

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 - 99

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, November 25, 1997

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.20 a.m. on Tuesday, November 25, 1997.

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., (Econ.),

J.P.

Hon. 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)

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

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

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tourism and International Transport) (Leader of the House)

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

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

Hon. G. W. PAYNE, (Minister of Public Works, Transport and Housing)

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

Mr. D. CARTER (Chairman of Committees)

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.

Mr. H. F. LASHLEY

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B., (Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tourism and International Transport)

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

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

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, LL.B. (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture)

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL, B.Sc. Econ. (Hons.), M.A. (Public Finance)

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, November 11, 1997.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes for November 11, 1997 have been circulated. I beg to move that they be confirmed subject to any motion for amendment to the same Minutes.

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 YOUR HONOUR

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to report that I am in receipt from the Accountant-General of the Accounts and Statements for the month of June, 1997.

PAPERS

Rt Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 20) Order, 1997.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I am to advise that the Reply to Parliamentary Question, No. 50 asked by the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South is ready.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 6 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
BORROWING OF \$750 000 FROM EDGHILL
ASSOCIATES LIMITED FOR THE PURPOSE OF
CONSTRUCTING A JETTY AT SPEIGHTSTOWN
ST. PETER

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, sometime in 1995 a high level meeting was held to discuss public/private sector partnerships. There are a large number of infrastructural and other activities that have historically been regarded as activities that can only be carried out by the State: the building of roads, the building of airports, the building of jetties, the construction of water facilities and the like. Increasingly, it has come to be realised that a large number of those infrastructural activities lend themselves to being the subject of public/private sector partnerships.

If I may illustrate, Sir, it is conceived, for example, that the cruise pier to be erected for the purpose of accommodating the mega cruise ships in Barbados should be constructed on a build, operate and transfer basis, an arrangement under which the private sector will build the pier, operate it under terms to be agreed and at some stage transfer the pier they have built back to public ownership.

Sir, the field of public/private sector partnership opens a whole range of new ways of doing old business and the opportunity for us to start exploring this range of new ways of doing old business - which is something the Government is anxious to press on with.

This matter pertaining to the erection of a jetty in Speightstown is central to the restoration of Speightstown. Speightstown used to be a thriving urban centre when agriculture in rural Barbados was strong and when Speightstown also had a strong fishing community. But it is clear to us that the future of Speightstown lies not in its past role as a fishing community, but lies in its future role as an important centre for heritage tourism. Since the early 1990s, the Speightstown Task Force has been examining plans to improve the infrastructure of Speightstown to enable it to optimise the potential it has of broadening its income and employment base through bringing on stream new heritage tourism related activity.

The judgment that the Government received from the public sector planners was that it was going to take us ten years to build a jetty in Speightstown and to restore to Speightstown a character it once had, namely, a seafaring town with jetties dominating its facade. We were told it was going to take us ten years to carry a project through feasibility and otherwise. What we have sought to do is to expose the redevelopment of Speightstown to the use of public/private sector partnerships.

What has happened here, basically, Sir, is that the private sector has agreed to proceed to build a jetty in Speightstown. We will certify the cost up to \$750 000 and allow the private sector to write off the cost of this particular venture from its future tax liability. This is what this is about. The State has not spent a penny. The private sector has gone in, built the jetty within two years within cost, and all we are asking Parliament to do now is to treat it as an interest free loan by the private sector to the Government with the loan being written off over a ten-year period between 1997 and the year 2007. That, Sir, is the simple background to this. We are pressing- public/private sector partnerships into use in a creative way.

I would simply seek, Sir, to ask the House to endorse the matter that is before us and treat this as a special loan for the purpose as I have outlined it.

I beg to move, Sir, that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ORDER NO. 10 - TO MOVE THAT THE HOUSE
RESOLVE ITSELF INTO COMMITTEE OF
SUPPLY TO CONSIDER THE GRANT
OF SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE
SERVICE OF BARBADOS

*On the motion of Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, seconded
by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, the House resolved itself into
Committee of Supply, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.*

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable House is in
Committee of Supply.

RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$10 698 845
FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND TO SUPPLE-
MENT THE ESTIMATES 1997-98 AS SET OUT IN
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 11 HEAD 35 -
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TOURISM AND
INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, having
consulted with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I
would beg your leave to disaggregate from this Head all
matters pertaining to accommodation. It would appear, Sir,
and I have discussed this matter with Honourable Members
on the Other Side, that there is another party interested in
the property just off Trafalgar Square, Craven Street,
London which we are pursuing to replace the present
property at 1 Great Russell Street. It is really a very
excellent property, in move-in condition. It is the
equivalent of a National Trust building, very central, well
located and, to use a Barbadian phrase, Sir, we are being
backraised. There is only a certain point to which the
Government would feel that it could up the ante in the
interest, of course, of Barbados. But this matter, at the last
moment, remains in an unsettled state. It would therefore
be most inappropriate for us to come before the House in
pursuance of the Supplement as set out. I am seeking to
delete from this request for supplementary provision all
references to properties, structures and furnishings
therefore. What we would pursue would be under General
Management Co-ordination and Overseas Missions in the
sum of BDS\$806 132. In respect of this, Sir, the major part
of the commitment here has to do with activities which the
Government - and I am pleased to say that the Opposition
as well and indeed all of CARICOM - has undertaken in
the attempt to canvass for the candidature of that most
distinguished son of Barbados, Sir George Alleyne for the
post of Director-General of the World Health Organisation.
11.30a.m.

As Honourable Members are aware, Sir George is
presently the Director of the Pan American Health

Organisation and last Tuesday, the 18th November,
nominations closed for the post of the Director-General of
the World Health Organisation and there are seven
candidates of whom Sir George Alleyne is one. There is
more than one Commonwealth candidate. Among the
candidates is Dr. Gro Brundtland, former Prime Minister of
Norway. There is also another director of one of the
regions of the World Health Organisation and PAHO, of
course, is a regional office of WHO. The African Director,
Dr. Samba, is also a candidate and there is an Indonesian,
Dr. Uton Rasei who is a candidate. Dr. Nafis Sadik of
Pakistan who is the Director of the United Nations
population fund is also a candidate and there is another
candidate from this region, from Bolivia, a Dr. Fernando
Antezana, who is connected with the outgoing Japanese
administration and I am pleased to say that we are at a
place where we can say without fear of too much
contradiction that Sir George Alleyne is really the regional
candidate of the Americas.

We are gathering support from other regions and I am
to inform the House, Sir, that many activities have been
undertaken and I believe that Honourable Members would
be glad to know that the Honourable Member for St.
Michael West, who is a former Minister of Health and was
Minister of Health at the time that Sir George became
Director of the Pan American Health Organisation, and
presently chair of a committee which is doing important
work at the World Health Organisation and by virtue of its
chairmanship has significant access and good connections
with Africa. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West
very willingly agreed to help in this campaign and has
indeed visited Africa and has been giving assistance and
advice in this campaign.

This is a campaign, Sir, where the entire CARICOM
has endorsed Sir George Alleyne and even the wider
CARICOM, the ACP indeed has endorsed Sir George
Alleyne. Our colleagues in Jamaica and in The Bahamas
and in particular our colleagues in Guyana are campaigning
indeed as assiduously as we are in Barbados in an attempt
for the first time ever to place a Caribbean person at this
high level in one of the U.N. family of agencies.

I want to bring the House up-to-date on some of the
activities which we have undertaken in this connection. Let
me first say, Sir, that the World Health Organisation is
unlike any other of the U.N. agencies in that its 32 member
board elects the leader. Barbados, of course, is a member
of the Board and what, we have been doing in the past
several months very hard is campaigning the other 31
members of the Board. A few countries - because there are
countries who are members, it is not individuals - a few
other countries which we deemed as highly influential,
even though not members of the Board like the United
States and France who are highly influential, are

also campaigning. It was highly gratifying to us in this region that Prime Minister Chretien of Canada came up and openly declared for Sir George Alleyne and in addition to that has offered to help us in the campaign and that process is on the way.

President Cardoso of Brazil who was visited by Sir George about three weeks ago has also pledged support for Sir George Alleyne, the Barbados candidate and has pledged the support of Brazil in the business and the process of campaigning. These are countries with tremendous influence well beyond their regions.

In this region, Sir, the Ambassador at Caracas, Her Excellency Teresa Marshall has visited Brasilia and Buenos Aires and has met with Ministers of Health and Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Argentina is on the Board and Argentina has now committed its support to candidate Sir George Alleyne. Peru is also a member of the Board. The Honourable Minister of Health, the Honourable Member for St. James South, has written on more than one occasion to all of her counterparts in the other 31 countries as indeed I have written to all of my counterparts as Foreign Minister in all of the other 31 countries and some of the other influential countries as well and Prime Minister, the Rt. Honorable Member for St. Peter has also been writing for a second time to his counterparts. Where support has been pledged we have been writing letters of thanks and urging that those who will support us will help us in the campaign process.

The strategy here, Sir, is that where countries have pledged their support other than to Sir George Alleyne we are asking that in the event that there is a second ballot - and we believe that it will come to a second ballot and possibly a third - but in the event of a second and subsequent ballot that support would come to us. The Africans have advised us that they will throw their support - there are seven votes in Africa and they will throw their support behind their candidate Dr. Samba - but to our knowledge the Africans are not campaigning with any enthusiasm outside of Africa and we have asked both the Francophone and Anglophone Africans for their support for Sir George Alleyne on a second ballot.

We are much heartened at the support that is coming to Sir George Alleyne from the Eastern Mediterranean. Bahrain and Egypt are promising second ballot support and Cyprus, the United Arab Emirates and Oman are very supportive. Sir George has very recently visited Japan and Egypt and, in the Gulf he has been to Tokyo, Cairo, Oman, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. In this kind of campaign, Barbados cannot hope to spend the kind of money that other countries can to offer the kind of inducements that other countries can and do, but we are very much depending on the fact that we feel that we have

the best candidate in terms of professional and technical confidence.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, no one, no one better than Sir George Alleyne and even some of those who have competing candidates agree that on professional and technical competence, on those grounds, Sir George Alleyne is the best candidate. We know of course in these matters, Sir, that political considerations enter into it but we continue to argue that because of this post, and here, Sir, I think I am entitled to speak as a former Minister of Health who, in the name of Barbados in 1979, in Russia, signed the declaration that we would aim for health for all by the year 2000. We were speaking particularly of primary health care and we were talking of course of access to primary health care to all by the year 2000. 11.40a.m.

I regret, Mr. Chairman, Sir, indeed I regret as a former Minister of Education as well that the year 2000 would be upon us and that it must be an indictment that neither will we have achieved literacy for all by the year 2000 nor access to primary health care for all by the year 2000. What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, Sir, is that there is a great deal of work that has to be done in the early twenty-first century and that Sir George has a very fine grasp, particularly bearing in mind his 16 years working with the Pan American World Health Organisation. He has a very fine grasp of the priorities and of the needs of the developing countries of the world. But that is not all, because as Director-General of the World Health Organisation one cannot only be dealing with the developing countries. Particularly in these last years as Director of the Pan American World Health Organisation in the Americas Sir George has honed, I think, to a very fine art his working on the interface between the developed and the developing countries.

We insist in our campaign that it cannot be that for this particular post exclusively political considerations should come into play and that considerations which speak to professional and technical competence have to be considered by the board when it meets to elect in January of next year.

The 32-member Board of the World Health Organisation has done something really in my experience which is very interesting in the UN family of agencies. The World Health Organisation's Board has set out its own 7-point criteria as to what it would wish to see in an incoming Director-General who would be expected to take the organisation into the twenty-first century. In that regard, Sir, I am very pleased to say that Sir George answers all of the criteria and admirably so.

In addition to that the Board has made it plain that it wishes to interview a short list of candidates when it

meets in the back end of January of next year prior to the actual election. We believe, those of us who certainly have seen Sir George articulating his vision - we have put out a brochure which I will have circulated to all Members of Parliament, prepared by Sir George, setting out his vision for the organisation, setting out his priorities as he sees them.

Prime Minister Arthur hosted a breakfast when we were attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Edinburgh a few weeks ago and he saw, and others of us had the opportunity to see Sir George speaking to the issue.

Likewise in Geneva such an event was hosted and at the time of the UN General Assembly in early October I hosted a luncheon and again this was an opportunity for Ministers to form their own impression of the man and his vision, his dream, his competence.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, all of this costs money. There are endless overseas calls. We are running this virtually like a military campaign. We meet by conference call with all 9 Barbados Missions abroad. The Minister of Health sits in on those meetings, her Permanent Secretary and from time to time the Honourable Member for St. Michael West giving his own assistance which he brings to this campaign - there are certain expenses which have to be undertaken.

Sir George has to travel to capitals to present himself to people and to make his face known to people. It is not possible that the Foreign Minister and/or the Health Minister can be with him on all of those occasions. It is just not physically possible for a small country like ours but I think that under all of the circumstances, Sir, we are doing exceptionally well.

When the Board meets in January, Sir, it is expected that the 7 countries who have nominated candidates would all converge on the Board Meeting in Geneva for that last push because it is the Ambassadors at Geneva who have significant influence because they are where the Headquarters of the WHO is and we believe that other countries will be coming with significant delegations, delegations of 30 and 40 people. We cannot afford that but what I am hoping is that our High Commission at London and our Ambassador at Brussels - they are all very much engaged in the campaign, the Minister of Health and myself, the Permanent Secretaries in the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Health and if it suits the convenience of the Honourable Member of St. Michael West, we must all be there pushing at that meeting so a much larger than usual lobby would be expected to bear down in January at the time when the election is taking place.

We are doing, Sir, as I hope Honourable Members would have gathered from what I said, the very best that

we can. Sir George himself has said that he has never encountered a campaign like this. He has never encountered an effort like this. He brings his own personal competence, his own contacts. He is not unknown within the Commonwealth and outside of it as well and he brings that to the campaign.

I do not think we could have a better candidate to be working with and the candidate has said and said publicly that he does not think he could have a better campaign team to be working with. So that all hands are to the pump. To bring this bacon home, Sir, would be the first time, as I think I have said before, that the Caribbean would have acceded to such a high posting anywhere in the United Nations family of agencies and we very much want to do this.

In effect all that has happened, has postdated this vote in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with telephone calls particularly conference calls, Sir George having to travel to capitals, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, myself, the Honourable Minister of Health, our vote is much exhausted, Sir, and we are expecting as I say that in the next several weeks and in particular in January when the election itself is to take place, we are going to be in greater need than the vote would allow. So, Sir, apart from other small items the bulk of this sum goes to the campaign for the Director Generalship of the World Health Organisation.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, with that report of the status of the campaign I beg to move that this Head, as amended, stand part. 11.50a.m.

Mr. B. M. TATTT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, as the Honourable Member has said, this is a matter that transcends the two sides of this Honourable House. This is a matter that is unique to Barbados and perhaps the Caribbean. It is not unique to the world, because in other countries persons who function on both sides of the House or either side of the House have known that when the call of duty is there they rely almost entirely on the positives and ignore completely the negatives.

When Britain was called to war, you will remember that there was an all party cabinet to prosecute the war for Britain and the allies. The truth is that we are engaged in what for us constitutes the equivalent of a war because it is a national result which we are hoping for. For those persons who might not quite understand, because one or two people genuinely have asked me how is it possible for me to function under the aegis of the Government in this particular issue, let me say that from the moment the Government invited me to participate in the campaign I discussed it instantly with the Leader of the Opposition

and his response was like mine, "how can you say: "No".¹¹ I had said to the Government that I was sure that I would have agreement on my side and can say to you that not only at the level of the Parliamentary Group, but on the day I left to travel to South Africa, it was a day when we were having our Annual Conference and when the President announced to the Conference that I was leaving to travel on behalf of Sir George Alleyne there was loud and participative applause.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TATTT: Sir, the point I am making here is that this a call to arms, if you will, of the country as a whole and we need to be mobilised in that direction.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it was not difficult for me because when I left the Government as Minister of Foreign Affairs, I had presided over a situation where, and I could just quote you from the briefing paper which said,

"Priorities¹ 1994-1995.

