot project and that the results of that project will not be used to advance the energy thrust of the Government.

The Honourable Member for St. Peter in reading from the Development Plan stopped short of reading a very salient part with respect to the Wind Turbine Project. He ended at the final paragraph on page 220 of the Development Plan where he said that the Wind Turbine Project which was completed in 1990 yielded positive results. But he failed to read the next sentence which said that **data** from this project had been **made** available to the private sector which has shown interest in this technology. And now there would be ongoing dialogue between the Government and the private sector agencies to see how **soon** and, if possible, the whole question of wind energy could form part of the national energy grid.

The statement by the Honourable Member for the City to the extent that this Government has no energy plan is clearly ludicrous, Mr. Speaker. The energy plan of this Government is spelt out and has been **spelt** out from time to time. It is spelt out in chapter 17 of the Development Plan. It has been spelt out in the 1991 Manifesto of the Democratic Labour Party. I do not think that that aspect needs any further elaboration.

I just want to move, Mr. Speaker, that the Resolution do now pass.

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 2.

BARBADOS TOURISM INVESTMENT CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1994.

Order No. 2 was called - To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation Act, Cap. 322A.

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Bill before the House seeks an Amendment to the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation Act, Cap. 322A by way of the addition in the Schedule of a parcel of land which has always been an integral part of the lands of **Heywoods** Hotel.

The lands of **Heywoods** Hotel comprise 3 parcels, one parcel measures 27.83 acres and was acquired for the Holiday Village Project. Another measures 2.895 acres and was acquired by donation to provide the access road for the public to the beach. The last parcel which is the subject of this Amendment measures 10 360 square feet and is Lot 115 of an approved subdivision and was acquired for the sewerage treatment plant.

The first 2 parcels were vested in the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation to permit the Corporation to have full control over them. The parcel measuring 10 360 square feet though it has always been an integral part of the hotel was never vested in the Corporation. Under the terms of the Agreement between the Government of Barbados and the purchaser of **Heywoods** Hotel the vendors agreed to vest or cause to be vested in the purchaser **easements** as are shown on a plan of Lot 115 at Heywoods, St. Peter.

Mr. Speaker, both the Solicitor-General's office and the legal unit of the Ministry of the Environment, Housing and Lands have agreed that the **vesting** of this parcel of land which as I said before is Lot 115 and which measures 10 360 square metres and the subsequent transfer of the 3 parcels by sale to the purchasers Barbados Shipping and Trading resorts would best be achieved through an Amendment to the Barbados Tourism Investment Corporation Act by way of an addition to the Second Schedule.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the Draft Bill seeks to make this Amendment and it has been prepared for **introduction** into Parliament as is being done now.
1.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, it should be noted that the Second Schedule contains the description of the other two parcels to which I earlier alluded.

I now move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

Dr. R. L. **CHELtenham**: Mr. Speaker, I begin by observing that once again in a matter of this sort there has been no disclosure of the plan to which reference has been made. It would really make for **ease** of discussion and may even avoid misapprehensions on our part if we were to have early sight of **the** plan.

My main comments, however, are of a much more fundamental nature. We **are** once again dealing with the privatisation of **Heywoods**, one of the assets of the people of Barbados, built in the main during the regime of **the** last Barbados Labour Party administration. This is one of several assets which this Government has seen fit to privatise and concerning which we in the Barbados Labour Party have already expressed our considerable quarrel and reservation. It would seem as though there is a deliberate attempt on the part of this administration to sell off, at times at very unreasonably low prices, assets acquired for the people of Barbados by the Barbados Labour Party. We are yet to hear of assets which are being sold which were acquired for the people of Barbados by the Democratic Labour Party, as though the history of the rich achievements of the Barbados Labour Party are meant to be obliterated during this session of the Democratic Labour Party in office.

