THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 - 99

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, November 01,1994

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.15 a.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, (Speaker)
His Honour R. D. MARSHALL, (Deputy Speaker)
Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDEFORD, B.A., MA., (Econ.), J.P.,
Mr. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B.
Mr. L. A. WEEKES
Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Q.C., LL.M. (Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs)
Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.)
Mr. L. R. TULL, Q.C., M.A.
Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business, Leader of the House)
Hon. G. W. PAYNE (Minister of Public Works, Transport and Housing)
Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A., LL.B. (Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)
Dr. R. C. HAYNES, M.B., Ch.B., F.R.CP. (Edin.)
Mr. D. Carter
Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE, (Minister of Labour, Community Development and Sports)
Mr. G. A. CLARKE (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing)
Mr. J. M. EDGfflLL
Mr. F. J. STUART
Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER (Chairman of Committees)
Mr. H. F. LASHLEY
Mr. R. St.C. TOPPIN
Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN
Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON (Minister of Health) Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLE Y (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture).

Prayers were led by Rev. Ivan Harewood. Mr.

SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the Proceedings of the Honourable the House of Assembly of the 25th day of October, 1994, having been circulated, be taken as read and confirmed.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to second that

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to announce that I am in receipt of the Accounts and Statements for the month of August, 1994 prepared by the Accountant General.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of 3 parcels of land for the construction of a pumping station for the South Coast Sewerage Project and also notice of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of a parcel of land at Allen View, Welchman Hall, St. Thomas for the laying of underground electrical cables at Harrison's Cave.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42 (5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the rest of this day's sitting.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to second that

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT MAXWELL, CHRIST CHURCH FOR ROAD IMPROVEMENT

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, during the execution in 1985 of road improvement works designed to improve the safety of pedestrians by providing sidewalks along Highway 7, a portion of land measuring 20.6 square metres at Maxwell, Christ Church owned by Miss lola Yearwood was used. Cabinet approved the acquisition of the 20.6 square metres which was so utilised and the then Ministry of the Environment, Housing and Lands initiated the appropriate procedures to effect the acquisition of the land.

It was soon pointed out, however, that an additional area measuring 46.7 square metres was roadway ai)d should be acquired to avoid a situation where the landowner held title to the remaining land and to some of the roadway while the Crown owned the intervening sidewalk/This approach would have the effect of tidying the acquisition and giving the Crown proper title to the road which in accordance with the Highways Act, Cap. 289 falls under its control.

All the legal requirements pertaining to this acquisition have been met and the relevant notices required under sections 3 and 4 of the Land Acquisition Act, pertaining to the total 67.3 square metres have been duly signed and published. The survey plan is available for inspection by Honourable Members and this House is accordingly invited to approve the Resolution for the acquisition of 67.3 square metres of land attached from Miss lola Yearwood's.

Mr. Speaker, I beg that the Resolution do now pass.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to second that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, I believe that over the years it has always been necessary to effect improvements of this nature. I think it has served the country very well. It also helps to relieve in many ways traffic congestion and, at the same time, safety in general. Of course, we on this side will not be opposing this Resolution from the point of view that it tends to follow a pattern which in the past, governments have accepted the fact that there are certain areas designed for improvement and it must be carried out.

I am not aware of any particular difficulty with this particular area in Christ Church but from the Minister's introduction which was very short, possibly I believe in the future we will get a little bit more information. But as it happens, in all cases - a new Minister. Therefore, I do not intend to pressure the Minister beyond what he has said, no more than to say that we on this side, then, will support the Resolution and will hope that the many other areas for improvement which I am sure will probably come from this side from time to time to bring about the same improvements in varying areas...

I can possibly think for the Minister's intention and I don't intend, Mr. Speaker, to go beyond the Resolution, but since it has the same effect based upon the premise of safety and that sort of thing, I think he could probably give some attention to the new St. Stephen's Primary School where the road needs to be adjusted. I suggest to the Honourable Minister...

Aside.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: Yes, as I said, I apologise for that; but the general tone which I made in my speech is that road safety is very important. Therefore, Sir, I do not intend to go any further than Christ Church but I hope that that general approach to this kind of problem will extend not only to Christ Church but to St. Michael and probably St. James and all the other areas too. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to say a few words on this Resolution as it affects the Maxwell Road and the main Highway 7. 11.25a.m.

That Highway 7 is a very important transit area for tremendous traffic both vehicular and pedestrian. As you know the part which it sought to improve is an area that attracts a large number of pedestrians, particularly tourists. Many years ago under the Barbados Labour Party we started building the sidewalks coming straight from Oistins right along that Maxwell Road and the intention was that as far as possible along Highway 7 they should be on both sides of the road. To some extent Governments have awaited the improvement of property where landowners under the Town and Country Planning Act are required to move their boundary wall back to a certain distance

and so Governments have had the benefits of improvement for the establishment of sidewalks or adequate pedestrian areas on that road.

I do recall the then Rt. Hon. Member for St John - I was in this House at the time - raising a song and dance about improvements along Maxwell Road because some mahogany trees had been removed and he contended that those trees had been disfiguring the environment - if I may quote the words of the Honourable Member for St Michael South Central. Subsequent, however, to a change of Government, of course, some trees were removed so that I took his comment then as merely a political statement although I myself would wish that where we have trees of vintage and of beauty and which contribute to the environment that we should be very careful when we move them.

In addition, the Government had a problem in that one or two landowners objected to the sidewalks being continued particularly in the area from about Deal Gardens comer going past the former residence of Dr. Ward and coming along that road going towards Cashel and there was a delay in completing the project. There is no doubt in my mind that this is very absolutely necessary in that area.

Another thing I would ask that we pay close attention to on Highway 7 are pedestrian crossings. At Chefette on Highway 7 traffic signal lights have been established regulating the crossing. I believe that again, was a private sector generosity where Chefette Restaurants Ltd. established that crossing. People cross in large numbers from the Blue Waters side to the seaside of the road. They are not only visitors to our island but there are residents as well, older people in particular, and people who are going to use the Rockley Beach. They are not all coming from Blue Waters or Rockley Road in my constituency. They come from far afield from constituencies of other members so we did need that pedestrian crossing there.

I would like to urge that we properly select pedestrian crossings on that Highway and in particular I think of the area by the Hastings Rocks. Hastings Rocks used to be a place of tremendous beauty, a place of regular entertainment As a lad I remember the Police Band playing there very regularly and sometimes on Fridays nights in particular it was the only form of entertainment that was provided.

I would wish to see the continuation of traffic lights and road improvement generally in this area. I hope that the Government will use the occasion of the start-up and the completion of the South Coast Sewage Project in order to put in whatever additional amenities are required to upgrade the sidewalk and improve Highway 7 so that it will be available for use by the larger number of visitors and residents who are increasingly using that area of Barbados.

Of course, I have pleasure in supporting the Resolution, Sir, particularly as it affects Christ Church but in general as it leads to an improvement for the public good.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to detain the House very long with the very brief contribution I will make on this matter principally in the vein of supporting it. That area of Christ Church from Oistins to Maxwell coming down through to the Hastings area is becoming increasingly a hive of economic activity, especially in the tourism related area. I think there is a need to enhance the rate at which adequate sidewalks are provided for pedestrian traffic in that area. There are some sections which are quite hazardous and dangerous for people to walk and I sincerely hope that that entire strip will be looked at carefully.

I am a resident of the parish of Christ Church and I frequently walk in that area. There are sections where one feels that one is really risking grave injury from time to time as the buses and traffic pass by, particularly walking late at night That is, of course, one of the main arterial routes out of the City area.

it is not only in that area but I believe I should take this opportunity to draw to your attention, Sir, and the attention of the House, to the very urgent need to continue with the widening of the Collymore Rock Road, the parallel arterial road which would take some of the traffic out of this road. That is the important connection, that not only we have to build more sidewalks but we have to facilitate measures that would reduce the traffic so as to make this Resolution even more meaningful. I think a key area would be the area of Collymore Rock, widening that road which is a bit dangerous and which happens to be in the constituency of St Michael South Central.

Thank you very much, Sir.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, as I came to this Parliament this morning I thought I was dealing with a housing matter but as I listened to the speeches I have heard about sidewalks and the narrowness of roads. It seems it has put it into the ambit now of public transport, *et cetera.*

It is true, Sir, that Christ Church is rather far from St. Lucy and I will not talk about the narrowness of the roads in Crab Hill, *et cetera.* I will say that I would like to compliment the Minister of Transport and Works for continuing the work that has been left for him to do by the Democratic Labour Party and I believe that he

will continue to look after the broadening of roads throughout Barbados and not only in Christ Church. I will say, Sir, that in the constituency which I am proud to represent we will support him in broadening the roads and we would expect him to do some in our constituency also. So we have no problem on this side in supporting this land acquisition that is before us today, Sir. Thank you, Sir. 11.35a.m.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I do not rise to promote any particular interest in my constituency of St. Michael South in this specific issue. I believe that a case has been made out by the Minister for the acquisition of this particular parcel of land; I share the thoughts of my colleague that the introduction could have been a little more fulsome, but that is for the time being.

What I would wish to advert to, Sir, is a comment made by my friend and colleague, the Member for Christ Church West, when he referred to a comment by a former Prime Minister, the former Member for St. John, as one involving a political statement. I believe I was in the House on that occasion when the statement was made. We were both in here, Sir, and I interpreted the comment then to be one strongly in favour of environmental concerns. But we can listen and we can hear different nuances and different implications. As for me, it was a statement about environmental concerns.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South. I have given a lot of latitude so far. Our sidewalks have ranged from Christ Church to St. Lucy. Would you focus, please, on the resolution that is before the House.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Sir, I am only claiming the same latitude that you gave the Member for Christ Church West.

Mr. SPEAKER: His latitude was about sidewalks.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Sir, and I am talking about sidewalks, Sir, and the conflict between the sidewalk and environmental concerns.

Mr. SPEAKER: You proceed.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Sir. I think we can have those kinds of conflicts; and I hope, Sir, when we are considering these things and genuine difficulties arise, you will find a way out of them. I believe that that matter has therefore been resolved. But we are giving our support to this Resolution. I would say generally that where it is necessary to acquire land for public purposes and in accordance with the public law, such measures will get the support of both sides of the House.

What I would like to see, Sir, is that when these measures come before us - and I am not accusing any Government for this is something that has happened down through the years whichever administration was in office - and we seek to acquire the land we should also make a statement at that time of how and when the land that is being acquired would be paid for, if compensation is involved. It may be, as we pay close attention to the interplay between desirable public purposes and the need for proper management of our finances, that perhaps we could give a statement as to how and when these lands would be paid for.

We are on the sidewalk, Sir, and I hope that this particular point would be taken into consideration. Thank you.

Mr. D. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Resolution before the Honourable House this morning. I know the speaker for Christ Church West spoke at length about Highway 7 but seeing I am so fortunate to be the representative for Christ Church East Central I would just like to move north and go to Highway 6 where there are four schools in the Christ Church area, namely Foundation, Deighton Griffith and the two Water Street Schools. At 3 o'clock on evenings when all the children leave school over 1000 children have to use the road in that area and I believe, Sir, we should see it fit to have sidewalks in the area between the Foundation, Deighton Griffith and certainly all the Lodge Road area so that our children will have a chance to travel the road without having accidents and that sort of thing.

I know we say that people are our greatest resource in Barbados and we have got to look to the future, so I would like this House to put on record that I would like to see in the very near future that that area which I just mentioned would be looked after with regards to sidewalks.

Also, Sir, in the Lodge Road area quite recently, I know it is now on Housing, but I believe I am not going out of my ambit We have another area there which is known as "Stinkeroo Number 3". I refer to the dump which quite recently caused havoc in that area and because I am talking about the children of Foundation I believe that in the very near future something tangible should be done about it so that...

Mr. SPEAKER: Would the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, just stick to the Resolution that is before the House. I cannot see the relevance of a dump to sidewalks.

Mr. D. CARTER: Sir, I have made my point and I would like this Honourable House to know that I am conscious of the fact that in that area I need to

see some sidewalks built as soon as possible. I thank you.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to just make a brief intervention. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West quite rightly raised the question of trees and the fact that sometimes trees do have to be removed and destroyed unfortunately in the interest of what we are pleased to call progress.

It should be, and I would want to recommend to the Honourable Minister that where we have to take down a tree for whatever purpose in Barbados, we should try to replant two, not one, but two in its stead.

Barbados needs to be much re-afforested. On a regular basis, happily not in recent weeks, certainly not since the 6th September 1994 we would sometimes see clouds go out to sea and the rain falling at sea. That is partly because Barbados is such a flat island and we do not have enough trees to attract the rain. It is often a very beautiful sight when one travels abroad to see sidewalks shaded by trees and I think this is something we might turn our attention to.

I see one or two feeble attempts being made in the City of Bridgetown to do that but it would not be a bad idea that some of our sidewalks where it is feasible to do so might become tree-lined. One would then have to be very selective about the species of trees. You do not want trees that would have spreading roots which would destroy the sidewalks over time and perhaps spread into the road itself and do damage there and become hazardous, but there are many beautiful ornamental flowering trees in Barbados which could be used to make sidewalks beautiful and shady in the interest of Barbadians and of visitors alike.

It would also be a way of enhancing our environment and it would also provide an opportunity *for* more jobs to be created. I would like to think that perhaps the National Conservation Commission would hearken to some of these words and that in the future we could begin to see... The idea is not too far away from us. I see trees in huge pots on Broad Street unhappily vandalised from time to time, but certainly on our major highways.... We see it on the Adams Highway where some trees have been used. We have gone back to the evergreens and some of the Australian primes which we know as casuarinas. Many years ago I struggled to put in some up near the Polytechnic and near the Parkinson School. I wanted to see a lovely rose petaloideus what are known as the African Rame Tree. Frangipanis are beautiful trees for this purpose and they do not have a large root system and they have a nice perfume, and they have a number of colours. There are many other ornamental trees that could be put to this use and I would like to recommend this to the relevant Ministries.

11.45a.m.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to see that you have broaden the scope of this debate to allow a little latitude for Members to go outside of the sidewalks. It is indeed very interesting to note that the Honourable Member for St Michael North West who did not allow such latitude was the first to take advantage of your good nature, Mr. Speaker, by not only going outside but commenting on the brevity of my presentation especially taking into consideration that this particular Resolution relates to just a specific 20 square metres of land at Maxwell. If he were in your position, I think this Resolution would have been completed by now.

Sir, I am not going to comment on the various points which have been mentioned by the Honourable Members which really are not relevant to this Resolution. But just as a matter of concern seeing that the Ministry of Public Works is also under my responsibility, Members did make a few points relevant to concerns in a few areas. I would like to state with respect to the speaker who spoke about the pedestrian crossings at St. Stephens Primary School that we are now in the process of communicating with all Members of Parliament with respect to the schools in their area. We are hopeful that we will be able to do what the last administration failed to do in that we hope to have the pedestrian crossings at all schools in this island and not just those in Christ Church or those in the particular constituencies where Government Members are as has happened in the past, even though I would like to start with the schools in St Andrew.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the sidewalks and the scarcity of them in the past few years, I think a lot of the funds that were previously available for sidewalks are no longer there. In the good old days of the Transport Levy which the past administration made sure died a natural death, you had a proliferation of sidewalks throughout the length and breadth of this country. I do not think that the past administration has anything to be proud for in terms of the sidewalks that they were talking about. I am particularly glad to hear the Honourable Member for St. Michael South speaking so forcefully about what he would like to see in terms of the sidewalks and talking about the environment and those things. One would have thought that he has only just arrived in these Chambers.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Andrew, please. In this House, please, I hope that you will accord all Members the respect due and you will not refer to anyone as "he".

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: ...The Honourable Member for St. Michael South. With respect to the acquisitions, this has always been a very sore point From time to time Government acquires land and for some reason or other people are never compensated promptly. I am hoping that I will be able to formulate some policy in the Ministry whereby a certain sum of money is set aside for acquisitions each year in terms of the amount of acquisitions during a reasonable period, so that the situation that has affected both administrations would not prevail.

With these few comments, Mr. Speaker, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

ORDER NO. 2 - TO MOVE THE PASSING OF A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT LOWER ESTATE TENANTRY, ST. GEORGE.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, this is a Resolution for the compulsory acquisition of 66 143.01 square metres of land at Lower Estate Tenantry in the parish of St. George, the property of Denzil McAlpine Power and Sons Limited.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass. Mr.

