
THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION, 1994-99

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, March 12, 1996

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at **11.20 a.m.** on Tuesday, March 12, 1996.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, B.A., Dip. Ed., (Speaker)
His Honour R. D. MARSHALL, (Deputy Speaker)
Rt. Hon. L. E. **SANDIFORD**, B.A., M.A., @con.),

J.P.

Mr. H. **DeB. FORDE**, **Q.C.**, **M.A.**, **LL.B.**
Mr. B. M. **TAITT**, B.A. (Hons.), M.P.A., **LL.B.**
(Hons.)

Rt. Hon. **O. S. ARTHUR**, **M.Sc.** (Econ.), (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs and Minister for the Civil Service)

Hon. D. A. C. **SIMMONS**, **Q.C.**, **LL.M.** (Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs)

Mr. D. J. H. **THOMPSON**, **LL.B.** (Hons.) (Leader of the Opposition)

Hon. Sir **HAROLD St. JOHN**, **Q.C.**, **LL.B.**

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

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

Mr. J. **O. TUDOR**, J.P.

Hon. R. C. **EASTMOND**, J.P., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., **LL.B.** (Hons.), LEC (Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)

Dr. R. C. **HAYNES**, M.B., **Ch.B.**, F.R.C.P. @din.)

Mr. D. **CARTER**

Hon. R. N. **GREENIDGE**, B.A., **LL.B.**, (Minister of **Labour**, Community Development and Sports)

Mr. J. M. **EDGHILL**

Mr. F. J. **STUART**, B.A., **LL.M.**

Mr. **W. C. C. CALLENDER**, J.P., B.A., Dip. Ed., **B.Sc.** (Chairman of Committees)

Mr. H. F. **LASHLEY**

Mr. D. St. **E. KELLMAN**

Hon. Miss H. E. **THOMPSON**, **LL.B.** (Minister of Health and the Environment)

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Friday, 23rd February and Tuesday, 27th February, 1996.

Hon. D. A. C. **SIMMONS**: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes of **23rd** and 27th February, 1996 have been circulated and I move that the Minutes be taken as read.

Rt. Hon. **O. S. ARTHUR**: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to report that I am in receipt of the Accounts and Statements prepared by the Accountant General for the months of December 1995 and January 1996.

PAPERS

Hon. D. A. C. **SIMMONS**: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Report on the Audit of the Accounts of the National Insurance Fund for the year ending December 31, 1992.

I am also commanded to lay the Estimates of Expenditure and the Schedules of Personal Emoluments for 1996-97.

I am further commanded to lay the Senate and House of Assembly (Remuneration and Allowances of Members) Order, 1996.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the Appropriation Bill, 1996.

I beg also to give notice of a Resolution to approve the Senate and House of Assembly (Remuneration and Allowances of Members) Order, 1996.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to move that the Appropriation **Bill**, 1996 be read a first time.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to second that.

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

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, in December, 1992 the Government of Barbados retained **Booker** Tate to advise and to assist in planning all aspects of rehabilitation of the sugar industry. As part of that exercise, a five-year operational plan was produced which **proposed** two options on the industry's capacity, namely Options A and B, with capacities of 75 000 tonnes and 65 000 tonnes respectively. Government and the Barbados Agricultural Management Company selected Option B, which included provision for up to 3 000 acres of diversified agriculture within the industry and the operation of Andrews and **Portvale** only. Government's decision to proceed with a 65 000 tonne industry was **confirmed** in the Government of Barbados Development Plan 1993 to the year 2000, at page 190:

"To increase gradually the volume of sugar production from an **annual** level of 50,000 tonnes to 65,000 tonnes by the middle of the Plan period."

In January of 1994 **Booker** Tate was appointed to manage the BAMC **and** to implement Option B, which involved the closure of Bulkeley after the 1995 crop. An agreement was also entered into between the Caribbean Development Bank, the BAMC and the Government to provide some of the finance for Option B under **Booker Tate's** management of the industry.

At the end of 1994 the BAMC Board was substantially changed and in March of 1995 the Board requested a review of Options, to determine whether Bulkeley could remain in operation as a viable alternative to the two factory options selected in the Five-Year Plan for the industry. A report on the cost of Bulkeley's continuation was presented to the BAMC Board and was reviewed by the Ministries of Agriculture and Finance. The BAMC Board accepted at that time the two factory options as the least cost solution and these conclusions were considered by the Minister of Finance in early May 1995.

At a subsequent meeting between the Ministries of Finance and Agriculture and Rural Development on 22nd May, 1995, the BAMC management was asked to advise Government on whether the closure of **Bulkeley** would prejudice the ability for the BAMC to expand its production economically to Option A at 75 000 tonnes in the future. The Minister of Finance indicated that he did not wish the closure of Bulkeley, as approved in the 65 000 tonnes option in 1993, to close the door on a potential increment to 75 000 tonnes. He requested that this be reviewed and a review entitled "The 75 000 Tonnes Sugar Option: A Summary Report" was presented on 23rd May, 1995.

At a later meeting between Government and the Sugar Industry Supervisors Association, alternative cost proposals for the rehabilitation of Bulkeley were further submitted by SISA. On July 31, 1995 in a letter Ref. M.P. 7003/18/6 the Director of Finance and Economic Affairs advised that Cabinet had taken the decision that Bulkeley Factory should continue in operation at least for a further two years. He also instructed BAMC to revise its business plan, giving particular consideration to the financial implications of the consequential changes arising from the Cabinet decision.

At the BAMC Board meeting on 28th August, 1995, the Board was advised of a policy directive by Government that a minimum production level of 75 000 tonnes of sugar should be targeted on the basis that Bulkeley would remain open indefinitely. This is now the **BAMC's** management objective.

On 30th August, 1995 BAMC management was invited to meet with the Director of Finance and other officials of Government to discuss these issues. Management was asked by the Ministry of Finance to revise its operating plan and to produce data to the Ministry of Finance on the financial implications of a 75 000 tonnes three factory option, with a summary of previous options also being made available, the intention being to facilitate an overview of the information by the Ministry of Finance. In consequence, and with the Board's agreement, management has undertaken the production

of a revised Five-Year Plan for the sugar industry and the industry, Sir, is now operating upon the basis of that plan.

ORDERS OF THE DAY SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the following Standing Orders be suspended for the balance of the day: Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is now the order of the day.

ORDER NO. 3 – THE POLICE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1996

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, this is a short amending Bill. The amendments which are proposed in the two substantive clauses....
11.30 a.m.

The Bill, in fact, has 2 clauses; but they are 2 substantial clauses that go to the heart of the amendments. These are designed to allow for the recruitment into the Force of special constable who might have served in special constabularies of the Police Force and who may have passed their 30th year. Honourable Members will know that you must be under the age of 30 to be enlisted as a member of the Police Force.

Over time, several governments have seen the need for recruiting additional personnel through the provision of special constables to assist the regular police in the execution of a variety of duties. Having regard to the existing legislation which includes recruitment after the age of 30, we have recognised that there could be a difficulty where, for example, a special constable was recruited as a special constables at the age of 28 and by the time he wanted to enlist into the Force he was age 31. So that the existing provision would deny that person who may indeed have the potentiality for development as a good police officer from becoming one. So we have brought this amendment to allow for special constables, not general recruits, who are in the special constabulary and at the date of subsequent enlistment in the Force may have passed the age of 30.

The first special constables were recruited into the constabulary on June 24, 1992 and currently we have

approximately 220 special constables. I think it was, 16 special constables at December last year who were, eventually enlisted into the Force; but the policy of the Government, as reflected through the Manifesto of 1994, is for the integration of special constables into the police force to the extent that we see the special constabulary as the training ground, and for want of a better expression, the catchment area from which to draw for enlistment into the Force.

Mr. Speaker, that really takes care of Clause 2A of the Bill. Clause 2B of the Bill deals with the basic qualifications for enlistment into the Force. We are providing that persons who become policemen in the future should have a basic academic qualification of at least 3 subjects in CXC grades 1, 2 or 3 or the equivalent in the GCE Ordinary Level or some similar examination. The General Service requires those qualifications as minimum qualifications for entry into the general public service and we see no reason why the Police Force should have an inferior qualification for entry because we are trying to standardise.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, more and more I think you will find that Government is going to require such types of basic academic qualification for admission to other sections of the Service. Following the Smith Enquiry into Escapes from Glendairy Prisons when Oliver, Bradshaw and Roberts escaped a couple of years ago the enquiry that was carried out by Mr. Justice Smith recommended for prison officers that the qualifications should also be increased.

I want to take the opportunity to just mention information for the public without going too far from the Bill, because I am inundated with requests from people to become prison officers but don't have the qualifications. Let me just explain that the basic qualifications to become a prison officer is 3 CXCs or "0" levels. Notwithstanding that rule, if a person has a general level of proficiency and he considers himself to be eligible, he can be made to sit an examination to determine his basic competence. It is therefore possible to become a prison officer with the basic academic qualifications of 3 CXCs or 3 "0" levels or alternatively to have passed the examination on basic proficiency which is set by the Civil Service.

Recruitment. The Minister cannot recruit and it is a waste of time for anybody calling or coming and asking me to give them a job as a policeman or a prison officer. The recruitment process for the Prisons is that there is a Committee of the Chief Personnel Officer or his deputy, the Permanent Secretary or his nominee in the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Superintendent of Prisons or her nominee. The Minister as such has no direct role.

I was just explaining that **there** is a similarity between the recruitment process in the Police Force and the Prisons. I am grateful to the Honourable Member for St. Michael West for his ready wit that allowed me to escape from the Police by putting all in one,

Mr. Speaker, I wish to take the opportunity, because one can never be sure what will happen next week, to mention a few matters about the Royal Barbados Police Force in general. It was unfortunate, during my attendance at the Council of Legal Education in St. Lucia that a headline appeared, on or **about** February 5 - I **think** it was the *Advocate Newspaper*. I saw it when I came back - "Crime Wave", attributing certain comments to a senior police officer which, I understand, were subsequently corrected or at least the impression was subsequently corrected by him.

11.40 a.m.

The expression "crime wave" is an emotive expression that finds its own articulation **from** time to time if there is a spate of criminal activity which concerns the public. I would contest and dispute any suggestion that there is a crime wave or there has been a crime wave in Barbados. We know that there were two incidents which outraged the public's conscience, the man who lost his hand in a cutlass attack, and the murder of a young man near the Barbados Hardware Store on the ABC Highway. We know that those two caused a lot of concern, disquiet, upset, in some cases consternation. But to use those **two** incidents and conclude therefrom **as** a necessary consequence that there is a crime wave is a ridiculous application of any kind of logic. It also flies in the face of the statistical evidence.

I will make available to Honourable Members on the other side the latest crime statistics dated January 1996 from the Royal Barbados Police Force. For the period January to December 1994 and January to December 1995 - and I am using them for comparative purposes at the end of which you can tell me if there is a crime wave - the grand total of offences in 1994 was 11 452. For 1995 the grand total was 10 541, a decrease of almost 1 000 cases, 911 to be exact. So where is the crime wave which usually connotes and implies an upward spiral when the figures have come down by almost 1 000?