- (1) to secure election by acclamation by Sir George Alleyne to Director General position at Pan American Health Organisation, lobbying to continue with active participation from missions, elections, September 1994."

Now, Sir, you are aware that the election in PAHO in 1994 occurred after I had demitted office. But, the commitment with which that policy had been set out was carried on by the succeeding Minister of Foreign Affairs with the indication of an understanding that here we were, as a country, finding ourselves in this very unique and wonderful position of having a candidate worthy of being considered *for* the highest office that any West Indian has ever been elected to in the international or regional scene at the time, the Director-General of the Pan American Health Organisation.

Mr. Chairman, the reason why we are able to join together in this effort can be said to have coalesced in an individual who is the manifestation of what constitutes Barbadianness for all of us who love this country. Especially at this time of independence, it is a pleasure to be able to say that a Barbadian, and I believe, Sir, if he was a white Barbadian we would have the same pride, well nearly the same pride, but the fact that he is a black Barbadian from a poor household somewhere in St. Philip of a generation or two ago, who came down to Bridgetown and was able to go to school and...

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes, he was a headmaster's son. I am being reminded that he was a headmaster's son and by

their standards, he could not be described as poor in the sense that many other Honourable Members might know poverty, but the fact still remains that he comes from a non-well-to-do family in St. Philip and he was able, by dint of his own natural ability and hard work to rise through all the levels to the point where we can be proud of him.

I had the privilege of masterminding his campaign for PAHO and I had the privilege of working with him in PAHO for six or seven years, working as a Minister. I had the privilege of not only seeing him move up the ranks in PAHO, but to see him spread out regionally as he was appreciated by Spanish speaking as well as English speaking members of PAHO. When one has had the opportunity to observe that kind of quality at work and one is able to say with impunity that there is one of my colleagues, there is one of my countrymen, then a call to assist in carrying this to its ultimate conclusion can only be greeted with a resounding "yes." So, I hope that it does not come as a surprise to anyone after this speech that we have reached this agreement and understanding. I think it was generous on the part of the Government to recognise that they could ask and I appreciate it. I said so to the Ministers who had come to speak with me and I think it is proper that I should accept to do the task.

I just wish to say for the benefit of one, not so enterprising columnist in Barbados, and I say, columnist to distinguish from the newspaper people, I just wish to say as far as the Government is concerned that there is no material benefit, what-so-ever, that accrues to me for this activity, at least not up to now.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I just wish us to establish that because I read in one of the newspapers how I was flying about the world and having a wonderful time. But the Honourable Minister and others know that going from, Barbados to South Africa to Mozambique and back, between Sunday and Saturday can be everything else except luxury and joy. But it is a joy in the sense that the work one went to do and continues to do and will continue to do, and I will be in Geneva in January, is because, Sir, I represent, Your Honour, my colleagues and all the other Honourable Members in here and all Barbadians who have aspirations to see Barbados reach this level.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it might not be fully appreciated what a magnificent achievement it would be, if we could pull this off. This country will not have an opportunity like this for the next 50 years. There will be no opportunity for Barbados to be considered, given the way how the distribution of posts at this level occurs in the world's arrangements. There is no likelihood for the next 50

years because there are 11 Caribbean countries and the Caribbean countries have to rotate positions and the chances are that if we would be successful on this occasion all the Caribbean could rejoice just as we are going to rejoice when Jamaica arrives in France on a given day. When Jamaica does better than anybody thinks, they have a right to expect all of us will rejoice that the Caribbean has demonstrated that we can function at the global level, at the very highest level, if we are given the opportunity and the chance. 12.00 Noon

Sir, just a word about the technical issues relating to WHO. This particular Board is not a board of governmental representatives as such. The persons who are nominated to the Board by the Government technically serve on the Board in their personal capacity. That is the technical position. Except in a few rare cases, it would be a strange bird that could believe that a person who is nominated to serve on a board at that level functions without reference to the wishes and concerns of his or her government. It would be a very strange bird who could believe that.

There may be one or two and, given the circumstances of the last election of a WHO Director General, who will exercise their personal right to vote in this election but the vast majority of the people who will participate in the actual voting as members of the Board will no doubt seek guidance from their respective governments. Indeed, there are some governments who will not have a representative on the Board but whose influence in the region and, indeed, in the World Health Organisation and other international bodies is so high that their views will be important to the results which we will get.

In that respect, Sir, I do not think the Government will mind if I uttered my own view that we would be more than grateful if the British Government would take a serious and immediate decision to support 'Sir George Alleyne. I hope that what I am saying would be transmitted via whatever medium such information is transmitted to the British Government that their failure to support Sir George Alleyne, if it should happen, would be a grave disappointment to the people of Barbados who have continually and constantly supported Britain at every turn, in every direction, and sometimes beyond the call of duty.

I find it hard to accept that Britain which is going to be on the Board - and I believe the Chief Medical Officer of the United Kingdom of Northern Ireland and Great Britain will be actually casting the ballot - I find it hard to believe that the British Government has not yet been able to say to the Government of Barbados that they are supporting Sir George Alleyne.

Sir George Alleyne is a product of British education through Barbados. All that Sir George Alleyne represents

is what the British said that they wanted to see in Barbados. Sir George Alleyne is a manifestation of the aspirations of people who grew up in his generation. Sir George Alleyne is constituted a Fellow of the Royal College and when you are a fellow of a royal college in Great Britain you have reached the apex of your career, whatever it is, whether it is music or whether it is dance or whether it is as used to be the unique situation, medicine. Now he is a knight. He is a British knight knighted through Barbados.

I find it difficult since they agreed on more than one occasion that he is the best candidate. They usually put the word "technical" in front. He is running against people who have been prime ministers. I have no quarrel. I know the Government cannot say this but how can a representative from Norway who is a non-Commonwealth person create doubt in the minds of a British Government, any British Government, and least of all a British Government which has led us all to believe that their coming to office was the dawning of a new day, a new Britain?

I feel very aggrieved but I believe that my feeling should be allayed once the British have given further consideration.

I hope that the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister will spare no effort to impress on their counterparts in the United Kingdom that this is not only a vote for a Barbadian, it is a vote for the entire Caribbean community. The fact that I am speaking about it means that it is a vote for the Opposition, the Government and, I believe that if the NDP were here, if the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central were in his seat, he would indicate that it represented his view as well. So there can be no doubt and I hope that the British Government will see fit.

In that vein, Sir, it would be helpful if the United States Government could *get off* their position and indicate that they are supporting Sir George. I feel that their failure at this point up to now to say what their position is might be operating to our detriment which they might not understand. But there are many countries that will wait for the United States to take a position before they take a position too.

Again, the United States Government has said on more than one occasion that Sir George is the best Director PAHO has had. They have indicated that they have no quarrel with the quality of the man. Therefore, we should not be spending time waiting and waiting. I hope that these two countries which between them constitute a source of serious influence in the world will recognise that in a choice between Norway and Barbados if we were going only on countries that it would be sufficient to support Barbados.

We are willing to say categorically as has been said by people of higher interest in health matters that Sir George is the best candidate in the world.

I just want to end by saying that the developing countries of the world have a right to expect something from the international system. The Nordic countries have had a Director General at WHO for more than one-third of its existence. Other nationalities, the last of which from developed countries is the current Director General from Japan, all of the Directors General have come from a developed country.

The time has come when some worthy candidate from a developing country should be given the opportunity to run the World Health Organisation. I am going to put in the record here that this unique moment has arrived when we can feel there are 7 candidates in the race and 5 of them at least can be called candidates from developing countries. I am saying that the time has come when one of those candidates ought to be the Director General of WHO. If my thesis is correct, then it should be the best of them to become the Director General of WHO. By any measure, under any circumstance it is agreed on all sides that the candidate offered by Barbados is the best by far.

For those reasons, Sir, we have a hope that not long from now, sometime in January, we can gather in this Honourable Chamber and thank God for the guidance which he has given to the election of Sir George Alleyne as the next Director General of WHO. 12.10 p.m.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Chairman, I have determined to join this debate to propose that the amount being sought be increased from \$802 000 to \$1.1 million for reasons that I will outline shortly. The reasons arise out of the most recent consultations I have had about the candidature and an assessment of what may need to be done.

Before I say anything else, Sir, I really must use this opportunity to place on record the gratitude of the Government of Barbados for the tremendous support the candidature of Sir George has received, first of all from our Caribbean neighbours. Sir George has been endorsed and adopted as a Caribbean candidate, not only with enthusiasm, but the Prime Minister of Jamaica in his capacity as Chairman of CARICOM, in his capacity as Prime Minister of Jamaica, but also in his own personal capacity has been actively canvassing for Sir George.

I must also cite as well, Sir, the Prime Minister of The Bahamas. We have now reached a level of cohesion whereby at every international meeting where the Caribbean is represented, the Caribbean Head has accepted

as an obligation and a duty to put the case for Sir George to the gathering, whatever its nature. So I really must register strongly our tremendous appreciation for the way in which the whole CARICOM area has rallied to this cause.

I must also, Mr. Chairman, single out the role that Canada has and continues to play in this particular issue. Canada has always enjoyed a special relationship with the Caribbean and the Prime Minister of Canada has not only committed Canada to support Sir George's candidature, but has also undertaken to canvass as well, and I am pleased to be able to report that at the recently concluded Heads of Government Conference in Edinburgh, one of the strongest voices speaking on Sir George's behalf was the Prime Minister of Canada.

Sir, I have listened very carefully to what the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has said about other special relationships that we have had with other countries and I really wish that the same commitment to long friendship, the same commitment to long traditional values was represented in the behaviour of other leaders.

I must also, Mr. Chairman, place on record the gratitude of the Government for the very patriotic way and also personally the enthusiastic way in which the Honourable Member for St. Michael West has accepted the appointment as Special Envoy and has discharged his duty. Sir, the reason why I am suggesting that we increase the amount is because we still have need of his services. Let this House not underestimate the very stiff uphill fight we still have to fight to ensure Sir George's election. I want to repeat that, Sir. We must not underestimate the tremendous challenge that lies ahead of us in securing the election of Sir George Alleyne.

It is beyond dispute, Sir, that he is the best candidate and that he is a candidate, if he were from a first world country, who would be saluted by the first world as a man of sterling qualities. But Barbados needs to pin the support particularly of countries in Africa for the support of Sir George's candidature.

I see, arising out of the recent meeting in Gabon, where I have had the opportunity to speak to African leaders, the need for other and additional missions to go to Africa to make sure that the work that was started through the visit of the Honourable Member for St. Michael West and others to put Sir George's case is intensified as we come closer and closer to the election.

I would obviously, Mr. Chairman, not on the Floor of the House and in public go into details about what was discussed but I just want to say, Sir, that we need seriously to redouble our efforts in Africa to make sure that we

can speak with a greater degree of probability about the success of Sir George's candidature.

I have listened very carefully, Mr. Chairman, to the words expressed by the Honourable Member for St. Michael West as regards the attitude of some of Barbados' traditional allies. I am not obviously going to reflect upon them, Sir, but just to say that we, and I want to be very careful what I am saying, recognise that countries have a sovereign right to choose but I think Sir George, the way in which he has represented his own case, and also in his own professional record and experience has more than established the credentials that are necessary for the position he is seeking.

I would like, Sir, particularly to thank the Government of Canada, and I am pointed in my reference to the Government of Canada. I would like to reemphasize that not only Barbados, but the whole CARICOM leadership greatly appreciates the way in which the Canadian Government has gone out of its way to embellish the special relationship we have with them in the way in which they have accepted and are supporting this candidature.

I want, as I close, Sir, to say only that I wish that all of our traditional allies who depend on our support in so many other fora, on so many other causes, and who get that support very often enthusiastically, could see the wisdom of supporting the very best man for a position that is so important to the international community.

I, Sir, with the Leader of the House, and in view of the fact that we have to intensify our efforts beyond what we thought we had, move that this vote be moved from \$806 000 to \$1.1 million which will enable us to mount the appropriate missions to Africa, Europe and elsewhere as necessary as the campaign for Sir George's candidature comes to an end.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, given the general consensus of the House on this matter and its importance to Barbados as a whole, I could not be silent on an issue of such great emotional and other importance for me.

In September of 1994, it was my very distinct privilege, pleasure and honour to sit at PAHO and watch the nomination of Sir George Alleyne and, indeed, be there for his election. It was the very first task that I performed for Barbados outside of Barbados. I will give full credit to the preliminary work which had been done by the previous administration.

I must confess to the Chamber, Sir, that I was filled with a tremendous sense of trepidation when the Deputy Prime Minister summoned me one day to say: "Liz Thompson, we are sending you to Washington. You must make sure that no votes which have been pledged to Barbados are lost and that defeat is not brought to us at the last minute. You must go as our Minister and our representative to vote for Sir George and to oversee this election process."

Now, having just come from overseeing matters at the law courts and practising law, I really did not know that within two weeks of my election as a Minister this task would fall to me, but armed with the very great work which had been done by the preceding Government, and with all of the experience and information that the Deputy Prime Minister could give to me, I went to Washington. I want for the record to share with this Chamber what Sir George's election was like because for those of us who are black Barbadians, for those of us who are Barbadians, a small country of 166 square miles, nestled to the east in the Caribbean sea, who are small players on the international stage, we often as Barbadians when our Ministers travel to do the work for the Government and the people of this country do not know what that task involves or what happens. 12.20 p.m.

The meeting of PAHO was extremely well attended by all of the countries that PAHO represents. The election took place towards the end of the meeting and with the countries that were to nominate Sir George everything went according to plan and they nominated him. On the day that the election was to take place, at the hour set for the election, it was apparent to all who sat there that something of great historical import, that something of great moment was about to take place. A hush fell on the assembly. There could have been perhaps 300 or 400 people there, Ministers and technocrats from all over the Americas, people speaking in various tongues, English, Spanish and the various dialects of the region, the Caribbean delegations sitting close to one another, concerned, nervous and anxious to succeed in this our task and the room filled up with Press from all over the world, with people who were curious, with PAHO staff but all silent, expectant, waiting for what was anticipated would be the election to PAHO of this Barbadian.

As the excitement began to build and the nomination process started, though there was a plan that only two people would nominate, more and more people got up spontaneously and said, Mr. Director I want to speak to this matter and people started to sing the praises of Sir George Alleyne in a way that you could not anticipate that a man of such humble beginning, from a tiny country in the Caribbean sea could have commanded such attention

and such respect in an international forum. One Minister got up and said, Mr. Chairman, I wish to move that we have no election at all, that he now be pronounced the Director by acclaim since it is the wish of everybody in this room because never before have we had such an excellent candidate and the room broke into applaud and people started cheering.

The Director said, much as it is my wish that this should also happen, the rules do not allow it so we have to vote and for the very first time in that entire meeting the delegation of Haiti came and sat in its chair and that alone brought itself tremendous spectacle to the room because Haiti was at that time in great political crisis and turmoil but they perceived this as being sufficiently important for the Caribbean that they had to be physically present in that room on that day for the only day of the meeting that they could be present.

One after one the heads of delegation went to the ballot box and dropped in a vote for this man Sir George Alleyne. When the votes were counted, every single country present had voted for Sir George Alleyne and he sat there, this humble man really not ostentatious but in tears. Then I was asked to speak on behalf of Barbados and to thank countries present for voting for him and I spoke and my comments were well received and then Sir George spoke and I became covered in goose pimples because sitting there on this platform, elected to this high office was really the best that Barbados had to offer because George Alleyne truly represented all that we have come to respect and to enjoy and to admire as the Barbados persona.

He is not only a Barbadian man but he is the most humane and charming person who you could meet. He is articulate, he is bright, he has a wonderful turn of phrase and is an excellent raconteur.