SPEAKER: Are you rising on a point of order? Hon.

D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to speak in this Honourable Chamber and it is an equal honour for me to represent the good people of St. George North. It is befitting, Mr. Speaker, that my first speech in this Honourable House concerns a matter which is of great importance to the people of St. George North and Lower Estate in particular. Lower Estate is the home of a number of poor and humble people whose great great grandparents have toiled relentlessly on the estate of Lower Estate formerly owned by Dowding but now owned by McAlpine Power and Sons.

Mr. Speaker, when the Tenantry Act was passed in 1980, the people of Lower Estate deserved the lot on which they live and they qualified then to buy this lot at 10 cents a square foot. Today, Mr. Speaker, this land is now being compulsorily acquired under the Tenantry Development Act, Section 9 but, Mr. Speaker, the Order designating it as a tenantry was made since 1985. It was also scheduled under the Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act.

Mr. Speaker, one would have thought that the tenants by 1985 would have been allowed to submit their Form One to the landlord and purchase the lot, but this was not the case. We also know that in 1986 the people of Lower Estate and other tenantries across Barbados were severely affected by the policies of the then Government. We also know that many territories were neglected, roads were not built, in May 1986, the Barbados Labour Party went out of office and by 1988 something happened which was quite strange. After twisting and twirling the last regime agreed to acquire Lower Estate, although it was designated as a tenantry. In 1988 roads were built, after they had agreed that just in principle land would have been acquired, water mains were put in and drainage was installed. A lot of development occurred in Lower Estate between 1988 and 1990. In fact, Mr. Speaker, only one road is left to be installed at Lower Estate. 11.55am.

In 1992 the owners of Lower Estate approached Government and said that the land was a privately owned tenantry. This was indeed strange and the Government agreed, in 1993, to deschedule Lower Estate as a tenantry. At March of 1993 the owners and Government agreed to have the tenantry descheduled and to have the lots sold on the open market. Letters were also sent out, Mr. Speaker, by the Crown to landlords asking them to reimburse the Crown $66 340 for surveying works. This was all agreed. On June 3, 1993 the Government confirmed to the tenants of Lower Estate that the Government was not interested in this piece of land. The landlords therefore sent letters to the tenants asking them to purchase the land at $2.00 per square foot.

This problem caused a number of people in Lower Estate to rise up and form a committee which protested Government action. I am sure Honourable Members of this House would recall what happened in June 1993 when the committee met and told the then Government they were not going to purchase the land at $2.00 per square foot; that the tenantry dated back over 100 years; that if any tenants deserved to pay 10 cents per square foot for the land, it was the tenants of that tenantry.

You will recall also, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Housing on June 15, 1993 making a statement to this House, after much protest, that Government was reversing on its decision and that they were then going to acquire the tenantry. That was in June 1993. Since 1985 this tenantry was in limbo, it was being twisted and twirled like all other tenantries across Barbados. I think the Democratic Labour Party Government had no interest in plantation tenantries at all. They paid lip service, some tenantry roads were built, but by and large throughout Barbados the tenantries are still in a dilapidated condition, services are not being applied, and we believe it is simply not fair for these things to happen.

When you look at Lower Estate, why should Government seek to acquire Lower Estate when I firmly believe that it was and still is a tenantry? However, Mr. Speaker, after the roads were built and all the services were installed, it is simply not fair for Government to use the taxpayers' money to put in roads and services and then allow the landlords to sell the land at exorbitant prices.

This Government pledged to protect the rights of the tenants at all times and this acquisition today comes at a time when the people cannot afford to pay more than 10 cents, so Government would become the landlord and would be able to sell the land to the qualified tenants at Lower Estate at the statutory 10 cents per square foot. But, Mr. Speaker, the winner in this exercise would be the landlord, because you are selling a piece of land at 10 cents per square foot to the tenants, but then you might very well have to pay the landlord much more. We must go forward and protect the interest of the tenants at all times, and this is what this Resolution is all about.

Mr. Speaker, after this acquisition, Government would be responsible for conveying the titles to the tenants hereafter. It also means that Government would be able to regulate and oversee the orderly development of Lower Estate. There are many houses scattered throughout, even in the road's pathway. All these things must be taken into consideration. It is no fault of those persons who have placed their homes in the roadway, I think it is between the last Government and the landlord. Although the lands were surveyed by 1988 a number of homes were put in willy-nilly, some staggering over two and three lots, so this has to be regularised. Many homes will have to be resited at Lower Estate, so it means that we will have to come back here very soon to obtain additional land to resite the five or six homes that are in the roadway.

I would also like at this time to appeal to landlords across Barbados to assist tenants who qualify to buy the land on which they live. It is very important that we appeal to landlords in the various tenantries to assist those tenants who qualify under the Tenantry Act to purchase their lots. More than 14 years have passed and we believe that the people deserve their tides. I can give the House the assurance that the Ministry of Housing will be pushing ahead to make sure the tenants in the various tenantries across Barbados have at least the titles in their hands. I would also like the urban landlords especially to consider offering tenants their lots at a reasonable price, bearing in mind the money which has been paid for rents over the years. In the urban areas land is being sold at all kinds of prices and Government must put in the roads and services. I believe that the landlords should take this into consideration and look at the development Government has put in before charging all types of fancy prices. Mr. Speaker, I believe that Lower Estate in the future will be better served.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am obliged to you.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, this seems to me to be a major acquisition on the pan of the Government with implications for a large number of people, not only the landlord, but also those persons living in the area over a long period of time. I am somewhat alarmed that a Minister of the Crown can so contemptuously introduce a Resolution of this nature to this Honourable House. The Minister of the Crown is here and this is the kind of practice which this House should not encourage. 12.05 p.m.

Now, Sir, this is part of the continuing dark side, if I may say, of what has happened at Lower Estate Plantation. That was pan of a crucial agricultural sector of Barbados and it is a tragedy to see what has happened to it over the years. I believe, in fact, I am not surprised that the Minister did not speak for very long because I believe that many members on the other side know only too well what is really the origin of this problem, going right back to the days when lands were acquired for a so-called BMC development and where certain subdivisions were approved under the previous Barbados Labour Party Government for persons who are well known Barbados Labour Party supporters in respect of Lower Estate.

The reality is now that Lower Estate is largely bush, and I believe that the Honourable Member for St Thomas might well be affected by the mosquitoes that will be coming across from the bush that has developed in Lower Estate. I believe he lives in an adjacent subdivision. I am not sure which Government approved that.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member wishes to know which Government approved the subdivision where I live. It was the Democratic Labour Party Government in the mid-seventies and the Honourable Member ought to know because he had 8 acres at the same development...

Mr. SPEAKER: Stick to the point of order, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS:...Barrow had 4.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: All I said was that the Honourable Member might be affected. All I am saying is that I am putting a plea before the House on his behalf and he gets up in the House to attack me. I will not try to defend you again.

Mr. SPEAKER: Could we continue orderly, please.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Anyhow, Sir, I think that we all must accept that this kind of ministerial conduct is

not desirable, particularly where this Resolution talks about implementing an improvement scheme for facilitating the purchase of lots by qualified tenants.

Sir, I have no difficulty whatsoever with the principle of government intervening and buying a tenantry and selling it directly to the tenants. 1 have always been of the view that the tenantry development in Barbados would proceed far more swiftly, if Government intervenes at that level and interfaces between the tenant and the landlord through the use of land acquisition powers. I have no difficulty with the principle behind Government's acquiring the land and selling the land to the tenants.

One would like to know what the improvement scheme is. One would also have liked to have a clear idea as to the exact location of the land. Now there is no map available. The Minister has not offered any map to the Honourable House. As a matter of fact, the Minister said nothing. I hope that in the circumstances, I will not be straying if I say that I believe that this land probably involves the playing field and the adjacent lands because I was able to identify at least one or two names here and I believe that this would have come across from the Wally Price land over on one side of the road and the other side with the pavilion there and then the new developments on the other side.

Now, Sir, I want to talk, first of all, about implementing an improvement scheme for the area. I sincerely hope that as a result when that improvement scheme goes into place that it will not lead to any destruction of the pavilion that is there for a very good reason. We know that the Barbados Labour Party violently opposed the placing of that pavilion on that site and when I look across, Sir, I don't see any members on the other side who were in the House at that time, apart from the Honourable Member for Christ Church West whom I believe spoke against it. I am not sure, Sir.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. the Honourable Member must not misrepresent even past or present speeches. His memory is fading. He is just slightly a younger man than me, but apparently he has gotten older quickly as far as his memory. I never spoke on any Resolution. I remember the Honourable Member trying to get a pavilion placed there for electoral purposes. That is what I remember and he hasn't spoken about it yet, but I will speak after him.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, I now understand that he did not speak in the Honourable House on it, but he spoke on platforms condemning it.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Once again the Honourable Member is quite mistaken, Sir. He was beaten soundly in St. George without my assistance on the Charles Rowe Bridge. I never spoke on it.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St Michael South Central, could we please focus our intention on the Compulsory Land Acquisition Resolution that is before the House.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: They just would not allow me. For example, on the urging of the Honourable Member for the City, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West just proceeded to mislead the Honourable House. I was not beaten in Charles Rowe Bridge. I won that box. I move on, Sir.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I have not spoken.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, could you continue please. I don't hear the asides. I don't know if you are hearing them.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I appreciate your protection, Sir, and I hope you will protect my time by extending it appropriately.The point I am making is that we know that the Barbados Labour Party has a tremendous antipathy to the whole idea of a pavilion at that site. They did not wish the people of Charles Rowe Bridge and Lower Estate to have a pavilion and I am pleading now that as part of this development that they would enhance that pavilion that has served the area so very well, a pavilion which the late Tom Adams, about four years later, made the point before this Honourable House that it is the type of development that Government should be making, particularly when money is tight when they can start off to make small investments to allow social development to take place around the area and in due course down the road they can always expand on the particular area. I hope that that principle will be put in place in respect of Carrington's Village, Gully Hill, in the not-too-distant future.

Reverting back very rapidly to St George, I think that this is an indication of something that has gone terribly wrong and I trust that that is not the reason why the Minister preferred not to deal with it 12.15 p.m.

Those lands were owned by Dowding Estates, managed by Mr. Herbert Dowding, a former member for the parish of St George. That playing field that formed a significant part of this acquisition, was available free to the people of Charles Rowe Bridge and the people of St. George for as long as I can remember, over 50 years. The Dowdings never demanded a cent from the people of

this country for the young people, in particular, of that area to enjoy that playing field. It has produced a lot of outstanding cricketers. Things have changed in such a way in that area that here today we are now buying what the people once ti&l for free. Never any demand by them.

What are the circumstances that have led to this? What are the problems? Why is it that we now have to come and spend public money on what has, in fact, been available to the people of Barbados free of charge over so many years? Are we trying to put money in certain people's pockets? I am a bit concerned about what is happening here, quite honestly. I believe the House should have been given more information on this matter.

As a matter of fact, when that pavilion as pan of the improvement of the area was placed there, the Dowdings immediately said they had no objections whatsoever because they considered it a gift to the people of the area. They had no difficulty with placing a structure of any size on the particular land and now we find ourselves in this situation. I am not satisfied with the kind of political explanation which we got from the Honourable Member for St. George North, and I am a little reluctant at the moment to respond to him in the vein it deserves since it was his maiden speech and he would be spared the attack which it deserves, but there is a lot more to this acquisition that the House has not been told and we want to know.

We, in particular, here would like to know, and the NDP would want to know how much we are paying for this land. Now you cannot come to the House to acquire this large piece of land telling us that you are going to sell it at 10 cents per square foot and not tell us the other side. What is on the other side? How much are you going to be paying for it

Now, the Honourable Member for St. George North I suspect inadvertently said that the landlord will probably be making a profit. Now that suggests to me that one would be paying more than 10 cents a square foot and that the Government will be making a loss out of this deal. That is what he said. I did not say it, Sir, but I think it is utterly irresponsible of the Minister, the Minister must be held responsible to come down to this House with a matter that involves this kind of monetary consideration and not give the appropriate information in the introduction of the Resolution. I think the minimum the House demands...

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It is not a matter of whether the price has not been negotiated. The fact is that the Honourable Member for St. George North apparently temporarily took on the responsibilities of Minister in this Honourable House, and I did not see his name in the *Official Gazette* as a Minister of the Crown. I did not say it He said that the landlord will be making money out of this deal. They were his words and if he knows that I can only assume that the Minister knows that as well and that this House must be told how much you will be paying for this property. That is a very reasonable request

We would also like to know what is going to happen with the change of ownership in relation to transactions in progress. I believe that there are a large number of transactions in progress. I suspect that is a legal matter. Perhaps, I think the House would wish to be told, because I think we have a duty to protect the tenants rights in this area as well.

I also would certainly want to know what is going to happen in terms of the further development of the recreational aspects of that development because it would seem to me, the last time I was there which was some time in August or September, that on the north, which I suspect is the side away from the road, that there are houses that are pretty near to the boundary of the playing field there. One would have thought that an opportunity would have been taken to allow for the further development of that field and not to constrict it anyway. It is a field that has a tremendous history and I think it is a great opportunity to, at least, establish the basis there for further development of sporting facilities at that site for the people of St. George.

It is very interesting to note that the Honourable Member for St. George North, who I have indicated that I will not attack on the floor of the House today, but I will indicate to him that he forgot all about the sporting aspects of the development When I pass through Charles Rowe Bridge I think tomorrow afternoon, I believe I will stop off and remind the people there that I had to get up in the House and make the case *far* them.

The pavilion that has been allowed to go into disrepair, I would certainly like to see something done about that because it does not matter what those on the other side say, the presence of that pavilion has been of tremendous value to the people of that area and it is utilised by strong Barbados Labour Party supporters and managed by them, from the very beginning, people like Foffie Williams. If it is in a state of disrepair, we would use our best offices to try to acquire the funds to assist with the development of the area if the Government does not meet its responsibility. I can promise you that But we would urge the Government first of all to try to meet its responsibility.

Sir, all these issues have been raised and we really need some clarification on these matters. We also would like to get some clarification as to what

is Government's policy in relation to the rest of Lower Estate. I believe you all can get all the information you want about Lower Estate. The Barbados Labour Party knows about Lower Estate better than any other organisation in this country. I can tell you who can give you the information.

Aside.

Dr. R.C. HAYNES: I am being disturbed, Sir. Please come to my rescue. You all know exactly where you can get all the information you want on the disastrous subdivision of Lower Estate Plantation. This acquisition will go in some small measure to correct many of the public wrongs inflicted on the people of that area because I want to say this, that what has happened at Lower Estate has thrown a whole lot of people out of work in that area. It has actually killed a whole area of industry which surrounded the agricultural activity at Lower Estate Plantation. So that subdivision not only had a disastrous effect on the plantation itself but adversely affected the lives of a large number of people. 12.25 p.m.

Now, Sir, I believe that a predecessor of yours will know only too well the name Denzil McAlpine Power, whom I believe hails from the parish of St. Peter and whom I believe the Honourable Member for Christ Church West knows very well.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Could we continue orderly please? The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, you have the Floor.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: He knows him well, Sir. Not only from his Christ Church activity but also from his St. Peter activity.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you giving up your rights to continue.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I sincerely hope that this would end a lot of the problems that have been created for him. Let us put it this way. I have no difficulty with that. Don't get me wrong. I am not saying that Government should not acquire land because someone is a strong Barbados Labour Party supporter or anything like that. I am not saying that, if you see what I mean.

Anyhow, Sir, the point I am making here is that I know that this has been a source of considerable trauma for a lot of people. I hope that this matter would now be finally resolved and I trust that it would not prove to be too costly in the long run for the taxpayers of this country. I hope that the price paid would not be significantly in excess of what the Government would obtain for the lands sold, especially bearing in mind, as I understand it from the Honourable Member for St George North, that a considerable amount of public expenditure has already been made in respect of the development there.

So, Sir, one final point I want to make and I want to revert back to an original point that I made and that is this. There is always a large gap between the conceptualisation of legislation and the realisation of the benefits from that conceptualisation. There are all sorts of problems relating to the operation of the Tenantries Freehold Act Quite frankly I believe that the matter can be solved by the Government relying more and more on acquiring properties which are tenantries, developing those tenantries maximally, providing more and more house-spots because very often you can get a situation where you have a tenantry, where there are 12 houses at the end of a mile long road or something like that and it is better for the Government to determine that they are going to acquire that tenantry, put the road in, put the services in and at the same time create an opportunity for more people to be serviced by that infrastructural development.