Even more instructive, just let me do it differently. I do not want anybody to call me again for the next couple of months on this. Let me give it now once and for all station by station. Central Police Station, an increase of 15 cases in the year 1995 over 1994, District "A" a decrease of 244 cases, Black Rock an increase of 21 cases and from here on all decreases - Hastings 144, Worthing 28, District "B" 40, District "C" 254, Oistins 81, District "B" 20, District "E" 51, District "F" 8, Holetown 127, Belleplaine

44. There were small increases of 15 and 21 cases reported at Central and Black **Rock** otherwise **there** were decreases island wide.

If I turn now to a comparison of the types of offences, serious bodily **harm went up** - we **are comparing** 1994 and 1995 - from 366 to 400, rape from **63-74**, sexual intercourse with minors was down **46-25**, other sex crimes down from 11-3, robbery down from 485-408, burglary in a dwelling house, important property crimes, down by almost 600 from 2 487 in 1994 to 1 898 in 1995, other crimes against **property** down from 20-5, drug crimes down from 807 in 1994 to **745** in 1995. Those are some of the crimes. Crimes against visitors in 1994 were 564, This is the separate category of crime against visitors down from 564 to 523 in 1994 **as** against **1995**.

I am pleased to **report** that there was only one case of rape reported against visitors **or** any visitor in 1995. That rape was in August 1995, and there were no other sex crimes whatever. It is blank. There were no other sex crime reports against visitors for the whole of 1995. I **do** not know if the amendment to the Vagrancy Act has anything to do with that. I do not **know**.

Aside,

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If the Honourable Member on the other side is suggesting to me improved economic conditions, then as a member of the Government that has ensured those improved economic conditions, I **take** the plaudit with humility.

Sir, it would be tedious for me to go through all these. I just highlighted the ones I thought might be of interest to members on the other side, the **Press** and the public. We have various types of theft, livestock, agricultural produce, postal **packets**, motor vehicles, bicycles, theft **from** the person, theft from shops and stores. Theft **from persons** showed a decrease of 37, but theft from shops and stores showed an increase of 76, from 304 to 380. There is no mention here, Sir, for the Honourable Member's benefit, of any theft at any Government Hospital. We do not **classify** that. That is only by way of an aside. Other theft, Sir, down from 1 293 in 1994 to 1 089 in 1995. I think that is enough for the statistics.

11.50 a.m.

In the face of those statistics, it is my humble submission to this Honourable House that it **really** is alarming to allege that there is any crime wave now or within the last year, indeed within the **last** two years. When the Government took over in September 1994 the trends were there that crime was coming down under the last Government. In 1994 we saw a gradual reduction and

that has held in 1995. Speaking from memory, I think the reduction overall in 1994 was like 14% and 1995 was about 14% or **15%**, 911 of 10 541.

I wish that people would be more careful before they raise alarms. During the Estimates debate next week I will still have an opportunity to **address** Honourable Members' concerns about specific matters, but I wish to say something also about the **rearrangements** of Departments which are conducing to greater efficiency. Honourable Members **are** aware that the Auditor General from time to time, and particularly during the period 1991 to 1994, has made very, very scathing and damaging **remarks** about the management of the Police finances and indeed the management of vehicles and their methods of buying parts. He has left a clear suspicion that during those years there were transactions, particularly at the Police Workshop, which call for a complete enquiry into what was going on and some reorganisation.

The police have a lovely, new, modern workshop facility, but prior to 1995 it had not been staffed and organised, I think because the previous administration was at the time of its construction still constrained by fiscal stringency. A Workshop Manager was **appointed**, I believe it was last November, Sir, and a substantial amount of reorganisation has taken place in the Police workshop. I am pleased to be able to report to you, Sir, the House and the public of Barbados that whereas prior to the appointment of the new Workshop Manager the Police were only able to get on the road a maximum at any one time of 128 vehicles a day, they are now consistently putting out for duty 160 and upwards a day, so that they are becoming more mobile. **A** greater efficiency is now evident at the workshop, which has resulted in a better output of vehicles.

The next step we have to take, Sir, and I am hoping that we should be able to have the Workshop fully staffed by about May this year, is to have the full complement of staff. They are operating with about six apprentices from the National Training Board and their apprenticeship comes to an end in May, so very soon we will be trying to recruit a few staff to manage the Workshop. But I wish to compliment all of those persons at Station Hill who are engaged in the organisation and management of the Police Workshop, from Superintendent Brereton down, who are enabling us to get more vehicles on the road to be able to give better coverage and surveillance to the island.

I will not say anything about the problem of cane fires at the moment, because there is a meeting tomorrow afternoon at 2.30 in the Ministry with all the relevant agencies to look at the question of cane fires, beyond what we have done. The Commissioner of Police early last week deployed a number of Island Constables to assist in providing surveillance in the sugar producing areas, and I

think he made that manoeuvre public, but there are other matters that will be discussed **tomorrow**, and during the Estimates next week I will brief the House as to what other matters are in train and such other **matters** of a non-secret or **non-security nature** that I can disclose.

Let me take this opportunity also, Sir... I read in the newspaper last week statements made by the Leader of the Opposition, by the former Prime Minister and by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy about cane fires. I wish to place it on record that the Government is deeply appreciative to the Honourable Members of the Opposition who have made statements publicly condemning the wanton arson in the sugar industry and I think that their gestures were highly commendable and public spirited. I have no difficulty in thanking Honourable Members on the other side for their public commitment and support in this matter.

I did appeal, two or three weeks ago, Sir, when there was a handing over of the new flag to the Fire Service, to the country then to be more careful about the possibility of house **fires**, and I appealed to them not to burn the canes but to help us to reap the crop green. I do not know if it was ever shown on television, if the appeal ever went out, it was done at the Fire Service, but I repeat that call today, Sir, to any lawless or reckless elements that there may be in the society, who **are** showing evidence of pyromania, to desist from it and let us try and let us **try** and reap the crop green because we are dealing with Barbados' vital economic interest. I am not going to say any more on that, Sir, other than that the full weight of the law will attend those who are caught setting fire to canes.

12.00 noon

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the members of the Police Force for the excellent work which they rendered in 1995 to see a reduction in **the** level of criminal cases in the courts. I also wish to thank the members of the Police Force for their **restraint** and understanding pending the receipt of their allowances. We voted in here a couple weeks ago, Sir, sums to pay outstanding arrears of allowances. I know that up to last week they had not been paid but everything is in train for the officers shortly to get their money. It is only a question of the bureaucracy and the system but the officers showed great restraint and understanding and we will take steps this year to ensure that it does not happen again.

The Government is committed to a mid-term review some time around September and when that time comes I will ensure that the Financial Controller does her projections in such a way that if the relevant vote, Operating Expenses, needs to be replenished to **carry** us down to the end of March 1997 then the application is made early, the funds are approved, and we get the matter brought here

by supplementary Resolution so that the officers in future will not have to wait.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think at this stage I will say anything more about crime. I will leave the matter of crime prevention and so on until next week for the Estimates Debate and give Members an outline as to what Government is doing. There has been a lot of talk recently and some of it deliberately generated by me to get public reaction about punishment. Next week I hope I get a chance to debate my Heads and I should be in a position then to look at what Government is doing by way of crime prevention and strategising to deal with these problems.

I beg to move, Sir, that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the substance of this amendment to the Police Act is not something that would excite massive discussion. It is obvious, by the tone, tenure and scope of the Honourable Member's presentation as he introduced it, I think, that it is not going to find any objection from any Honourable Member over here and so the opportunity may be taken to make a few preliminary remarks about the Royal Barbados Police Force in general.

Before I do that I would like to raise a question with the Minister concerning the amendment itself because it seems to me that if we are amending the legislation to change the age limit somewhat, I have often wondered what is the magic of the number of 19. It seems to me that if the age of majority in Barbados is 18 and if a person can vote when he is 18, that a person ought to be able to go into the armed forces or the Royal Barbados Police Force or any such institution after the age 18.

This amendment is staying with the 19 year old concept and I really am not sure I understand what is the magic of 19 versus 18. I would think that when the age of 19 was originally arrived at, the age of majority in Barbados was 21 and that would have been an attempt, I think, to allow in as many persons as young as possible, bearing in mind the upper age for retirement at that time when the age of 19 would have been brought to the fore. I think therefore, and for what it is worth I offer it to the Attorney General, that if we are in fact amending the legislation, opportunity ought to have been taken to review this limit of 19 because, Sir, it is very difficult for young people between the ages of 17 and 19 to find gainful employment.

It is extremely difficult. There are very few places anywhere now, unless you are working in a supermarket or those kinds of odd jobs, it is very, very difficult for a young person, however well qualified, to find employment in this country between the ages of 17 and 19 and to the extent that a career possibility, like the Royal Barbados

Police Force is available and bearing in mind that the qualifications required is only 3 O-levels, it seems to me that opportunity should be taken to embrace a wider pool of young people for purposes of recruitment.

If there is some other reason I am sure the Attorney General will enlighten us but I have found no substantial difference in the behaviour patterns of 18 and 19 year olds. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, as I am sure Your Honour knows, neither group is well known for going to the polls to vote; 18 and 19 year olds wait very carefully before making any decisions about who will represent them in the House. As the statistics all over the world show they usually wait until the next time around. I would like to suggest that the age of 18 would make a lot more sense in Barbados, especially since 18 is an age of majority.

Secondly, I would like to allude to the question of the graduation from special constable to police officer. It is my understanding that the training received by special constables is essentially the same as that received by the police officers. They are both trained in the same environment and the special constables, as I understood it when last it was explained to me, have the same kind of basic training. It is obvious that those who are going to become police officers go on to additional training. I think it is right and proper that persons who volunteer and who apply and who become special constables ought to be given the opportunity to become members of the Royal Barbados Police Force.

12.10 p.m.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, one of the other areas which I believe attention should be paid to is the whole question of a height requirement. I have always found it difficult to accept the height requirement ever since we moved past the concept of brute force as the major requirement for a police officer. I know one young man who subsequently became a special constable and I believe, because I have not seen him, for a while, he was a quarter of an inch too short. He would take the exam and pass the exam. I remember, Sir, that he grew an Afro or tried to grow an Afro. He spent about 2 to 3 years working on chest exercises. Now I believe that is cruel and inhuman punishment, I feel and, as a matter of fact, I think it is unconstitutional. I personally think that discriminating against a person for a particular job because of their height might very well be contrary to the Constitution of Barbados, but I make no big issue of it. You do not have to have any height requirement to be a Prime Minister. So I do not see why you should have to have any height requirement to be a policeman or a policewoman for that matter.