Asides.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Well, we concede that he is too a very attractive man but that apart, when he speaks, he speaks with tremendous depth to whatever subject he speaks on having been a classical scholar who then went on to do medicine. I have heard him give a speech and talk about problems in the developing world and developments in medicine and yet he started at the point when the Incas and Aztecs suffered deprivation of their native population through the introduction of the common cold by the Spaniards coming to the Americas. That is the kind of depth that he is able to bring to a subject, the kind of linkages that he is able to make for people so that you do not see disease or illness in isolation but that you understand the impact of disease on population and the extent to which a thriving population and the development of man and the development of the person can be stymied by the intervention of disease.

If Sir George Alleyne is to become Director General of the WHO, we will have to put in a tremendous amount of work to ensure that the battle is not lost but his election will represent for Barbados, not that we put out a tremendous financial effort but it will represent that Barbados has something of excellence to offer, that here is a simple person, born in relatively simple circumstances in rural Barbados who has risen to the heights of international diplomacy as an international technocrat and manager.

He is a person who has benefitted from the educational system in Barbados, born into a rural village and having what we consider to be traditional Barbadian manners like "Good Morning", the extreme courtesy that one does not often see in Barbados these days, the kind of charm that Barbadians of a certain generation bring with them. It is something in the way they carry themselves and the way they present themselves to others and this is why wherever Sir George goes and speaks at international meetings even now as he does this canvass that people are left continuously in awe at the quality of his language and the depth of his knowledge and the breadth of his skills and his sheer managerial competence.

We must, all of us, be unanimous in our support of Sir George for yet another reason. I have watched in the international fora the benefits that Latin America has been able to repatriate by placing its citizens in international organisations and financial institutions where there is funding, where there are grants, where there is technical assistance and wherever there are benefits to be had, and if we are able to elect Sir George as Director of WHO, not only do we automatically catapult Barbados a notch higher on the international scene but by having a person on that level, we can also tap in and access a source of information, of knowledge, of assistance and repatriate to Barbados some of the myriad benefits which are to be had by positioning our citizens in this way. And the Government as part of its development thrust is recognising the economic potential of citizens so positioned and is therefore making an attempt to spread its diplomatic wings, if I may use that expression, in such a way that we position not only Sir George, but other Barbadians in critical places all over the world and in international organisations where it matters. 12.30 p.m.

The WHO is one of the oldest organisations within the United Nations system. Sir George will come to the Chair, if he were to win, at a time which is crucial in the development of the world. We are from the perspective of the environment facing tremendous challenges which impact on health. On the last occasion I was in this Chamber I spoke about the effect of global warming in relation to skin cancer and the rise of the incidence of skin cancer in Australia in particular out of global warming.

But he is also coming at a time when international organisations, regional organisations, when Governments are in a position where international funding, concessionary rates, the donor agencies are drying up and all of us are being called on to manage our resources much more effectively and efficiently and where in particular in Health there are tremendous challenges caused by the new and emerging diseases, AIDS, Lupus, the re-emerging diseases, the hansen virus, ebola, and so on, tuberculosis, cholera, many of the diseases which we thought we had beaten are now coming back as severely and adversely impacting on populations particularly in the developing world.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has 2 minutes.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: We have too, Sir, a serious problem in relation to the incidence of chronic diseases and the impact of chronic diseases on communities all over the world, for chronic diseases are perhaps the major challenge to health in the world at the moment.

It is going to be critical that we have at WHO a leader with the competence of Sir George, with the experience of Sir George and the proven track record from PAHJO, who understands the problems of the developing world, who identifies with the developing world, who speaks the language that we speak, whose navel string is buried here and understands how we feel and the lie of the land where we live, who can communicate on the basis of his competence and skill with the developed world and who can command their respect and who will not bow when indeed he should stand erect.

So I am happy to lend my voice to this debate to speak in terms of what this election means for Barbados and I wish to commend to this Chamber, as indeed perhaps I do not need to because he is so widely embraced by us all, this man of such excellent scholarship and competence and to say that those who want to pray about this matter, those who like the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, the Honourable Member for the City and I who will be working on this matter, I am glad to be in the Chamber at this time when there is consensus on a matter of such tremendous national importance and on which two political organisations, normally opposed to one another, can find common ground to unite and work for the good of Barbados. In fact not just for the good of Barbados but for the good of the world because we truly believe and we speak with one voice when we say that Sir George is at this time the right person to lead the WHO. I would wish to thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 35, as amended, stand part.

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

The question that Head 35, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, seconded by Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour Mr. SPEAKER the passing of one Resolution in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the motion of the Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, seconded by Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR Head 35, as amended, in the sum of \$1.1 million was read a first and a second time and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 9 - A BILL TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THE PAYMENT OF GOVERNMENT DEBTS BY THE USE OF SERIAL BONDS

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise in this debate to introduce to this Honourable Chamber a Bill which provides for the payment of fees, economic costs as well as students tuition fees to the University of the West Indies by way of serial bonds. The legislation therefore which is before this Honourable Chamber seeks to set out for us the mechanism by which these serial bonds can legally be issued and to ensure that the serial bonds would be issued in such denominations as are required and as determined by the Minister of Finance in respect of the particular moneys due and owing, indeed, Sir, that it should have a maturity date no longer than 12 months from the date of the issue of a bond. 12.40 p.m.

Now, Sir, one of the reasons why this legislation is before this Honourable Chamber today, is that there has been a history within the University of the West Indies, particularly over the last 20 years, where successive Governments in the Caribbean have treated the matter of payment and the treatment of economic costs in a very cavalier manner sometimes and in other times have been genuinely unable to pay. As a result the university, which still has to continue to function on a day to day basis, has had over the course of these years, and very often to incur astronomical interest rates, particularly, Sir, in Jamaica where the university's centre is located and where interest rates have run as high as 40 and 45 percent within the last ten years. The university has had therefore to incur these interest rates without having the opportunity to be able to fund the deficit that would naturally accrue as a result of incurring these interest charges, Sir.

This has led to severe difficulties for the University of the West Indies and during the course of delibera-

tions which led to a review of the Governments of the university some three years ago, discussions started as to how best Regional Governments could seek to avoid this emerging situation and to put the university on a sound footing, while at the same time recognising that Governments sometimes may have genuine cash flow difficulties that may not allow them to service as potently and as expeditiously as they should, the debts which they owe to the University of the West Indies.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, Sir, we started to hold discussions, and it was agreed upon at the University Grants Committee, first of all that a mechanism which allowed for bonds to be issued to the University which could then be held for a period of time and would be negotiable and in being negotiable, would also carry interest that these could then be issued to the university so as to ensure, Sir, that even where a Government had cash flow difficulties, their liabilities will be met and the University at the same time, would not be forced to incur extraordinary interest charges in respect of the monies owed to them. Sir, invariably we are dealing with large amounts. Barbados pays what is really the third largest amount to the University of the West Indies as a Regional Government. This year in our Estimates, Sir, we have already provided some \$38 million for economic costs and we have also included a sum of \$10 million under higher educational awards for tuition fees, since this Government reaffirmed its commitment to continue to pay the tuition fees for all Barbadians attending the University of the West Indies in pursuance of undergraduate programmes.

Indeed, Sir, this policy which we have adhered to came after there was a threat that this might not have continued. One of the difficulties was that in the disaggregation of the sums owed in the amounts of economic costs and in the amounts of tuition fees, there was and has been some nervousness, because while the University has been receiving the amounts owed to tuition fees from its students, and from those Governments like ours who pay for their students, the question of economic costs continues to be one which proves to them some difficulty in collecting.

We therefore have agreed, Sir, at the University Grants Committee, that all the Regional Governments would seek to introduce legislation in their Parliaments to authorise the Governments to be able to issue serial bonds to be able to effect a true commitment to our obligations and to ensure that the University would not suffer financially as a result of our inability to pay. To date, Sir, this represents the implementation of the commitment of the Government of Barbados at the University Grants Committee over the course of the last year.

Indeed, Sir, I am instructed that this Bill which is before this Honourable Chamber, should it pass, would in

fact become the model which will also be used for legislation in respect of all the other Regional Parliaments, so that they too may execute their commitment given at the University Grants Committee.

I only want to say, Sir, that the question of financing tertiary institutions remains one that requires significant planning. We have reached the stage with respect to the funding of the University, where over the course of this current triennium, because the university plans its finances in respect to a triennium, we have agreed that from 1996-97 onwards our amounts due and owing to the University in respect of economic costs will reflect the fact that the University's budget will only rise on account of inflation from here on. We have set about also within the Council of the University of the West Indies to establish a Strategy Committee which is charged with ensuring that there is proper and adequate planning to ensure that there is not the type of cost overrun or inability to stick to plans which have been laid out clearly in respect to the growth and development of the university.

We believe, Sir, that there must be continued growth in the number of students who currently attend the University of the West Indies. The CARICOM Heads of Government in July of this year pledged themselves to a target which would see 15 percent of students moving on from secondary to post secondary and tertiary institutions within the Region. I dare say, Sir, that within the Government of Barbados and indeed the Council of Ministers for Education within CARICOM, we have already recognised that the mechanism which we used to assess the numbers moving on may well not be the most appropriate one and at the last CARICOM of Ministers of Education meeting, Sir, which I had the honour to Chair in Barbados, we took a decision that we would seek to develop a more appropriate mechanism to assess more accurately the number of students moving from secondary education into post secondary education and from secondary education into genuine tertiary education.

Barbados, at the moment, Sir, has the highest numbers within the Region. We have a situation where we still do not in those numbers take into account the large number of Barbadian students who go outside of the Region for their tertiary education and we all know that there is a significant number of them. The Student Revolving Loan Fund alone is one of the major arms which presently finances those persons who would wish to go overseas. Then indeed, Sir, there are some who make their own private arrangements for financing for tertiary education that is extra regional. So that we recognise as Governments that the goal set by the University of the West Indies in respect of being able to achieve larger numbers for its enrollment between now and the year 2002 is an absolute must.

I am happy to report, Sir, to this Honourable Chamber - and indeed it will come back to us in a different form within a matter of weeks, because it has cost us additional money, but it is the goal which we set out to achieve - I am happy to report that as a result of an increased emphasis on access to post secondary and tertiary level training placed by this Government we saw a phenomenal increase in the numbers of persons registering at the University of the West Indies in the academic year 1996-1997 which was just completed.

Indeed, Sir, we saw an additional 200 students registering from Barbados at the University of the West Indies representing almost a nine percent increase in registration in one academic year. That is a phenomenal achievement, given the fact that persons have had, given the history of our access to tertiary education...

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: ...a nine percent increase, Sir, in one academic year and this came immediately after the Government of Barbados pledged itself to continue to pay tuition fees for students attending the University of the West Indies, after there was a threat and a conditionality attached to the World Bank loan that there would not be any such subsidy provided for Barbadian students and that the students themselves would have to find sources for their own financing of their tuition fees. 12.50 p.m.

I daresay that the confidence which the Government reposes in the people and youth in this country in declaring itself committed to continue to pay the fees was part of the reason responsible for that 9% increase in one academic year. It came within 6 months of the announcement of this Government's continued commitment in that regard.

While it is a heavy cost for us to pay and while we may end up giving the University of the West Indies in excess of \$50 million this year because there are still wage negotiations to be brought to book which are not currently reflected in the Estimates, the reality is that the cost of not ensuring that our people have access to these tertiary institutions is far greater than the cost that we will have to pay up front to allow them access.

Therefore, this Government remains firmly committed to supporting strongly the expansion of numbers who are capable and eligible to enter tertiary institutions, particularly the University of the West Indies, but all tertiary institutions, for further training.

I would only want to add at this point as well that we hope that the large amounts of money which have become

due and owing over the course of the last 20 years as a result of the lack of prompt payments by governments of the region will become a thing of the past with the passage of this legislation. This does not mean that governments will not have difficulty with cash flow but it will mean that in those instances where the bonds cannot be redeemed at a particular maturity date that the person holding the bond, in this case the University of the West Indies will have the opportunity to negotiate the bond and sell it to a bank or any other institutional investor and let the interest accrue to that new person with the university having therefore redeemed what was due and owing to it and, therefore, being capable of executing its financial affairs in an orderly manner.

This legislation, therefore, I would like to commend to this Honourable Chamber as a necessary means by which the University of the West Indies can continue to execute the mandate given to it on the review of its governance over the course of the last few years and to ensure that we can do right by that institution by putting it on a sound financial footing.

One of the things which the University has been also trying to do over the last 3 years has been to raise funds outside the region through a number of different means and one of the difficulties that the University has genuinely had is that when it goes to institutions asking them for donations, an endowment or some form of funds, they ask for the University's books.

The University has shied away from showing these international institutions and international NGOs its books largely because it reflects the fact that Caribbean governments continue to owe it large sums of money and the institutions invariably say to it why are you asking us for money when you can collect money from the persons who have committed themselves to support you.

The books do, in fact, constitute an embarrassment because it -is unable therefore to reduce the percentage by which it relies on regional governments' support by going to other institutions largely because its accounts receivable are too long and too high in respect of money flowing from Caribbean governments.

We hope that this piece of legislation will be able to remedy that unfortunate situation and that the efforts of the University to survive, in spite of the lack of funds coming to it over the course of the last 20 years, will become a thing of the past.

I, therefore Sir, would like to commend to this Honourable Chamber the legislation which is before us and to suggest to us that this is exactly what the University needs. It has asked for this assistance. The CARICOM

Ministers of Finance, the University Grants Committee and the CARICOM Ministers of Education have all pledged their full support to ensuring the passage of this legislation and the execution and issuance of these bonds in respect of both economic costs and in our case tuition fees which are due and owing.

Hopefully in the future, we will not have to come back as we will shortly do to pay interest for monies which were paid late to the University in respect of the triennium 1993-96. Without anticipating that supplementary when that comes before this Honourable Chamber, one would hope that that would be the last of its kind since we are capable now of managing our debt through the issuance of the serial bond rather than just letting the interest accrue and having to come and pay later on as we will have to do very shortly in respect of an old debt to the University of the West Indies.

I, therefore Sir, wish to propose and move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.15 o'clock in the afternoon.

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

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 2.15 o'clock in the afternoon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly. 1.00 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, the Bill before us seeks to deal with a very pressing issue, the issue of financing university education, not only in Barbados but across the region. Apparently, from time immemorial there has been a problem especially with other countries in the region not honouring their outstanding debts to the university. This proposal to introduce bonds is really an attempt to delay expenditure commitment on the part of the various Governments across the region.

You are really seeking here to incur debt until the bond becomes mature basically, but there is an interest component to the bond which would have to be accounted

for as expenditure in the financial year in which it is issued. The other component of it, the principal part, would only become expenditure to Government when the bond is matured.

Now, in Barbados where interest rates are extremely low, compared to, say, Jamaica, one can understand perhaps the merit of going the route of the serial bond but, for instance, in Jamaica where interest rates are of the order of 40% or 45%, the expenditure for Government would still be huge almost immediately on issuing the bond so that the benefit which Government may have in having to incur an expenditure that is 8%, 7%, whatever, 6% of overall principal of the bond, in the Jamaican experience you are talking about almost 40% or 45% of that principal which would still constitute a large amount of expenditure for the Government of the day.

Yes, this bond will, in fact, I suppose, be of benefit to Barbados and, in fact, we should hardly be using it in the Barbadian experience because we, apparently, have not been so guilty of not meeting our commitment to the University of the West Indies so that even though we are putting the Bill in place in the event that it becomes necessary, our experience in the region is exemplary and therefore we can anticipate no excessive use of this instrument.

In the extreme case, as I said, of Jamaica, the use of the instrument will be questionable because it will not translate into a sufficient benefit for the Government of, say, the Jamaican experience because the gap between incurring the immediate debt and stalling the debt with the use of the serial bond is not going to be wide enough to justify using the serial bond in the high interest rate regime countries as Jamaica, as I said before.