I think that would meet the demand, not only of persons residing in the tenantry to be able to buy land in a developed situation, but also would create serviced house-spots and opportunities for other people to participate. So that in a sense all is not lost in relation to this Resolution in that we have the scenario -

(1) where the Government acquires rather than relies on that direct relationship between the tenant and the landlord.

(2) you have a situation where the Government puts in further infrastructure and from what I can see, certainly more people have been able to obtain house spots in the area.

So that the requirements of that philosophical approach to the development of tenantries are being in fact played out here. But it was the same point that I made at the time when the Tenantries Freehold Act was introduced in this Honourable House.

I would strongly suggest to the Government that at least they should benefit from this experience, unfortunate in some ways but nevertheless they should look and see at the end of the day where they have arrived at - acquisition, further public development of the area, the provision for more house spots, the possibility of following on the foundations that I have made by placing the pavilion there of a social amenity being expanded.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has two minutes to conclude.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: That is with or without the interruptions, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: Included in your time.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Including the interruptions. Sir, I will have to deliberately interrupt the Honourable Member for Christ Church West when he speaks to make sure that his time is suitably eroded. Actually, Sir, I have completed my contribution. Thank you very much indeed.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member has obviously enjoyed himself. Unfortunately he has not read his brief right because I think he should have got more facts from one of his candidates who obviously is connected with the company whose lands are now being acquired so if the Honourable Member had been doing his homework, unless the relationship has deteriorated between himself and a former candidate, he would have got a very good brief and would be able to come in here and to talk authoritatively on these matters. But in some respects he has misled himself. I do not believe he will mislead anybody in the House because Honourable Members know when to take the Honourable Member seriously. So that he may not mislead the public, I have to correct some of the points that he has made in relation to this tenantry.

This tenantry was designated as one of the tenantries under the Freehold Tenantries Purchase Act and that meant, Sir, that tenants were allowed to purchase their house lots at 10 cents per square foot That 10 cents has not increased since the Act was passed in 1980 nor has it been increased since this tenantry, by Order, was put into the Schedule of the Act.

Now, that legislation is one of the most significant acts of social engineering that one would find on the Statute Book of Barbados and it has all the brands of the correct democratic socialism showing concern for those persons whose foreparents worked on these estates as slaves for generations. Showing concern for people who used to be told that they had to take up their houses and move overnight. Showing...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The Honourable Member for St. John will have his time. It shows concern for those persons who had to take up their houses and move. That is what I am saying, Sir, some of them have to move overnight.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Would Honourable Members desist from making interruptions across the floor, please.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: It also shows concern for the orderly development of rural communities in Barbados and therefore it was very important if we were to keep a social and cohesive Barbados that the poor Barbadians, particularly those in rural Barbados who had a history of slavery behind them, should get the opportunity to own their house spots and improve themselves and their lots. I cannot see how any right thinking person could possibly object in any age to that type of legislation which the Barbados Labour Party had the honour to bring before this House. I do not see how you could object.

As a matter of fact, Sir, since this legislation has passed you will notice in tenantries throughout the length and breadth of Barbados, including the parish of St John where I live, that people have converted their houses from wood to wall and have improved their living conditions. Our women folk and our old people and our men folk no longer have to go in the yard in order to have toilets and baths and that son of thing in an open position. So let us get it straight that the Labour Party's act in passing this legislation was revolutionary and it is a significant bit of legislation. I was very pleased to have been advised in its drafting by Sir Roy Marshall, a distinguished Barbadian, who did the draft at the time. We took into account all the Constitution and everything in relation to it Now Lower Estate Tenantry was scheduled in 1985 as the Act authorized the Minister to add tenantries from time to time once you were satisfied they were tenantries. By 1988 the then Government decided that it was going to acquire the tenantry. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has found some disagreement with that impliedly in his speech. I do not understand an acquisition of this tenantry to mean that the landlord in relation to those lots that have 10 cents on them can get higher than 10 cents. But there were also other lots that were part of the physical area but did not have tenants on them at the time and there may be an argument for those lots to be valued at a higher price. 12.35 p.m.

In addition to that, Sir, there were areas of the tenantry road which became the tenantry road but which were not part and parcel of all of the lots. They were not occupied by tenants. So there may be some argument as to the price of that land to the extent that it has now become public land. Obviously, where the Government has gone in and has improved the condition, in no situation when the matter goes to litigation to be discussed can a landlord claim - although some do try to come and claim it because I do a lot of cases against them in this instance - he

is entitled to charge at the higher price because of the improvements that have taken place.

I have a constituency that has suburban tenantries. So I know these problems occur very often and we have to argue the problem. But the Honourable Member must not use those factual positions to suggest that the Government has agreed to any price because I understand that no price has been agreed. If the Honourable Member is doing his homework, he would have found out that these matters...

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of elucidation, Sir. I made it quite clear that I was concerned that the Honourable Member for St. George North said that the landlord might be making a profit out of the whole thing and I was just asking a question. I would like to get an answer from the Minister.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I am sure that the Honourable Member will get an answer from the Minister, but I have put out what I understand as an Honourable Member who is looking at this matter objectively on how these matters are approached and not to score any points. But then I have more experience in dealing with cases involving land valuation than the Honourable Member for St Michael South Central would have and obviously because of my profession I will deal with it He has had the experience of where he has been the landlord selling or getting his land acquired. So he would have the experience of getting a proper valuation of these matters.

Now I believe that these tenants are entitled to get this problem out of the way. In 1993 I had to go up there because at that time the landlord sent out a notice to most of the tenants asking them to pay at a higher price than 10 cents and there was a tremendous protest. The Honourable Member for St. George North and myself and a gentleman who tried to be the Honourable Member for St. George South and did not succeed and then tried to be the Honourable Member for St. George North on the last two elections also became a member of the committee. We all worked together with the tenants in order to bring to the attention of the then Government that this was a tenantry, and very soon after, the Minister who was in the Senate I believe issued a statement going back on the position, although a decision had been taken to deschedule this particular tenantry. It was descheduled and then it was rescheduled. If there is one criticism to be made, it is the decision to deschedule the tenantry. I believe it was then rescheduled so that at the moment the tenants are still entitled to purchase their lots at the price stated.

In my view and I am not a judge in the matter, Sir, I cannot see how a landlord will get for those areas that have the price of 10 cents on them any more than that 10 cents. But in relation to the other lots, there will be an argument. To that extent, he probably will make some profit because land values have gone up between 1985 and 1994 other than in respect of the scheduled lots in this tenantry. I would hope that we will see the rapid solution to these problems.

Sir, there is a pavilion of sorts in this particular area. The Honourable Member had been protesting that he wanted a pavilion there and he said with Mr. Dowding's permission he begged for a few bits of old boards and established a pavilion at the time with very good intentions. But I am sure he did not have only the people's interest at heart. I am prepared to believe that he also had his electoral fortunes in mind at the time but unfortunately for him that did not get him the seat of St. George North.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of elucidation, Sir. I have been looking at this map and I do not see any pavilion provided here for any playing field.

Mr. SPEAKER: But the Honourable Member *for* St Michael South Central, I believe the Honourable Member for Christ Church West was only referring to the pavilion that you referred to.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Those were the days when the Honourable Member turned up for his election dressed in white and that is why he has the appellation of "Snow White". There is a certain humour about this part of the history in time because I have no quarrel with the Honourable Member trying to win a sit and obviously in the process taking steps which he thought was necessary. In fact, in Antigua it is well known that one of the leading politicians there built the roads himself as soon as elections came. He had no roads and he went and put the roads in himself and said to the people that he was able to do that. I am not quarreling with that aspect of it All I am saying, Sir, is that we must in these tenantries make rapid progress now. We are some 14 years since the legislation was passed in 1980. We have identified all of the tenantries now, some of them have had improvement I can think of another tenantry in St George North, Bel Air Tenantry, I can think of Applewhaites, I can think of Pool which was improved, I believe, in 1987.1 can think of some others in rural districts, but there are still too many in the rural districts that are in need of development and improvement and we will have to have an overall plan for dealing with these problems. Some work has begun. I do not want anybody to misunderstand me, work was done under the Labour Party and some work has been done under the Democratic Labour Party when it came back to office in 1986.1 do not believe that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central had much to do with that work, although he was Minister of Finance *for* the year afterwards, I do not think he did very much there.

As a matter of fact, I am not sure whether anything was done during that year that he had the responsibility for... 12.45 pjn.

Mr. SPEAKER: Could the Honourable Member for Christ Church West just stick to the Resolution please?

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: That is why I am sticking to the Resolution, Sir, because...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Do you see he is protesting already, Sir? I am suggesting that if he was so intent on following up Lower Estate, as Minister of Finance he should have made money available to deal with Lower Estate when he was Minister of Finance.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is said differently now.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: You have to introduce it, Sir. He allowed that wonderful opportunity to pass where he could not now have to go up to Charles Rowe Bridge tomorrow night and make any statement, but in 1987 if he had made the money available he would have been able to have convinced the people of Charles Rowe Bridge that he had carried out what he had signalled originally when he went to put the pavilion there.

I said, Sir, I hope that the tenantries will be rapidly attended to and completed. I live in a rural area and I can say that I really regret very much that rural Barbados when it comes to tenantry roads and basic utilities have not been treated in the same manner as other parts of southern Barbados with the speed with which southern Barbados has had some things done. I am not going to go any further on that, but there are also suburban tenantries that really need to be attended to and I would hope that as the economy improves and the resources are available that we would be able to put this problem of roads and tenantry roads and basic utilities behind us.

There has been money made available under the Basic Human Needs Programme which helped with the tenantries development. Unfortunately, Lower Estate did not come under that immediately. Then there was money made available by virtue of the negotiations of the Agreement with the Venezuelans when we did the oil facility, and that was negotiated in the Labour Party's time between 1976 and 1981. The first concessional oil facilities where the money was then allowed to be used for purposes such as this. Therefore, there was action being taken, and I would hope that now we have brought Lower Estate to this House, and the final parliamentary approval is being given, and I am sure Members of both sides will vote for the Resolution, that the people in Lower Estate will find themselves in a better state and condition in so far as basic amenities are concerned, and issues such as these will not become issues of partisan politics, but recognising that if the quality of life of our citizens is to be raised and to be of the sort that would give us not only a statistic in the human development ranking, but would give us really an environment of a society that is progressive, I believe that the House itself must say to the Government that we have to get on with this job and get all of the tenantries properly completed, Sir.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time I have heard a debate like this in this Chamber and I have almost heard the same things repeated again. I do not intend to keep the debate at a level in which it is not progressive, and so I intend to deal with the issue in a very brief way. I must say not as briefly as the Minister introduced it.

Whatever problems or difficulties we have had with the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act, we have beer able to get on with the job. If I quote from the Development Plan 1993 on page 115, just to put the Government's position clearly,...

Mr. SPEAKER: Which Government are you referring to, please?

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: The Development Plan 1993.

Mr. SPEAKER: Oh, I see.

Mr, L. A. WEEKES: "The involvement of Government in the plantation tenantries programme includes the provision of surveying services for landlords whose qualified tenants opt to purchase their lots."

The important thing here is, Sir, that we have made progress and despite the large number of tenantries that were to be dealt with, according to this document, there are only 16 tenantries now to be dealt with. It said 300 lots. So it suggests very clearly that the past Government's position, whatever reservations it may have had, was not saying what the Honourable Member *for* St. George North was saying, that we care little about people and what was being done for them, because in the very Plan that was the policy indicated by the Government.

Added to that, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West has raised the point and he has made the point that both Governments have made an effort, but in this particular instance clearly there was some difficulty which obviously could not be adjusted or dealt

with through the very process of the others. In 1988 a decision was taken that the Lower Estate tenantry should be acquired for the purpose of implementing an improvement scheme in the area and facilitating the purchase of lots by qualified tenants. That is what we are here discussing, how to deal with the problem in order to allow the tenants to be able to acquire their lots. The Government made that decision and it went ahead, and this is most important to remember, that the Government of the day at its own expense, without any consideration of direct cost recovery from tenants, financed the improvement of the roads and the provision of electricity and water in the area. So clearly the accusation that the past Government had no interest in dealing with these kinds of tenants is surely wrong. We must look to the future. The Act is there and whatever amendments may have to come from time to time will surely be dealt with, but at the present moment, we need to deal with this Bill. 12.55 p.m.

All the comments made by members may have some validity, but I am not privy to the personal dealings or whatever took place between landlord and tenant That must be the fault of the Minister who did not expound anything on the matter for me to be able to respond to. So I have a difficulty whether to respond to the member who seconded the Resolution or the Honourable Member for St Michael South Central.

It is an extreme difficulty because it is out of that that a policy decision will come. Therefore in dealing with all the other tenants and lots we should be able to proceed much more smoothly and far more quickly because of the implementation of this particular one.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us hear the Honourable Member in silence, please. Continue, please.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: What is of importance to me is that even those tenantries that we are speaking about under this particular Act suffer the same fate as other tenantries in other districts and therefore, it seems to me, that we should be guided by the problems that confronted the other tenants in such a way as not to confront those tenants that we are dealing with.

One of the things that we need to remember which the Minister again has not been able to help me with and therefore I have to ask the question - the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central made the point - if you are developing a tenantry you are not going to develop a tenantry to put houses. Part of the conditions must be for facilities for community services. We have tenantries in other parts of the country where we put up houses without proper community centres, without playing fields, without anything like that.

The plan itself did not suggest that proper planning was being done. This is where I am saying to the Minister that in this improved scheme he is thinking about, I would like to hear whether there would be developments in these areas for proper community services, recreational facilities and things of that nature because this tends to reflect, and my own experience tells me, that in those districts where tenantries were developed without these facilities we have had a lot of deviant and bad behaviour and in many cases we have had vandalism.

What we need to do, is to have a complete constructive development, not only to benefit those who live there in terms of somewhere to sleep and eat, but somewhere to express themselves. In that context, I feel that we should be discussing this particular development in that light, rather than rehashing the things that will not get us anywhere. We need to know what the Government intends to do.

The question of sewerage. There is a sewerage problem in some areas and when we are talking about the districts, I am not so sure what kind of sewerage disposal we were thinking about We have some old developments where the sewerage system is creating a public health hazard. I want to know if the Minister is going to develop it in such a way that we will be rid of this sort of thing. I heard the Honourable Member for the City many a time speak about toilets in the yard and that sort of thing. I need to hear whether the Minister is developing this to the point where we will have a model, then, for that development tenantry.

Then, Mr. Speaker, the question of drainage. All these improvements are necessary. Only this morning's newspaper I read - and I hope the Member for St. Thomas does not think this to mean anything - but the people in that area are having a problem with drainage. Some in St. Thomas are walking through mud or something like that Wherever it is. I understood it was in St. Thomas from what I read but I stand corrected.

What I am saying, Sir, is that this whole development needs to be developed in a proper way so that we get rid of some of the complaints that tenants do make from time to time. It is in that context that I got up to speak on this Resolution, not to refer to anything that has happened in the past and as to why one government has not been able to do, but about what we are doing today. Whether the new government is determined to buy the lots is a matter for them. But we have always had the complaint when tenantries are developed to the point where you have electricity and water, what usually happens is that the very tenants have to pay a higher price because the landlords take advantage of the fact that they did not pay any

money for any of these facilities but then turn around and live out of the government expenditure.

I am sure that those who are responsible for this particular project would take all of these things into consideration when the price and the tenants and so on are determined; that it will give a fair deal to those tenants who are able to afford them. It is that kind of development that will carry the nation forward.

I am not getting into housing. Neither am I getting into National Housing Corporation because I am not so sure if National Housing Corporation may have something to deal with this. I will leave that for another time.

Sir, my main argument is that we should make sure that when we develop this particular tenantry, it would be a model for the other 16 or 300 lots remaining to be developed and to be a good model for future developments. I need say no more, Sir, because I think 1 have briefly responded to what I have been able to glean from members and I leave the Minister to see if he could help me to understand what his policy and direction is, what he intends to do in this particular area and, most of all, to give guidance to whoever is responsible for this area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, some issues have arisen in this particular matter... Okay, I will speak after lunch.