Heywoods, the Flour Mill, the oil wells were all acquired, constructed, during the period of the Barbados Labour Party administration **1976-86**. We maintain **that** for a project worth about \$60 million ten years ago or less to be sold to the biggest private interest in Barbados now, Shipping and Trading, for merely \$34 million is an **unreasonably** low price and that is one of the several points of disagreement on the sale itself between the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party. But this is not a private matter. The sale of **Heywoods** Hotel is a public matter and there is no reason why at this stage all the conditions of the sale should not have **been** made known to the Opposition and to the public of Barbados.

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I am not sure that all the conditions of that sale **have** been made known. There **are** issues which we still need clearing up. Who determined in the end that \$34 million was **reasonable**? What valuations were done, and by whom? What were the differences between valuations, if indeed more than one valuation was done?

Aside.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, I am hearing word that we might have debated this already. Reference has been made in the past to the privatisation of **Heywoods**, but there was no full scale debate on this matter. We are talking about a facility that can house **300** beds and more,

on **27** acres of beach land, virtually prime beach land in Barbados, and we are led to believe that a facility which is less than **10** years old, or just about, that had 'an original value of \$60 million, in 10 years we should be selling, that for \$34 million. I **am** hard put to **accept** that that is a realistic valuation and I think the people of Barbados would need to be assured that the Government got the best price for that asset.

Mr. Speaker, the residents of the St. Peter area near **Heywoods**, and indeed all Barbados, will be concerned about the **fact** that the right of way leading to the beach, which was regarded as a public right of way, will now be falling into the hands of a private group. We would like to know what assurances the Government will be giving, and can give, that the access to the **sea** which has **been** enjoyed by all Barbadians when the Government owned it, will continue to be enjoyed by Barbadians now **that** that access is being privatised. I do not recall, Mr. Speaker, in the statement that was issued relating to the conditions of sale, that that point, which is a point of public interest, was mentioned or clarified.

If I may continue, Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Government can give us any details with respect to the **future** of **Heywoods** as a hotel plant. There has been a tendency in Barbados recently, and particularly in relation to the Shipping and Trading **properties**, to go the all-inclusive route, and there is **considerable concern** in Barbados as to the implications of the all-inclusive, particularly for the large range of ancillary services that support **the** hotel industry in Barbados. The hotel **industry** in Barbados **has been** built on the premise **that** the visitors come here and that a whole range of small **services**, whether it be the taxi man, the hotelier, the water sports proprietor, that they all will get a share of the tourism business because of **the** fact that the visitor, **once** he gets here, has the **freedom** to choose with respect to where he **eats** and which of the ancillary services he would **seek** to enjoy. But as soon as you have gone the way of the all-inclusive, large numbers of these people **are** cut off from participation in the activities of the **sector**. Shipping and Trading in particular, with **one** or **two** of the purchases, in relation to one or **two** of its other tourism investments in Barbados has gone the route of the all-inclusive, and I am wondering whether the Government knows **or** would **wish** to tell us at this stage whether the purchasers **are** likely to convert **Heywoods** into an all-inclusive hotel, whether they have any concerns about how far the all-inclusive notion should go in Barbados, and whether they **are** at all aware of the adverse impact that this is having on a whole range of ancillary services such as I have referred to, those involved in transportation, those involved in food provision, restaurants, those who **are** involved in entertainment, **and** so on.

1.10 p.m.

Even though, Mr. Speaker, I recognise that the issue before the House is a narrow one, and even though I do not wish to lead the debate in areas where it cannot reasonably go, I thought that there was a sufficient nexus between the matter before the House and this recent development in tourism, particularly led by the Shipping and Trading properties, for me to enquire of the Minister whether Government is giving any thought to this new development in **Barbados** and the adverse implications for the small man involved in tourism, entertainment, restaurant, food provision and so on.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, there are just two very brief points which I want to make in response to the Honourable Member for St. **Joseph**. One is in relation to the question of the closure of the beach. **The** transfer does provide that public **access** to the beach will be maintained, and provided for, so that there is no question of any public access to **the** beach being closed off.