For the OECS it is going to be slightly different for them. It is going to be slightly different because, yes, like the Barbadian experience you would delay the commitment in terms of the full principal but you would have to account immediately for the interest component on the bond as expenditure for Government. However, in the case of the OECS, they do not have the same privilege that Barbados would have in terms of recourse if it becomes necessary through alternative means of financing by way of a Central Bank which we can do.

In the OECS experience, you cannot run to the Central Bank for financing of deficits. Their arrangement does not permit such an experience. In fact, it is, perhaps, the reason why in today's Caribbean we have looked and are beginning to look at the OECS countries as a model for other Caribbean countries because of this question of not being able to print money willy-nilly as is experienced in those Caribbean countries which have Central Banks.

Whereas in Barbados you can immediately use an alternative form of financing, even if you delay the process by way of a serial bond issue, in the OECS there is not that immediate instrument available to those countries. Therefore, from that standpoint, while we may see benefits accruing by the delay of the full amount of the transaction between the OECS and the University, they do not have the same kind of accommodation we have here in Barbados. That too will have to be a factor to be considered in terms of utilising this instrument as an alternative means of financing the University of the West Indies.

Immediately, there will be benefits to the Barbados Government in the event that you did not have the available finance upfront to utilise this facility because the overall cost and commitment to the Government can be postponed except for the interest component. I am saying the same will not apply to other countries within the CARICOM region. As I have explained before, particularly in the case of Jamaica, definitely one would have to question the option of utilising the serial bond instrument.

It has been stated that, in the case of the University, financing beyond this year apparently will be tied to inflation. Now, that one is extremely difficult to justify across the region again. Yes, in a low inflation regime as Barbados is it would be easy to state and there may be advantages to Government, but certainly, in the context of Jamaica again where inflation is known to be excessive, simply tying ...

Aside.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: It has been adjusted temporarily in Jamaica. Jamaica is a special case of destruction by the international institutions. It may be temporarily low but almost overnight in Jamaica you can get this inflationary spiral once again so that to use inflation as an instrument, or to tie financing the university to inflation alone across the region is going to create some difficulty when you look at the differences in the economies across the CARICOM region.

Now, the question of productivity was not stated this way, but it is believed that we can get greater mileage out of university education by way of output and particularly efficiency if we increase the enrolment. Like any other business, we are really seeking to increase output while containing our input costs. This would translate into an increase in efficiency or productivity on the part of the University of the West Indies.

Now, that again we will have to look at from the point of view of being able to attract the quality staff we would need in these institutions. It is not widely known but one of the reasons why the salary scales at the University

are so good relates back to the 1960s and the late 1950s experience when in order to attract lecturers and professors from the United Kingdom you had to pay them commensurate salaries, that is, commensurate with universities in the United Kingdom, so that from almost the inception of the University there was some disparity between the salaries offered at that institution and the salaries across the board in, say, the public service and quasi public service institutions, and that has existed from back in the 1960s.

Again, you either go for a restructuring which brings the University in line, which is going to be hard and very difficult to justify because you are really paying salaries out of the public purse but salaries which do not reflect the wider public service salaries. Therefore, there is going to be difficulty from that end in terms of effecting some changes in costs over time. The question of other costs which you seek to contain would be difficult if you are going to be suggesting that we are keeping track with the improvements in technology and education and services offered in education. The real desire say for Cave Hill to bring on higher levels of students would require further expenditure by way of space and increasing space at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus for sure. 2.35 p.m.

To simply tie financing to inflation is going to be extremely difficult to justify in an environment where you are seeking to improve overall output in terms of quality of student, in terms of the type of courses and quality of our university education that we are seeking to offer in the Caribbean. One of the other aspects would be the whole question of postgraduate work. I do not know what is the recent thought but I recently heard the Vice Chancellor discussing this whole question of postgraduate degree programmes at the University of the West Indies and again if we are going to be going that route, then there would be additional responsibility in terms of the Government in providing financing.

In the interview the whole question of seeking foreign financing was discussed but we have already heard in the debate that to do so you need to demonstrate by way of your balance sheet that you are capable of repaying the debt which you incurred. From that standpoint this measure might provide some comfort but it does not reduce the debt equity ratios and other indicators that financial institutions would look at in terms of determining whether or not the University itself is capable of repaying such loans. Again, it is difficult to justify or for me to understand how the financing would be confined to inflation over time. That is not as easy as it appears especially since we have additional expectations of the University in terms of what contributions they can make to the overall development of the wider Caribbean region.

I heard the spurious relationship between the number of enrolments and recent decisions to continue the payment of fees for students but then again, this is politics so if there is an increase in the enrolment, one is tempted to believe that it has something to do with the fact that there is security by way of not having to pay the fees on the part of the students. It is really a spurious relationship but one that you are tempted to draw when you are on that side of the fence. I would hope, however, that it has more to do with the recognition on the part of the young people that their lot in life in the Barbados economy or throughout the Caribbean would have more to do with their educational attainment, therefore, from that recognition alone, that there is this increased desire to be educated at the tertiary level.

Without any scientific proof, I cannot even dispute the relationship that there is some increased enrolment resulting from the decision taken by Government. I do not recall at any time that there was any decision taken to stop the payment of fees for students even in difficult times before 1994. That, however, is not an area that I wish to go into. I think it is time enough for us to look forward and to look at what can be done in the interest of Barbados and the Caribbean and not to become too caught up with the past, with who is responsible and who is not responsible for this. The fact is that the measures that were taken were taken in the interest of this country and the evidence is there to show that those measures did in fact redound to the benefit of Barbados and we are now a shining example of what a successful stabilisation programme can be and so much so that we have started to see some re-visiting of philosophy on the part of the World Bank which is now beginning to understand and appreciate that government is necessary and that more government may become necessary in developing countries.

It is as a result of prudent management, shining examples of the capacity to manage on the part of developing countries among which Barbados must be regarded highly, that these institutions will have to re-visit such myopic views that Government itself is inefficient and cannot do things well and cannot provide services as efficiently as the private sector.

I have never been of that view and I hope that I will never be of that view because again when one looks across the public service of Barbados there is ample evidence to show that many tertiary level trained people are indeed attracted to the public service and have been doing good work within the public service and that we cannot discount the value of educating these people to come and provide quality service within the public sector.

No one can convince me that a private sector which avoids skilfully the services of highly trained personnel and avoids skilfully quality people from the lower echelons of

society, can convince me that the private sector is any better place than the public sector to provide proper services in Barbados. I will never be of that view and all I am saying is that we need to re-train the people to understand that the public sector belongs to them and that they can do an outstanding job and be well rewarded within the public sector of Barbados.

It is a secured environment, it is an environment that guarantees success once you work and the same cannot be said of the private sector because from the time that you enter, there is a limit to where you can go within the institution and that is why we will never be able to and should never see ourselves as limiting opportunities for Barbadians and Caribbean people as it relates to achieving and reaching tertiary level education across the board. It is the one area in which we can in fact excel and the one area in which we can prove that we have equal opportunity and as a consequence of having a well developed public sector and opportunity within the work environment prove that we have in fact acquired knowledge that is useful to the development of Barbados and the wider Caribbean.

From that standpoint, no one can even begin to look at the University in any other light but that it is important to the continued progress of the Caribbean and any means that can be sought to assist in financing and alleviating problems relating to finance within the University of the West Indies must be pursued.

I will just wind up by saying that in the attempt to introduce this Bill, and it was lauded as the first attempt in the region and may become a model for the rest of the region, that the circumstances which prevail in the Barbados economy and prevail in Government finances are not the same across the region and that while this Bill may be the first I am sure and I repeat that such an instrument in the case of Jamaica will not be easy to adopt as in the Barbados experience. As I said before it is not easy for a Government to have to pay between 40% and 45% interest on a bond in any given year because that interest becomes expenditure immediately, whereas the principal becomes expenditure only after the bond is matured. So therefore in the context of Barbados an 8% interest rate, as expenditure in a given year, is not significant but certainly in the context of Jamaica a 40% to 45% interest rate becomes immediate expenditure for that Government and therefore this instrument would not be as widespread as one may hope throughout the member states of the University of the West Indies. 2.45 p.m.

I hope they have given thought to the prevailing circumstances in their economy. I hope they have given thought to the whole question of the nature of the economies across the region before they go for a full

scale adoption of the instrument because it is not going to be the same for all countries in the region.

On that score I wish the University well. I have every reason to believe that it will continue to be a shining light across the region. Its importance cannot be stated here or any other place because the future of the Caribbean depends wholly and solely on what we can do with human resource development and not just economic development. The two are too interrelated to be separated at any stage and it is a first requirement. The development of the human being is the *sine qua non* for economic development so that there is no way in which I can even seek to oppose anything that is going to be of assistance to the University of the West Indies. On that score, Sir, I thank you.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this Bill and after a careful analysis of this Bill, Sir, there are certain things that appear to be quite different than what was delivered today, Sir.

First, Sir, I would like to know how a university could be cash strapped and could be going the option of receiving bonds in exchange of cash up front. It tells me, Sir, that any university that is prepared to accept a one-year bond instead of getting their finances up front, it tells me that the financial position of that particular university cannot be that great because if it was great the demand for cash up front would be better than a demand for bonds in a future period. So, if the financial and the cash base of the University is that great I would expect Government to be pumping cash into the University up front instead of giving the University a future in-flow which they are not even sure about at the end of the period because there is a provision in this Bill for an extension.

[Certain remarks made by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. SPEAKER.]

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: There is a relationship between the University of the West Indies and the Governments of the Caribbean and it is a trade off. That is, Sir, there is an agreement where the ...

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Your voice sounds a bit strange.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: An electrical interference, Sir. It is off.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope that is not signifying anything mechanical.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: No problem, Sir. I will still flow, Sir. There is a relationship, Sir, and the

University has been promised sums of money by the Governments of the Caribbean and the trade off for that, Sir, and it was said in the speech by the Minister, is that the University has agreed to accept a large number of students entering the University which in the long run would help with the unemployment situation in the various territories because there will be a shift from the unemployment roll to the ones who are studying.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is truly, truly misleading this Honourable Chamber. The Government has not promised the University any money other than that which is due and owing, economic costs and tuition fees, nor is there any agreement between the University and the Government to do anything that conspires to hide anything. Furthermore the only thing that I would perhaps wish to do when I go to the Strategy Committee Meeting on Thursday in Trinidad is to tell them that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is perhaps capable of designing the most fanciful course for creative imagination that the University could well offer as we go into the twenty-first century.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am saying that the figures have been given in here today that the intake, and the Minister said that since she came to power and decided that nobody would have to pay fees that the intake into the university has increased. It means that the University has been given a commitment by Government that they will pay the fees and there has been an increase in numbers. What is the effect on the ground, Sir? People who were previously unemployed are now studying at the University and it means that they are not counted as being unemployable any more but they are now studying and they have been taken out of that bracket. It is a fact and if anybody wants to challenge that statistic then they should go and check with the employment bureau to see how the unemployment statistics are checked. It has been well designed and I am saying it is a governmental plan and if you look back for the last 3 ye^{rs} this Government has been coming to Parliament and they have even accused the Democratic Labour Party of suffering the University by not giving them timely in-flows of cash.

They have accused the Democratic Labour Party of that and if you are now telling me that the University has to wait for one year for a cash in-flow, tell me what is different to what you have accused us of.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I really was waiting to correct most of this in my reply but I think that it is becoming dangerously close now to misleading people in a very serious way. If the Honourable Member for St. Lucy had read the legislation and understood it fully and understands anything about serial bonds as well, he would understand, Sir, that the university does not have

to wait for a year in order to get their funds. I started by saying it is a negotiable instrument. The University can sell it to banks or to any other institutional organisations. Furthermore they can sell it before the one year maturity at a discount rate in order to get the cash flow as soon as possible. If we issue the bond today and they decide in 3 months time they want to sell it to a group of insurance companies for the money they can do so at a discount rate, gather the funds on the face of the bond that the bond is written for and sell it at a discount rate so that the person who buys the bonds from them will get the full interest from Government minus what he would have paid in the discount rate to the University. It is as simple as that but he is misleading the House in a most terrible way. 2.55 p.m.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, people want to teach me about bonds when that is something, I have dealt with nearly all of my life. I want to say, Sir, to this House, if you are telling me that the banks and the insurance companies have so much money and they need to invest it other places within the Caribbean, tell me any bank within Barbados that has been able to trade off this at the University when they have so much cash that they want to get rid of too.

We can come and make pretty speeches but there is something called judgment and this is the judgment time. I am saying that if the University has a cash flow problem, a serial bond cannot help with a cash flow problem. I am saying that I am surprised at the Government of Barbados when they are bragging about how much cash they have, to be entering into a relationship like this because Jamaica decided that that is the best thing for them. I am saying that if Jamaica thinks that is the best thing for them let them go ahead. This is Barbados and we in Barbados have to start setting our own examples and it seems to me that they are blindly following Jamaica without looking at what we are doing. I am saying if we have so much money in the Treasury why do we want to issue bonds to anybody? The bonds are causing an additional cost to the Treasury, when the money is there. There is no interest charge, so you need to outflow the money. But, whenever you go and commit a bond, what you are doing is the face market value plus interest, according to the Minister and I am saying that it is an additional cost.

The only way that this bond will be valuable to Barbados is if the Minister is seeing something down the road that I am not seeing. It is telling me that there is some belief among the Cabinet members that the economy is going to get worse than we have predicted and they are protecting themselves up front. Because if interest rates are to get higher, it means that they will have this instrument saying we can only pay X amount of interest rates. But if the economy is going to get better there is no need and this is plain, financial talk. This is true because the only way a

Government that has a serious surplus of cash is prepared to issue a bond, is if that Government can see danger down the road. But if anybody has cash and then goes to borrow or something like that, something will have to be wrong. You cannot have surplus cash and then decide you are going to borrow wild and that it is like linking it to that. So, we have to ask ourselves today, Mr. Speaker, what is in it for the Government of Barbados? Because, you cannot tell me you have a lot of cash and do not know what to do with it and then issue a bond. The obvious thing you would do is to take out the cash and pay. It would not cost you, but the bond is going to cost this country and we need to know why the Government is prepared to commit themselves to a cost to the pountry when there is no need to.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I do not mind all those arguments, Mr. Speaker. Do you know what is lacking in this country, Sir? We have some so-called financial experts in this country who are not giving back one thing to this country. Because, if those so-called gurus in this country would come out sometimes and tell Government that the decision you are taking is wrong because it is going to cost the taxpayers, many of these financial decisions that come to this country would not even come before Parliament. This is not the first, Sir. If you look at the Order Paper there are a couple more to come and we will deal with them when they come.

It is telling me the economy cannot be as strong as people want me to believe when you can make decisions like the ones that we are dealing with today and some to come later, Sir. I am saying, either there is a relationship between a trade-off with jobs and I do not know if the University has gone to the level now, Sir, where the University wants to get involved in politics and I would like to believe that they do not. Because, I would hate to believe that the University of the West Indies or any university would decide to increase their roll just to help any Government in the Caribbean to make their unemployment statistics look good.

But the evidence is there. We have a situation in this country where on one side the Government promises one thing and the other side the University is strapped for cash and there is a big trade-off, a promise to the University to make sure that you are well, if at the same time the University has agreed that they would have a large intake which will remove people from being employable into the area where they are studying. So you know what happens? When you work the unemployment statistic, automatically the unemployment statistic falls. That is the plain logic. The logic is there, so whoever wants to challenge it can challenge it. But there is a policy and it has to be

a deliberate policy and I have watched it. This is not the first time, Mr. Speaker, I have made a statement like this. Because when you look at the intake at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and you have seen that the numbers have increased since 1994 and no one can deny that statistic* At the Barbados Community College the same thing has happened and now at the University of the West Indies the same thing has happened. There are more people studying in Barbados today than before. It tells me, Sir, that there will have to be some relationship between Government and the educational institutions and that there is a dramatic shift where people are forced not to work but are forced to go back to training.