SUSPENSION

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to move that this House be suspended until 2 o'clock.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative witfiout division, and Mr. Speaker suspended the House accordingly. 1.05 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This House is now resumed. The Honourable Member for St. John.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying before we took the break, there are a number of issues which have come up in this particular matter which I think need some comment in addition to that which was given by the Shadow Minister with responsibility for Housing and Lands.

In fact, I should begin by saying that when the Minister and his Parliamentary Secretary had finished speaking, I was not myself sure who had delivered the maiden speech. I think the Minister of Housing has set many records in this House and has now set yet another one with the shortest ever introduction of a matter in this House by a Minister of Government. The real point is that it smacks of incompetence of the highest level for any Minister of Government to introduce any matter in this Chamber in the way that the Honourable Member for St. Andrew sought to do so.

The mere fact that the Parliamentary Secretary in that Ministry had all of these things to say about the matter, speaking also as the representative for the area, meant that it was incumbent on the Minister, as a matter of duty to the people of this country, to the taxpayers of Barbados, and to this Parliament, to address those grave areas which his Parliamentary Secretary said arose out of the matter. He did not say a single word in relation to what his views are about the features of this particular matter, nor anything else about some of the critical issues relating to the development of tenantries in Barbados.

Based on what the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West have said about the matter, and they are speaking from experience which they obviously have from long association with it, it is something that merited a better quality of introduction and, certainly, the Minister should have taken this opportunity in one of his first measures before this House to deal with those substantive issues. There is no other Minister so far in the new Cabinet who has treated this House with such scant respect and such indifference and I hope that it will not be so on future occasions.

The presentation of the Honourable Member for St. George North was, in fact, lacking in some important things but I think the very critical point that needs to be made is that, contrary to the impression which was given by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, significant work had been done in the period 1987 to 1991 in relation to the development of tenantries in Barbados. We did not have to go the route of land acquisition, if the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act is as path breaking as it is supposed to be, and I question that. But the Honourable Member for Christ Church West always heralds that point of view.

All the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act did was to give people those tenantries and I am talking about rural Barbados. I am not dealing with the problems we had in relation to urban and suburban tenantries because when the Freehold Purchase Act was introduced in this House

the then Minister of Lands himself did not recognise that it would have impacted on urban and suburban tenantries. If you read the speeches of the Members of the then Barbados Labour Party Government on the issue of the introduction of the Freehold Purchase Act, one thought that it was a successor to the Tenantries Control and Development legislation which in itself gave tenants path breaking rights. All that the Freehold Purchase Act did was to give them the right to purchase the land which they could not be removed from anyway, so long as they were listed in the Schedule to the Tenantries Development and Control Act, so that in all of the huff and puff which the Honourable Member for Christ Church West always brings to these debates, if you see through the matter and can see clearly what happened consequent on the introduction of the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act, it has not been as path breaking a piece of legislation as one anticipated.

There is another reason for that. It is because what essentially it did was to solidify and entrench the rights of tenants whose ancestors had been living on those lots for over 300 years but what it did not do, and this is something that should be of concern, is that it did not change the relationship of those tenants who were entitled to purchase those lots to the land surrounding them.

A man living in Pool Tenantry in St. John, or Lower Estate Tenantry for that matter, who could not be put off his lot anyway because of the Tenantries Control and Development legislation, merely had the right to buy the land at 10 cents per sq. ft. Most of the tenantries did not have any infrastructural facilities in them so therefore he was in no better physical condition than his foreparents had been for 300 years, and nothing changed in respect of his relationship to the land that surrounded him, so other than the house spot, he did not acquire any other unique far-reaching rights under the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act

A man in Pool - his property still abuts and bounds plantation land which has nothing to do with him nor his children so that his relationship to economic resources to Barbados changed in no way after the introduction of the Freehold Purchase Act If we continue to herald it and trumpet it as this path breaking piece of legislation, then it would have had some phenomenal impact in the economic relationships of people in Barbados to the resource of land and that did not happen so there is nothing path breaking about it. It merely established by law rights of ownership in land and very often the piece of land which those families have purchased is in a tenantry which is in the same condition that their grandparents and great-grandparents found it in.

The people in Todds in St George would never forgive the Honourable Member for Christ Church West or anybody else on that side, least of all the Honourable Member for St. George South, if they were to hear him say that the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act was some path breaking piece of legislation when they still have to walk through mud to get to their homes, when they still do not have adequate street lighting and when water mains are still not provided in those tenantries. Therefore we have to commit ourselves to a new programme, as was the case in 1987-1991 to develop the tenantries in Barbados.

It was not only Pool Tenantry. When the Democratic Labour Party Government borrowed over $50 million from the Venezuelans a number of tenantries were completed in Barbados, in the constituency of St. John alone, and I will get to St. George soon. A large number of tenantry roads were completed, Lemon Arbor, Wakefield, Knight's Village, Colleton, Cliff - 7....

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is the parish you said was neglected under the Democratic Labour Party. There were 7 tenantry roads in St. John. There were about 12 I think in the St. Philip parish as a whole, including Sunbury which successive Members of Parliament had promised, probably including the Honourable Member for St. Thomas when he was representative of that constituency, because when it was in St. John they told me there had not been a Member of Parliament yet who did not promise them a tenantry road and as soon as the Democratic Labour Party was returned to office in 1991 the tenantry road at Sunbury and facilities were put in and there are a large number of tenantries.

We need as a matter of urgency to have the tenantry roads completed and the infrastructure put in place, not just at Lower Estate, assuming that is what is going to be done, but in Society Tenantry in St John which the Honourable Member for Christ Church West forgot, and where he lives, that is one of the most appalling tenantries in terms of lack of facilities and there are a whole list of others which I could give, College Savannah, impassable roads, Ashford Tenantry in St. John, Clifton Hall which we had started but which due to the problems with the Venezuelans we were unable to complete because the funds were not there and the pipe tracks had to be covered back over and so on. Foster Hall, College Bottom, and you could go through the entire list Guinea, all of those are tenantries which need urgent attention and I want to make a special plea in view of the fact that this special attention is being given to Lower Estate for reasons best known to the Parliamentary Secretary and obviously not the Minister. That based on that, special

attention should be given to complete the remainder of tenantry roads in other areas of rural Barbados, in particular St John, St Philip, St. Joseph, St. Andrew and those very unfortunate persons living in Todds Tenantry in St George who have suffered from lack of representation for such a long time in this Parliament. We have a symbiotic relationship in St. John with those people. 2*15 p.m.

So, considerable work has been done and I would hope that as part of the programme of rural development for Barbados, that the Government will consider earmarking a sizeable sum of money for the completion of the tenantry roads programme in Barbados.

All of the ground work is there. The Minister cannot complain. He has every thing on a silver platter before him except the money. But he has everything else - the plans for the road, where to put the water mains, where to put the poles, the linemarks, all of that is laid out before him. The phasing of the programme, the cost of the works which would have to be reviewed, but he has everything there.

From 1987 it has been there and therefore with that available to him he should be able to argue a case to the Minister of Finance who is growing more sympathetic everyday to these kinds of demands to make the funds available for rural Barbados and for a serious tenantry road programme to take place.

The Minister therefore does not need to be side-tracked by small matters. He is obviously not going to be side-tracked today by such a small matter as Lower Estate. He has left that to a more worthy colleague so I want him to look at the bigger picture since he permitted debate on that, Mr. Speaker, and for the Minister to pay urgent and immediate attention to the restoration of a tenantry road programme in Barbados to ensure that persons living in rural Barbados are in the economic mainstream.

The second point of significance is this. And this is why this debate is very important. The original Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act was amended particularly to take cognizance of that monstrous lack of understanding which the then Minister of Housing who introduced the Act in the 1980s suffered under in relation to urban and suburban tenantries.

The smaller tenantries, the Act sought to clarify the position' so that a piece of land with more than 5 house-spots or more wouid be a tenantry but that the old definition of 2 or more had been changed. There were persons whose rights had vested under the original Act to whom compensation had to be paid by the Government of Barbados, and therefore, when the Honourable Member for St. Andrew is paying attention to the cost of acquisitions and you can estimate it but I do not really know that you will find that the payments will be any faster than you imagined.

You could make provision for a large sum of money but you may not be able to get the department to make those payments fast enough to deplete that vote. But you also have to make provision for compensating those persons whose rights had vested or alternatively those persons who may have to be relocated because there were provisions in the amendments to the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act to relocate where, I think, the landowner had to find an alternative lot of land for those persons whose rights had vested.

The cost of that falls to the Government of Barbados and I have heard the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, I think in the previous session, reminding the Government about these costs and I assume work was done on it then, but I recommend to the Honourable Member for St. Andrew that attention is paid to that because time is running and the period of time in which these relocation costs should be met and relocation should be carried out, the outer limit of that time is almost here. Therefore those costs are going to fall to your account very shortly and I assume that the Minister is paying careful attention to that matter.

So we would like to know what the overall plan is in relation to tenantries. We want to know whether provision is being made in respect of the implications of the amendment to the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act which was done in the past 4 years.

With respect to this particular acquisition I wish to reiterate, Mr. Speaker, that it is a monstrous act of incompetence for the Minister not to have dealt adequately with this matter and have taken the opportunity to make it very clear to the public of Barbados what the implications of the matter are, both in terms of the costs and the benefits and I hope that would not be repeated again in the history of this Parliament

I think the Honourable Member has now made history and should be content to have done so and that in future his actions would be characterised by frankness and that level of efficiency and knowledge and mastery of the subject area which one usually associates with him outside of his political involvement We would not be opposing this particular measure.

Mr. L. R. TULL Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. John has invited me into this debate and

I join it with great relish. I am a little amazed at the way in which the Honourable Member for St. John can change his colours with such remarkable speed. Every time there has been a debate in this Parliament in relation to tenantries in the last 3 years, the Honourable Member has been taking a position that is violently in conflict with a position that he took earlier.

I am however not going to waste time on the Honourable Member's submission even though he would like to drag me into Todds. The fact is that the...

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us desist from such interruptions, please.

Mr. L. R. TOLL: The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that the people who live in Todds tenantry in St. George have been treated extremely shabbily by the last Government. They have only been out of Government about 2 months and they have not done the roads up there despite numerous requests made by me and others. The road in Todds will be fixed. I talked to the people. I have no difficulty with that but I do not need the assistance of the Honourable Member for St. John's representation in the St George side of Todds.

I want also at this point before I deal with some of the substance to the Resolution to run to the defence of my friend, the Honourable Member for St. Andrew.

I think that the Honourable Member for St. John is speaking with tongue in cheek. I almost saw the tongue come through the cheek when he was speaking and the kind of assault that is made on the Honourable Member is totally unworthy of him. It is common practice that where there is a Minister and a Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry, that the Minister may invite the Parliamentary Secretary to do some of his work. There is nothing wrong with the Honourable Member for St Andrew referring to the Parliamentary Secretary who has responsibility only for housing, as I gathered, if what I read in the Official Gazette is true, for him to introduce the measure. I would really like... 2.25 p.m.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order, Sir. It was the Honourable Member for St. Andrew who introduced the measure in this House and not the. Honourable Member for St George North. We can split hairs. It is moved that a matter stand part and then deferred to your Parliamentary Secretary to give the substance of it. That is normal. There is nothing unusual about that.

Mr. L. R. TOLL: I think it is unfair for the Honourable Member to pick on the Member for St. Andrew. I rather like it when he seeks to pick on the Honourable Member for St George South. I think you should pick on people who can handle you.

Now in respect of the Freehold Purchase Act, Sir, it is undoubted that it has worked a complete transformation of rural Barbados including the constituency of the Honourable Member. We have across Barbados a number of plantation tenantries of 14 years ago that have changed their character completely. The Democratic Labour Party in 1965 passed the Tenantry Control Act and all it did was to say that five house spots constitute a tenantry and that the people must remain on those five house spots forever with no provision for purchase. They must stay on the house spot forever and use a pit toilet outside in the yard and they cannot put a ground seal to the house because that is constructing a permanent structure on a landlord's land and there you could be invited to leave the land when you do something that is inconsistent with your status as a tenant. That is the legislation which they passed. It was meant to perpetuate the division between the people in the tenantries and the rest of the society.

The Barbados Labour Party has always believed in the philosophy of a property owning democracy that all Barbadians should be entitled to own a piece of land. My grandfather used to say, Sir, that you are not a man until you have a plot and sale. It is because of that that the Barbados Labour Party with tremendous foresight decided to transform the plantation tenantries in the first place and then the urban tenantries so that those who were living on these tenantries for many, many years for all the existence of Barbados over 300 years could finally come out from the cold and could own their land. That is what has happened with the Freehold Purchase Act and the other companion bits of legislation of the early 1980's and I speak with great authority.

I have in my own constituency the biggest plantation tenantry in Barbados - Drax Hall. I remember when I was first a candidate in that constituency that there was not a single house in Drax Hall other than the plantation house that had electricity. I held public meetings when I first started using the battery of my motor car to generate power to use the public address system. There were no roads in Drax Hall and, when canvassing and I get to Byde Mill, I had to leave my car down at the bottom of Byde Mill and walk half a mile up through the worst road in Barbados to be able to see people in Drax Hall. There was no bus service. People did not have running water in their houses. There was a stand-pipe quite some distance from where the majority of people lived. There were no playing fields. There was nothing, Sir. It is because of this situation that a group of us back in the 1970's decided it was time that this division of Barbados into the "haves and have nots" should be brought to an end and that the people who

lived in the rural constituencies and the agricultural belt who had given of their best years - their sweat, toil and tears - in developing this country should finally be given a chance to come into their own. That is why this legislation was passed.

Sir, it does not fit well in the mouth of the Honourable Member for St. John who only knows the country after he got pushed up there in 1987 to talk as if nothing has happened. He wants to say that this is not a path-breaker. This is revolutionary legislation. This is legislation where a Government with the courage could say that these people have paid for this land already. Therefore, for them to pay 10 cents a square foot for the land to live on was even asking them for too much, but we made that concession. The Honourable Members on that side, Sir - not the Honourable Member for St John. At that time he was only the water boy. He was not an Honourable Member of this Chamber - voted against it. They voted against the right of Barbadian people living in plantation tenantries to acquire land for 10 cents a square foot There is a lot of talk about constitutional propriety as if they are any guardians of constitutional propriety in this country.

I get very emotional, Sir, when we deal with this because, unlike a lot of people in public life, I am never going to stop talking about the lot of the poor and the disadvantaged in this society. Politics in Barbados have gotten so - I cannot even say sophisticated, but it almost burns the tongue of politicians to talk about the poor people and their suffering. You are not supposed to talk about those things. But I represent a constituency, Sir, with people who are artisans and agricultural workers who are good, decent and honest people who have not been given a fair share of the patrimony of Barbados. I really do not think that measures coming before this House to improve the lot of the people in the agricultural belt of Barbados should be treated in the cavalier manner given by the Honourable Member for St. John. I think that it is an insult to them that he should trivialize the importance of this piece of social legislation that relates to plantation tenantries in Barbados and do not seek to diminish the importance of the legislation nor diminish the foresight of the Government of the Barbados Labour Party that introduced it.

Now I have one or two questions to raise about these tenantries, Sir. The Barbados Labour Party had as its centerpiece of its Manifesto in the last general election rural development and I understand that a Minister has been assigned the portfolio of rural development The Minister will hear from me often because the concept of a two Barbados remains. They are the Barbados of St. Michael, Christ Church and the coastal along with the West Coast and the Southern area and then the rest. They are the ones who do not get water, Sir, who have to go weeks without water in their homes and die ones which have been seen in today's paper from Todds where they complain that it is high-class worthlessness that they have to be living in those conditions in 1994. The Minister will be hearing from me regularly; not only the Minister of Rural Development, but also the Minister of Public Works. There was a time when crime was the preserve of the urban area, the country areas were relatively free of crime. Old people could still walk to church at night in St George and pass through large areas of roads between canefields and did not have to worry about it, but all that has changed, Sir. Yet Government has not got around to recognising that the people who live in the country areas of Barbados are as entitled, as anybody else, to what is going on in this country., We have to get some too, so we want a lot of street lights, because it is now dangerous to walk about the country at night 2.35 p.m.