The second point the Honourable Member **spoke** about **was** the question of a right of way being abandoned. I think a historical review of **the** situation **will** show that this right of way had been **abandoned** quite some time ago.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: It was abandoned in your time. You abandoned the right of way. That right of way **was** not abandoned, **Mr.** Speaker, in our time.

Those **are** the only two points I want to put on the record.

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

On the motion of Hon. M. A. KING, seconded by Hon. C. V. WALKER, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. L. L. BRATHWAITE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. **CHAIRMAN**: The House is in committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

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

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

ORDER NO. 3 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE **THE** LEASE TO THE METHODIST TRUST CORPORATION OF BARBADOS INC. OF LAND AND **THE** BUILDING **THEREON** AT SPEIGHTSTOWN, ST. PETER FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES

Hon. D. W. BOWEN: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution **seeks** to lease the property which formerly accommodated the Speightstown Boys' School to the Methodist **Trust** Corporation of **Barbados** Incorporated.

A few years ago, Mr. Speaker, the Methodist Church established a Methodist Training Institute to implement and **coordinate** certain aspects of the multi-faceted training needs of the Church. Permission was given by the Crown for the **former** Speightstown Boys' **School** to be used as the centre for residential and **non-residential** programmes to be organised by the Institute.

These programmes **are** expected to meet training requirements in the areas of Christian education, vocational skills training and other lay training courses as the **need** arises.

The property in question is situated at **the** corner of Chapel **Street** and **Goodings** Alley and consists of a **former** Church building **and** a relatively new extension which was constructed by **the** Government. With the relocation of the Speightstown Boys' School to **Battaleys**, **the** building at Chapel and **Goodings** Alley became **vacant** and there **was** evidence of serious deterioration **resulting** from vandalism and **the** lack of maintenance.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of **the** Environment, Housing and Lands is concerned about the number of Government buildings which, having become functionally obsolete, have been vacated and left to deteriorate as funds may not be available for their refurbishment for other uses. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, this is a concern of the entire Government.

Our records indicate that ownership of the site is shared by the Crown and the Church. The Chief Surveyor has established the boundaries of the portion owned by the Crown. We now seek parliamentary approval to lease to the Methodist Trust Corporation of Barbados Incorporated the portion of the property owned by the Crown at the **former** Speightstown Boys' School, subject to **the** following main terms and conditions:-

- (1) That **the lease shall be** for a period of **15** years at a nominal rent of **\$100** per annum with a review every five years; and
- (2) **that** the Methodist Trust Corporation of **Barbados** Incorporated should be responsible for repairs and improvements to the building throughout the term of the proposed letting, and the payment of utilities and other outgoings arising out of its use of the premises.

I now move, Mr. Speaker, that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: I beg to second that, Sir, and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I rise to give my support to the Resolution. It is to be regretted, obviously, that the Government's commitment to take action to **find** the best possible use for the old **Speightstown's** Boys' School is not mirrored in other action to deal with some of the other urgent problems in the general Speightstown area. Now **that** Government has rather belatedly cast its eye on Speightstown and **has** started to **see** the wisdom of the revival of the North, and **has** started to **see** the effects of its policies on the areas in general, I would join this debate to urge **that** the Government work with entities in the area who have been conceiving of plans for the development of Speightstown to give a thrust in the town to revive it.

There is a Speightstown Committee headed by concerned citizens that **are** very deeply concerned about the state of the town. I have myself laid on the Order Paper of Parliament for some time now information calling Government's attention to **the** dilapidation in the town and urging Government to take action to restore Speightstown to its historic and true role in the society.
1.20 p.m.

One would have welcomed this Resolution if it were part of a general approach to the rebuilding of Speightstown, Sir. I hope that it is and I **am** therefore giving my support to it in **that** spirit **that** anything that can be done to restore Speightstown and to make the fullest use of its facilities is action **that** is worthwhile of commendation.

I also hope that the retraining and educational programmes that **are** intended to occupy the premises to be leased can be of some use in bringing relief to the high levels of unemployment presently obtaining in the district. I join this debate **unreservedly** to support the Resolution

and to urge however that it should be made part of a general programme involving the Government and **the** private sector to deal with what can only be described **now** as an area of national disgrace.