Mr. Speaker, do you know what is the long term effect of that? You are double building people's hopes. You would have sent them to school and promised them when they went to school that after they came from school they would have received a job. When you tell them they need to go and retrain again, you are asking those same people to go and retrain with the expectation, Mr. Speaker, that when they come out of the University, SJP Polytechnic or the Barbados Community College there is hope for a job. So you are in a sense tricking those people twice.

We must in the 21st Century, Sir, ask ourselves one serious question. If we have built the hopes of people twice, Sir, how can we honestly expect those people to trust us when they come from the University, Community College and SJP Polytechnic and they would not get any work? We are building a time bomb.

I am saying, Mr. Speaker, we are building the hopes of young people and the long term effects are that we are telling those people that given the authority we are going to provide a job for you and we are doing it two ways, and at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, those young people are not getting any work and then we ask ourselves as politicians, why the young people do not listen to us. The young people will never listen to us because they realise that we plan for them, not in their interest but in our interest. Mr. Speaker, if the Government wants to go ahead with that plan it is up to them. I have spoken and I have shown them where their long term interest is not going to be matched by the short term interest of those young people.

Thank you very much.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the House has just been engaged by the speech of the former financial advisor to the Sugar Industry of Barbados who had to be dismissed to save the Sugar Industry from the further disastrous consequences of his representations to them, Sir. 3.05 p.m.

Mr. D. St E. KELLMAN: On a point of order, for the 20th time the Honourable Member is as usual misleading this House that I was the financial advisor to the sugar industry. I was never the financial advisor to the sugar industry but it is a fact that he was the financial advisor to Mr. Manley and also the BADC.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, the former financial comptroller to the sugar industry obviously has an interest in financial matters, and he spoke, and we can begin to understand why the sugar industry finds itself in a very sorry state.

Mn D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I wa£ never the financial comptroller of the sugar industry and I feel that the Right Honourable Prime Minister of this country should not get involved in a matter like that. The Right Honourable Prime Minister is misleading this House and as the Right Honourable Prime Minister he should not do a thing like that, branding me as the financial comptroller of the sugar industry when he knew full well that Stewart Martin was die financial comptroller of the sugar industry.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have made your point of order.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, this particular measure elicited a very strong speech from the Minister of Education and I think a supporting speech from the member for St. Michael North West that reflected an understanding of some of the financial crises that the University of the West Indie? has had to endure to stay afloat but, more especially, to begin to address the developmental needs of the Caribbean.

May I say, Sir, that throughout its history but more especially in the last decade the University of the West Indies has surged from one financial crisis to the next It really has and there is a determination on the part of a number of governments to put the University's affairs current but also to put in place mechanisms for financing the university that will allow it to be able to have a predictability in its accounts and financial affairs to better manage its own financial affairs and better approach the rest of the world like many universities do for endowment and grant financing.

The financial crisis of the University has been derived from the fact that many of the member countries have either not been able to pay in full or to reconcile their own cash flow with the cash flow requirements of the University of the West Indies. Therefore there is a need for an instrument to enable them to do both things, to meet their obligations in full but to reconcile their cash flow management with the cash flow management of the University of the West Indies.

The extent of the problem lies in the fact that one major contributor to the University of the West Indies owes the University of the West Indies millions and millions of dollars and the University in response to that has had to go and borrow, and it has had to borrow in Jamaica, where at certain times the interest rates on overdrafts are as high as 61%. Borrowing, therefore, in the Jamaica market at the punitive rates has even further aggravated the financial problems of the University of the West Indies.

Sir, the Member for St. Lucy, I will deal with his nonsense in due course. The reality that there is a timing difference between the University's financial year and member countries' financial year and the University is dealing with a large number of different countries each of which have a different financial year and therefore it is going to be in a perpetual problem of having to reconcile accounts, to bring its accounts to books.

Sometimes member countries feel that they are current because of the timing differences. They go into lapse. A group of people have sat down and said let us find a financial instrument that will allow all of that aspect of financial chaos to be resolved. The instrument, Sir, is a bond that if you are current then you do not have to issue the bond but the bond is negotiable, it can be sold right away so that if the University wants it to be put in cash, contrary to the nonsense that we hear from the member for St. Lucy, it can discount the bond like any other bond holder can discount a bond and get cash.

It is a marketable security that will hereinafter put member countries in a different relationship to the University of the West Indies, namely, that when they now owe, the University does not have a financial instrument acknowledging that they owe so that the University will be able to go and cash in to bring cash into the University's coffers.

What this will do is to put the University in a position where those who owe will issue the bond and the University can discount it for cash. The member countries have acknowledged that they owe the University of the West Indies but there is no instrument that puts cash into the university.

Sir, this I think therefore has been recognised by all the people planning the University's affairs as a financial device to allow member countries to acknowledge properly their liabilities to the University, make provision to have that liability represented in a financial instrument and also serve the University's purpose by having a financial instrument that can put the University in cash if the need so arises.

Sir, I want to use the Floor of this Parliament to make the point that the Government of Barbados has been trying

to remain current. There is a massive need for all governments in the Caribbean that owe the University to become current as well and the reason is that like most tertiary level educational institutions our University of the West Indies ought to be in a position to rely upon grant funding and endowment funds and the funds from foundations to help meet its non-teaching expenditures.

Most universities in the world derive their funding for non-teaching activities from endowment funds and so on. You cannot go to the rest of the world and say, let me have access to endowment funds to carry on activities in my university when, in point of fact, people can point to the reality that your own contributing countries have not given you what they are supposed to be contributing.

The University of the West Indies has struggled to convince potential contributors outside the region that they should continue to make a contribution to the University in circumstances where the member countries are in default. I think that the University has prepared a paper on governance which is a serious paper because it has recognised that the University itself has to reform all its systems of administration, all its systems of governance* all of its systems of appraisals, its research, the orientation of its development efforts to make it a more relevant institution in our time.

Part of the governance of the University, part of the reform of the governance of the University as anticipated, is to make the University more reliant on non-governmental sources of income by way of direct payment as part of the effort to strengthen its developmental thrust. This is the direction of good universities in the rest of the world. They sell themselves less on how they depend on Government than how they can use the talent that is within their capability to carry out developmental work and earn income.

It means that the governments must first of all live up to their responsibilities and the governments are willing to live up to their responsibilities by the use of this serial bond. It is therefore a disgraceful thing to hear the kind of nonsense that is issued by the Member for St. Lucy. The Member is saying that the Government should not use this financial instrument but it should go and borrow from the banks in order to raise funds by borrowing from the banks to put money in the University. It is the same thing.

You had to borrow from the banks by the issue of Treasury Bills or by some other financial instrument that the banks could hold. I therefore ask the Member what is the difference between giving the University a financial instrument that they can discount as a way of paying them and giving the bank a financial instrument to hold in order to pay the University of the West Indies.

He is saying that the fact that there is liquidity in the banking system means that the Government can have cash to pay the University but it can only have cash if we create a financial instrument that the banks will hold. All we are doing is to tell the University to hold the instrument itself and if it wants cash, discount it and get its cash. But that is the kind of mad nonsense that issues from the Member for St. Lucy who believes that he has a capacity to speak on everything with a degree of ignorance. The thing that bothers me about his speech and why I am speaking in this matter is that this very sorry, sorry nonsense that an expansion in intake by the University of the West Indies is an attempt by a Government to cover its unemployment record is the kind of putrid nonsense that it saddens me to hear issuing from this Parliament on the eve of the 21st century. 3.15 p.m.

Our region, Sir, has the sad distinction of being below all other regions in the world in relation to the ratio of secondary to tertiary education and part of the development of the Caribbean is in point of fact to increase the intake at the University of the West Indies to alter the balance also in favour of skills that are more necessary for the developmental purposes...

Aside.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: He is a sports model, Sir. It has reached the stage where the Heads of Government of the Caribbean countries at the Heads of Government Conference in July this year in Montego Bay dealt with the question of human resource development and a human resource development strategy for the Caribbean. A specific target was set which still would not bring us to international levels but would substantially improve the intake of the University of the West Indies and hence its capacity to build the skills of the people of the region over time. To hear, therefore, Sir; that the University is having a larger intake mainly as a way of easing the short-term unemployment is such nonsense that it is the kind of commentary that should be ruled as out of order on a responsible Floor of Parliament.

I would only want to say, Sir ...

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is giving the impression...

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, please.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. He is giving the impression that when people move from being employable to the University that it does not have an effect

on the unemployment situation. If that is what he is saying well I cannot do anything about it.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, it is really a sad thing that a political party that used to pride itself as being a party serious about education could have issuing from the Floor of this House that a determination to increase the intake of young people being trained at the University is a very sad thing. He said it has to do with trying to juggle unemployment numbers and has nothing to do with the wider purpose that has engaged us in this country in building a country for more than 30 years, systematically creating opportunity for our people to be educated and be trained because this is why very often Parliament is held in such disrepute by the people.

The business of building a nation has not yet been finished. We have just started. The Caribbean and Barbados is further below the ratio of university students to population than most other countries in the world and we can have a parliamentarian coming in here to make nonsensical statements that are critical about the intake of students at the University of the West Indies ...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order, Sir. To give the impression that I am just making a statement and there is no basis for it is misleading the House. There is a strong basis and anybody looking at the statistics will see that there is a relationship between people studying and the unemployment statistics. I am saying that if the Prime Minister is saying that I am wrong, then he should provide statistics to prove that I am wrong, but this comment about nonsensical and silly are not words I would tolerate in here because we would have ...

Mr. SPEAKER: You have made your point.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I want the Honourable Member for St. Lucy to tell us how many people now presently attending University from Crab Hill he would want us to turn out from University. I want him to tell us how many people from Pie Corner, the children of poor people who are getting an opportunity to rise above their own peers, how many people from the Judge Gap and Pie Corner that now have been given an opportunity to go to University he feels should not now get university education. I want him to tell us these things.

I want him to tell us how many people from St. Michael West, St. Michael North West and Christ Church East who have been given the opportunity to attend university to prepare themselves for the future, should not be there, because it is a very sick position that is being taken by a member of this Parliament that we should

all condemn, that to create an opportunity for people to go to university is now being seen as a conspiracy at altering unemployment figures rather than in the sensible developmental context in which it should be represented.

Asides.

. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Rt. Hon. (X S. ARTHUR: May I say, Sir, having heard the speech of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that every full and ample opportunity should be given to him to go to university and improve himself. I do not mean that, Sir, in a patronising way. I mean it because I believe that every Barbadian should be given the opportunity to be the best that he or she could be.

Mr. Speaker, I am speaking the way I am because I know there are many people who speak disparagingly about the University of the West Indies for the wrong reason. There are some people who are contemptuous of the University who would never send their children to the University of the West Indies. They would break themselves to send them to other universities in the rest of the world because, in their view, the University of the West Indies, like most homegrown things, is not the place for them to send their children.

It is the only university I have known. I was educated there, Sir. I have taught there in various capacities consistently from between 1971 and 1994. For almost every year of my adult life I have been associated in some respect with it, but I know there are a lot of people who are disparaging of it as an institution and it comes from various kinds of directions.

There are some, Sir, who cannot go but who would use an opportunity like today to be disparaging about it. I feel those of us who know what is the worth of the University to the region have a responsibility to rescue it from the clutches of those who have nothing good to say about it.

It is my view, Sir, that the Honourable Member for St Lucy's speech was inspired by a sense of pure malice to the University of the West Indies.

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, please. You will have to withdraw those words.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Let me just put it otherwise, that in every other region of the world people are finding the means and the reason to expand the intake of university students because they understand the value of having their citizens trained at the tertiary level.

Sir, when I hear a Member of this Parliament with facility and in a facile way criticising the University's intake as a stand-alone matter, I have to wonder seriously what are his motivations because the motivations cannot be good sense.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I have never criticised the University's intake. What I have done is I have made a linkage, and that is a difference.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: To vulgarise it, Sir, to vulgarise the expansion of the University's numbers as being part of a strategy to camouflage the unemployment situation, I would say to this House respectfully, can only be a fabrication of a philistine and backward mind. It can only be something that has issued from a head in which the brain only serves as a device for keeping the left ear from rubbing against the right ear. It is not worthy of us, Sir, it cannot be. I want to make the point that I support the other Heads who feel that that at this juncture in Caribbean development we have to find the resources to finance the expansion of the University of the West Indies, to finance the University being able to serve the development needs of the region, to finance research programmes for the University that are relevant to our times and to the future. 3.25 p.m.

I therefore cannot in good conscience abide with the kind of what I can only charitably describe as nonsense that has issued today from the Member for St. Lucy who has not even a faint understanding of anything pertaining to University finances but believes that he must be an expert in what he does not understand and therefore has given a speech that has made people reach the wrong conclusion and does not understand fundamentally the role of the University at this time because I would suggest to you, Sir, that a role that a University can perform is something that would be foreign to the member for St. Lucy.

I am obliged to you.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I wrap up the debate in respect to this Bill may I say that I would like to thank the Rt. Honourable Member for St. Peter for his clarity as well as the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West who I believe brought a level of maturity to this debate and indeed raised one or two issues that I will seek to respond to in my closing statement.

It is unfortunate, Sir, that the debate was carried wide, very, very wide by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy who attempted to imply notions that simply were not true and cannot be true and to that end I think it may serve the records of this Honourable Chamber well if I seek to make a document a letter from the University Bursar,

Mr. Winston H. Bayley, University Bursar and Director of Finance as a document of this Honourable Chamber.

I started, Sir, in my introduction of this Bill by stating that the use of this funding mechanism, serial bonds, was but one of many measures which was being undertaken by the University in the restructuring of its governance and indeed, Sir, I would like to quote from this letter to verify and establish the veracity of the fact that this is only but one mechanism to deal with the restructuring of the University and is therefore no political motive by regional Heads of Government to hide unemployment figures.

Sir, the letter is dated July 16, 1996 and it reads in the first paragraph which I will only read:

"Dear Minister,

As you are aware, the University is implementing a new financial regime from the 1st August, 1996. Some of the elements of the new regime are a 5-year strategic plan, bi-annual budgeting with annual reviews, delegated budgetary controls to Deans and Heads of Departments, the revised financial code, managing auditing with audit committees whose membership will be all non-university persons and the introduction of a funding mechanism for the payment of contributions by Government namely, serial bonds."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we implemented the new financial regime from the 1st August last year. We implemented the five-year strategic plan which was approved by the Strategy Committee earlier this year in St. Kitts. We implemented, Sir, the bi-annual budgeting which started in 1996 to 1997 financial year. 1997 to 1998. We have implemented already, Sir, the delegatory budgetary controls to the Deans and Heads of Departments. We have already implemented the new financial code and also management auditing. Sir, the only thing left for us to do was to bring the serial bonds to Parliament to become law so that we could do that too.

All of that was part of a systematic restructuring for the governments of the University because the University was having overdrafts in Jamaica of J\$400 million and J\$500 million in overdrafts at 61% because Governments of the region were not in a position to pay or had chosen not to pay at that particular time. It did not stop there, Mr. Speaker. I have a decision taken by the CARICOM Ministers of Finance earlier this year. Not only is it necessary to put the mechanism for the serial bond in place but you had also to devise a ruling that in the event of a Government neither paying cash nor issuing serial bonds, what would happen to the interest that the University would accrue as a result of their debt. For the first time, proposed by the Government of Barbados, we took a decision at the

University Grants Committee, then endorsed by the CARICOM Ministers of Finance that, if you fail to pay when you are supposed to pay either by cash or serial bonds, then interest must start to run and that interest must be disaggregated as to your territory.

Before, if we did not pay or we paid late, there was no liability for the Government to pay interest and we have said no, that so much so do we want to put the University on a strong financial basis that Governments must be prepared to accept the consequences of their actions and where there is late payment or non-payment that they must pay the interest which becomes due and owing and for the first time that is now part of the financial rules of the University requiring Governments therefore to adopt that additional obligation.