I am very serious, Mr. Speaker. I think that if we are talking about reform, and this is the new catch word

in Barbados these days where we are reforming everything, we should do some qualitative assessment of some long-held beliefs about some shibboleths in this country and height requirement in the Police Force strikes me as one of those things, I remember one of the most efficient officers in the Barbados Defence Force – it was then called the Barbados Regiment – who was a man who could drill in the most exquisite way. He was someone whom we all admired when we were young at school and he could never have become a police officer because he was not more than 5 feet 7 inches and the requirement is 5 feet 8 inches.

Aside,

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is saying from his seat and each of us can give examples of somebody who otherwise qualified to be a police officer but somehow could not make it because he was a quarter of an inch or half an inch too short, Mr. Speaker, I have probably the dubious distinction in this House of never having successfully recommended anybody for the Police Force. I cannot recall anyone whom I have recommended for the Police Force whether I was in the Government or out of the Government who was successful getting in and I know at least two of those persons who have gone on to other and different work. One is currently practising Law and he wanted to be a police detective.

I remember speaking to the former Commissioner of Police to find out if I should desist from recommending people because, if the profession of politician disqualifies from recommending someone to be a policeman, then I would like to know so I can tell my constituents who come to me. As a matter of fact, Sir, I have done that, I have sent them to their headmaster or to some other person and I cast no aspersion on the recruiters. I am not here complaining, I am just making a serious statement about a matter which has concerned me over a long time.

The former Commissioner of Police is my friend. We went to school together. The former Commissioner of Police was someone for whom I had the highest respect and I believe he had the highest respect for me and from time to time I would ask him: how is it that I make these recommendations for people, and I do not call anybody as you know, Sir, from a different capacity...? Because I do not like the idea of a politician calling up anybody in the Government Service saying that he wants them to get a job for X or Y. I will never claim that I have not participated in assisting my constituents to get work because that is part of my duty. I have always perceived that as part of my duty. I will beg a dog for a job for one of my constituents because I consider it to be part of my duty, but I also consider it no part of my duty to be interfering with especially the Police Force, Prisons, *etcetera*. But I will recommend those persons. Again the people who live in my constituency know that I do not recommend anybody

whom I should not recommend because at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, as Your Honour knows, if you send someone to a place with a recommendation that is flawed and that person turns out to be quite short of what you have recommended, the place where you sent them does not pay too much attention to the person you sent. They pay attention to **him** or her who recommended. So I am very careful about where I put my calligraphy in relation to recommendation of people.

Sir, I have been very concerned over the years, I tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I have never successfully recommended anyone for the Royal Barbados Police Force. So now that my colleagues on the other side are the Government, I ask my constituents: do you know anybody in the Government? I am not saying that they will be more successful but occasionally I have discovered that it is much more efficacious to have a recommendation from my friend, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, He represents my family in the House of Assembly. I have a qualitative question about how well he does it because there are certain things he is supposed to put in place that I have not seen put in place yet, But we will discuss that at another time. The point is though, Sir, that occasionally persons from his constituency come to me because of family connections and I say to them to see their representative because the law of averages suggests that, he having done fewer than I, might be in a better position to be successful than I would be.

Sir, having said all of that, I **am** satisfied that the Royal Barbados Police Force over the last 20 years has made fantastic strides in the quality of personnel which it has as part of the Force. There is nothing quite as rewarding as talking to a young Police Constable who is (a) articulate, (b) mannerly, (c) knowledgeable, and (d) ambitious, I have found that with a number of the young policemen whom I talk with. I talk to them fairly often. I do not mine saying that many of the people I count as my friends and indeed one of my best friends in life has been a policeman. He is retired now. But he has been one of my best friends in life if not the best. We have been friends for over 40 years. I thought that he was the best policeman in the Caribbean and there are other people who think so too, but that is neither here nor there. The point I **am** making though is that young policeman today, because I have seen and watched them, have been criticized generally. The Force has had some criticism and I tell them from time to time that it is desirable that they be criticized.

You have to remind the Police Force that the citizens have a right to say how they wish their policing to be done and sometimes the criticism is valid. If you have an organization that has such an awesome responsibility and it is not criticized from time to time, it can get out of hand not only in Barbados but anywhere. We are familiar with what has happened in California. Anyone who discusses

policing and who observes some of the things we observe about the Police Force in the state of California would always hope that Barbados and indeed the Caribbean could never reach such a low level in policing, even though in terms of resources they have a massive amount of resources available to them at all levels.

12.20 p.m.

We in Barbados have been very fortunate that our senior policemen are demonstrating more and more, in a **kind** of evolutionary way, a higher interest in what I call qualitative policing, in the thinking policeman as opposed to the brutal policeman. I was very glad recently to see that one of the distinguished gentlemen on the Bench had finally accepted that a plea in the courts that constitutional rights of a prisoner had been offended was a possibility in Barbados and that it could come out with a positive result. I was ecstatic when I saw in the newspaper that a Judge had agreed that the constitutional rights of a prisoner had been trampled in Barbados. For a long while I used to wonder why it was that we had this almost immaculate situation where, everywhere else in the world, and certainly in the United Kingdom and in the United States, prisoners were getting the occasional constitutional protection, but in Barbados our people responsible for that were so immaculate that each time there was a cry of brutality it was greeted with "it couldn't happen here", "hardly likely", "not true".

When you represent constituents like mine that live in some small gaps, cheek by jowl, hard to find employment, difficult terrain to walk at night because there are no lights, when you represent that **kind** of constituency you also have a very keen sense of fairness with regard to how they are treated when taken **into** custody. Or what happens when the police visit at an early hour in the morning to a particular house and a grandmother, who never participated in dope in her life, and does not know anything about what is going on except that she has grandchildren, finds her house rudely shaken up as the police go about their lawful business? I have wondered about that from time to time, I have spoken about it from time to time to senior policemen, **to** junior policemen, and to some people who practise law. I have said to them that somebody has to take a stand against the very few in the nonetheless important group who pay scant attention and have very little respect for certain niceties that are part of a civilised community.

I do not believe it is necessary in Barbados for any policeman to kick down any door, least of all when the people live in board houses. If there are people inside of a house who need to be apprehended and you have sufficient force outside, sooner or later that person will be apprehended. The concept of a movie type break into a house to kick down the door and that sort of thing has no place in a society of this size, and policemen have to

understand that it is the duty of the citizens around to **see** that all of the rights of all the citizens are protected all of the time. That is why I said, and why I hold to the view, that the quality of policing in Barbados has improved and that is why I **am** pleased to see that we have more and more people in the Police Force who are seeking to improve their knowledge, who are seeking to improve their standards. You can find a large number of them taking one or other course at the University, sometimes with great hardship.

I have nothing but admiration for those police officers who do their work well, work 20 hours a day sometimes, have to go to court like anybody else and give their evidence, and still find time to go to Cave Hill to study, many of them studying law but some of them studying the humanities. Again, there is an unfortunate feeling that if you are a policeman the only thing you should want **to** study is law. That is not **true**. Once you are studying, once you are doing something else, once you are going forward, you are making yourself a better person. I hope that the promotion criteria in the Police Force will always take account of those persons who on their own **seek** to improve their ability and their knowledge.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments, as evidenced by the fact that I am speaking first on them, do not excite this side in terms of anything to fight against. I hope the Minister will respond to the questions about the 19 year olds and the height, which is not now in this bill, but the whole question of revisiting this concept that a policeman must be 5' 8" or taller. I used to tell my late wife that there was no way she could have become a policewoman. She was 4' 11³/₄" and used to constantly battle that she was 5' by growing her hair in a certain way. She has gone to her grave arguing that she was 5' but the record shows that she was 4' 11³/₄", so you could appreciate that I have had a discussion about height for a fairly long time in my life.

Mr. SPEAKER: I **am** glad that the Honourable Member has stated that length does not have anything to do with quality.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Height.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, as a teacher of the highest order. . . .

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I will not ask Mr. Speaker to withdraw anything.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do you agree with the Speaker then?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, as a man of consummate knowledge yourself, you appreciate these things.

The Minister also talked about his appreciation for the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition and the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South, the former Prime Minister, and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy, all of whom have spoken on this issue of cane fires, I really wish that at least one of the newspapers in this country would take heed of an article which it has published today of statements made by the Attorney General of Trinidad & Tobago. I wish that the editor of ~~tha~~ newspaper would read the article which is published in his own newspaper about what the Attorney General of Trinidad & Tobago has said about how some media people utilise the Press for various reasons. I wish that that editor would read that, because only a person who is inebriated, mad or malevolent could take some of the editorials which we see in Barbados and not believe that they are designed to divide the community. They are divisive and, Mr. Speaker, from this House of Assembly I have never been afraid to say what I think, no matter the consequences. I believe that when an editor uses an editorial for personal reasons, that editor is a person worthy of pursuit by the police.

12.30 p.m.

I do not like the suggestion which has been made even in an editorial purporting to welcome the utterances of the said gentlemen that somehow the Democratic Labour Party might have been party to, knowledgeable of, or in some way connected with cane fires in this country. The Honourable Member for Christ Church South will remember when about 20 years ago there was a raging controversy in this country where political parties started accusing one another of setting cane fires and it led to some serious enmity in the community among the politicians for a short while. Indeed, in some instances it was a long while, because there is nothing more heinous in a country like this that depends on its livelihood for sugar cane than to accuse a public person of that kind of economic sabotage. Even an implied suggestion, as comes from editorials in this country is heinous. That any Honourable Member in this Chamber or any person who has been in this Chamber or is an important person in a political party would stoop so low as to set fires is a dangerous suggestion and has nothing to do with the civics of this country. It is a malevolent charge and has no place in this society.

People in this country have to understand that there are certain kinds of people who sow more discord, who create more mischief, who are more dangerous than any politicians or other public people they purport to attack. They are downright dangerous, wicked and have no place

in decent society. I do not complain about anything they say about me in the newspapers, unless they spell my name wrong. I complain about that, because I have a psychological problem about that. They can say anything about me because I am in public life and I expect to be criticised.

Any Honourable Member in here, least of all those on the Front Bench, who do not expect to be criticised have chosen the wrong profession. A politician who is not criticised is a joke. If you can go through Parliament for 20 years and no one has ever said nasty things about you at some time, you should check to find out what has happened. I am being prompted by my distinguished colleague that the nastier they get about you it may very well be the higher the quality is,

Sir, it is par for the course if you are in this business, and I have always worried that it is all right to attack the politicians but if a politician should attack a member of the Press the whole Press goes crazy. I know the working newspaper people are decent people. The people who work scribing, the ones who do the work, have no axe to grind. They don't have any agendas. It is the newspaper owners and the odd editor who say they are the Fourth Estate, if they are the Fourth Estate we are the Third Estate and it is Estate vs. Estate. If they can give, they have to learn how to take but to accuse any Honourable Member of being a participant in economic sabotage is a disgusting and unacceptable way of life in this country,

I know as night follows day that no member of the Democratic Labour Party - that is not something I am thinking - would condone, furthermore participate in, the destruction of sugar cane in this country. Who would they discuss it with? The Honourable Member for St. Michael South with whom I have had the longest association of the members over here will tell you that our discussions in the Democratic Labour Party over the 30 years I have participated in them have a certain quality about them that does not permit any coarseness. We have fun. We talk serious politics, but no one could come to us suggesting that this would be a way forward. Forward to what? What would be the end of participation? How could the Barbados Labour Party ever succeed if they participated in something like that? How could the Democratic Labour Party succeed? How could the NDP succeed if they were to participate in something as foolish as economic sabotage?