Hon. C. V. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to see **that** the Honourable Member for St. Peter **has** given his **unreserved** support to the project. Indeed, the only regret I have is **that** it had not taken place earlier because I myself some time ago, when I had the responsibility for the Ministry of Education, when we moved the students from the boys school into the school at Battaleys but the problem we were faced with then, **as** you heard from the Honourable Minister who introduced this Resolution, Mr. Speaker, was **that** we discovered that it was one of these situations where there was joint ownership.

Often we **find** in Government buildings - and I have found this in Government buildings specifically dealing with schools that - sometimes we have on record the ownership either being the Government or **the** particular church. But at the time when one comes to make the decision **as** to who is the real owner we have to go through an additional search. I do believe that there should be some proper permanent record that we are not having a constant search because there are different people who **are** performing the functions at any given time.

The Methodist Church wanted to get involved in this project **as** I said from the time we **had** moved out of the school and when we had completed the **Battaleys** school. I **am** happy that it **has** now reached the point of conclusion and we will note from the significance of the commitment by the Government to the assistance of the **Church** and the fact that it is tied to an educational institution that the nominal fee of **\$100** per year which can be considered a reasonable fee. I **am** sure that the Methodist Church although they, **like** all the other churches with whom we have **had** to deal on the matter of school properties where there is lack of funding for the repairs even after the Government has given them the funds, the agreed sum when we turn over properties which are no longer in use, **as** schools, they still fall short of funds to continue their projects. We would hope that they would find the funds to complete and to proceed with the educational project which the Honourable Member for St. Peter spoke. I **am** sure it will be **appreciated**.

With those few remarks, Sir, I just want to support this Resolution.

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

TENANTRIES DEVELOPMENT
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 1994

Order No. 4 was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Tenancies Development Act, Cap. 239A.

Hon. D. W. **BOWEN**: Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members may recall that the **Tenancies** Development Act, Cap. 239A came into force on the 1st November, 1980 concurrently with the proclamation of the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, Cap. 239. The **Tenancies** Development Act, Cap. 239A was designed to provide for the development of **tenancies** as part of Government's effort to upgrade the level of housing in the island.

Under this Act, Mr. Speaker, provision was made for specific types of improvements including **roadways**, drainage, water supply, sewerage disposal and electricity supply. Under the Act **these** types of development had to be undertaken by the landlord within a period of 3 years from the commencement of the Act. What this, in effect did, was to give landlords up to October 1983 as the deadline to carry out any improvement to their tenancies. At **the** expiration of that period **the** landlords lost the right to develop the tenancies and it then became the responsibility of **the** Government to develop all **tenancies** in which infrastructure was required prior to the **sale** of the lots.

Mr. Speaker, in practical terms this provision created difficulties since there **are or** there were some landlords who were willing and able to finance the development of **their** tenancies prior to **the sale** who have **been** prevented from so doing owing to **the** expiration of the 3 year period in October, 1983. The financial burden placed on the Government as a result is unmanageable particularly in the current economic climate.

This Government therefore feels that **the** intention of Section 5 (1) should be to provide for the continuous development of the tenancies albeit under **the Ministry's** control and supervision. **Indeed** the Act should even allow for joint venture arrangements between the Government and the **landlords** of the **tenancies** in the development.

What this Amendment **seeks** therefore to do is to delete in Section 5 (1) of the **Tenancies** Development Act, Cap. 239A the 3 year limitation thereby permitting:

1. Either the landlord **or** the Minister to develop tenancies where the circumstances support it.
2. To provide a measure of **control** by the Ministry in **situations** where the landlord is permitted to **develop**, and

3. To remove the unnecessary restriction.

With these **introductory** remarks, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: I beg to second that, Sir, and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this bit of legislation before the House is a piece of legislation that in the judgement of **the** Opposition will have very far reaching implications for landlords and tenants particularly in urban areas of Barbados, Sir.