When the fellows who were in death row were running around Barbados three years ago, or whenever it was, they were not running around Bank Hall and these areas, they were running around Market Hill in St. George, just under where I live, and Lower Estate and that area and all through St. Thomas. We in the rural constituencies deserve to come into our own and we must get what we deserve. You are going to hear a lot more, from me anyway, I do not know about the others, about this.

The roads. I have given 22 roads in my constituency that are in an appalling state %of disrepair. In fact, to say disrepair in relation to some would suggest that at one time they were in a state of repair. You cannot say disrepair in relation to them. They have never had roads. In my submission, Mr. Speaker, the worst area in Barbados is Windsor Tenantry in St. George. Todds is bad, Buttals Tenantry, Jordans Tenantry, Monroe, Hannahs Valley, all the way through the constituency there are bad, bad roads. There was a time when I first got into politics that your constituents would ask you for a public bath. I started in the public bath days, Sir, where you could go around and promise people in a district that you would make sure you get a public bath and they would vote for you. Nowadays a public bath is a thing in the folklore of Barbados, because the Barbados labour Party in the Government between 1976 and 1986 ensured that over 98% of all the houses in Barbados had running water. That is what they did in tenantries, they made sure that there was running water.

They also ensured that electricity was brought to all districts in Barbados. Again, when I started, Mr. Speaker, I had to go around from time to time with a long list in districts like Farm Road in St. George, Drax Hall Woods, Monroe Village, to get the residents to sign a petition for me to take to the Commercial Manager of Barbados

Light and Power so that they could get electricity in their homes. When I first came into Parliament I used to speak regularly about the inequity of having people in St. George cutting canes - in those days they used to burn the canes liberally - and these people had to cut canes and go home on afternoons with all the soot and ash all over their clothes, in their lungs and all over and did not have any running water, nor did they have electricity so that they could even at the end of a hot day in the fields drink a cold Banks beer.

All that has changed, Sir, and we moved into another stage, that of roads. The Barbados Labour Party has given an undertaking that it will fix all - a-1-1 - the tenantry roads in Barbados in this term of office. I accept that. I got at a public meeting in Ellerton during the election campaign and spoke in terms similar to how I am speaking today and telling the people in my constituency it is about time they get these things, these roads, and the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance came and spoke at the meeting after I did and gave the undertaking that all the roads - because I had mentioned them one by one - would be fixed during this term, and subsequently he extended it not only to the roads in St. George South but to the tenantry roads in Barbados in general. I feel strongly, Sir, that from the record of repairs to tenantry roads and the construction of tenantry roads during the period 1981 to 1986 - because we have to get the history of these things right...

Aside.

Mr. L. R. TULL: I know, Mr. Speaker, that they do not want me to run again. They know that a majority of 1993 is formidable, so they would like me to go home.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not listen to the asides, just continue, please.

Mr. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, the plantation tenantry roads were owned by the plantations and therefore the plantations were responsible for the maintenance of the roads, not the Government. The plantations did not pave the roads through the years because they had to use their tractors and other equipment to bring out the canes and they did not want to spend money on paved roads to bring tractors and so on to break up the roads, so the most they would do is every now and then drop a little marl to stop a hole. The passing of the legislation of 1981, which the Honourable Member for St. John would deride in his ignorance - and I do not mean the Bajan ignorant, I mean a lack of knowledge - made it possible for Government for the first time to take over and be responsible for the construction and maintenance of roads in the tenantries. Up to 1981 it was not the responsibility of the Government, the Government could not go into private property and do what it wanted to do, not in our country, so from the time we passed the legislation we started to do road construction in the tenantries in the plantation areas and built large numbers of roads in those plantation tenantries, including Henley in St. John, during the period to 1986. In my own constituency between 1981 and 1986 new roads, I am not talking about repairs, were constructed in the whole of Drax Hall right down from Byde Mill right back. Buses could go in for the first time and turn around. They were built in places like Mount Tenantry, upper Brighton and other areas, and the work on tenantry roads, in my constituency at least, stopped dramatically in September 1986 and never started back. There is not a single plantation tenantry road that was built between the period 1986 and September 6,1994! Not a single one was built in my constituency during that period.

If I speak with a lot of feeling on this matter, Sir, it is because of that kind of neglect and therefore the Honourable Member for St John must pick on something else with which to play games. Don't play games with this. 2.45 p.m.

I am going to wind up, Sir, and I am going to commend the Honourable Member for St Andrew for bringing, in such a timely fashion, this matter before Parliament. You may recall that some time last year there was a flare-up in Lower Estate because of this very problem and the newspapers carried the story of the tenants, making clear that they were wronged and that they needed matters put right. A number of persons from the Barbados Labour Party went down to the Lower Estate area - they didn't invite me. I wasn't one of them. But I don't mind - to try to sort it out. They did not get the cooperation of the then government. That they have moved with such expedition to rectify the problem is a matter for congratulation of the Honourable Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary, the Honourable Member for St. George North.

I would hope that the rate in which they have gone about rectifying this one will be spread over other areas where we have kindred difficulties like in Bulkeley Terrace where people bought land at the commercial price, when they should have been buying it at the 100 price. I want the Minister to move with great haste to make sure that those people who paid their money at the commercial rate, $3 and $4 a square foot, will get back their money, give 100 for each square foot out of it and let the people get back their money. If it does that, he will gain the undying gratitude of the batch of representatives, members of parties for their rural constituencies who realise that they have to fight battles now that were won long ago in the constituencies of St. Michael, Christ Church and other parts of coastal Barbados. I am grateful to you, Sir.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, when one listens to the members from the other side, one would get the impression that this land acquisition started with them.

I want to quote here from a plan, the Barbados Plan of Land at Lower Estate Tenantry and the date it was certified which is April 30,1992. You are aware, Sir, that the General Election was on September 6, 1994 and the plan was actually recorded on October 6,1992. Seeing that the House would not allow you to quote from something without making it a document of the House, I would like to make this plan a document of the House.

This Resolution dealing with this land acquisition is really unique because it is the policy of the Democratic Labour Party and we have stated this...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Mr. D. St E. KELLMAN: We have stated this since 1980 that we had problems with the Freehold Tenantry Act. The reason why we had problems with the Freehold Tenantry Act is not because we did not want the tenants to get the land, but in some cases you had a situation where you are taking land from poor people and giving it to other poor people. We strongly felt that the onus should have been on the Government to provide the land for those poor people so that you would not disenfranchise people from property that they had for their children or their grandchildren.

This acquisition at Lower Estate is unique. You have a situation where the Democratic Labour Party acquired the land and you are speaking about 109 plots. What we are saying is that an acquisition like this we, under our rural development plan, and you will hear of rural development as if it is something new but the Democratic Labour Party - that's why you will not see it in our manifesto - because it has always been a policy of ours and all we have been doing is expanding on it

That is why we could have gone into St. George and we could have developed a plan like this which is now a document of the House and we could have put in roads, electricity and all of those amenities. We are not talking about a tenantry where you go and make it a plantation tenantry, you put down line marks without any roads. You have a unique situation here where you have all the amenities you wanted and now you are inviting tenants to come and enjoy the amenities.

I am saying that my friend, the Honourable Member for St. James North has a good example of what rural development is all about. It has been stated by the Democratic Labour Party. He said it in St. Michael South last night and on Tuesday last week he was told by the Honourable Member for St. John that he would have made my speech a policy speech, and he did it on Saturday, too, Sir.

I am saying that once the Barbados Labour Party planned to take our policies and introduce them like how they are introducing this one today they will have no problem from me. I will support this, Sir, because I realise that they understand now what is the true role of a Minister of Rural Development and they have acknowledged that we had something good and they are prepared to accept what we bad planned.

On the roads, Sir. This falls under the land acquisition because leverage was given for that So I believe I can do it also. We had planned that by 1995, and there is a plan in the Ministry, that all the tenantry roads of Barbados would have been completed. The Minister does not have to worry. He has the leverage where he can go and fix all the tenantry roads in Barbados and if anybody criticises him he can easily say it was the policy of the Democratic Labour Party and they are following our policy anyhow so he does not have to worry. We will support him on that

I am also saying that in a development like this 1 would not like to see just houses I would like to see things like playing fields. I believe there is enough land in Government that there is enough other land that they can use, where you can get a church and have some commercial area because this is the type of rural development that we in the Democratic Labour Party are... When we talk about rural development we are talking about rural development where you have all the amenities and not just the housing aspect of it.

We are saying today that we will support the Government on this issue and we have no problem with this Resolution but we would also like to say that because someone is prepared to name 23 roads and get up and say that they will support the Minister, we hope that the Minister will share the roads and he will not give them all to one member. Thank you, Sir.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, 1 rise in support of this Resolution in this Honourable Chamber, as outlined by the Honourable Member for St. Andrew and the Honourable Member for St George North.

I find it peculiarly strange that fault would be had with the Honourable Member for St. Andrew for allowing the Parliamentary Secretary who has specific

responsibility for housing to introduce this Resolution in the substantial form in which it came. May I say at this stage, Sir, that he made a first class for his maiden speech.

Having said that, Sir, it smacks of a peculiar form of intellectual dishonesty to hear a member speak of a Minister allowing his Parliamentary Secretary who has the responsibility for the area to introduce a matter when that same member was once a Minister of State and introduced many matters that his substantive Minister of Finance did not even speak on, far less, in some instances had short speeches as well too. So that in respect of this, at the end of the day, whether the person is a Parliamentary Secretary with responsibility for a particular section of a Ministry... 2.55 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael North East, would you confine your remarks, please...

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, I am only dealing with matters that have been raised in this debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well, you are going a bit far and wide.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, I will try my best to confine my speech but I am only dealing with matters raised by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. To that extent, therefore, the remarks of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition as they relate to the Honourable Member for SL Andrew and the Honourable Member for St. George North, as I said, smack of a level of - I was going to say intellectual dishonesty but that would be unparliamentary for me to say so, so I would not bother with that. But I fiod it very difficult to understand how a member can so quickly forget his own experience in this Honourable Chamber when he did not hold the singular substantive position for a ministry as in the case of the Honourable Member for St. George North.

Having said that then, Sir, I would like to deal with the issue of the development of tenantries and not only rural tenantries because a lot of the discussion in here today has centred on rural tenantries. The Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act, while it did not bestow the right to purchase at 10 cents per square foot for urban tenantries bestowed a right to purchase at a far lower level as a result of the legislation and indeed there was a subsidised rate which was to be taken by virtue of the provisions of that Act in respect of urban tenantries.

One of the things, Sir, that has disturbed me is that for the last eight years or so, there has been very little development of urban tenantries outside the constituency of St. Michael South, in particular in northern St. Michael. Indeed, if we look at the constituencies of St. Michael North East, SL Michael West Central, St. Michael North and St Michael Central, one which I know you would appreciate the level of lack of work that has been done by the last Government in those areas, particularly as it relates to roads and in particular drainage, in Codrington Hill, Storey Gap and Lewis Gap. If the rain barely falls in Storey Gap there are people who cannot get out of their houses and who are literally marooned in spite of the fact that they live only five minutes from the City centre.

In areas of Bush Hall, there remain today in Richard's Land and Howard's land areas where people, once again, are marooned simply because there are no roads. There are no concrete pathways. There is not even marl that they figure they can walk out on the marl. It is just grass and in most instances water settles there and where people have to step they have to put plastic bags over their shoes in order to get out of their houses.

Similarly, Sir, there are other areas I am sure throughout the whole of St. Michael and one therefore must comment that it is very difficult to understand how all of a sudden the Opposition, then again one part of the Opposition, the Leader of the Opposition says he will have difficulty in supporting this Resolution and the principles as outlined by the Honourable Member for St. George North...

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. I never said I would have difficulty. I said the Opposition would be supporting this Resolution. I do not know where she was or what she was listening to but certainly not my speech.

Hon. Miss. M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition stated that he had difficulties with the principles outlined by the Government with respect to the development of tenantries and the total development when he spoke in his speech.

Aside.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, with all due respect, he said that he had difficulty with the principles as outlined and, in fact, he said that the Honourable Member for St. George North essentially did not express properly what were the principles in respect of this particular tenantry but he spoke and accused the Government and said that he had difficulties with the Government in general in respect of its development of tenantries as a whole so that is where the distinction comes.

Let me say this, Sir. I have difficulty in understanding it because they were in charge of the Government for eight years and they had the majority of seats in St. Michael. If I remember correctly, they had 9 out of 11 and in spite of the fact that the people of St. Michael had spoken in such large numbers for they to represent them, the level of development to tenantries in St Michael remained almost non existent, as I said, except for St. Michael South, and in particular the Bay Land.

If we look, Sir, at the question of the drainage as I said, once again that remained virtually untouched and roads such as Canewood Road in Jackson, just above Jackson Tenantry, they remain today the victim of bad drainage. In fact, I believe just before they left office they planned the reconstruction of Canewood Road without looking at the issue of drainage and in spite of the fact that millions of dollars are now going to have to be spent *on* the reconstruction of that road they never paid any attention to making sure that adequate drainage would be put in place to ensure that the road had it longest possible length.

Further, Sir, I want to refer to the fact that in respect of urban tenantries once again there was a particular lack of attention paid to the settling of proper boundaries in urban tenantries. If we look at the history of Criminal Law in this country we will see that a large number of disputes that come before the court, particularly in relation to wounding, outside of those that are obtained in a family situation, or a relationship between man and woman, the majority come in relation to disputes over boundaries, disputes over land, this one complaining about this one stepping over their line, or this one's paling is over his line.

The time has really come, as we have outlined in the Barbados Labour Party's Manifesto, for there to be a proper planning of St. Michael to ensure that many of these boundary disputes will cease to exist, as they presently do, so that the problems that go with them in communities can be solved.

In fact, Sir, if you go up on the top floor of the Hospital and you look down on the constituency of St, Michael South Central you will see the ad hoc planning that has taken place in these tenantries and the fact of there being virtually little or no room for people to move and the types of encroachments that take place.

I find it strange, Sir, that when the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central was in control of the purse string that adequate provision was not made for some sort of study to be had ensuring that there was proper planning of tenantries in St. Michael. In the same way that he has professed to be a stout defender of the people of St. George, I would have thought that he would have made those efforts in respect of St. Michael and the concerns of urban tenants there when he was Minister of Finance.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, on a point of order. The Honourable Member should be aware that I stopped the Barbados Labour Party from moving all the people from Hall's Road, Carrington's Village,...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St Michael South Central, that is not a point of order.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central still has not made a point because at the end of the day he has still done nothing tp put anything in place to improve the condition of those people in St. Michael South Central neither when he was Minister of Finance nor since.

The point really is this, Sir that there has to be proper planning of the tenantries in urban Barbados if we are going to avoid a lot of the disputes and difficulties that we find ourselves in communities. I am heartened that the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto, as well as the Throne Speech, reflect those elements as part and parcel of the programmes of this Government over the next few years.

I would only want to make one last point in respect of Alleyne's Land in Bush Hall. They are in a similar position to the tenants of Lower Estate in St George and to that extent, Sir, where Government improved the roads. Indeed, Sir, the Barbados Labour Party not only put in the roads, Sir, but ensured that they had in some instances in Alleyne's Land, proper drainage put in, although when we lost the Government the programme was never continued and therefore roads like Perfection Road and one or two others in surrounding areas remained without proper drainage until today. 3.05 p.m.

In spite of the level of development that was put in by Government a situation emerged where the landlord is now seeking to charge a level of price *for* the purchase of that land that is not commensurate, Sir, with any money that he has spent in developing it and secondly, Sir, it is not commensurate with the prices being charged in the surrounding areas. So to that extent, it is a similar situation to Lower Estate and at the end of the day the people of Alleyne's Land, Bush Hall, I will say, are being unfaired, Sir, by being asked to pay $5.00 per square foot for what is in effect urban tenantry land.

It has no commercial value whatsoever. The development has not been at the instance of the Land-

lord Indeed, Sir, I know that there may be other landlords in this Chamber, like the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central who might be a little more generous with his development of properties that he owns than that landlord.

So that at the end of the day, Sir, I am asking for a similar treatment. I am asking the Minister of Housing to remember those persons. There are over 150 houses in that tenantry, it is one of the most densely populated areas in that pan of St. Michael and I believe that it is unfair to ask them to pay a price that is not commensurate with the spirit of the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act

I believe a group of them have gotten together and they have submitted to the Ministry of Housing since earlier this year, a petition to have it designated as a tenantry as is required under section 3 of the Tenantries Development Act, and I am asking therefore, Sir, that that too be considered for designation of a tenantry.