We who have lived in this country have seen cane fires all our lives and we know how destructive they are. You don't have to have 4 degrees to know that that is dangerous to the society. It is cruel for someone to write in a newspaper that goes outside of Barbados - the newspaper is not confined to Broad Street; the newspaper is all over the world - to suggest that we could possibly have an Opposition that could participate in that sort of thing,

even by the slightest implication, by the misuse of a single word. If any single person could draw that conclusion, that should have been re-written. I make no bones about it. I will not sit idly by and have anybody assault the integrity of the members of the Democratic Labour Party on an issue like that. We know we will be assaulted on other issues, but we take that as par for the course and we expect that in due course any wrongs to be righted will be righted. We know that the courts have never stood in the way of righting certain wrongs, and we will leave such things to be dealt with accordingly.

I am grateful to the Attorney General for speaking on this issue in the manner that he did, because there must be no divide in this House, in my view on such matters. We appreciate him indicating his *appréciation* of our position on that. I hope that the wider community will understand that this is not an instance where we are scratching one another's backs. We are simply dealing with the reality of public life in this country. Mr. Speaker, if I seem a little incensed about that issue, it is merely because I feel strongly about it.

But if I may come back to the issue of the amendments before us in the Royal Barbados Police Force, the Honourable Member says that next week when we come to the Estimates he will deal with some of the issues in great detail on crime prevention. I know that he is capable of flying *kite*. He has been a good practitioner of the Easter art of *kite* flying in recent times, but even from his own mouth Re has said now that he seeks to stir up the community by making certain utterances and I will wait to see next week when he comes whether he is going to be stirring or simmering. I have my own view and the Honourable Member knows my view on some of the things he says. I have said some harsh things about what he said and he was drawn in, I believe, but they were not published, so he does not know what I said.

Next week, when he talks about some of these things perhaps we can discuss them; but I want to say that I will never agree to revisiting the hanging of young people. I cannot agree to that. I may be the only one, although I know better, but I think he needs to know that I will not be participating in any revisiting of hanging 17 year olds for the same reason that I want people to get jobs at 18 to become policemen, I want us, however we can, to move those young people forward not backward and I want to say to the mothers in this country who agree – I hear words coming out of some mouths at an interview on the television, but no one knows whose 17 year old it will be, because all of those who are 17 years old seem to me, whether they were born in Fairfield or whether they were born in Belleville or whether they were born in one of the Heights, they all seem to me to connect up with the same kind of mental approach to life.

I do not know that I understand the ones in Richmond Gap to be that much different from the ones up in the Heights. I have always said that the capacity to hire the right representative at a given time should not be the dividing line between who lives and who dies but that is another matter which we will get to in due course.
12.40 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment, small as it is, did elicit some discussion but I think it is discussion that is well deserved.

The Auditor General makes some statements every year and I am pleased to hear the Attorney General in his capacity as Attorney General dealing with those statements in real terms because the inherent recognition that a particular administrator who is accountable would be identified by the Auditor General because another department did not find it convenient to give the necessary resources, is a point that has to be made and remade by us as we look at the public administration in this country.

Now, there have been newspapers which suggested by inference, and I am not now criticizing the newspapers, that the Police Commissioner who is the accounting officer was responsible for these difficulties which would show up especially between 1991 and 1994 where the cars were not on the road. The same thing applies to the Sanitation Department when the trucks are not on the road. It is a question not of the person who is accountable being negligent. It is a question of the allocation of resources in a sensible way to allow for the duties which the Auditor General refers to almost *ad infinitum* department by department. But, Sir, next week when we come to examine some of these departments we will be able to deal with the reality *versus* the myth because the public out there does not always know what caused a particular issue because there is no analysis done in Barbados.

There is no television programme which helps the citizen to understand how the public administration occurs. There is no in-depth article in any newspaper that explains to an ordinary person what they mean by seeking to get additional staff or what you have to do. There is hardly any knowledge out there in the marketplace and when half truths are published, not deliberately all the time, but they are half truths because they can only fit into so much space, then ordinary people get the wrong impression about administrators.

I say that because there was an implied suggestion at one point that the Police Commissioner was responsible for the breakdown in the workshop. That is only true on the face of it since he is accountable. If somebody has to carry the blame he has to carry the blame but now we hear there is a Workshop Manager and I believe the Workshop

Manager is not a **former** policeman, He **has** been **employed** not because of his attachment to the Force but he is a civilian presumably with experience and expertise in the field of managing a workshop,

Now when you are going to compare the operation of the workshop under the Democratic **Labour Party** with the operation of the workshop under the Barbados Labour **Party**, there is no superior political **skill** on the part of one Attorney General versus the other, It is that **the** first Attorney General having softened up the givers of **resources**, the second Attorney General is a beneficiary of getting the resources at that time. I am not taking anything **away** from his perspicacity in seeking out, spelling out and working on. That is **a** question of **energy**, but when the comparative analysis is being done by the pundits, you then will see letters to the editors saying, when the Democratic Labour Party was in office they could only get 120 cars on the road and now the Barbados Labour Party has gone in they are getting 160 cars on the road.

During election time you could expect the Attorney General to take that line, It would be **strange** if he did not **take** that line but the truth is that citizens ought to be able to **make** the judgment between the rhetoric of election time and the reality. The Attorney General again was kind this morning and it is good when the Attorney General is leading the House. My **friend**, the Honourable Member for St. John has said often that when the member for St. **Thomas** is leading the House his demeanour and style is more commensurate with our understanding of how we should function, I am going no further, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. **TAITT**: Truth is like that, Sir. Every time we tell the truth about him he gets a little upset. Anyhow, Sir, the Attorney General was kind enough to remember that we were under some structural difficulty because often, in recent times, when I have seen some of the commentaries of how the present administration is able to get **some** things done that we were not able to get done, **you** do not see the little line that we were trying to do those things under tremendous difficulty and under tremendous strain.

Mr. Speaker, I think I can stop on this point. The only point I am making here is that when comparative analyses are being done it would be helpful if somehow those who have to make the judgement could have further and better information. Mr. Speaker, I am very glad that this amendment gave me an opportunity to speak on a couple of things and I am grateful to my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. **Philip** South, the shadow Minister in this regard.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. **TAITT**: I am grateful to my colleague who gave me the opportunity to lead in this debate because I would not normally get the opportunity to **speak** at that time. So, **Sir**, the Honourable Member has to wind up **and** I will give him the opportunity to speak on the questions I raised,

Thank **you** very much, Mr. Speaker.

Dr. R. C. **HAYNES**: Mr. Speaker, my contribution will last approximately five minutes, First of all I would like to associate the National Democratic Party in the condemnation of those, **whoever** they may be, who **are** responsible for the spate of cane fires. Perhaps one should **keep** drawing to their attention the damage done to the economy not only immediately but also that **all** future crops from that particular area of land that has **been burnt** for some years would be compromised in terms of their future yield and also the environmental damage done to the country as a result of the erosion that follows the loss of **an** adequate amount of **trash** on the ground.

In relation to the police, I trust that by next week the Honourable Attorney General would be able to tell us how close he has got to the 1 500 mark which we in the **NDP**, supported by no less than **three** previous Commissioners of **Police**, **feel** would be the adequate size for the Force. I hope he would be endorsing the position that there is no better method of controlling crime than having a police presence as much as possible. It is interesting to note that the United States has just moved strongly in this direction with the creation of another 100 000 policemen, and all the **reports**, where things are analysed properly, coming out of the United States at the moment state that the increased presence of policemen has made a difference in terms of the reduction in the incidence of crime.
12.50 p.m.

In the **area** of penal reform, I sincerely hope he will be able to inform the House in a short period, at least by next week, what steps he is taking to improve the conditions at Glendairy Prisons in terms of the preparation of the inmates for return to a productive life in the society by way of education, inculcation of family and moral values and so on, what programme is there within the system to help those young people with education and improvement of their approach to society so that they will not just leave there and come back out and continue on the same path.

Also, we want to know what steps are being taken to improve the physical conditions of the Prisons and we would like to hear him repudiate the concept that you hear on the **airwaves** day after **day**, that when people are incarcerated they should be virtually tortured, that they should be starved, that they should be humiliated

in every possible way. I **am** not saying it happens, what I am saying is that there is a **kind** of thinking that you hear in this country which is violent in the extreme, as far as I am concerned. We always have to remember that when we hear of this violence in the society, we have to remember that this society is a verbally violent society. I **am** not surprised to see that that translates into the **kind** of violence that you **see** among young people, because there seems to be a belief that the Government has no duty of care towards persons who are incarcerated. We in the NDP feel that when you incarcerate a person you have a duty of care, a duty to ensure that that person is not only punished appropriately, but also that part of that process should be a highly constructive rehabilitation process.

These are some of the areas. We would want to be **talking** about what views the Attorney General may have on the use of modern technology in terms of improving the Police Force, what steps he will be taking to make sure that those things are put in place and, finally, what plans he has for the detection of white collar crime which appears to be largely nonexistent in Barbados. Sir, you know we are a remarkable society. If you look at our crime statistics you will find that only certain people in Barbados commit crimes of any **kind**; 99.99% of all crimes in Barbados are committed by the underprivileged, if you look at the court statistics or read the newspapers, but all of us know that is not the case. What happens is that the focus of detection is largely among these groups. There are wide areas of white collar crime hardly ever explored, and indeed I do not think the Force is in a position to deal with complicated accounting systems and this **kind** of thing. Are we going to be making sure that we recruit these **kinds** of people who are capable of investigating corporate accounts and this kind of thing? It is a very interesting society.

I promised you, Sir, that I would **speak** for only four minutes so as to allow the Attorney General, before 1 o'clock...

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Well, Sir, in that case I might as well take the other half minute or so. These are the main points I wish to make, because I can assure the Attorney General that next week we shall be giving him a very warm welcome on matters of hanging children and that **kind** of thing. We will be dealing with those matters next week.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2.00 p.m. today.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

12.58 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, in dealing with the matter before us I would like to make a few points. As a politician who represents a rural constituency, I must bring some information before this House which I would like the Honourable Attorney General, who is also responsible for the Police Force, to look at. We have a station in St. Lucy which is known as Crab Hill Police Station. Even though it is a substation and even though there are not many complaints within the constituency of St. Lucy, we have **been** having a particular problem which has been imported to St. Lucy and that is a problem with the importation of drugs. I am suggesting that the Attorney General instruct the police, after some discussion with the management of the Arawak Cement Plant, to have a boat stationed at the jetty at the Arawak Cement Plant so that the police may easily use that boat whenever there is a problem on the Northern side of the island.