Sir, I want to place that in that context because it is really improper, I would have almost say malicious but I cannot say malicious to suggest anything other than honourable motive. Sir, this was not a question of the Barbados Government getting up and saying to do this. Over 13 countries sat down in a room, chaired by the Honourable Minister of Finance from Jamaica who is the Chairman of the UGC and took these decisions and I want to say that in respect of the increase in enrolment at Cave Hill, I never thought, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that I would live in Barbados and hear a parliamentarian, not to mention from the Democratic Labour Party, get up and deprecate the fact that we could have a 9% increase in admissions to the University in a single year because Mr. Speaker, as far as I know, the one thing that this country values the most is the right to education, the one thing that the Democratic Labour Party has tried to continue to foist on the people of this country was their role in the provision of education of this country.

Asides.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I have to say foist now. I really have to say foist now because the same Party will now sit down quietly on their benches and not seek to correct either publicly or privately comments which would tend to suggest that they have no interest in increasing enrolment to tertiary education in this country. They do not care. That is what was said over and over on those benches and it is significant, Sir...

Mr. B. M. TATTT: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I do not know what the Honourable Member is trying to draw out Mr. Speaker, the record of the Democratic Labour Party in education, as your Honour knows is so clear. The Honourable Member cannot now attempt to tarnish it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The record of the Democratic Labour Party is not the point of order. What is the point of order.

Mr. B. M. TATTT: Is it no point of order, Sir? I was explaining the point of order. The point of order is the Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member must not say that the Democratic Labour Party did or said anything. The Honourable Member needs to address the Chair much more specifically, Sir. 3.35 p.m.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, I really am distressed and I want to say this quite seriously. We set about as a Government to pursue a deliberate policy on the expansion of access to training in tertiary institutions. At the Polytechnic we moved and increased the funding and opportunities available there so that we could move the numbers from 1 400 students to 2 500 students. At the Hospitality Institute we moved from 200 to 650 students. At the Barbados Community College we expanded there too and at the University of the West Indies we also increased the rate of transfer there and there will be a supplementary coming to this House, Sir, without my anticipating it.

At the University of the West Indies we sought to do a similar thing not only in relation to Barbadian students but also students from the OECS countries because we recognised in the same way that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West recognised that, if you increase the number of students you increase your capacity to achieve efficiency gains in respect of it, and since Barbados carries over 75% of the cost of the Cave Hill Campus it is in our interest to increase the number of students attending the Cave Hill Campus. So we have a very clear view on this.

Sir, I would only wish to say before sitting that it is really a very distressful thing that this debate could therefore have sunk to those levels by the contribution of the member for St. Lucy.

I am told, Sir, that perhaps I should seek to tell the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that, rather than coming straight to town on most days, he should stop short in Speightstown and seek to get some tuition. Really, Sir, it behoves us to ask the question, how the Honourable Member could be allowed, Sir, to get up in here and make those allegations? Sir, it speaks to me of a lack of leadership on that side and a lack of vision on that side.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Speaker, I think, for the record we have to clear up this matter of what is being spoken here. I have listened to all the members here today in silence and I am making a point that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East is misleading the House. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy was speaking about employment and he was saying that the intake...

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure you must be aware that a point of order must relate to the speech that is being made. Sir, you cannot make explanation of another member's speech. Just make your point, Sir.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Speaker, I am saying that the Honourable Member for St. Michael North East has said that this side is not supportive of an intake into the university. This is patently untrue and it was not said by any Member on this side.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a fact and it is part of the record of this Honourable Chamber that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy declared that the effort to increase numbers at the University of the West Indies was an attempt to hide unemployment figures. It is a fact and I am saying to you, Sir, that it reflects, Sir, the vision of someone who is myopic, someone who is blind in one eye and someone, Sir, who does not understand obviously the role that the Democratic Labour Party claims to have played in the expansion of access to education in this country.

He does not understand it and I am saying, Sir, that for Honourable Members on that Side to allow that to spew forth from his mouth in the same way that it spews forth from Soufriere in Montserrat...

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is casting aspersions on the House. For the Honourable Member, Sir, to say that Honourable Members on this Side allowed an Honourable Member to say something, Sir; it is unrestrained speech in this House. How can the Honourable Member say that we failed to allow a Member to speak?

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I indicated it really is distressing to hear that and to me it speaks of a lack of leadership on that Side, suffice it to say that. I only want to say, Sir, that it is my opinion.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is saying that the leadership over there does not allow them to say what they wish to say? Is that what the Honourable Member is saying and that there are a number of things she would like to say but the leadership does not allow her to say them?

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mercifully, Sir, I have a leader who will come and take guidance and make sure that we know what we speak when we speak, unlike others, Sir.

Sir, suffice it to say I believe that the University is deserving of our support in this Bill. The reality is that for almost 20 years it has moved from financial crisis to financial crisis. It has had to chop ...

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I wish to draw to Your Honour's attention that this House does not appear to have a quorum. I draw it to Your Honour's attention with much regret.

Mr. SPEAKER: Proceed, please. Mr.

B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir. Mr.

SPEAKER: Proceed, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: One, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Where is the nine, Sir?

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Sir, as I said I really believe that the University of the West Indies is deserving of our support in this matter. It is a matter that has been allowed to catapult it from financial crisis to financial crisis. Those who have been associated with it will tell you that programmes have had to be chopped in the past, that staff could not be hired, that consumable materials could not be purchased and in the circumstances, Sir, all because of the inability to plan and otherwise to receive funds when promised to do so.

I therefore, Sir, would like to commend to this Chamber this Bill and to suggest that in whatever regard we can continue to assist the University in its effort not only to expand its numbers, Sir, but to continue to be recognised as one of the top 50 universities in this hemisphere, Sir, that we should seek to do so.

I would sincerely hope, Sir, that we also recognise that the importance of the Caribbean psyche is also linked inextricably with the health and prosperity of the University of the West Indies which so symbolises that pride that we wish to feel at a political level and not only at an academic level.

I beg to move therefore that this Bill be read a second time.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 3.45 p.m.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY seconded by Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY Mr.

CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee. *Clauses*

7-72, inclusive, were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY seconded by Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, seconded by Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Serial Bonds Act, 1997.

ORDER NO. 11 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES APPLICABLE
AND OTHER PROVISIONS RELATING TO
PERSONAL STAFF OF THE PRIME
MINISTER AS SET OUT IN THIS
RESOLUTION AND IN THE
SCHEDULES HERETO

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the Resolution before the House is a Resolution that is designed to do two things. To facilitate the restructuring of the Administrative Office that serves the Prime Minister in a political capacity and also, Sir, to address a very grave anomaly that obtains in relation to the conditions under which such persons serve relative to other persons on contract to the Government.

Mr. Speaker, from time to time, holders of the Office of the Prime Minister have adjusted the range of staff and the functions exercised by the staff serving the Prime Minister. It is now my proposal, Sir, to make an adjustment consequent upon the contracts for the Officers holding posts in the Prime Minister's office expiring. I propose, Sir, to consolidate the position of Press Secretary and Personal Assistant, but I feel that the office of the Prime Minister has historically lacked a person who functions as an Office Manager.

The Prime Minister's office in a political capacity manages a vast array of paper records and it is assumed that that office management function is going to take place by magic. So that, Sir, I am proposing therefore to abolish the post of Press Secretary to consolidate the Press Secretary functions, into the post of Personal Assistant and to create a position of Executive Assistant to deal with office management functions at the same level, Sir, as the old Press Secretary level.

The effect will be that the cost of running the Prime Minister's office will not increase, but the posts in the office will change. But, I want to use this opportunity, Sir, to say that there is a need systemically to improve the facilities, generally available to all Members of Parliament to the carrying out of their responsibilities. Not only the Prime Minister's office, Sir, but all Members of Parliament

generally. There have been submissions made, through the Management Commission of Parliament that, I believe had elicited support on all sides of the House and I believe we are anxious with the continuing support of all sides of the House to put them into effect.

Those matters, Sir, pertain also to the question of subventions for political parties which I have supported from the Floor and which I am pleased to say are now being taken by all political institutions, despite utterances that one might have heard issued from some people, Sir, in public.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, the other matter that is being changed here are the conditions for gratuity of the Prime Minister's staff. Right now a Prime Minister's Personal Assistant or other staff only gets a gratuity after three years of service or having served not less than two years, if that service is terminated by a general election. That puts these Officers who do not hold pensionable positions at a total disadvantage relative to all other contract Officers of the State.

Therefore, Sir, the opportunity is being made to put the conditions of gratuity for the Prime Minister's staff on the same condition as all other Officers holding contracts with the Government of Barbados. Those are the changes being contemplated and I commend them to the House.

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Prime Minister is probably best placed to determine what kind of arrangements he would wish to have within the Office of the Prime Minister and so it would fall very poorly from the mouth of any other Honourable Member to question the Prime Minister's decision to, as he says, restructure the Office of the Prime Minister. I would say that this is probably the least efficacious restructuring that I have ever seen in an office. And the Prime Minister has probably been more eloquent in what he has not said than what he has actually said. When a functionary at the level of the highest office in the government makes a decision to revamp his office as we have seen in the Nixon White House, even in the Blair Cabinet, there must be some cause or causal factor which is not immediately apparent to the naked eye. 3.55 p.m.

I am not able but now we will have someone on this Side. As I look around I see someone on this Side who can speak with more pristine authority on these matters than I myself am able to. We are discussing the restructuring of prime ministerial offices.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You are going to buy one of his books?

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: "Essence of Economics" which I believe we should give to the Prime Minister of the aside as a gift. You can be sure that as soon as the book is available I will give it to the Prime Minister of the day or rather the Minister of Finance as a personal gift. As soon as I get my gift from the Rt. Honourable Member for St. Michael South, I will be giving one to the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I would want for the House's records to show that the gift that is being proffered to me by the Member for St. Michael West is not proffered because he does not want to have anything written by the Member for St. Michael South in his house.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I do not understand this "ungenerosity" on the part of the Prime Minister because I am suggesting that a book with the title "The Essence of Economics" is something which the Prime Minister should relish, but if he does not wish to get it, I will make sure that he does not get it from me but I know that the former Prime Minister is of a generous nature and will see to it that his student of former years continues to benefit from the largesse of his intellectual capacity.

Mr. Speaker, what I have not been clear about and the Prime Minister did not as yet explain to us is what is it that would have generated the desire to restructure his office. We would have been much better served if the Prime Minister had taken the opportunity to explain to us the genesis of the office and the performance of office holders in his experience so that we would have been able to assess the desirability of the change.

However, we have to take Prime Ministers in some matters on face value. In some matters, we have to assume that a Prime Minister is speaking with all of the sincerity at his command and if he says he wishes to readjust the posts we have to take it as given. But, Mr. Speaker, there must be something unacceptable that the next prime minister of this country, determining that he requires a press officer, must come back to this House and bring another Resolution. I believe that there is a sum of money that has been determined for the cost of each Resolution that has been brought here. I am sure that if the Clerk of Parliament were pressed he could produce for the House through Your Honour an accurate indication of how much money it costs to bring a Resolution here when that Resolution has been processed by the various layers

of bureaucracy in the Government. Hence, this constant moving back and forth of Resolution upon Resolution is resulting in an assault on the taxpayers of this country.

Why must we have a change merely because the Prime Minister feels that a particular press officer has not performed at a certain level? Why must we have a Resolution to change the entire structure? If the Prime Minister feels that his press officer is not functioning at the level he should be functioning he should have the courage to get rid of him or her. He should not come in here with a whole Resolution to change the entire structure of the Prime Minister's office in this country, merely because he, having made a decision which may have been founded in proper examination but, having been prevailed upon by others who may not have had the exact experience which the Prime Minister has in these matters to readjust his thinking, now presses on this House the necessity for an entire almost revolutionary change where you have an executive assistant in the Prime Minister's office.

Sir, I recall when a former Prime Minister considered it desirable to abolish an office. The Barbados Labour Party made it a cause *cefebre*. I am being told from his seat that that was a Civil Service appointment and this is a political appointment.

I think that we should give the Prime Ministers of the day 3 or 4 posts that they could play with from time to time so that they could decide without reference to or coming to the House. My contention is that this is a waste of the House's time. A Prime Minister ought to be given a staff of so many to decide how he or she - I have to say he or she because you never can tell these days - can disperse their staff.

For us to come in here with a whole Resolution to determine that somebody should be dismissed, sorry, demoted, I find that unacceptable. I really am disappointed that the Prime Minister in the context of the slogans which now permeate the public service about public sector reform - of course, the Honourable Member is saying that this is not public sector but political sector - that such reformation as is happening is born out of political necessity, I presume, and we can look forward in the future to some further adjustment in the political framework.

The Prime Minister ought to have been able to tell us and really should not have any difficulty telling us about the performance of the holder of the post while it existed. I am very pleased to have read in the newspaper and I thought that the House would have been made privy to that by a statement because the Government usually makes statements when they are having anything momentous that the former press officer was being elevated to the level of personal aide.

What I do not understand is this. Apparently when the press officer was functioning as press officer, the post of press officer was perfectly okay. So he has grossed up press officer and personal aide but instead of superannuating the personal aide of the day he has recycled the personal aide into a new position which he is creating.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAJTT: I have misunderstood? Could you as a point of elucidation explain? I will give way.

As I said, Sir, Prime Ministers should have some little leeway and more than a little leeway in determining their staffing. I think, however, that as Prime Minister Blair had been able to demonstrate in Britain there are certain changes that can be made when necessary without troubling Parliament and I think that the Government would do well to examine the situation that exists in the United Kingdom and to follow that example rather than trouble the Parliament each time there is a change of Government - as there will be shortly. There will be another change of Government shortly and we will have probably to go through this whole process again, and this is really my concern. My concern is that we must not, at every change of Government, have a new dispensation in these matters. 4.05 p.m.

We feel that the time has arrived where the country can properly recognise that the Prime Minister must have a cadre of persons that come into office with him or her properly to execute the work that is familiarly associated with the Head of Government. It would save Parliament from wasting parliamentary time having to discuss matters such as Executive Assistant.

I am a little chagrined about the tide of Executive Assistant to the Prime Minister. Executive in itself suggests a level of operation which might inflate the mind of a person who holds the position. If, as I had read in the newspaper this is merely the research capability in the preparation of speeches, then that is what it should be, a Research Assistant, but an Executive Assistant suggests something slightly different. Therefore, the Prime Minister should give very early thought.

You see, Sir, we have in the public service at the moment a title called "Executive Officer." An Executive Officer whether in the Navy, or in the Army, has a particular role to play. Executive Officer was phased out in the public sector now we are having public sector reform and the Prime Minister is coming in with something called Executive Assistant. It smacks of convenience.

The Deputy Prime Minister will soon want an Executive Assistant as well. If you are not careful, we

will soon have to have an Executive Assistant for the Deputy Prime Minister which would make more sense.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAUT: It is just, Sir, that the Prime Minister ought not to be stressing us out with this kind of paper when all he could have done, quite frankly, and ought to be in a position to be able to say "Goodbye" to whomever he wishes to say "Goodbye" to expeditiously, bring in whomever he wants to bring in to replace them and he does not even have to report to Parliament. These are not matters that require parliamentary attention and parliamentary time.

Now we have a post called Executive Assistant. The gratuity should be a standard gratuity throughout the entire system. We agree with that. We should not have gratuity being paid to some categories of people who work to be paid by taxpayers different from gratuity for other categories of persons.