The Opposition has not had a full briefing on it until the Minister spoke. But we believe that it is such a profound change that we ought to study it carefully.

I rise in this **debate** to **ask**, with the leave of the House that further **consideration** of this matter should be deferred until we have ourselves had the opportunity to go into all **the** aspects implied in the legislation.

It is legislation that sounds simple but it will have very far reaching consequences for both landlords and tenants. We are urging **that** the courtesy of a deferment be allowed on this occasion so that the House **can** benefit from **the** fullest possible contribution of the Opposition on this very important matter.

1.30 p.m.

It is an important piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, it should not be trifled with, the issues **are** profound, and we are **asking that** further consideration be deferred. We have **not** really had enough time among ourselves to study it in great detail, but we would want to speak to it.

Hon. M. A. **KING**: Mr. Speaker, in the circumstances I move **that** further consideration of this matter be postponed.

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

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

QUESTION TIME

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I move that Question Time be now taken.

Mr. SPEAKER: Question No. 81. The Honourable Member is not in his place.

Hon. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Honourable Member for St. Michael's 'outh East, I lay the answer to Parliamentary Question No. 81.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is the end of Question Time.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: That concludes for the Government, Mr. Speaker, business on hand for the day. I do not know if there are any **matters** the Honourable Members on the other side might want to deal with today.

Asides.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Sir, it **looks** as if **the** time for adjournment has arrived. Before we do this, Sir, I have to make a statement.

On 27th May notice of a Private Member's Resolution was duly given, as I understand it, Sir, in **this** House of Assembly. Normally a time is set aside to deal with Resolutions of that nature. I do not **propose** to make any exception on this occasion and therefore I **am** proposing that that matter, which normally is dealt with expeditiously, should be considered at the sitting of this House on Tuesday, 7th June. What I **am** trying to say then, Sir, is that we are reserving Tuesday, 7th June for a debate and determination of that Private Member's matter, notice of which has been given by **the Leader** of the Opposition. We would like it concluded in the day and I am going to move that the House be adjourned until Tuesday, 7th June, 1994 at 10 o'clock in the morning for debate on what is normally referred to as a vote of no-confidence. The Resolution has been tabled by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, speaking on the motion for the adjournment, I would **first** wish to thank the Leader of the House for the very courteous way in which

all my **requests** for discussions of this **particular** matter have been responded to by him. I would also want to say, as well for the record, **that** the Opposition, after discussion with the Government, finds the date of Tuesday, 7th June agreeable for the debate. However, we have two concerns. One, **that** all **Members** of Parliament should have been put in a position **that** if they wanted to they should be allowed to contribute to the debate. I should say that we on this side are now satisfied **that** arrangements have been made such that that should be **the case**.

The other concern is **that** in a matter of this magnitude I do believe **that** the public purpose would be served best if you **could** exercise the discretion vested in you to have **the** debate broadcast and televised live. I **am** therefore using the opportunity of **speaking** on the motion for the adjournment to **formally make** such an application to you to use your **good** offices to make sure **that** this debate is fully broadcast on radio and television.

I thank you, **Sir**.

Mr. SPEAKER: All I can say to the Honourable Member I wish I was in complete **control** to determine that **matter** right now. The problem is **that** I do not have that complete authority so to **do**, but it always rests within the procedure of this House where the **Leader** of the Opposition and **the Leader** of the House determine that matter. I will do my part, if it does come to that, but outside **of** that it remains there.

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 7th June, 1994 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
1.41 p.m.

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SPEAKERS IN **THIS** ISSUE

ARTHUR, Mr. **O. S.** (St. Peter)
BOWEN, Hon. D. W. (St. Michael South Central)
CHELTENHAM, Dr. R. L. (St. **Joseph**)
GREAVES, Hon. P. M. (St. Michael North)
KING, Hon. M. A. (Christ Church West Central)
MILLER, Miss B. A. (City of Bridgetown)
TAITT, Hon. B. M. (St. Michael West)
WALKER, Hon. C. V. (St. George North)