As you are aware, Sir, we have been having serious trouble where people who do not live in St. Lucy have been using St. Lucy as a point for landing drugs and also for the collection of drugs and we would not like to have to take the law into our hands since we are sure the police can do a good job. So we are calling on the Attorney General to give them the necessary resources so that they can deal with this particular problem. We must admit that it is because of the terrain on the Northern coast that sometimes persons feel that they can do what they have to do and easily escape from the hands of the law. I am suggesting, Sir, that the Honourable Attorney General should look at this development.

We have been having problems along the Orange Hill area and the **Maycocks** area and I honestly believe that if we had development down at the Naval Base where there are people on site on a regular basis maybe these people would think twice before using these areas to land their drugs etc. That is why I feel that it would be feasible if Government could attract investment, for example, to allow someone to build a hotel at the Naval Base and then there would be activity down there where one could easily see what is going on in that particular area and then there would be no encouragement for people to **try** to use that facility for landing drugs or anything like that.

I also want to deal with the age factor. I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, **that** because most of our

students leave school when they are 18, to ask a student to wait until he is 19 when he has a desire to get into the Police Force might be to deprive the Force of good policemen. Should that student get a job elsewhere and get the feel of money he might not be too inclined to leave that job then to go to his first liking. I feel that we should give that gentleman or lady the opportunity to grab the first opportunity to the liking that they have. Some people might say to me, it is just one year but one year is a long time. I do not see why a man has to be 5' 8" to be a good policeman. I cannot see how height can make a man a policeman. I would like for someone to explain to me how height can make a good policeman.

Another point I would wish to make, Sir, I realise that we talked a lot about a workshop at District "A", but I believe that if we are going to be efficient it is time that at least we have one workshop in rural Barbados. I find it rather difficult in a situation where you have Crab Hill, District "E", Belleplaine and Holetown, that you have to ask the personnel at those stations to send vehicles to Bridgetown to be repaired. I believe that there should be some small workshop or what I would call a hit team operating from one of the stations where minor problems can be attended to without having to take them to Bridgetown for them to be repaired. If we are speaking about efficiency that is one way we will solve that problem.

I want to get to a major problem which relates to the burning of canes. Some people sometimes set about to accuse people, not realising that when they set about to accuse people that actually they end up encouraging people to do wrong and I will show you, Mr. Speaker, what I mean by saying that. We, on this side, have been accused of encouraging people to burn canes. Mr. Speaker, people must understand that if a party has the support of over 50% of the voters in this country and you have a newspaper giving the impression that one of my comrades is encouraging people to burn canes, that is a serious charge and that is a charge, Mr. Speaker, that can encourage people to burn canes in this country and I will tell you why.

You must understand, Mr. Speaker, that people have followers and if the impression is that burning canes is good, people would start burning canes and that is a bad example to be set by a newspaper in this country. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that the results of the cane fires should be carefully analysed and you might easily find out that it is not the Opposition that is encouraging people to burn canes, but it might be some people in the newspapers that are encouraging people to burn canes in this country because they are giving the impression that to burn canes in this country is something good.

Could you tell me, Sir, why a party that would have spent so much money developing a sugar industry in the

nineties would now ask people to burn canes and destroy something that they would want to be successful and could reflect on two or three years from now and say, I have started the Barbados Agricultural Management Company and look what it is doing? It would be foolish of us, Mr. Speaker, if we were to encourage people to burn the canes because, in burning the canes, what we would actually be telling people is that the Barbados Agricultural Management Company was a bad idea. So I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that when people want to lay charges they must be prepared to analyse what they are writing because when they write foolishness there are people who can explain it and show that they are the ones that are encouraging people to burn the canes and not the members of the Democratic Labour Party.

Let me say this. I have an interest and anybody I see lighting canes I am going to make sure I inform the police because at the end of the day it is my son who has to live in this country. It is not only the sons of the Members over there, my son has to live in this country too and when I destroy this economy I am destroying the foundation for my son.

Mr. Speaker, you will appreciate that we have a situation in this country where people would want us to believe that politicians will do everything wrong and have no interest in this country. There are politicians who will join hands and encourage people. If we are going to set this example it means then that politics is not for me and I have no intention of leaving politics so the politicians will have to change if that is the style they want to adopt. If they are going to encourage editors to write foolishness that is up to them but I am not going to be a party to that.

2.15 p.m.

So I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that we have a situation in this country and the evidence is there, the evidence of the Barbados Agricultural Management Company that the Democratic Labour Party set up and it has no interest in seeing anybody burning canes in this country. If it has such an interest what it is actually saying is that it has made a mistake by forming the Barbados Agricultural Management Company.

Sir, let me deal with the police. Sometimes I wonder whether asking a policeman to serve 33 1/3 years is not too long a period. Because you must admit, Sir, that there are certain jobs that demand a lot of you. So that is something we might also have to look at, not only the height and the age factor but the length of service. Sometimes it might be good to ask a policeman to leave after 20 years because he might have reached his capacity to perform and it might be better for him to step out and allow someone else to come after him and perform well also instead of asking him to stay on when he knows full well that he cannot perform

anymore and that he would have given of his best. I go back to the point where I asked the Honourable Attorney General to make sure that he has a boat stationed at the Arawak Cement Plant to combat the drug trade and I will also ask him in the Estimates to make **sure** that he sets aside some money to upgrade the Crab Hill Police Station. I know that you have already started but I know that you will also agree with me that there is more to be done at the Crab Hill Police Station. **Thank** you very much, Mr. Speaker,

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, **Sir**, I rise to wind up. I am grateful to all the Honourable Members who spoke. I want to respond briefly to the points made. First of all, regarding the question of age, I spoke with the Commissioner when the Honourable Member for St. Michael West was **speaking** and the Commissioner is of the view that the age should remain at 19 for the time being, I am therefore advised not to amend that today. In fact, the Commissioner advises that they start recruiting at 18 years 6 months **but** they do not enlist in the Force until 19 years. So they recruit right after 18 years and then you get the training course and then you can become a **police** officer enlisted at the age of 19. I will discuss it further at an appropriate time but the advice given to me at the moment is that we can leave it because we do in fact start recruiting immediately after age 18.

Now as to the height, Sir, I have always wondered like the Honourable Members why the law says 5 feet 8 inches and not 5 feet 9 inches or 10 inches. I do not know if it is felt that a short man cannot control a potential offender. I do not know, Sir. I do know however, Sir, that it has worked hardship. A very strong supporter of the Democratic Labour Party in 1986 came to me, He writes in **the** newspaper every week - **HNB**. He came to me when I was previously Attorney General in 1986. He had been a bugler or possibly a trumpeter in his school band and he wanted to get into the Police Band but he was **turned** down because he was half an inch too short. I raised it at the time with the Commissioner and he said that **he** would look at it but I do not think anything ever happened,

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Minister of Labour is saying that it is discrimination against short **people**. But I am sure that we have a drummer in the Police Band originally from Church **Village** in St. **Philip** who is not 5 feet 8 inches but he is in **the** band. He is a **very** good drummer and that is something that we will have a look at. But I cannot give the Honourable Members any definitive position on it until the matter is further discussed.

I am glad to have heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael West speak of the difficulty that he has had as a politician in trying to get persons into the Police Force. I suffered very badly for years recommending people to the

Force and they were never recruited. Then I raised it with a former Commissioner of Police. His argument was that he did not want the Force politicized. But I thought that was the height of illogic because it presupposed that because an MP gave a letter of recommendation to someone to join the Force that automatically that person would be a supporter of the MP's party or that the person would go into the Force and try to politicize it. I had to say to him that I presumed he **recruited** from every parish and because an MP from one parish writes in support of somebody there is no reason to suggest that there is politicization, As I said, it is a very difficult thing. I am glad that Members on the other side have suffered the same level of frustration as I have as I am sure other Members on this side have suffered. However, what I do want to say is that I think it was the last sitting of the House or the one before that I brought to the House the print-out of all special constables recruited since 1992. I asked Inspector Collymore for the list including addresses and I wanted to look at the distribution of special constables through the parishes of Barbados. I am pleased to be able to report to the House, and I will try and bring the print-out next week so that Members on both sides can have a look at it and see, that the recruitment policy strongly suggests that every parish is fairly represented in the recruitment process. Between 1992 and 1994 and since 1994 we have from St. John, St. Lucy, St. Michael West and **St.** Michael South and **all** over, special constables from every parish or constituency represented.

A point was made about editorials and the use of editorials or misuse of editorials and the Honourable Member for **St.** Michael West teased me, Sir. I am glad that he raised this matter. Your Honour was here about a month ago one evening when I started the debate on hanging under eighteens **and** Your Honour heard what I had to say,

•**At** no time did I say that I was flying a kite. I went on call-in programmes and on television on various **interviews**. I made it clear that I was serious about what I said. Now a very strange thing happened about 3 weeks ago. A person came to me about 5.30 or 6 o'clock one evening smiling all over her face and said to me in the Ministry - "How did you like today's editorial in the Nation?" I **said**: "So, so. I do not appreciate the suggestion that I was flying a kite or that I was doing something that was unbecoming of the office of Attorney General." The Nation's editorial that day had "Simmons For The Youth Too" and in the body of the editorial they said that I suggested about flying a kite and that conduct was unbecoming of an Attorney General. I was offended by that. But this person said to me: "What do you not like about the editorial?" I went outside and got the paper and said: "Look at this. I never said anything about flying a kite and they have it in here. Then they said that it was conduct unbecoming of the Attorney General." Do you

know what that person said to me? The person said: "I am surprised that that has come. I never saw that." I gave her the paper to read. She asked for a glass of water when she was finished. I said: "What happened?" She said: "But I wrote this editorial and I did not put in those words", and there were some at the bottom, "and I did not include that paragraph either". She claimed to be the author of the editorial. She went out and got her husband and brought the **original** that was submitted as the editorial to convince me that somebody at the Nation tampered with her work and included something that was offensive to me and tried to ridicule me. That is what happened. The woman wrote an editorial which they tampered with and put in something that she did not write, so I am glad that the Honourable **Member** for St. Michael West spoke about editorials. Flying a kite is something that was developed out of malevolence or wickedness or with a desire in somebody's bosom in the *Nation* to ridicule. That is where it **appeared**. The *Advocate* did not carry it, the *Advocate* quoted me exactly and never carried anything about kite flying. 2.25 p.m.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central asked about the numbers in the Force, including the Special Constables who are members of the Force. The **Police** Force is at approximately 1 500. He asked about technology for the Police Force. He was in here in November, 1994, I think it was, when I brought a Resolution for \$1.5 million. The Government then explained to the House that that Resolution was for the computerisation of the Force. The computerisation of the Force is virtually complete, so I do not know what technology he is asking about, but we have computerised the Royal Barbados Police Force, we have computerised the Immigration Department and we will be moving to computerise the Registration Office in the next financial **year**. We have computerised the Corporate Affairs Division.