Sir, in that respect I would like to ask the Prime Minister if he could see his way to agree that gratuity should be paid to those persons who work in other departments of the Government who have come from other countries who work in this country for us and who have had great difficulty getting their gratuity. I would be trampling on the rights which you have allowed me if I went farther than that but I believe the Prime Minister would be able to pick up the line of that call in due course. But, really, if you have anybody to dismiss, dismiss them for cause, or loss of confidence, or any of those things.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: To tell the truth if the fellow who held this position was as ignorant as that person you are now dealing with, he should have been dismissed even earlier. He could not even write a letter. Call for the records and you would see that he could not even write a letter.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not let us get into that now.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Very well, Sir. I hope the Prime Minister when he responds will indicate, give us chapter and verse so we would be able better to understand what is the mischief that is being corrected. It is proper that we should know. If a Prime Minister brings in a whole reform of the department, we should have some idea. What is the mischief that is being corrected? Mr. Speaker, I would wait to hear from the Prime Minister.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I was not here to hear the Right Honourable Member's introduction

in this matter but I am reliably informed that the measure has been cast in the mould of strengthening the office of the Prime Minister.

I do not think the Honourable Member for St. Peter should get too agitated in his seat. We support the measure. We are not opposing it. We think it is a bit convoluted way to achieve the ends that he wants to achieve but we support the measure. We can afford to support that measure, and the Honourable Member can rely on our support because we believe that the Honourable Member should have the staff and resources available to him to carry out the task which he now performs but that is not a concession he makes to people who now hold the office he once held.

While I am quite willing to support what he is requesting here openly, Mr. Speaker, I have been told by the Honourable Member for St. Peter that he is not supporting any requests made by me to enhance the status of...

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is seeking to mislead the House. A package of measures came to me and the Honourable Member for St. John wrote saying that the Democratic Labour Party could not support the package. Those were his words in the last paragraph. I wrote him back saying that in such circumstances where the Democratic Labour Party could not support the package those parts in the package that were exclusively for the benefit of the Democratic Labour Party I would not obviously feel to go ahead with. Those are the full facts of that situation.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member has an advantage now declared that nobody else has. When I treat it as a package the Honourable Member does not want to treat it as a package. I start to treat it as a package and then the Honourable Member says he does not treat it as a package anymore, so I think he has that advantage. I am not complaining.

I am saying that I am supporting what you want and all I am saying is that the same concession is not being afforded the person who now holds the office which the Honourable Member for St. Peter once held. The Honourable Member for St. Peter made solemn commitment by word at Combermere School on the day he became Prime Minister that there were some things that needed to be done. You may not remember.

Mr. SPEAKER: I was the one at Combermere.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Yes, I know but the Honourable Member met me there. He pulled me aside for a few minutes and he told me that he was of the view that the facility ...

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member would yield on a point of elucidation. Not only did I say it then, Sir. I gave the Honourable Member the assurance that I would support a position, and I still do. I will support a position for Research Officer for the Leader of the Opposition and I told him I would be delighted to see that in the package that comes forward from the Management Commission of Parliament, and that is what came forward.

Subsequent to that and for the record, Sir, I am saying that I fully support the need for a Research Officer to the Leader of the Opposition. I am saying I have not disengaged from that but it is part of a package.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I do not know why the Honourable Member is so excited. I do not intend to deal with personalities. The Honourable Member wants me to deal with him so he can make his case better to the public and say that the Honourable Member for St. John was the one who washed his dirty linen in public, but I am not dealing with personalities.

I am dealing, as the Honourable Member for St. Joseph in matters like this, not on the basis of the incumbency of the office, but on the basis of the principle of the resources which should be made available to politicians to carry out their work and the support mechanisms which should be in place as a matter of principle and nothing to do with personalities.

The fact that one office holder makes a case out or another, the Honourable Member can rest assured that I do not deal with those matters in that way. Therefore, I would always be surprised that the Honourable Member's position had to be based on "well I am going to support all the measures which benefit one group but I am not going to do any which will benefit the other group." I consider that kind of politics to be unnecessarily contentious and bordering on petty.

I support this. If this is what the Honourable Member said he needs to improve the facilities at Parliament, to isolate certain members of his staff and place them in Coventry for the time being, and this is the convoluted way by which he wishes to do it, there is nothing wrong with that. I am not dealing with personality, I am dealing with the principle. You should be free to run your office to the best of your ability and to the kind of standard and comfort which necessarily go with the post. This is not what we are quarrelling about, we are saying that if the Honourable Member has another agenda in mind, well, we cannot market that agenda for him, he has to market it himself.
4.15 p.m.

The Honourable Member must be careful of one thing since he likes to say that a man is known by his friends,

not me, he is the one who would have said that about me. What the Honourable Member for St. Peter needs to do is to ensure that there is a strict division between his office as Prime Minister and the activities that relate to the Barbados Labour Party - not on the account of the Honourable Member for St. Peter but on the account of other people - which has been blurred. We have had debates in here which have delved into personalities. There was a former Personal Aide who was attacked because he was delinquent at one point in the payment of some rent. Eventually, he paid it but it got down into a very rancid episode of abuse outside of the Chamber, not in here. You were not in the Chair then Mr. Speaker.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: We are not getting to that. I am saying to the Honourable Member for St. Peter that if he is cleaning up to clean up generally and let us not have a blurring of those roles because he and I know of a lot of correspondence circulating in relation to activities which underlings of his have been engaging in, obviously heavy with power, so if this is the way which he is going to solve it well, as I said, you have to market that.

One of the most unremarkable things and one issue in which very little comment was made was some strategic changes which the Honourable Member for St. Peter made in his office recently and I assume that these are to facilitate those strategic changes but sometimes one has to cut out the cancer and therefore I believe that this is a very circuitous and convoluted method of cleaning some of the odorous practices which some people have engaged in since September 1994 and which need to be stamped out. But this will not settle the matter even though the Honourable Member for St. Peter might think so. The last time I had to speak in these terms about somebody else in this Chamber, Sir, we were at the receiving end but this is not going to settle it and we gave the Honourable Member for St. Peter the assurance that if that element is not cleaned up and dealt with that we will have to bring more pressure to bear in the future in relation to that and we certainly would be ready for that.

Let us get to the substance of the matter though which is that there are office holders like persons who work in the Prime Minister's office and the Opposition's office and the constituency aides who should qualify for a gratuity and in addition to that should be paid the gratuity on the date on which they qualify. Let us say that the previous qualifying period was three years. Once that three years has elapsed, they should receive that gratuity. I hope that those anomalies which are attached to posts in the Management Commission as well as the Prime Minister's office will be dealt with in that way, Mr. Speaker, Sir, because you may have people who may have to serve

for five years under the incumbency of one Opposition Leader or one Prime Minister who have to practically beg to get their gratuities advanced. I have recently had to ask for my own staff for them to be paid the gratuity which has accrued to date but I am not sure that the law permits it and these are young people who have no other savings and have other calls on their salaries. They do not have secure jobs, they do not have pension. As I said, I do not deal with personalities. The Honourable Member may want to but he is not getting me into that debate.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that generally speaking, the terms and conditions of those persons who are attached to politicians who serve for five years or sometimes less or who may resign their office during that period, once they qualify for their gratuity, they should be paid at the time for which they qualify whether it is a year of service, three years of service or whatever. They should be paid gratuity at that time. I have only got up to calm the Honourable Member for St. Peter down, because I noticed him shifting about and a bit worried in his seat, and to let him know that we support this measure and we have no problem with it but we do not believe it would solve some of the major problems which exist with the close circle of advisors. I said that I do not want to get into the issue of personality, if not there would be a lot that I can say here and I will not say it on this occasion. I may never say it, but the point is, as I said, this is a convoluted way of dealing with a very serious matter of people who are drunk with power and responsibility and have used their offices to manipulate others and it is something that needs to be dealt with and stamped out.

A word of warning to the wise should be enough for the Honourable Member for St. Peter in that regard.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I have listened very carefully to the House. I have taken to heart the view of the Member for St. Michael West that a greater flexibility has to be afforded to Prime Ministers both in terms of the number of staff and the function of staff but also the independence to exercise judgement about who should serve the Prime Minister. In that respect, Sir, I feel myself a bit laboured by having to bring this matter to Parliament because I know the constraints under which I seek to discharge the office of Prime Minister.

I would, for example, Sir, put a case if I were allowed to for somebody who could help write my speeches in the way that I would write my own speeches because I spend a lot of my time as Prime Minister writing speeches and keeping abreast of developments with a view, when I write the speech, to be current and also to reflect policy and not to confuse the policy and send the wrong signal. Many people see speech writing, for example, as a simple thing but it means that the person writing the speech

must be reading the same thing as the person who is going to deliver it and has the same perspective. Speech writers for Prime Ministers have historically been people who ... 4.25 p.m.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: That is the point I am making. I would like, Sir, to have a person whom I can afford to pay who has a wealth of experience and who has been himself or herself

Aside.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I do not have that, Sir, and as a result I spend a lot of my time doing research to write speeches and writing my own speeches.

May I also say, Sir, that there are other ways in which the office of Prime Minister, as a political office, has to be improved but which the Government does not have the resources to provide at this stage. What I am seeking to do is to use the exact amount of funds that the House now provides to run the Prime Minister's Office to restructure the office to get a stronger office management capability in the management of the Prime Minister's affairs.

The Prime Minister's office, Sir, manages a vast array of records and information. It must relate to a large number of institutions and the sheer task of managing the Prime Minister's political office requires an executive function. It has not had that in the past and all I have sought to do is to consolidate the position of Press Secretary into Personal Assistant and create a position of Office Manager.

The Member for St. John, says, Sir, he is not dealing in personalities. It means that there has been a massive transformation, Sir, and that he has had his road to Damascus because his whole career, Sir, has been in dealing with personalities and that he is not going to deal with such to my mind means he is not going to deal with problems which exist in relation to a close circle of advisors. I suspect, Sir, he speaks with a very personal interest in this matter. Our friends are our friends. I do not tell him whom his circle of advisors should be. In fact I do not think anybody in the DLP can tell him whom his circle of advisors should be. He has his own circle of advisors. Some of them have even told people in Trinidad that they are also my friends and are part of my circle of advisors and I had in Hong Kong to clarify that since he is raising it now that it was brought to my attention in Hong Kong that a person who is foreign to my circle of advisors had purported in Trinidad that he is my very, very best friend and my close advisor. I said, but that is not true and that is all I did in Hong Kong.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: You are raising it. All I did was represent the facts of the situation that I have said I have no relationship whatsoever with a person who was purporting to be one of my close advisors - that person. I believe that you are speaking about the wrong person. That is all I said.

The Member for St. John is free to choose his own circle of friends, his own circle of advisors. He will surround the office of Leader of the Opposition with people who, in his best judgement, he feels can assist him in the discharge of his responsibility. I will not this evening either comment on the record or performance of any of them because you can be sure that where the blurring of roles is concerned there is a lot to be said about that matter.

I do feel that I have a responsibility to speak this evening about the question of the measures that were put up by the Management Commission of Parliament. What came to me was a document from the Management Commission of Parliament including a large number of measures to improve the conditions under which Members of Parliament serve and to address some long-standing anomalies that have worked a hardship particularly on former Members of this House.

The measures, Sir, came to me also making provision for a subvention to be paid to political parties and the document also represented that the political parties had agreed to the guidelines under which the subvention was to be paid. The document represented further that there was unanimity on all sides represented in Parliament about the measures together with the guidelines surrounding certain aspects of the measures contained in the package. Thereafter, Sir, I received a correspondence from the Leader of the Opposition representing that the Democratic Labour Party wanted to have things beyond the guidelines that had been agreed to by the Management Commission, govern access of the political parties to the subvention, namely the drafting into law of certain new provisions to determine how political parties are financed, what they should disclose, a new law governing political broadcasts, a whole range of things. That matter was alien and foreign to what came to me from the Management Commission of Parliament. So that in essence the Leader of the Opposition was seeking outside what had been agreed to within the boundaries of the Management Commission to establish unilaterally new conditions to which the other members had not been party and which were not contained in what was represented to me as being the unanimous position of the Management Commission of Parliament, and that the Democratic Labour Party therefore in the final paragraph could not support the package if that new fundamental condition was outside the bounds of what had been agreed to. I wrote back saying, Sir, that I was going to refer this matter back to the Management Commission of Parliament

but that in the circumstances I thought it was only fair that if the Democratic Labour Party was going to oppose the package in public that those parts in it that go more uniquely to the Democratic Labour Party members were things that I would have to say "no" to. The matter, Sir, has been referred back to the Management Commission of Parliament. I believe, Sir, that there has been a meeting on the issue.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: There is not? Another document has come to me again. Then I cannot act.

I just want to say, Sir, because I do not want there to be any confusion. I said in my letter to the Leader of the Opposition that I was going to refer the matter back to the Management Commission of Parliament for further consideration in the light of his response to the original package.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The Honourable Member said that he proposes to approve all of those matters except...

Aside.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, I will go and get the letter.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: In fact, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had not proposed to approve anything. All I said was that I could not approve those things that were explicitly in favour of members of the Democratic Labour Party and that I was referring the package back to the Management Commission for reconsideration. I could not obviously, Sir, be approving something that I was sending back for reconsideration. I was not approving anything at all. As a result therefore, Sir, nothing contained in the package has been approved and that is the point. That is why it has gone back to the Management Commission of Parliament, Sir. When the letter comes you will understand what I am saying. I drew to his attention that there were certain parts of the package that in my judgement were explicitly for the benefit of members past and present of the Democratic Labour Party and that in the circumstances I could not approve them. But I would refer the rest of the package back to the Commission.

Now, Sir, if it is the wish of the House that the matter, having been reconsidered, should be proceeded with I would like to know that that is the case and that it is going to enjoy the unanimity and the unstinting support of all concerned. 4.35 p.m.

So that all I will be seeking to do then, is not to exercise an independent discretion in the matter, because

I really do not feel I have one, Sir, but merely to be the instrument of the Government that put into effect what the Management Commission has said should be done in relation to persons served by the Management Commission of Parliament, because that is my only role in the matter. Anybody, who was formerly part of Government must formerly make it a reality and it has been referred to me in the capacity of the Minister of Finance and the Minister of the Civil Service and all I am seeking to do, Sir, is to expedite and facilitate the need. I just want it to be clear, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that I referred the matter back to the Management Commission.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of clarification, if you would give way to it. When the matter left the Management Commission there was unanimity. I indicated quite clearly in my letter to you that certain public pronouncements by a Leader of a political party caused the Democratic Labour Party to reflect. The same week in which we agreed to the disbursement of a subvention there was a statement about bribery. We took the position therefore that we should have the clearest principles in place for financing, but I want to draw one other point to the Right Honourable Member's attention. There is no power under the Management Commission Act for the Management Commission to be involved in the issue of subventions and we have to amend the Act at the earliest possible time to deal with that. So even now we are breaching the law by using the Management Commission to pay subventions to political parties. It is not a matter of contention. We are in support of subventions, but the clearest principles must be in place. We have had the same problem, as you know, as it occurred in relation to the Poverty Alleviation Fund. At least you found an entity by which you could pay the money. But the Management Commission does not have the power by law to deal with issues.

Now on the issue, Sir, of the Right Honourable Member's letter to me, I believe that the Right Honourable Member must understand that he wrote to me as follows: He told me:

"Please be advised that I have submitted a copy of your letter to the Director of Finance and Economic Affairs and have instructed him to ensure that the wishes of your party are fully complied with. Our wish was that the law be put in place before the subvention was disbursed."

And then, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the subvention would be disbursed without our wishes being complied with. But the Right Honourable Member needs to recall that he indicated as follows to me:

"You would, of course, appreciate that it would not be feasible for me to approve the implementation

of those proposals which are intended exclusively for the benefit of past and present Democratic Labour Party Parliamentarians in the face of the Party's explicit opposition.

In the circumstances and following your instructions, I have decided not to approve the following measures contained in the package:

- (1) The post of Research Officer for Opposition Parliamentarians,
- (2) The regrading of the post of an Executive Assistant to the Leader of the Opposition, and
- (3) Amending the Amendment to the Retiring Allowances Legislative Service Act, Cap. 12A."

The Prime Minister then went on to say,

"I shall, of course, also bring this matter to the attention of the Management Commission of Parliament."