The facilities *for* the most pan are there. They need to be finished There needs to be proper drainage and proper sewerage facilities and I am asking therefore for favourable consideration for the residents of Alleyne Land, Bush Hall, so that they may acquire the land, not at 10 cents a square foot, because they are an urban tenantry and I know that they will not get it at 10 cents a square foot but the law makes adequate provision for the subsidized rate that should be charged to them in respect of there being an urban tenantry.

I would wish just to support this Resolution with those few words.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am slightly amazed that this Resolution should have generated such long debate because in the nature of things in so far as Government is a continuum, from time to time it is necessary for one Government to complete the work of a previous Government and Honourable Members on the other side who were in Cabinet should recall that this particular matter had its genesis in the previous Government. With slight modifications we are in fact just bringing to an end a phase in the tenantry programme that perhaps was one of the most unsavoury since 1980.

Other speakers have alluded to the circumstances under which this tenantry has now fallen to Government to complete what should have been done years ago. I am not going to reiterate anything that was said in that regard. This is essentially a tidying up process by the best means available to ensure that the people of the Lower Estate tenantry are able to get facilities which others in similar plantation tenantries throughout the area have got but which have been denied to these particular tenants since 1980 when the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act became the law.

I was concerned that the Leader of the Opposition - and in this regard I wish to echo some of the comments made by the Honourable Member for St. George South - that the Leader of the Opposition sought to trivialise the contribution which the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act and indeed the Tenantries Development Act, the companion piece of legislation, have made to the social history of Barbados.

If we say, Sir, that we are promoting home ownership in Barbados as an ideal that it is within the aspirations of the average Barbadian to own his own property, that is, his house. The Barbadian's house is seen as his own castle. In this regard if we look at the distribution of housing throughout Barbados you will see that terraced units are the exception rather than the rule and that our people in Barbados prefer to have their own little plot of land on which to build their own little house, be it wood or wall, rather than live cheek by jowl in terraced units such as they have in big countries like the United States and England and so on.

That is pan of our cultural tradition, the desire of the Barbadian to own his own house and have his own little plot of land. If we therefore agree that it is a worthy ideal to promote home-ownership among our people, surely we cannot have a discriminatory process under which only a certain section or segment of the community is able to own his own house.

In recognition of the fact that all Barbadians should be given the opportunity to own their own plot of land on which to build their house and to end the discrimination real, perceived or pretended, the Barbados Labour Party in the 1976 Manifesto made a solemn pledge to the people that we would ensure that those persons who had given all of their lives' work to plantations and whose only reward was to rent a house-spot from the plantation would be given the benefit of owning that house-spot on which they could build their house and in some cases they could own by negotiation the land behind the house-spot which had been farmed for agricultural purposes.

It took a long time to put together because it raised some very sensitive issues about property rights and constitutional issues concerning the deprivation of property and so on. And after many years of negotiation it came to fruition in 1980 when the Tenantries Freehold Act with suitable amendments took into account the constitutional position and plantation tenants were then given the right to own their plot of land at 10 cents a square foot

The Honourable Member for St John said today that all the plantation tenant required was a better right than that of being a tenant undo* the Act, that he merely established by law rights to ownership and the tenantries are in the same condition as the tenants' foreparents had left them. People still have to walk through mud, no street lights and so on. That is a highly simplistic observation, Mr. Speaker, because as a representative of a rural parish which has benefitted from the provisions of that Act, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition ought to have been in a position to observe the number of wall properties in the plantation tenantries in St. John. I can tell him that in my constituency of St. Thomas the movement *or* the transition from chattel dwelling to wall dwelling has been phenomenal. Merely to say that they have rights to own the land at 10 cents a square foot ignores the desire by those former plantation tenants to improve the quality of their housing and the contribution to the improvement in the asset value of the housing stock of Barbados. It ignores the fact that with that plot and sale, as Barbadians are wont to call it - which is the conveyance and site plan - those poor people who never had access to the banking system suddenly now having acquired that plot and sale got access to the banking system and could go into any bank in Bridgetown, put down the plot and sale by way of equitable mortgage and say that "I want to put on a wall front or wall back or start fresh. Hold these title deeds and lend me $20 or $30 thousand because I want to build a nice home like anybody else for my family." The Leader of the Opposition should know that and I should like to suggest to him that, if he talked to his constituents about the benefits that have accrued to them as a result of having the title deed, the present emptiness in his mind about the contribution of this Act will disappear. 3.15 p.m.

Sir, I know that in my constituency the whole village of Canefield, for example, was prior to this Act almost a pariah. It was a village on the out-skirts of St. Thomas between Airy Cot and Welchman Hall, they had no road. They had very poor quality housing. But compare today: There has been a vast transformation in the social environment in Canefield. There are numerous wall structures, very imposing and all well furnished and equipped. They have electricity of course. They never had electricity before then and the road is completely paved and was one of the last contributions that the Honourable Tom Adams made to his own constituency of St. Thomas before his death. In Dunscombe, I do not think there are any tenants in Dunscombe anymore. Everybody has his own plot and sale. They own their own land and throughout the parish that is npy own experience. In St. Philip when I was up there as the MP, I remember going through districts with the Form I and filling them out for the tenants so that they could send to the plantation owner and express the desire to own the land. Before they got the plot and sale, many tenants in St Philip actually started to build. I think right now of three in Thicketts and one in the Conga Road area. But the problem with the tenantries, as indicated by the Honourable Member for St George South, was that the plantations that owned the land and the roads always cried that they did not have the money to upgrade the roads. So it was left to the Government to undertake in due course to put in the roads to complete the development. We gave them the right to own. We made sure that they had water and you made sure that they had light, but the roads remain and still are a problem. Because there are a couple of hundred roads I suppose in the plantation tenantries all over Barbados and those roads are expensive to build.

Now contrary to what the Honourable Member for St. Lucy was saying, I can find no policy enunciated in the Democratic Labour Party's Manifesto of 1991 about rural development I can find a policy on urban renewal at page 28.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas is trying to mislead the House. I have said that over the years we have always had a rural development policy and...

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not the point that the Honourable Member for St Thomas was making.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Pardon me, Sir. He said that we did not have a policy, Sir, and then he made reference to our Manifesto.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member was saying that in the Manifesto. He confined...

Mr. D. St E. KELLMAN: Yes, Sir, and then he made reference to the Manifesto.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is your point of order though?

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: The point of order is that he is misleading the House because we always had a policy and there would be no need for us to put it in the Manifesto.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well, that is no point of order.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: And good evidence of no policy either, Sir. They had a policy on urban renewal which was set out on page 28 of their 1991 Manifesto. Of course, the 1994 Manifesto has nothing. It is just equally empty. There are lots of words but it is really empty. Just as an indication of the fact that they had no policy, or if they had a policy...let me put it this way. If they had a policy, the Democratic Labour Party was so wicked to the people in rural areas...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member *for* St. Thomas...

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: We are discussing a Resolution relating to compulsory acquisition of land at Lower Estate. I think you are going a bit far now as you discuss the policies of the Democratic Labour Party.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I think all Members who spoke before I spoke have indicated to Your Honour that this matter and I in fact began...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Thomas, I gave some latitude but your latitude is going a bit far.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Too far east is west, Sir. Let me come back to Central Barbados, Lower Estate.

Mr. SPEAKER: Right. You are now on the right track.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Lower Estate and the tenantries nearby were never developed by the Democratic Labour Party. We are now having to develop Lower Estate Tenantry to put in roads and so on in that area. That is because the second bit of legislation in 1980, the Tenantries Development Act I think it was called, Sir, mandated Government to go in and put in the services once the area was designated for development The first Act, Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act, allowed the tenants to own the land at 10 cents a square foot The second bit of legislation required the Government to go in and develop the tenantries and that is what is happening here. The point that I was making, Sir, is that the Democratic Labour Party never really used the powers of the Tenantries Development Act. Indeed, Sir, on November 15, 1988 I asked a question in this House calling on the then Democratic Labour Party Government to do tenantry roads in my constituency near St. George which is fairly contiguous to St. Thomas and listed a number of places: Lion Castle Tenantry, Content Tenantry, Bennetts, Highland, Bloomsbury, Grand View, two unnamed subsidiary roads off Shop Hill, Christie Village, old Sharon, Walkes Spring, Church Gap, Hillaby, Vault Road, Whitehall. Some were tenantry roads and some were subsidiary roads. This was November 15,1988. Look at the opposite page of the Question Book, Sir. This is November 1994, six years later, it is blank. They have not even had the decency to answer to say when funds become available we will deal with roads. Nothing so. They ignored the people of St Thomas for six years. The Question Book does not lie. They ignored the people of St. Thomas for six years and I am hearing today from an Honourable Member that they had a policy for rural development. That gives the lie to it, Sir. They did not even bother to answer me, treated me with scorn. Lord Melody used to say: "Treated me with scorn as though from a donkey I was bom.[11]1 am speaking on behalf of the people of St Thomas. 3.25 p.m.

I will say this now, Sir. Our party now will ensure that in the course of the next five years the tenantry roads will be repaired and rehabilitated or constructed.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not saying all. The Honourable Member for St George South said all. The tenantry roads of Barbados, under the Rural Modernisation Programme, the rural development side of the Ministry of Agriculture, will be but one element in the plan and the package for rural modernisation. Street lights, water and so are other elements, but there will be a lot more involved in rural modernisation. Rural modernisation will not be limited only to roads, water and light We will have housing...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You want all the tenantry roads? We will do all the tenantry roads, and I will tell you why that is not fanciful. Sometimes you spit up in the air and it comes down in your face, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy said today - and I wrote it down, Sir - that they had a plan to finish all the tenantry roads in Barbados by 1995, which is next year. The Democratic Labour Party would finish all the tenantry roads by 1995. You do not have many to do then. If you could finish them in a matter of months, we have five years. This is 1994, months away from 1995, and he said it. If he could do it in four months, we have five years. That is what the Honourable Member for St Lucy said.

Sir, it is not difficult Let me just tell you, for example, how it can be done. In my constituency you can do two tenantry roads a year and in 3 years you will be finished. That is one part, then there are other areas. We would do two in each, even if we do it on a constituency basis. Farm it out to private contractors. It can be done speedily. In 1985, after I got in, Sir, I pledged to do Hopewell Road and other tenantry roads. I was able to do Hopewell Road, which is of considerable length. Most tenantry roads are not as long and as complex as Hopewell Road. We did also in one year Downes Gap, Arthur Seat and Hopewell at the same time; two in one year. They were not easy, because Hopewell involves not only

a straight road, but then you had to do branches and do a circular piece. The same thing applies to Downes Gap. You had to go all around the Pond Bottom in Arthur Seat to do that, so it can be done.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Continue, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: A very important point is being made on the other side that a lot of the tenantry roads in Barbados have a proper base already. They are old time "white roads", as we used to call them. They probably just need scraping and putting down the surface on top, but not in every case.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please cut out the asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The road where I live, at Neils Plantation, was one of the worst roads in Barbados for about eight years or more, but they did not have to do anything with that other than scrape it and put down the surface, and it has remained in good order ever since then. I am submitting that most of them have a base and all you need to do is to go in and do the work efficiently.

I will say something. I want to be fair about the Opposition when they were the Government. They made an attempt with Lion Castle Road, they made an attempt with Duke's Tenantry and in those two areas they went in and put down marl fill and rolled it I went and I spoke to the contractor with the men driving the heavy equipment and asked them what they were doing. They said they were repairing the road. I told them they were not repairing the road, they were spreading down marl fill. They said that was what they were told to do and I said it was a waste of money and that as soon as we got heavy rains in September all would be washed away. I have been proven right. The only thing that has remained in Dukes are the concrete verges that they have alongside the road. The surface of the road has reverted to the state it was in, let us say, three or four years ago. Most of Lion Castle again is breaking away, because the rains have taken a toll on the marl fill.

That is a classic case of incompetence and squandermania. We have to go over that now and do them over again, spend money twice in two areas. I wish to give the House the assurance that this Government, committed as we are to efficiency and the proper expenditure of public funds, will not be half-doing anybody's roads so that the weather can then come and take a toll on it. The people in the country deserve to have good quality roads, roads that will last, and that is what they will get under this party's rural modernisation programme.

I just wanted to clear the air about the Democratic Labour Party having any policy for rural development, Sir. I passed the Manifesto over to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, he said he will find it. He has kept it, he put it beside him and he has quit the Chamber for the time being. It does not exist. There is nothing there, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has two minutes to conclude.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I wish, Sir, to conclude by saying that I hope never again that we have the kinds of shenanigans that we witnessed with the matter at Lower Estate. I remember, and the records of the House will show, that about 19771 took part in a debate in here where I read into the record the background to the pavilion, the expenditure, who put it there and all of that. I am not reaping up recriminations, we are going to draw a blind over that period and go forward. The Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central knows the role that he played prior to the elections. That is in the records already, we do not have to reap it up again. Let us go forward, let us agree today that the people of that area at Lower Estate Tenantry have been the victims of opportunism and deserve now to have their future social environment properly planned and developed, and this Resolution provides the basis for such future planning and development I am therefore pleased to support the Resolution and to compliment the Honourable Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary, in particular, in whose constituency the property is located for bringing this to Parliament so quickly so that we can get this matter out of the way and let it rest 3.35 p.m.

I am obliged to Your Honour.

Hon. R. N. GREENIDGE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make my small contribution to this debate. I begin, first of all, by highly commending the Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary and, indeed, all those concerned because I would be naive to think that the Minister alone and the Parliamentary Secretary alone had a hand in bringing this particular Resolution before this Honourable Chamber.

It is particularly gratifying to me to note the reason why this particular parcel of land is being acquired. It is the reason that touches me and this reason is outlined simply as "to implement an improvement scheme and to facilitate the purchase of lots by qualified tenants." The human element, Sir.

This tenantry has its origins somewhere in 1983. It means that a little boy born at Lower Estate in 1983 might just recently have completed the 11 plus exam. The point I am making is that inordinate delay should never had been. The delay cannot be laid at the feet of the tenant. That is quite clear. I believe the delay has to be in what the Honourable Member for St Michael North West referred to as the system or it has to be the landlord. It just cannot be tenants because the tenant is too eager and too zealous to have his hands on those papers. From 1983 until now he has been going to and fro and he has no conveyance. That is hard.

I believe that Government's initiative here shows the social conscience of Government It shows that Government is not prepared to allow the landlord *of* anyone else to hold qualified tenants to ransom. That long delay is much too long for those tenants at Lower Estate.lt also indicates that Government will sometimes have to acquire land from the landlord first in order to ensure that the tenants' rights are not trampled and the human pan of this particular acquisition is what really touches me.

When the Honourable Member *for* St George North was relating the history of the Lower Estate Tenantry I could empathise with him because having canvassed St. Philip North myself I can safely say to him and to this Honourable House I know tenants who are having the same problem, from 1982 until now and yet they have not yet had their conveyances. I can empathise with the Honourable Member for St George North.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would be the first person to praise those landlords who have conveyed the land to the tenants and who have performed all of their obligations under the Tenantry Freehold Purchase Act. But, Sir, there are a handful of landlords who are reluctant to have their lands subdivided for some reason or another. They say they do not have money, who are reluctant to put in roads, who are reluctant to mark out the boundaries in their tenantries and some of them even refuse to state the price to the tenants that the land is supposed to be sold at.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West is saying he has an identical problem. The point I am making is that there are some landlords, just a handful of them perhaps, who pretend not to understand their obligations under the Act Some landlords who refuse to cooperate and tfiere are some landlords, Sir, who are very very difficult to deal with. In the meantime, Sir, there are hundreds of tenants out there who have already paid the purchase price and some of them who are still holding the purchase price, perhaps under their beds, and today they do not have a conveyance.

I recall, Sir, one old lady who told me that she just wants to get her hands on her papers so that she can give it to her grandson and then she will die a happy woman. That is all she is waiting on, to leave this world with a piece of paper that carries her name, a paper that would say she has been here on this earth. Beside that piece of paper, the only one she may have to rely on is a death certificate. This means a lot to a lot of those tenants out there and we should not take it as being something trivial. Without that conveyance those tenants were told that they cannot build wall on the land. Some of the houses are old and rickety and the tenants are refusing to construct wall because they think it is illegal. They need to have the conveyances in their hands.