Finally, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. We will continue the programme of refurbishment at Crab Hill which was Started last year. We did all the termite treatment, some renovations and painting the property. That will continue.

As to the question of stationing a boat at the jetty at the Arawak Cement Company, I will discuss that matter with the Commissioner of Police and indeed the Government Security Committee for their advice and recommendation. Except to say that I have given insauctions and as recently as two weeks ago authorised the confiscation of a boat and two engines which were involved in the drug business, drug activity, Sir, whose owners when the matter got to court were not in a position to pursue a claim of right in respect of the boat. We are

confiscating as many as we catch and are worthwhile and we are going to turn around and use them in the fight against drugs. There are three or four we have.

In addition to that, there are other negotiations going on with the British Government and the European Union for equipment not only for Barbados but for the region. I will not go any further at this stage, but I expect that within a year the region ought to be substantially better equipped to fight drugs. We received a tremendous amount of co-operation from the British and the Americans, especially at the maritime level, and those relationships are being deepened every day. In May last year I had meetings in London on my way from a conference with the then British Foreign Office Minister, Mr. Tony Baldry and the Home Secretary In England. The Prime Minister, on 28th September, 1995, had a meeting with Prime Minister Major and as a result of that certain initiatives were taken by Prime Minister Major and Mr. Chirac and Chancellor Kohl, and the European Union is taking very, very urgent interest in this region with a view to providing assistance for the region to combat drugs, because they recognise that these islands constitute the first line of defence for Europe and North America in the drug war and so they are committed to helping us.

On 15th May this year there will be a major regional conference, sponsored by **UNDCP** and the European Union, at Sherbourne for the states in the region. We will give the House more **information** later on. There will be a Press Conference at some time, I presume, by the **UNDP** Representative here, but that is going to be a major conference for the region and a first step in a new era of co-operation between the CARICOM region and the European Union in the fight against drugs. I will not say any more on it at this stage.

It is **true**, as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy has recognised, and I appreciate his speech very much, that the north of the island, in particular the St. Eucy area, Archer's Bay, Maycock's Bay has been in the last year to 2½ years, starting with the case of **Alkins**, attractive landing sites for drug dealers and traffickers, particularly those who make use of boats. There is overwhelming evidence that a lot of the marijuana that has been landed at that part of the island has originated in St. Vincent. I do not want to say we are on top of the situation, but we are monitoring it carefully and so well that Honourable Members will **see** a lady in today's paper who is before the courts again today. She came from Canada, stopped off at Barbados, went to St. Vincent, and by the time she came back on **Carib** Express Saturday morning we had known and we held her. We have got a tremendous amount of assistance from the American Government and Interpol, and the drug fellows ought to know that we are catching up with them.

I want to say this. On the supply side of the drug business there is evidence – which I was able to tell Mr. Erickson from *Interpol* yesterday when I met with him – that in the last 6–8 months there has been a fall off in the amount of drugs imported into Barbados because we are able now to intercept and to capture a lot better than we were able some years ago. The result of that has been a scarcity in Barbados, and the consequence of that scarcity has been violence between drug lords. There is now a scramble for territory and a scramble among the drug lords to get the limited supplies that are still coming through. They are fighting among themselves and some of the shootings that you have heard about have been the result of fights among people involved in the drug trade.
2.35 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ... if they are killing out themselves I am not bothered about that at all. If they are prepared to shoot down one another, I really am not concerned about that part of it. I would be concerned if they were shooting innocent people but if they are involved in drugs and shooting to get a piece here and a piece there they can go ahead and write off themselves. That is a matter for them.

Sir, I gave some figures earlier and I did complete but I just want to make 2 points. In respect of juveniles, I indicated that there was a fall off last year in several areas and an overall decline and I gave the figures earlier. In relation to juveniles who were known to be involved in crime, between January and December 1995, we had 37 reported cases as against 64 for 1994 and 106 for 1993.

Persons have been concerned also about the use of firearms. Let me give those figures. In 1994, firearms were used in 159 cases involving robbery or assault with intent to rob. In 1995, that figure had dropped to 104. The cases of shooting at with intent had dropped from 23 in 1994 to 9 in 1995.

I thought I would give those for the sake of completeness. I will try and get a copy of the *Crime Newsletter* for January to December to show the comparison and have it sent to the Honourable Member for the Estimates Debate.

Sir, that is all I would want to say on this Bill. It gives me great pleasure to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: I beg to second that.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS seconded by Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, Mr. Speaker left the

Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1–3 were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ORDER NO. 8 – COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, Mr. Speaker left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee of Supply.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1995-96, No. 14

HEAD 28 – MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, this is a very simple amendment. All we are doing is moving funds from one Item: 625 to 611. Under Item 625 we have effected savings of approximately \$148 000, largely brought about because the Immigration Department had requested and was authorised to purchase a *standby* generator. Insofar as they had computerised the Department it was essential that they had continuous power.
2.45 p.m.

The quotation that was provided at first was for a lot more than we were subsequently able to make the purchase for so there has been a saving of \$148 000 on that Item. Now, at the same time, Item 611 – Maintenance of Property, is a little *short* of funds and we are seeking the House's permission to transfer the savings from Item 625 to Item 611.

Why is it necessary to spend this money? The Immigration Department for some time has suffered very severe defects in the roof of the department and those defects have caused considerable inconvenience. When there has been heavy rain some areas of the

department have been flooded. It was decided to ask MTW to do the repairs to the roof and those repairs were started recently and completed two Wednesdays ago. The effecting of those repairs caused some inconvenience to the general public. I take the opportunity to apologize to the general public for the inconvenience, but it was absolutely essential that we got the work done before the rainy season began in 1996. It was an opportune time for MTW to do the work during the end of January and a couple of weeks ago. It meant that we had to move some of the senior staff out of the Immigration Department and, luckily, we were able to find temporary accommodation for them at the Post Office Building at Cheapside. I am pleased to report that as from last week Tuesday the Immigration Department was able to resume its operations down here by the Careenage.

Now, while the repairs were being done to the roof, we found that there were other areas that needed to be dealt with at the same time and it was decided that we should make an attack on the other areas that were in need of repair. In October 1994 when I toured the Immigration Department for the first time it was agreed that the Ministry would carry out certain renovations to the interior of the Immigration Department to provide better facilities for the general public and the officers in the Department.

I invite Honourable Members who know the department to go and visit it now. They will see that there has been a nice redesign of the interior of the office done by MTW. The work has been completed and this \$148 000 is needed to complete our payments in respect of all the work that has recently been done. Really there remains in the new financial year to do something about the exterior of the building. I think Honourable Members will agree that the exterior of the Immigration Department really looks grimy. It is in need of sandblasting to clean it off, get rid of the fungus and paint it nicely.

I have also authorized that we change the entrance and have a nice modern inviting and friendly entrance to the Department. We will undertake those kinds of works in the new financial year so I am asking for the House's approval for these funds to pay for the works at the Immigration Department.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, just a few simple questions. The first relates to the question of the movement of graduates of the University of the West Indies from territory to territory which, as I understand, was one of the agreements of either the Heads of Government or the leaders of the OECS countries, I do not remember which, but it is something that was due for implementation on January 1.
2.55 p.m.

I wanted to find out what stage it was at and whether it is likely that any or all of the territories will be able to implement it by a specific date and to say I think it is a very sensible decision and one which should be introduced without delay, and certainly something that graduates of the University of the West Indies of all ages and stages would be happy to benefit from.

The second point relates to something I have noted recently. I went to St. Lucia with my wife and when we arrived at the airport she merely had to show her passport and walk straight through the airport. In Barbados we have to fill out a very long immigration card. There are other territories I go to as well in which the system which the Americans use, where you just look at the passport, is acceptable. I understand fully why there is need for immigration cards, but for travel in the Caribbean is there not a more simple method that can be utilised, particularly for citizens of a country or CARICOM nationals? It seems as though there are more impediments, or there is more bureaucracy in travelling into an island like Barbados than there is in many other Caribbean territories and it has been very noticeable to me in very recent times, except for Trinidad, of course, which you may be lucky if you find any Immigration Officer on duty when you arrive at the airport anyway. Apparently they summon them by bell, but there are other pleasures associated with travelling there. The point is, I was wondering if the Minister might be able to tell us in particular about those two matters which are very important.

The immigration card which is presently used in Barbados I know was changed and was approved by the previous Cabinet. I was a Cabinet Member when it was approved, but it is only that one has the daunting task of having to fill it out; it is the most tedious immigration card travelling any part of the world that one has to fill out. Unless that information is being used for purposes which I have not detected yet, then I would like to suggest that perhaps it may be a good idea to review it and to simplify those procedures for travel into Barbados.

Hon. Sir HAROLD St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am interested also in the implementation of the agreement among CARICOM countries with respect to graduates and I would like to know what progress has been made, not only in Barbados but in the other countries. My understanding of it though is that subsequent to the decision that was taken with respect to graduates of the University of the West Indies, it was pointed out that there were tertiary institutions in the Caribbean other than the University of the West Indies, graduates of the community colleges in various territories, and in Jamaica an institution originally known as CAST, but now known as the Technical University. At least I have seen some advertisements which would suggest to me that the status of

that institution has changed in the same way as the polytechnics in the United Kingdom have **changed** into universities,

I am fairly clear in my mind that subsequent to the decision actually being taken by the then Heads of Government, some **kind** of review had been **agreed** to at a subsequent Heads of **Government meeting**. I would **like** to know what the position is, because I am one of those who share the view that if the intention is that the graduates of the University of the West **Indies** should be given these special privileges, it should be extended to **all** graduates of tertiary institutions, for the very simple reason that some of these graduates are **more** likely to remain in the Caribbean and be interested in **working** in careers with institutions that span the whole of the **Caribbean**. It must also be remembered that the **University of the West Indies** itself is fairly restricted in **the** number of programmes it has across various disciplines.

His Honour R. D. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, I just want the Minister to bring us up to date on some matters. We have people in the constituency who have been living in Barbados for quite some time and a lot of them have been here without ever having any **kind** of status. Quite often they approach me because they have children born in Barbados, some of them **carry I.D.** cards but they find when they leave and are coming back into Barbados they have problems. A lot of them **ask** me what they can do, because they are afraid of going into the Immigration Department for fear of being deported. There are a lot of them from St. Vincent and St. **Lucia**, and most recently a lot from Guyana, and I would like the Minister to bring us up-to-date on what **these** people can do. I know at one time in a previous administration they were given a period to come in and....

Aside.

His Honour R. D. MARSHALL: - 1978, but I would like to know exactly what these people can do.

Thank you.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, first of all the matter of the graduates of the University, the position is as follows: I do not have a file in **front** of me so I am going to tell you from the best of my knowledge and belief, which is as recent as last week. The **Ramphal** Commission, among its several worthwhile recommendations, did recommend that there should be freedom of movement throughout CARICOM of graduates of the region. The Heads of Government last year mandated the respective Ministers with responsibility for these matters to prepare legislation for introduction into Parliament in January of 1995. After the decision of the

Heads of **Government**, CARICOM then retained Professor Carnegie from **Cave Hill** to **research** the matter, prepare the papers and to do a draft Bill. Professor Carnegie did draft a Bill for **the** movement of **skilled persons** throughout the region hassle free. As lawyers, some of us know that there are different opinions and so there were different opinions as to whether the Carnegie Bill should have been implemented **as** drafted or whether merited amendment,

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition wanted to **know** if any countries may have done anything about it. Grenada and Dominica have implemented the legislation. I understand that Jamaica is proposing to do theirs by administrative action. Barbados has drafted a Bill which differs from the Carnegie draft and is substantially shorter. We saw that we only needed to amend our Immigration Act in the manner **proposed** by the parliamentary draughtsmen in Barbados and that would give effect. Before the Prime Minister went to the inter-sessional meeting week before the last in Guyana, he met with the parliamentary draughtsmen and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs to go through the Bill in the light of certain comments we have had from the CARICOM **Secretariat**, and the position is that the Prime Minister has told CARICOM and his colleagues that Barbados will shortly be enacting that legislation.

Realistically, I **would** say that having regard to the Estimates debate next week, no sitting of the House the week after, this Bill will more than likely come in April, even though I have to be away for at least two weeks in April, but other people can deal with it, so it will most probably come to **the** House in April. The fact is, therefore, that Barbados has a draft **Bill** which is not in the same terms as the Carnegie draft, but which we feel will do the job and provide for freedom of movement between graduates and **skilled** persons in the region. As I conceive it, when I read the first Carnegie draft it did not seem to apply to those of us who are graduates of universities other than Cave Hill, and I made it clear that as far **as** the Barbados Bill is concerned - the Carnegie draft did not specify that, it limited it to within the area, and if I wanted to leave Barbados and work in Jamaica it would not apply to me - so **as far as** Barbados is concerned I am giving the House the assurance that what will be included in the Bill, subject to Cabinet's approval, because it has not gone to Cabinet yet, is provision that graduates of any recognised university, not **limited** to the University of the West **Indies**, who are CARICOM nationals will have the right to move around.

I do not think people need to fear a flood of other CARICOM nationals into Barbados. Let us think it out. No graduate is going to leave Jamaica and come to Barbados unless he knows he is coming to a job. He is not just going to come and bum around. And certainly no Barbadian is going to leave here and go to St. Vincent to cool out.

I am not trying to reflect on the quality of service or life or anything like that. I think people will go if they **know** there is a job that they are going to. It is different from going on a holiday. This is to provide opportunity for work hassle free.

3.05 p.m.

Now, on the ED Card, Sir. This ED card is really a problem. As the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said, they had done an ED card which was published and then by the time we took over there was need to amend that because the airlines association had not agreed with everything and the previous Chief Immigration Officer was to have got a new ED card done. I think it would have been early 1995. There was a meeting of the Airlines Association, Travel Agents Association, Chief Immigration Officer and the Head of the Department of Statistics and one or two other people. I cannot now remember all, Sir. They had not been able to agree on a form of ED card for months. It was causing problems because as Honourable Members on the other side would know the private sector had agreed with the previous Government to provide financing for the computerisation of the Immigration Department which would simplify the procedure under which they could get drawbacks of duty and the whole idea was that when the person came to the airport and you showed your ED card a part would be torn off at the bottom like when you go to the States and the bottom part is torn off and stuck into your passport. That would then be put into a little satchel on which would be the names of the private sector places that were offering duty **free** prices. You would put it in your pocket and when you went into town to shop you would go to Cave Shepherd or Louis Bayley or whoever, present the piece of the ED card on which would be the number and this would then be written down or put in a computer, fed back to the Immigration computer and ultimately the supplier would get back his drawback of duty within a month of the transaction going through.

Now that proved difficult to implement for a number of reasons. First of all the National Union of Public Workers complained that to ask an Immigration Officer when he stamped the ED card on both sides and tore off the bottom piece to put that in the satchel and give the passenger was not part of the responsibility of an Immigration Officer. They subsequently agreed that there was no big thing in it and indeed there was none and we got over that.

The Department of Statistics argued that they wanted all of this information: How long did you stay in Barbados? Did you stay in a guest house, a condominium? All of this you would see on the ED card. From that information their estimate of how much money is spent by a person who stays in Barbados is vital, not only for

statistical information, but for the Central Bank and themselves to estimate revenue. We tried to cut out some of the things they had. We were able to shorten it and it is still that length because these departments say they want all of this.

I absolutely agree 100% with the Leader of the Opposition. It is really a tedious job having to fill out answers to so many questions. You go into big countries who have problems with bombings and all types of things and in England you just fill up 4 or 5 lines and that is that. A meeting is being called shortly which involves the Caribbean Tourism Organisation because they also have an interest in the statistics. It is accepted on all sides that the statistical information that can be distilled from the ED card is important to many organisations. The Ministry of Tourism here has a pressing need for the information. The Caribbean Tourism Authority say they need it. The Statistical Department say they need it so we are bringing together everybody shortly, within another week, to **fine-tune** and to see if we cannot -

- (a) shorten the card, and
- (b) more importantly, get the information out more speedily now that we have started the process of **computerisation** of the Immigration Department.

Now that process is not complete because, and this I only found out two Tuesdays ago in here, apparently it had been the original decision of the previous administration that when the Immigration Department was computerised virtually all of the data entry operators from the Statistical **Department** would go to Immigration on transfer to put in the information that has to be included to get the system up and running. Suffice it to say that all of them have not gone but we have taken on, from the Statistical Department or have had released from them to the Immigration Department, I think there are about 6 or 7 of them, the point being that if we get all of them as Data Entry Operators in the Immigration Department and the computerised system is up and running you produce one set of information which is then passed on to Statistics, Ministry of Tourism, Central Bank, whoever. But right now the system is not fully manned and you will see in the Estimates that we do have provision for additional computers which will help us speed up things.

As soon as the system is fully operational we expect that some of these problems will go away or all of them will go away and everybody should be able to get the information within a month. At the moment for arrivals we are up-to-date to January. For departures however, we are in arrear to November and a consequence of that is that we are still unable to give the private sector the service that it was always intended should be rendered to them. I must say that I am deeply grateful to the private sector

for the forbearance and the tolerance which they have shown in this matter because the private sector is paying a substantial amount by way of interest in respect of the equipment and they are still not getting the benefit of the service.

We hope that by June, that is the date that was **targetted** and agreed at the last meeting at which I was present three weeks ago with the people from the duty **free** sector, we agreed that by June 1, we would be in a position to have the system running as was originally conceptualised. That is the best information I can give Members on that. Grenada and Dominica have implemented the skilled persons movement legislation.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central asked about persons without status. Sir, last year I had the support of the Opposition for a proposal that we offer a kind of amnesty, **without** calling it amnesty, to persons who had been in Barbados without proper documentation for a long period. Several debates took place between November, 1994 and the Estimates debate last year, when we made it clear that all CARICOM persons who have been here before September, 1992 and who do not have status in Barbados under the Immigration Act must go to the department and get the forms and apply for **status**. That Act of going to the department and applying for status will not make you liable to **deportation** or a hassle. Admittedly, in October, 1994 some zealous, exuberant or enthusiastic officers tried to scramble up people all round the country and hustled them into the department. I put a stop to that. It is now understood that if you have been here before September 1992 go and get your form, fill it **out** and so long as you have not been engaged in any criminal or immoral or illegal conduct you will be granted a form of status and more than likely permission to reside and work for 3 years or 2 years in the first instance.

3.15 p.m.

Sir, I hope that clarifies the position and, in any event, Government is working on a White Paper in relation to Immigration. The draft is almost ready and that will be available sometime in the early summer I hope. What we have taken the opportunity to do is to be as transparent as possible with Immigration. We want to set out the general principles that will apply for each kind of status. You are **entitled** to citizenship if you qualify as 1, **2, 3** or 4 or pennanent resident if you satisfy 1, 2, 3 and 4; you get a work permit and so on. So that lawyers who are advising people will have a document that will guide them. Where there is need to amend the legislation to reflect policy, we will do that also. But the first draft of the White Paper is nearly ready and I assure Honourable Members that we are trying to simplify things.

Another thing that I have done recently is this. I found a system which I think was promoting too much bureaucracy and it had existed for a long time but that does not make it satisfactory. Every file on immigration other than short-term work permits comes to my desk or used to come to my desk and I had to read the submissions from the department which were probably about 3 pages and I had to make a decision. Now there are thousands and some days like a Tuesday or Thursday when I am out of the office, and I get back, my in-tray is filled with about 30 or 40 files. That is just **in.migration**. It is **waste.ful** of my time. It is wasteful of the **Chief** Immigration Officer's time and it promotes too much delay. I worked it out one day that it **takes** 8 days for a file to get from the Chief **Immigration** Officer to me and get back to her. The Chief Immigration Officer sends it maybe to an AO-1 or whoever, who then has to read the thing and write a little note, then it goes up to the SAO, then to the PS and then to me. I have to send it back and I mail it straight to the CIO, but I understand that it still goes **to** the PS and then to the CIO.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: A previous Minister of Immigration in the Democratic **Labour Party**, when I told him about it, he said that it was a lot of **foolishness** and why did I not do something about it. So what we are trying to do is to give authority to the heads of sections. In the Immigration Department, you have a Chief Immigration Officer who under the system has no time at all to conceptualize, to think, to sit back and say how do I want to plan for this innovation or that **innovation**, or how should I be advising the Minister in regard to this or that. All she has to do all day is to be operating by rote, reading things and writing notes to the Minister for his recommendation for approval. No Head of Department should be doing that and her **desk** is always full, What we are doing is to agree and I have given the instruction that they have an Assistant Chief Immigration Officer. You have a Chief Deputy and then Assistant Chief, So you have an Assistant Chief who is responsible for immigrant status and you have **ACIOs** who **are** in charge of extensions and student visas. Student visas are a lot of foolishness **too**. Every year a fellow is going to Cave Hill and he has passed his second year, he is coming back for the third year and his thing has to come up to the Minister to approve for him to continue. That is rubbish, waste and nonsense. So we are cutting out all of that and saying that those various heads of sections, where application is straightforward, can sign in the name of the Chief Immigration Officer. It does not even have to go to her. Where there is doubt in their mind, then go to the Chief and if necessary to the Minister. But routine things like all of the ones we get from Cave Hill with so many to be done, just do the thing. But up to a month ago, they were all having to come through. So we are trying to remove much of the bureaucracy. I had feedback from the

department last week that the officers are very, very happy with the new system and I have no doubt that it will save some of the time. But during the Estimates we can **talk** about other matters. In the Service, there is a general **problem** not limited to the Immigration Department, It is the question of exercise of discretion and the desire to hold on to the exercise of discretion...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No, no. **Stinkeroo** did not involve any exercise of discretion. Mount **Stinkeroo** did not involve any exercise of discretion. That involved the payment of money from the Ministry of Finance to the Ministry of Health. There was no discretion in that. That is a question of priority. It is a question of priority or a question to let him take the blows from me.