As the Honourable Member for St Thomas said, they cannot use that land as any real security because when they go to the bank or any other lending agency the bank needs to exchange that conveyance for the money. If they don't have it, then they don't have access to the loan. It is very hard on them.

In this particular instance at Lower Estate I see the landlord as being compensated for the land as it was worth before the roads were put in. So the landlord has no need to worry, nothing to be vexed about, because he did to put in any roads, any utilities and he is being paid for his land. I see Government here on a rescue mission. 3.45 p.m.

I see Government too as the only one bearing a loss in this particular instance because Government is the only one who improves and develops the land. It gets nothing in return but Government is on a rescue mission. Government is acting here as a facilitator to ensure that these tenants own a piece of this country. This, and the Act itself is a far-reaching piece of social engineering. It shows the serious manner in which Government views the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act. It is a serious part of Government's social policy.

Sir, in this instance where Government as part of its social and moral responsibility becomes a mediator in this land acquisition matter at Lower Estate, I have the greatest pleasure in supporting the Resolution.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, as I consider the purpose of this Resolution with its emphasis being to get rid of an anomalous situation at Lower Estate, I must compliment the Minister for having brought the Resolution. Even though he was brief and to the point as he introduced it, this Honourable House is required to consider that over time a number of forces have acted against the interest of small tenants in many tenantries in Barbados.

In my subjective view, if and when this Resolution is it would have gone a long way towards empowering the people of Lower Estate and I select the word "empowering" because even though the process of empowering of all Barbadians is still not yet complete in its wider sense, in my view the existing legislation governing relations between landlord and tenant on tenantries, particularly plantation tenantries, is the first step in the empowerment of our people.

As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, there are other stages of empowerment too such as the introduction and encouragement of entrepreneurship on a sustained basis such as the promotion of small business and such things that go beyond this Resolution. But I want to stress that in my view the Tenantries legislation which has made it possible for poor persons who earn the right not only to gain possessory title but real legal title, is important to these people especially if you consider the historical forces that would have worked against them.

Picture Mr. Speaker, the situation we had in the 1940s and 1950s where ordinary poor people, our parents and grandparents, toiled and literally slaved on plantation properties providing raw labour, often not only against the oppressive heat but also oppressive wages. Picture a situation where many of these people worked in the sugar fields with no proper sanitary facilities. Picture a situation where many of these people were virtually mortgaged to tenantries, their labour extracted and at the *end* of the day, prior to the passing of the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act these people still left this world and the most they would have had would have been a possessory title which had no real value in law so I welcome the Resolution as a motion designed to empowering the people of Lower Estate.

I was made aware of the peculiar problems that led to this legislation coming here. I have no difficulty in supporting it When the people of Lower Estate are properly empowered, they will not only become freehold owners of their land, but the anxiety that they would have experienced, especially those who were old and retired and had become pensioners, would very much had been assuaged for the reason that they could go on knowing that their labour and contribution to this country would not have been in vain.

I took particular note, Mr. Speaker, of the very excellent suggestion of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and Attorney General who indicated that part of this empowerment permitting these people to get conveyances in their hands - he called them plots and sale which is the language and vernacular of poor tenants - where these people could use these things as security for bank loans and use these bank loans further in the improvement of themselves.

I also took particular note, Mr. Speaker, that a large number of Honourable Members who spoke on this Resolution saw tenantries and tenantry developing as occupying a very meaningful part of a rural development programme. I took particular note that in his youthful enthusiasm the Honourable Member for St Lucy spoke not only out of turn but spoke not with the amount of conviction that members on this side can speak because even as he was maintaining an argument that their policy on rural development was so manifest that there was no need to put it in a manifesto, we on this side remain convinced that we were the ones through the passage of the Freehold Purchase Act that really started the process of empowerment on plantation tenantries.

We still have to be cautious, Sir, because even though it is true that tenantry development of Barbados is important and even though, in my view, tenantry development is going to play a very important part in Barbados over the next 20 to 25 years, especially the maintenance of existing tenantry roads and such like, we must also be made aware of the fact that even though the legislation is welcomed and has worked well, there are still recalcitrant landlords as the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, the Minister of Labour has indicated, who make life extremely difficult for the tenants. It is a fact that since a lot of landlords do not get a commercial price for their tenantries, they are extremely reluctant to cooperate.

Let me give you an example, Mr. Speaker. I know of an instance where there is a plantation with a tenantry. All the tenants have indicated an intention to buy. The plantation manager told them informally that his lawyers were such and such a law firm. These tenants immediately got some money together to buy their lots. Lo and behold, having assured the tenants that he would cooperate, after some 18 months that landlord on that plantation tenantry is still to instruct his lawyers. Luckily the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act has a provision that where landlords do not cooperate you can ask the Registrar of Tides to go around him and convey straight to the tenants. I can see either that being done in the future or land acquisitions being done.

I repeat, Sir, that in my experience the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act does permit the Registrar of Lands and Titles in instances where the landlord does not cooperate or cannot be found, to vest titles in tenants and this might have to become necessary in the future for the reason that there is another tenantry I know where, in anticipation of a windfall and a hugh amount of profit

out of the tenantry, this landlord went on and built the roads, developed the tenantry well but then by the time he had done that the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act had been passed on the plantation tenantry limiting the price he can charge and he for 9 years has frustrated the legitimate aspirations of the tenants by not conveying. I am going to ensure by means that both involve the Registrar of Lands and the Ministry of Housing, to properly guarantee that tenants on that particular tenantry receive, in the words of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, their plot and their sale.

There are other instances too where some landlords have not only been recalcitrant, but they have tried to defy the legislation by sometimes charging commercial prices for plots in plantation tenantries acting as though they were unaware of the fact that there is a strong element of control of the sale price of these pieces of land in their tenantries. This Parliament must be made aware of these problems because I anticipate that in the future, as this Government aims to get its rural development programme going, this matter will return and I can assure this House that an aspect of the development of our rural policy will be developing people in rural areas. We have clear ideas as to how we intend to push our rural development programme, Mr. Speaker, and we are going to ensure that nothing stands in the way of the legitimate aspirations of those who occupy tenantries as they seek to take this business of empowerment to its rightful place in this country. 3.55 p.m.

I must say I was very heartened that all Members who spoke in the debate recognised both that this has implications for the development of countryside districts in Barbados and even though the Honourable Member for St. John who has perfected the skill of saying something that does not coincide with his beliefs, always, on every occasion of making a speech, not consonant with his true desires, and making a speech not aware of the fact that it is in conflict with his true feelings down in his heart, even though the Member for St. John has been saying that this piece of legislation, namely the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act, is not as far-reaching as we on this side believe, even he was able to recognise that the neglect that he inflicted on St. John for the last 8 years cries out now for some treatment. He is coming to us now in a sort of benign way saying he wants some at Society, he wants some up in Pool, he wants some in parts of Todds which are in St John and things like that And even the Honourable Member for St. John is able to recognise that a Resolution such as this is quite in order, notwithstanding any reservations he may have to the wording of the legislation and notwithstanding any reservations he may have in relation to the manner in which the legislation was worded.

I want to commend all those Members who have taken part, particularly the new Members on this side. I cannot but help hearing the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who might well be advised to listen some more, before flying into the race at a time when the race is fairly swift as he is merely like a tortoise trying to take pan in a race of sprinters.

With those words, Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, in winding up I would like to congratulate the Honourable Member for St. George North in his presentation on this Resolution. Members on that side have made some very heavy weather of the fact that I introduced this Resolution and the Parliamentary Secretary dealt with it at length. I would like to remind Honourable Members of a fact which they are fully aware of, that even in the British House of Commons, Junior Ministers at times introduce Resolutions of this nature and it was part of our strategy, taking into consideration the fact that the Honourable Member *for* St. George North is the Parliamentary Secretary with special responsibility for Housing and also that Lower Estate fells within his constituency, for the Honourable Member *for* St. George North to present this Resolution. But following the traditions in this House where it was felt that a person would have to be a Minister in order to introduce a Resolution, I took the opportunity, simply with the agreement of Members on this side of introducing the Resolution and allowing the Honourable Member for St. George North to speak and he did an excellent job at it

Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat surprised when I stand here and listen to Honourable Members on that side. I do not want to go into any detail with respect to anything they have said but I am somewhat surprised at the shadow spokesman on housing, the Honourable Member *for* St. Michael North West, when in dealing with this particular Resolution he seems to be of the view that when Government is coming to the House with a Resolution of this nature, they should be coming with some package whereby there should be some policy on housing, there should be some policy with respect to recreation facilities, there should be some policy with respect to the provision of playing fields and pavilions, roads and things of that sort.

Mr. Speaker, I think that Honourable Members on that side have failed to grapple with the real purpose for bringing this Resolution before this House. I believe that when the Honourable Member for St. John got up to speak he should first have told Members why Honourable Members on that side failed to follow-up what the Barbados Labour Party Government, prior to 1986 did, when under section 3 of the Tenantries Development Order, we set in train what we are witnessing here today.

Mr. Speaker, the real reason for bringing this Resolution is twofold in the sense, as Honourable Members on this side have already alluded, the failure of a landlord to respect legislation which has been passed in this Parliament - a landlord who knowing that it was his duty to sell land at 10 cents a square foot under the Tenantries Freehold Purchase Act, was seeking to sell land at market price. And secondly the real reason why we are here now is because the Members on that side, during the last administration, failed to bring this Resolution when it should have been brought

Mr. Speaker, when you hear Members on this side speak about recalcitrant landlords, I think that the time has come when we as a Government must address this refusal by landlords and plantation owners in respecting laws which have been passed in this Parliament. And Members on that side have alluded to cases in their own constituencies and Members on this side have alluded to cases in their own constituencies and yet we have got situations where, day after day, repeatedly, landlords and plantation owners are flouting the laws which have been passed in here.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to recommend to my colleagues, I think the time has come when we must pass some son of legislation whereby we will be able to deal with these people; whereby plantation owners and landlords who refuse to sell their land to qualified tenants, especially with respect to the plantation tenantries, that the legislation will require some penalty to the landlords. In addition to that they would have to pay all the legal costs of the tenants, they will have to pay all the surveying costs and all of the expenses pertaining to the transaction. I think, until that is done landlords will be able to flout the laws which have been passed in these Chambers.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to delay this House any further but I just want to deal briefly with one or two points which have been mentioned by Members on that side.

The Honourable Member for St. John should know better when he is talking about tenantries. When he is talking about a policy for tenantries he should know that his administration, the last administration, committed this country to a policy whereby the tenantry roads were being fixed under an arrangement with the Venezuelan Government. I did not hear him mention it I did not hear him meiition anything about the collapse of that programme. I did not hear the Honourable Member for St. John and I think it is dishonest on the part of any representative to come here and make statements like the Honourable Member for St John ...

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I precisely said that the road at Clifton Hall...

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the word 'dishonest'.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let me hear your point of order.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON:.... that the road at Clifton Hall, St John was not completed because the programme came to an end in 1991.1 precisely made that point. 4.05 p.m.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, what programme? What programme is the Honourable Member for St John telling us about? At least you should tell us about the programme. You should let us know that the Venezuelan project has collapsed. You should let us know that in the constituency of St. Andrew where I come from that no tenantry roads have been fixed during the past two and a half years. You should let us know that in this administrative year we only have enough funds now with the collapse of the Venezuelan Programme to fix two tenantry roads. I think that you owe it to this House as someone who sought to lead this country to let Honourable Members especially new Members of this House know that. Wherever I go as the Minister responsible for Public Works, I am hearing Honourable Members on this side and on that side telling me that they have 20 tenantry roads in their constituency to fix. You and the Honourable Member for St. John...

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member please desist from interrupting the House.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: As the chief architect of policy on that side and who sought to be the chief architect of policy for this whole country God forbid, he is trying to make it appear as though this administration does not have a policy on tenantry roads.

With respect to the Honourable Member for St Michael South Central, I really do not see anything that he has said that I really should pay any serious attention to. But I would just like to mention and I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church West dealt with it when he was questioning and waiting to hear the Minister say what price would be paid for this land and he knows the procedure. The land has first got to be acquired and then the question of the price will be dealt with at a later stage. The Honourable Member for St Michael South Central knows that procedure. Even if, Mr. Speaker, we had known the price, whatever transpired before

this acquisition had a lot to do with the landlord because the landlord sought to charge the tenants, not 10 cents per square foot but the market value, and that is why we are here.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to his questioning about what is happening in regards to the other lands in Lower Estate, that will be dealt with in accordance with our Sites and Services Programme as set out in our Manifesto which is seeking to ensure that a house spot is available to anyone in Barbados who can afford to buy it

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that there is anything more of note that needs any comment from me. With those words, I move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ORDER NO. 3 - TO MOVE THE SECOND READING OF THE LAND ACQUISITION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1994

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, from time to time it becomes necessary for the Minister of Housing and Lands to invoke the provisions of Section 3(1) of the Land Acquisition Act to acquire land which states: "Where it appears to the Minister that any land is likely to be required for any purpose for which the Crown is authorized by any Act to acquire land or for any other purpose which in the opinion of the Minister for public purposes, a notification of that effect shall be published in three successive issues of the Official Gazette and of a daily newspaper in this island under the hand of the Permanent Secretary to the Minister".

Mr. Speaker, there are occasions whereby land has been acquired by Government and after the acquisition it is found that the land is more than what Government sought to acquire for that particular purpose. There is a question of interpretation with respect to Section 28 of the Land Acquisition Act which reads as follows: "It shall be lawful for the Minister at anytime to sell and dispose of all superfluous lands acquired under this Act which are not required for the purpose for which the same were so acquired". The operative words there are "to sell and dispose". It shall be lawful for the Minister at anytime to s&ll and dispose.

Mr. Speaker, there are some practitioners who feel that to sell and dispose give you the right both to sell and to dispose which would mean that you would be able to sell the land in some cases and in other cases you would be able to sell or enter into an agreement by licence or otherwise. There is a school of thought that tends to think that this provision does not give you that right

Mr. Speaker, the difficulty arose on December 22, 1988 when Quality Motors of Spring Garden Highway offered to purchase from the Ministry of Housing and Lands Crown lands in that area. The parcel measuring 5076 square metres was required to facilitate a major expansion programme which they had planned. The area represents a residual portion of 19 736 square metres of land acquired under the provision of the Land Acquisition Act, Cap. 228 for the purpose of road development At the time when Quality Motors had decided that they wanted to purchase the land, there was no problem with respect to Section 28. But subsequently Quality Motors changed their minds and decided that they wanted to lease the particular 5076 square metres of land. The agreements were prepared and the parties were about to sign the lease when it was pointed out at the particular point in time or rather when the differences in opinion as to whether *or* not Section 28 should be construed as giving the power of the Crown to lease the land arose.

As a result, this amending legislation was formulated. It has already had the blessing of the Attorney General and also, Mr. Speaker, in an effort to widen the powers of the Crown, the Ministry of Housing and Lands in consultation with the Attorney General propose in this particular legislation to widen the Minister's powers not only for the disposal of the superfluous lands, but also to include the power to grant a licence or let into such land without the need to obtain further parliamentary approval. It was also considered that in respect of each financial year the Minister shall cause to be laid before both Houses of Parliament a statement of all dealings, transactions and dispositions with respect to land which have been effected by him without prior approval of Parliament.

The proposed Bill will enable the Ministry of Housing and Lands to carry out a variety of transactions relating to superfluous land and there are other lands apart from this particular one. Apart from facilitating those persons *or* agencies desirous of entering into transactions, the proposed change in the Act has implications for widening the revenue base of the Crown. In this respect, there are a number of idle lands which we could lease *or* dispose of in some other way apart from sale in order to bring some revenue to the Crown. 4.15 p.m.

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I should like to second this Bill. From time to time Government has to acquire land in order to further develop this country. Sometimes the land acquired becomes superfluous because the purpose of the intention has been served and a lot of land has been left over. Often it is left to the Minister to sell the superfluous land. This amendment will give the Minister the option not only to sell the land but also to lease it One can think of many parcels of land throughout Barbados - for example, lands on the highways - that are left after road development which Government might very well have to come back from time to time to lease to many businesses and individuals in this country.