So, **Mr.** Chairman, I think that I have answered all of the concerns of Honourable Members and I beg to move that Head 28 stand part.

The question that Head 28 do now stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
3.25 p.m.

HEAD 35 – MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
FOREIGN TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL
BUSINESS – \$513 425

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: This is a consequence of recent legislation for increases in salary. \$513 425 is required to pay increases of staff salaries and allowances in the overseas missions for the **period** 1995-96. The substantive Minister is not here and I beg to move that Head 35 stand part.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: **Mr.** Chairman, Sir, I truly regret that the substantive Minister is not here and I will not impose any pressure on the acting Minister of Foreign Affairs. I presume he is acting.

Anyhow, Sir, I would like the Attorney General to ask the Minister when she comes back to be ready when we come to Estimates to give us some substantive information about some matters relating to the overseas missions. I am concerned that persons who will be paid out of the amounts we are voting now have been languishing in their homes on a daily basis in New York ever since we sold the house at Pelham. Those persons have had no substantive work and are being paid to stay home. The cook and the other staff at Pelham have nowhere to go and nothing to do. The Government cannot sever them because the severance payments would be too high. The Minister knows everything, but she doesn't seem to be aware of these things.

These persons have not been useful and some of them must feel a little strange that it is now a considerable **time** since the Minister came in here and fulminated about how she is bringing a new and different paradigm shift in foreign policy. She came here and made foreign policy seem...

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am sending a message. If you are willing to defer the Resolution until she comes, I will do that, but I am merely sending a message via the Attorney General. The Attorney General says he is a good messenger when necessary. There is no reason why 2 foreign ministers should be in the backseat, who should never be in the **backseat**... That is one of the problems with this Government. Two experienced former foreign ministers are sitting in the backseat, but not today.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It would not be fair. I am serious about this. I really believe that the Minister when she comes... **Are** you sure that the Minister is not in Barbados? Are you sure that the Minister did not know that this was coming and decided it was better to take whatever leave she can take?

Quite seriously, I don't understand why we were selling Pelham, but we knew that we were selling and we were going to be looking for a new place for the ambassador to live. It has been some considerable **time** since the ambassador was appointed. He is living, as I understand it, in a hotel and he is not the only one, or this is not the first time. Ever since the Barbados Labour **Party** came to office most of the senior people who were appointed have been living in hotels. The one in London has also been up to very recently living in a hotel. The residence of the Deputy in London has not been made available to him for some considerable time.

I don't want to put the Attorney General to any difficulty, but I am saying more particularly to New York that concerning these persons who are not working, I think we should do the proper thing if it is not envisaged. As I understand it, the arrangements which are being made are not acceptable to the Ambassador. My understanding is that we appointed the Consul-General to be the chief property comptroller and searcher, which is not unreasonable or unusual because Consuls-General usually have a responsibility for this kind of thing. However, the Consul-General has identified a property which he thinks the Government should buy, but the Ambassador says he doesn't want to live there and his wife doesn't want to live there and it really causes me some stress that after 30 years of independence we are still going through these kinds of manoeuvres.

When the Minister comes next week, let the Minister come down here **prepared** to give serious answers to these very vexing questions, because the whole question of real estate in North America has been mishandled to the question of our movement to **801, 2nd Avenue** I would like some serious answers. I am not going to seek to embarrass the Attorney General, because he could possibly have the information but is not properly briefed on the matter; but there **are** some serious concerns about the whole question of accommodation.

I want some details on this, Sir, and I am going to look forward to hearing **from** the Minister when she comes to the Estimates.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, let me give the Honourable Member the assurance that I will draw his concerns and strictures to the substantive Minister.

In London, the Deputy High Commissioner is still occupying the flat upstairs of the Embassy. It was completely redone and I understand that very good progress was made. The residence of the former Deputy High Commissioner at 58 Donnington Road was **left** in a terrible state. It is up for sale and I heard that they have actually identified a purchaser and with the money from that they are going to find somewhere for the gentleman.
3.35 p.m.

As to New York, I do not know anything. I do not go to New York. I do not like New York so I would not know what is happening there. I have not been to New York for about 10 years. I do not want to go.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the Honourable Member would give way and let me explain what is happening in New York, and before that, let me say that I am disappointed that we have not been able to utilise the house that was occupied by the late great Sir Frank Worrell **as** a kind of permanent place to acknowledge the great fusion which occurred between Frank **Worrell's** living in London and functioning for Barbados. I really believe that we should not dispose of that house as a people. That house should be earmarked as a place of national interest. I do not believe that where Frank Worrell spent most of his adult life should just simply be **obliterated**. I do not think the cost of **re-quiring** that house was beyond the Government but it is the Government's watch and they must **decide** what they are going to do.

In New York what is happening is this. We sold the house at Pelham. I think we sold the house because we were trying to catch at the price which we got for the house. We made a great profit from selling the house in Pelham. It is not a great profit but we purchased it for US\$110 000 and we sold it for US\$850 000. It looks like a great price but if we keep the Ambassador living in

a hotel for over a year when we net out the actual cost of having him function the way he is functioning we will find that any profits which we made from selling the house in Pelham will have been frittered away. Furthermore, it is time we stop catering to the idiosyncrasies of each person who is appointed to these Heads of Mission posts. If every **Government** each time a new person is appointed is going to go and find a new set of arrangements to settle that person, all we are going to do is one Government or the other every four years making some adjustment. I have no sympathy whatever with this feeling that some persons like living in Manhattan. Some persons do not like living anywhere. People lived in Pelham for 30 years as Ambassadors. Suddenly it was felt we had to live in Manhattan.

Aside,

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Some people like dogs and some do not like dogs, I think that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can have a policy which should be articulated to persons who are being offered jobs. If you **are** going to be Ambassador coming with this job is living in such and such a place. I am not now casting any aspersions on the present incumbent. I am just saying that it is about time. The former Ministers of Foreign Affairs all will agree in principle with what I am saying. This business of having to make new arrangements every time we get a new Government, every time we get a new ambassador, does not make sense.

The three people who are on the staff for the ambassador are languishing at home. They do not go to work in the morning. They wake up in the morning and they must feel some sense of inadequacy waiting for six or seven months without any kind of work, and we have to pay them. They have not been sent on special leave but they have the same internal considerations as those unfortunate persons who have been sent on special leave.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to move, Sir, that Head 35 stand part.

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

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

On the separate motions of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I wish to give notice and to seek the leave of the House to rescind, as soon as possible today, a Resolution dated February 23, 1996 by which the House had approved an Order which was called the "The Senate and House of Assembly (Remuneration and Allowances of Members) Order, 1996. I wish to rescind that Resolution and in its place to substitute the Resolution which has been circulated. I will explain why, Sir. Perhaps, if I explain why we are seeking to have the Resolution rescinded, there would be no need for debate.

Mr. Speaker, what I have to say is not really a reflection either on you or the Leader of the Opposition. I certainly must not be taken to be imputing negligence to either one of you, Sir, but when the...

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure I can speak for the Honourable Member. It goes to show that two such members never bother about those things.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: When the original Resolution came and the Order was passed, I think none of us, and as you have said, because – who was it that did not care for those things in Latin? I cannot remember who it was now – *Cicero non curat...* I cannot remember. I think it was Galileo.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, when the original Resolution came here, the salary for the Speaker was shown at \$67 220 for the financial year 1995/96. That for the Leader of the Opposition was shown at \$69 236. Now it becomes clear that they were errors, Sir. If I am not mistaken, I think the Opposition voted against those salaries, but now the error has been found. I also wish to say that the error also affects the Chairman of Committees. I do not know if he realised we were short changing him, so that it is to ensure that Your Honour, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Chairman of Committees are paid the correct salaries that we have to rescind...
3.45 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: No money has been paid out yet, Sir. We are asking that we rescind the earlier Resolution of February 23, 1996 with a view to doing the corrections.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I just wish to indicate that the House is aware of our position relative to this matter. Since we had voted against it we

have no problem with it being rescinded, but I do not know what is my correct salary because I do not have any trade union representing me. Even if I did, what my view is about what my salary should be is not necessarily the view the trade union would be likely to reach agreement with the Government on. I am only rising to correct the impression which the Acting Leader of the House may have been giving, that I may know what my correct salary is. Only the Government and those unions that agreed, even those who were dragged in kicking and screaming, would know what the correct salaries are, but as I said, we are not going to stand in the way of the Government correcting an error like this. I know that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is not to blame, so perhaps I should speak on your behalf now, Mr. Speaker, since you cannot speak, since they are correcting something that would affect you. I am glad that they have done it as quickly and as speedily as they have done it, but the Democratic Labour Party did not support the salary settlement and therefore our position has not changed on that matter.

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

ORDER NO. 10 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
SENATE AND HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
(REMUNERATION AND ALLOWANCES
OF MEMBERS) ORDER, 1996

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass. This is a consequential Resolution. It was found out in the Other Place that the figures were wrong and they did not debate it, so we are asking that this Resolution do now pass.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: My understanding, Sir, is that an Order was made by the Minister of a given date some time in the past. That Order only becomes effective if it is approved by the House of Assembly. The House approved it and during the period between then and now that Order as approved by the House was the Order. We, a minute ago, passed a Resolution rescinding that Order, so the *status quo ante* remains. There was no Order in place once we had rescinded. This new Order which was signed by the Minister comes before the House now to be approved and it is being approved with a retroactive date. The Minister has signed an Order which we are now going to approve, so his Order will have no effect until we agree on it. If we do not agree the Order does not come into effect.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: We will record the dissent as before.
3.55 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes Government business for today. I am about to move the adjournment of the House and in doing so I wish to say that earlier today I received a letter from the Leader of the Opposition requesting an opposition date between the time of Estimates and the Budget where Private Members' Business can be debated, **Sir**. I wish to assure the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that the Government will view this request favourably and **make** sure that we fix a time, which time would seem to be some time in April that is convenient to the Leader of the Opposition. I know he has to travel so whatever date is convenient the Government will do it. The **Prime** Minister has also indicated something else about which we will not speak of at this moment.

Mr. Speaker, next Monday we would wish to commence the debate on the Appropriation Bill and the Estimates. It is normal that the Thursday meeting would

start some time in the **afternoon**. I am not in a position now to say exactly when but more ~~than~~ likely some time around 2.00 **p.m.** You would come down for lunch and then start at 2.00 **p.m.** Otherwise, with the **concurrence** of the Opposition, it is proposed to start at 10.00 o'clock on Monday because the Leader of the Opposition has to travel and we want to facilitate his travel and give him an opportunity to speak on the second reading of the **Bill**.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I ~~am~~ moving, Mr. Speaker, that this House do now adjourn until Monday 18th of March at 10.00 o'clock in the morning.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. Speaker adjourned the House accordingly.
4.00 p.m

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MARSHALL, His Honour R. D. (St. Michael West
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