Over the last $2Y_2$ years, Mr. Speaker, there were over 150 acquisitions made by Government, and in that two year period there was over $3 million that was paid out by the last Government for acquisitions. We can cite cases in the next two years where a number of acquisitions which Government will have to enter into. A look at a major acquisition, the Bridgetown by-pass, we will have to examine this quite carefully, during the coming months we will have to come back here to examine the acquisitions of land in Bridgetown.

There are also other highways, in Christ Church, the improvement of Highway 2A, we have to acquire land to improve the highway there. There are also land acquisitions to be done to improve the South Coast project, so that over the next year this Parliament will be asked to approve the acquisition of a number of parcels of land across Barbados. We will also be able, through this amending Bill, to give the Minister a leeway to lease the land rather than having to sell the land, as is the case at this point in time. I believe that through this amendment the Ministry of Housing and Lands will be able to enter into contractual arrangements to lease lands, to sell lands and to raise revenue. In the final analysis Parliament will be given an account of all leases and sales of these arrangements every financial year.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Speaker, I represent a constituency in which there is a problem with land, especially in the Parish Land area. I do not propose to speak on that at length unless you have to ask me to come back in line, but I wish to make the general point that in looking at land we need to take great care so that we do not have a problem of coming here again with this kind of Bill we are looking at now. I believe, with our scarce resources, we need to pay great attention to how we are going to use them.

We are hearing people making all kinds of claims on land and everybody is looking after their own interest. I believe that in the national interest we need to look at the utilisation of lands and give it great priority. There are people who want land for house spots. Every day I am getting calls from people who are desperate and who want somewhere to put their houses. I believe we are going to have to give great consideration to house spots. It is a great problem and people are crying out for house spots. I do not want to see people on the streets, as we see in so many countries, even in Trinidad next door.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am trying to follow the Honourable Member *for* Christ Church East, but how does the point relate to the Bill before us?

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: I am making the point, Sir, in terms of use of land when you have superfluous land. I am saying that we need therefore to look at the utilisation of land so that this superfluous element will not come back to haunt us again. We cannot look at this measure in isolation, we have to look at it within the context of a whole study of the use of land in Barbados. We have had the talk about the use of land for golf, we have had the talk about the use of land for business development, we talk about using land *for* road development, we talk about the sewerage project and about using land for all kinds of purposes. I think in the national interest we need to find out where the need is greatest. There is a great need for land to be used for house spots and whatever we do we have to carry out a study on the utilisation of land in Barbados so that five years down the road we do not find that we have the wrong use for the land.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, just a few points on this matter. Certainly the Opposition will not be opposing this amendment to the Act, except that we do have some concerns about the new Section 29, the first being that in large measure wherever provisions like this appear that Ministries are notoriously negligent, and Ministers, in providing the necessary reports in a timely fashion. I can think of many instances, even with recent legislation, in which the necessary reports mandated by the legislation have not been laid or provided in time. Since this is the case, and to my certain knowledge is not about to improve, even though the new Government will tell us otherwise, and every Government demits office in this country with a trail of reports yet to be laid and a series of ministerial actions mandated by the legislation left undone, perhaps it would have been better had the legislation contemplated that the Minister could advertise in the Official Gazette or a local newspaper that he proposes to grant a licence for such lands and give anybody who may wish to object a month or so to object

If he were acting under Section 28, in other words if he wanted to grant a licence or if he wanted to do any

of the things which are set out in 28(a) or (b): "grant by way of licence or letting any easement, profit or right in respect of any such lands;" that he could indicate beforehand or lay some kind of order which would be subject to negative resolution in Parliament, so that the intention of the Minister to dispose of the land in accordance with the Act would be known to Parliament beforehand. 4.25 p.m.

In this particular scenario, not that one wishes to anticipate a situation of impropriety, because certainly I don't anticipate it now; but a Minister could very well acquire land with an ulterior motive in mind, particularly a motive which could under Section 28(a) and (b) grant a licence to some person in respect of a portion of it and the Parliament of Barbados would not know about any of those dealings, transactions or dispositions with respect to superfluous land for which prior approval of Parliament is not necessary until three months after the close of the financial year.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I think that the Honourable Member should look at the actual amendment with respect to section 29. I would not like to be too facetious by saying that...

Mr. SPEAKER: Could you make your point of elucidation, please.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Yes. With respect to licences being in the Minister's mind. The point I am trying to make is that under section 29, the amended section 29, it states that in respect of each financial year. I do not know if you are addressing yourself to that amendment. It deals with the same question you are concerned about

> "The Minister shall cause to be laid before both Houses of Parliament a statement of all dealings, transactions and dispositions with respect to superfluous land."

I think that this was in the minds of the person who drafted the legislation at the particular point in time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Could I ask the Honourable Member for St. Andrew, what is your point of elucidation because the Honourable Member for St John is clearly stating that the Minister would have brought his measure to the House after.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: No. The point of elucidation which I wanted to bring related to his statement that a Minister... What I gleaned from what he said was that a Minister could grant a licence or release the land and Parliament would not know anything about it

I don't think he addressed this particular pan of the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: As far as I see it, you have not really in anyway made the point any clearer.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Let the Honourable Member *for* St. John deal with that

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you very much for that intervention.

The first point, perhaps, I should make again is that notwithstanding what is clause 29 and the intention of it, you will find that the exception in Barbados is a situation in which the Minister lays any such report within the financial year. That is not the rule. There is no legislation which exists in Barbados which mandates a Board or a Department other than the Accountant General's Office to lay a report in which that report is ever laid in time.

That is the first point I am making. Rather than have a situation where the report should be laid, even though it is within that financial year, after the transaction has taken place, whether it is the granting of the licence or letting any easement, profit or right occur. Rather than let that happen, if you really want this thing to be efficient and you want the public to know, it perhaps could have been a better amendment if, where the Minister proposes to dispose of land by way of granting a licence or anything set out in 28(a) or (b) *for* which the prior approval of Parliament is not necessary that the Minister would be required to advertise in the Official Gazette and within a local newspaper that he is proposing to grant such a licence and the purpose for which it is granted, or giant by way of licence, any easement, profit or right In other words that would have to happen before he does it and that you will give people a month or so in which to object, if they wish to object, to that proposed course of action.

The alternative would be that the Minister could indicate that the superfluous land would be dealt with in a specific way by Order subject to negative resolution which would not delay the process unless somebody objected to it within the time prescribed for objection, by laying of the Order.

The point I want to make is and I don't wish to impute anything to you because you and I know better than that. I am saying that this amendment could be conceivably used by a Minister to acquire land for one purpose

where he has an intention or hidden agenda in respect of the superfluous land and Parliament would be unaware of that until the jeport is laid after he has either granted the licence or disposed of it either by way of sale, lease, exchange or grant. Therefore, that is just a legitimate concern we are raising with legislation of this type. The acquisition of land is something that is very important and for which the rights of the owner of the land should be very well protected. Certainly, this does not affect compensation so we are not arguing that

For the purposes of accountability, knowing how our Parliamentary system works, knowing the level of inefficiency, the failure of departments to provide these reports in time in nearly every area of government it would be perhaps better had the Minister considered that there would be a more efficient and faster way for this to be done which led to accountability and transparency. That is the only concern we are raising and we want to ensure it forms pan of the public record in Barbados.

We will support this, or give it, I should say, critical support on the understanding that we would have preferred that the public of Barbados would have had prior knowledge of the manner in which the Minister is proposing to grant the licence or whatever in respect of those superfluous lands.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am going to speak on this Bill very briefly. Obviously, it has my support but I must make the point that it is an improvement on the existing legislation. You will find that section 28 of the Land Acquisition Act speaks only of the selling of superfluous land by the Minister and such land can be sold without Parliament's approval under existing legislation. So that Parliament is not taken into account at all and, in fact, in my experience in this House and outside of this House, I have known the Government to have acquired land and then sold off to supporters of the particular party substantial areas of this land and they have made a packet out of it

The debates in this House will reflect my angry intervention at that event and I refer specifically to the acquisition of the Oraeme Hall Plantation by the then Democratic Labour Party Government. What happened is that they acquired the land, used part of the plantation lands for agricultural purposes and that was the purpose for which it was acquired and then the land that is now known as Goodwood Park was sold off to a group, some of whom had spent substantial monies in my constituency to make sure that I did not win in 1971. They merely lost their money. Some of them have since left the Democratic Labour Party and are now the bagmen of the NDP. 4.35 p.m.

I have a knowledge of this matter and it was a very bitter matter. In fact, I spoke about it not only in Parliament but outside of Parliament and challenged the people at the time that if I was saying anything wrong, to take me to the law courts, but it was a fact. It was unfair to the Gooding family. It did not matter to me that the Goodings were white and I suppose that was the only excuse they could use, but it was unfair in my view in law because the purchasers who got the benefit were equally white, but they were bagmen of the Democratic Labour Party in those days. When I challenged it and asked why it was not brought to the House, I was told that there was no necessity since it had come under the Land Acquisition Act and had been vested, I think, in the National Housing Corporation so there was no necessity to bring it before this House.

Now, we have to move beyond that stage. I believe, therefore, the new section 28(c) is an improvement on the existing legislation because if the Government has acquired land and is seeking to dispose of that land by sale, lease, exchange, or grant, Parliament must now know. In the case of Graeme Hall and Goodwood Paik that people made some millions out of, Parliament was never told at all.

Mr. Speaker, in any event, I would wish to suggest to the Government that when the Ministry has had the time, that along with the Ministry of the Attorney General they look at really a major overhaul of the Crown Lands Vesting Act and the Land Acquisition Act to simplify the parliamentary process of acquisition and sale, while building in the checks and balances, some of which the Honourable Member for St John spoke, which must necessarily be there.

There is a recent decision - when I say recent I mean within the last 2 or 3 years, I believe, of either the House of Lords in England or the Privy Council - which says that where a Government has acquired land and has no further use for that land, its first obligation is to give the persons from whom they acquired the land the choice of re-purchasing that land or returning it to them. In that particular case the land had been acquired for something like 50 odd years from a company which was still in existence and the Government had not used it for the purpose for which it was acquired and sought to dispose of it to someone else and the House of Lords held that they did not have that choice and must therefore restore the land.

I am making the point here that we should look at that because I believe, in good faith, sometimes Government acquires land for one purpose and then realises that it does not need the land, or it does not need all of

that land and it seems unfair to me to the citizen that he should not have the choice of whether he should still continue to own a bit of the land.

Graeme Hall stands out like a soar thumb in my mind and it is one part of my parliamentary history that I regretted seeing. I was very new in Parliament and I faced the barrage of those days of the then Right Honourable Member for St. *John*, a powerful debater, a skilful debater, who make you feel as though you were doing something wrong.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: The then Right Honourable Member for St. John. But I was sure that I was on good ground. I believe we have reached the stage where, particularly since our Constitution has written various fundamental rights, that we should try to create the real civil society in which social justice is put into concrete terms in areas such as these. While I consider the legislation an improvement, I would still hope to see us go even further in the House look in a substantive way at how we can improve the whole process of acquisition.

Now, Honourable Members are aware that that process is bedeviled very often by the time within which the compensation is negotiated and paid, and for various reasons. Obviously there are still long outstanding cases where land has been acquired and compensation has not been made. I would hope that the Government, as the economy improves, would find the money to pay any outstanding claims for compensation under the Land Acquisition Act and that we can find some way as well of speeding up the process where people can get their compensation.

A lot of negotiation now goes on between the Land Valuation Board, I think they are called - the group who deals with valuations - and the persons whose land is acquired. Sometimes one might be waiting for a comment from the Ministry of Agriculture or, a comment from some other Ministry, and I am afraid that since the subject is not really the subject of other Ministries, they do not often see the necessity to be as speedy as the Ministry which has responsibility for compensation.

I support the Bill, Sir, and hope that we will see even more substantive amendments. I must comment as well that I am pleased that annual statements are going to be made but I have myself some reservations about the practice of annual statements. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas and myself were two of the members of the Public Accounts Committee and we have had the experience of having to deal with a matter pertaining to a statutory board that should have laid its report, the St Joseph Hospital Board, and we have not had that report We had to enquire and we were told that it was coming and never came and several financial years have passed. I believe that is bad. If we are to be accountable as the supreme institution in whom the people have trust we must make sure that their reports are there.

In fact, the St Joseph Hospital became the subject of a very substantive debate led by the Honourable Member for the City, the Deputy Prime Minister, and none of the reports were there. The only time I heard the reports were ready was when the elections were called. I was told that if the elections were not on, the reports would have been before the House. Well, Sir, I found that one difficult to believe. That was for the purpose of placating the electorate but the electorate was not placated by such statements.

Sir, I would urge this Minister - he has a very bad example before him of the former Minister who did not ensure that his Board brought the report In this case this Minister would have no board but he certainly has civil servants and there are disciplinary codes for dealing with them as well. I believe myself that if I was in charge of a board, and I am on a board, and I have said to them already that the reports had better be here because they are not embarrassing me. But if a board fails flagrantly and without just excuse to come and bring a report to the House, I believe the Minister should get rid of the Board and finally, if the Minister still cannot get it done, I believe that the Prime Minister should get rid of the Minister, and still if he cannot get it done, then I think we in Parliament should get rid of the Prime Minister. I believe that is how accountability runs.

I have said to the Board I now head that I want all of the reports laid on time, if not, I want a statement so that I can go to the House and do the public's duty and explain to members that the reason why this report is late is X and I ask for the House's indulgence because if not, we are going to find ourselves in the area of rumour and not substantive fact but when the facts are there then you can speak on them. I urge the Minister, he is binding himself seriously here and I hope to see that he will set the example as a result of my experiences of what happens with boards and the bringing of reports before this House.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, before I formally move that this Bill do now pass, I am particularly impressed by the comments made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. I certainly was not aware that members on that side had taken advantage of superfluous lands in the past. I would like to give this House the assurance that very shortly a further

amendment will be brought in this House in terms of the amendment which was brought in the House of Commons which would make sure that when land is acquired for a particular purpose, and it is not needed *for* that purpose that the person from whom it is acquired will be given the opportunity to acquire it And I would hope that the Honourable Member for St. John will support that amending Bill when it comes before this House. With these few comments, Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill be read a second time. 4.45 p.m.

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

On the motion of Hon. G.W. PAYNE seconded by Hon. DA.C. SIMMONS, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee, Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called and passed. Clause 2 was

called.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I just want to make a point very clear in this debate because I do not wish the Minister to feel that we are not clear in our mind about what we want. In the second reading of the Bill, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West made a valid point. That point does not relate to superfluous land and I think you have to make a distinction. The Privy Council case...

I am very grateful to him because in the course of our parliamentary conference I remember this point came up. I could not remember the source of it but I had read on that decision and that related to the entire land that was acquired.

Now, there is a difference between that and superfluous land. If the Government does not use the entire piece, then certainly it would make sense for it to be offered back to the owner because one assumes that the purpose for which the land was acquired has failed even though the question of purpose is something that is up in the air. But with superfluous land that is something different altogether and I do not think that I would support any attempt for the superfluous land to be be offered back to the owner because that would not be sensible in my view.

I only wanted to make that clarification but I agree and certainly if you want to move in such an amendment now we would support it with regard to the land as a whole where it is acquired, that it should be offered back to the owner first. I think that is a fair principle and is something which we would give support to. I assume this is only to deal with superfluous land and our complaint is not about that. In fact we are not complaining at all. We are only saying that perhaps it would have been better had the Minister given notice that he was going to grant a licence or do whatever he wanted to do and if somebody wanted to object they could object and then it would be a matter for his determination. At least the public would have an idea before hand rather than after the fact.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Following upon what the Honourable Member for St John has said I take his point relevant to the superfluous land but the suggestion I made with respect to the amendment which I will ensure will follow very shortly related to the entire land and not to the superfluous land. I beg that clause 2 stand part.

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

Clause 3 was called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. G. W. PAYNE, seconded by Hon. DA.C. SIMMONS the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Land Acquisition (Amendment) Act, 1994.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday 8th November at 11.00 o.clock in the morning.

Speaking on the adjournment, Sir, I wish to inform Your Honour that both sides of the House are agreed that on the 8th November we will have full debate on the Throne Speech. There are two Resolutions of which notice was given today which we hope to do as soon as the House is re-assembled on the 8th and then for the balance of the day we wish to have full debate on the Throne Speech.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to second that

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 4.55 p.m.

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