Matter, meaning the matters that were not approved to,

"Before acting further on the other aspects." *Asides.*

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The matter could only refer to those that you have not approved, because it says before acting further on the other aspects of the report as submitted to me.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this matter does not need to be contentious and the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter knows that we have written back to him since then and indicated that we can proceed, but there were concerns and we still have concerns about the disbursements of the subventions. The Right Honourable Member has a subsequent letter from me. That letter is dated July 28, 1997 and it said,

"Should any further discussion be necessary on this matter, I will make myself available."

The Management Commission has been summoned three times since then. A quorum was here for one of those meetings, but the meeting did not occur. Mr. Speaker, Sir, these are matters that need to be dealt with. We extend the courtesy of the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter of supporting this measure, but there are many other people in the system who need their concerns addressed in the fairest manner and that is all we are calling for.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Member for St. John has read a letter written by me

and put under a construction that I could not possibly have intended. Namely, that what was referred to me was a package that was agreed to by the Management Commission of Parliament. Then, I received a letter, whatever the motivation is not my concern, from the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party saying that his party could not support in public the package. I responded saying, as I said very carefully in the letter, Sir, that he would understand in the circumstances that I could not proceed to approve those parts of the package that were exclusively for the benefit of past and present Members of the Democratic Labour Party in the face of the Party's explicit opposition in public, but that I was going to refer the rest of the matter back to the Management Commission for their further consideration, and that is what I have done.

I also want to say, Sir, that the directions that I gave to the Director of Finance and Economic Affairs were very clear. The Leader of the Opposition wrote saying that the Democratic Labour Party was not going to touch any subvention unless there was a law in place. The instruction to the Director of Finance and Economic Affairs was to carry out the wish that if you do not want the money unless there was a law in place, if there was not law then you could not get the money.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: That was your wish, expressed by the party. Sir, the "toing and froing" of this matter, sadly has arisen not as a result of a division within the counsels of the Management Commission, but as the result of a statement made in public.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. The Right Honourable Member is misleading the House because the Democratic Labour Party's position in this letter of July 10th was, as follows:

"We wish you to know that we wish rules to be devised and a commitment given that such rules will be made into law, and prior to disbursement of any subvention, to deal with matters of contributions to political parties, election costs such as advertising, public opinion polls, qualification of political parties to receive subventions and related matters.

You may therefore proceed on the basis that the Democratic Labour Party will not give support to the package of proposals made to you by the Management Commission of Parliament without due regard being given to our position as set out here in this matter."

And that position was that a commitment should be given.

The Right Honourable Member's letter, we assume, was a commitment that the Director of Finance had been asked to fully comply with our request. The matter ended there. There was no basis for any further contention. The Management Commission could have met and resolved the other issues. Now the Right Honourable Member is telling me that what he wrote is not what he meant, so we are back to square one.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I can only tell you what I wrote. This Parliament and all other previous Governments have given subventions to the Association of Journalists without there being a law governing it, to the Manufacturers Association, to the Trade Unions, to BIMAP and to a thousand institutions across the world and there is no law that converts them into pariahs in the minds of the public that unless we control them, then there will be no accountability and transparency, but you are dealing with political parties now, Sir, so it must be law now, so that the Unions can be depended upon to get subventions from the Government and spend them, Sir. 4.45 p.m.

The Management Commission went to the trouble of drawing up guidelines that were submitted as part of the package that specified the steps that would have to be taken to get access to the money and how they should be accounted for that were in compliance with the procedures that the Ministry of Finance used to disburse such subventions to all other institutions; but we are now to go and treat political parties as a pariah, and we now must impose on them the full force of statute when everybody else who is getting subventions from Government does not even have the guidelines that Management Commission have written in relation to parties.

So these parties which have built this democracy now will have to have a law governing political polls and a whole range of foolishness after the Management Commission has said these are the guidelines.

What I meant and what I told the Director of Finance and Economic Affairs is that it is not Government's policy to create a law for this. We have moved in this money on the Floor of Parliament and the Government has acted by that means and the Government has also acted by insisting that guidelines agreed to by the Management Commission should be put in place and we are satisfied that those guidelines are full and complete for the purpose. Disburse the money!

We will not be bent by the Democratic Labour Party so that before we can deal with the needs of parliamentarians we must now bring a new law governing political polls and foolishness. I want to be clear, Sir, that I have no intention whatsoever to bring a new law to

say that to get a subvention the political parties must be governed by a statute so that transparency and accountability...

Aside.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: I understood the last paragraph of the Leader of the Opposition that the Democratic Labour Party will not be supporting the package unless the law is in place. We are not putting a law and the Democratic Labour Party cannot make the Government create new policy. I am not putting in any new law. I have referred the matter to the Management Commission of Parliament.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I think that all parliamentarians have a vested interest in this matter. It would seem to me that what the Honourable Member is saying is that he understood something from the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Opposition understood something from him. They are not agreeing on who understood what from what. The Rt. Honourable Member is saying that he in the context of his understanding is not bringing any law. The Leader of the Opposition is saying he understood him to say that he would comply. The question is, why is it necessary for there to be a penalty attached? If the Rt. Honourable Member says he is now clear, what is the problem with the penalty that has been attached to those things exclusively for the DLP. I cannot believe that the Rt. Honourable Member is saying that the DLP thinks that he is imposing some kind of punishment. If he is saying there is no problem, if he is not having any law, all is in place, then if the Management Commission has agreed, proceed.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. This entire debate is unfortunate because subventions which go to Parliament... they are not political parties neither is a Government or a Prime Minister who is a politician dispensing or giving funds to his own party and to other parties. Therefore, it was stuck in the Management Commission that, given that politicians are now considering taking up Government funds to give themselves, there should be transparency right across the Board.

That was the position taken in Management Commission. So to believe or to give the impression that this is similar to subventions being granted to say, the Child Care Board or some home is not so, and I repeat that the politicians now would be giving money to themselves and therefore a higher level of accountability was required. It is an unfortunate debate and unnecessary...

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Member for St. Michael North West has not heard what I said. I said that the package that came to me from

Parliament came to me with guidelines written into them that were agreed to and subsequent to that the Leader of the Opposition acting on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party wrote saying that in addition to those guidelines that had been agreed to they also want a law. I am saying that my simple position is that the Democratic Labour Party has said that unless there is a law they cannot support the package.

If the Democratic Labour Party is withdrawing its position that it does not want a law in place, fine.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, if the Honourable Member will give way. If the Honourable Member is saying that he is not having any law, that is the end of that. The Management Commission does not have to heed or apply to any Minister. The Management Commission is not like the union applying. The Management Commission is making a decision of the Parliament. If the Honourable Member is saying that he is not making any law, end of that. Do what the Management Commission has done on the basis of the guidelines and proceed!

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a very simple matter. Something came to me under the pen of the Chairman of the Management Commission of Parliament indicating that the package enjoyed the full support of all sides in Parliament. A subsequent letter came to me indicating that one of the sides in Parliament could not support...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is unwittingly misleading the House. There are two points I want to make, Sir. The Rt. Honourable Member is a member of the Management Commission by virtue of...

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The Rt. Honourable Member for St. Peter has two bites at the cherry. First of all, a submission coming from the Management Commission comes from him because by virtue of his office he is a member of the Management Commission. We have a system where the Management Commission of sensible men can agree to something but we have to then send it to the Prime Minister or the Minister of Finance for him to approve what we, including the Honourable Member for the City as Deputy Prime Minister agreed to. So I object to that principle first of all but I cannot do anything about it.

If the Rt. Honourable Member for St. Peter as Prime Minister does not like what the Management Commission sends to him even though we all agreed to it he has the

last say in the matter. That is the nature of what is going on in here.

The second point that I need to make, Mr. Speaker, Sir, is that many of these things were reached on the basis of consensus. Part of that consensus was reached outside of Management Commission. On the question of the amounts to be paid political parties the Management Commission was told that as between the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and the Rt. Honourable Member for St. Peter they had agreed that the money would be equally divided, between a party that is 60 years old with a headquarters and 28 candidates, a party that is 42 years old with an auditorium, a headquarters and 28 candidates and a party that is 8 years old and cannot even keep the 28 that it ran in the last election but all of us were to get the same amount of money to accommodate behind the scenes discussions and negotiations.

We accepted all of that and the Rt. Honourable Member for St. Peter is now trying to open up the issue by being petty and unnecessarily petty. We agreed to the package. Deal with it! Foolishness!

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, could I say something before you proceed? I am going to let you speak, Sir.

I have given a lot of latitude and I think we have gone far and wide from this Resolution before the House. I would like to make before you wind up the Resolution, I would like to suggest that the matter which has to come back before the Management Commission that the Management Commission be given a chance to review the whole matter.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this matter has only become an issue because between the matter having been agreed to in the Management Commission came to me as Minister of Finance because the Minister of Finance approves the vote of the Management Commission as it has financial implications and the Minister of the Civil Service is the final person who approves posts. It came in that sense, Sir. Between it being agreed to and it coming to me, the intervening event that has caused all of this was, as the Honourable Member for St. John had said, a statement by some other political leader. He has allowed that to intrude and to change the position of categorical support that the Democratic Labour Party's representatives on the Management Commission gave to the Management Commission for conditional support by way of a letter to me saying that he could only now, in the light of the statement... 4.55 p.m.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order, Sir. This is why we are having problems and the whole issue

is being unnecessarily drawn out. When the matter of the subvention came up, the Democratic Labour Party put its position, but because Honourable Members on all three sides said that they wanted the matter dealt within a timely way, we withdrew our position on the question of laws and we said we were going to let the process move ahead. I would like the Honourable Member for St. Peter to let the process move ahead. He obviously cannot see himself to do that.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, there are two things. If I am understanding the Honourable Member for St. John to agree, because I feel strongly about this, Sir, that political parties in Government should exercise no greater claim to resources for the support of political parties than all other Opposition parties, because I feel this is fundamental, it would be easy for me to say let my party get the lion's share and agree for a proportional amount that the Barbados Labour Party should get the lion's share because we are the oldest in Government and have the most seats in here.

I want to make one point, Sir, that political parties when they are in Government also have to remember that one of these days they are going to be in Opposition too and you always have to do things that you can live with when you are in Opposition too. An Opposition party has the same responsibility for the staff who work for them to go home with a little gratuity too, and your responsibilities of running a political organisation do not diminish because you are in Opposition. In fact, they may even increase.

I fundamentally feel, Sir, that all parties are equal in relation to the responsibilities of running a political party and if there are to be funds, then let there be equality. But there can be no sense of Government and Opposition in terms of need. Therefore, I hear about pettiness and all of this, but I am very clear in my mind that if there is a subvention, let all parties share in the subvention equally because needs are equal.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker on a point of order. I wish somebody would brief the Honourable Member for St Peter on what happens at Management Commission meetings. That matter did not come up for the simple reason that we were all interested in consensus. What the Honourable Member for St Peter is now doing is opening an issue which deserves debate, and if he wants to debate that issue and delay the process further then we can debate it and discuss it further.

The point is, that it cannot be on the basis of a discussion which took place between two political leaders that a position be arrived at because at no time did the Honourable Member for St. Peter solicit my concerns that it should be divided equally. It was a discussion

between two leaders but we still decided in the interest of pushing the process ahead to go along with it. One of the two who agreed was the first to talk about bribery. You understand where the problem comes?

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. We are going around in circles. If the Management Commission took a decision which was unanimous, despite what happened between then and now, at this stage it seems as though everybody is hoping to return to the *status quo* where they were.

With respect, Sir, I would like to suggest that the Clerk of Parliament has prepared a document for implementation of the recommendations of the Management Commission Report and therefore that document speaks to legislative action and administrative action to implement the decisions.

I would like to encourage Honourable Members, let us just wind up this debate and agree to look at that document urgently with a view to ...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Members of the House, Sir. The Clerk has prepared a document.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, this is a very simple matter. The Minister of Finance and the Minister of the Civil Service make decisions in relation to these matters.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I am going to make a definite point. I do not mean to be offensive, but the Attorney General will probably appreciate what I am about to say.

The Minister of Finance and the Minister responsible for the Civil Service have to pronounce on agreements reached by the Management Commission. With respect, the Prime Minister has no jurisdiction over the Management Commission but as Minister of Finance and Minister of the Civil Service he can pronounce on it. Letters concerning what should or should not happen ought to have come to the Chairman of the Management Commission saying: "I agree, I do not agree, the Government cannot afford, the Government does not share" or anything like that. What happened between the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister, or the leaders of political parties is all extraneous to any agreement that is reached by the Management Commission.

The Management Commission having reached an agreement, I am mortified to hear that Members of Parliament who happen to be office holders of Prime

Minister and Leader of the Opposition can do something to obviate a decision made by the Management Commission. That is contrary to law. They do not have that power, Sir, and you must not let them presume to have that power. They are, for purposes of the Management Commission, bare members.

I think that the sooner Your Honour brings it to their attention privately, or in here, Sir, that they have no jurisdiction over the Management Commission, we would be a lot better off. I have no difficulty listening to them because I respect both of them, but when it comes to interfering with the rights of Members of this House, they stand in the same position as any other ordinary member and they must not therefore be forcing their respective offices on this House, and that is my position. It is my position yesterday, today and tomorrow.

I am sharing the view expressed by the Attorney General. I am dead serious. The Attorney General has offered a way forward without prejudice to the legitimate positions of both Honourable Members.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, this matter is so very simply delicious that a matter has been referred to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of the Civil Service saying that these measures enjoy the unanimous support of the Management Commission. Then a political party that was supposed to be an entity that was involved in the unanimous decision writes saying: "Contrary to what may have been represented to you, we will not support that package that you have in your possession unless there is a law in place."

Now, Sir, if the Democratic Labour Party is now withdrawing that letter and saying that what has come from the Management Commission is full and entire for the purpose of getting on with the business, and that they are withdrawing the requirement that there should be a law...

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, regrettably the Honourable Member wants to draw out the debate but he is misleading the House. The Democratic Labour Party's position was that having considered the matter further, this was after the Management Commission had discussed it, it could not have ended there because, contrary to what the Honourable Member for St. Michael West said, I claim the same rights to veto a decision in relation to my party's position that you claim as the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance at the level of your position. Let me make that abundantly clear. So if you and I do not agree, rest assured it ends here in this discussion. Let that position be abundantly clear.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER; Order, please.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I said, giving due regard to certain public pronouncements made recently, the Democratic Labour Party does not wish to be associated with a process which is not entirely transparent and above question.

I interpreted the Honourable Member's letter to be saying that he would put the transparency in place. The matter could have ended there but then the Honourable Member went on to say that notwithstanding that I am going to put the process in place, the matters which will benefit your people I am going to cut out of it. Let us end it here. The position is that I have said what the Democratic Labour Party's position is on this package. We need to proceed and have the matter dealt with as a matter of urgency on both sides of this House. There are Members of Parliament who are full time MPs and because of circumstances beyond their control they cannot continue to function in those circumstances and something has to be done. I ask the Honourable Member for St. Peter to put aside all of that sophistry and to let us get to the heart of the issue or Parliament itself can override the Minister of Finance too. We are sovereign, we do not have to wait on any Minister of Finance. Parliament can say that the money is there, Parliament has that right to do that. 5.05 p.m.

Asides.

Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON: If the Honourable Member for the City wishes to take that risk on this occasion she may get the support on this side.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, please. The Honourable Member for St. John just read the letter. Am I to understand Honourable Members that we are about to start over again? Please. Could you wind up on the Resolution please.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: If you could protect me from those Members who are rising on points on order. I am being very serious, Sir. The question of terms and conditions for politicians is a contentious issue and which politicians themselves have made a contentious issue by being critical whenever any improvements to the benefits

of politicians are put abroad and that is why if it is the entire will of Parliament on all sides that there should be an improvement in the conditions of Members of Parliament, the public must understand that there is not a division in that will.

What came to me were two things. One from the Management Commission saying that it is the will of all Members of Parliament represented on the Management Commission that there should be certain improvement to the conditions of parliamentarians. Then another letter came and said that the Democratic Labour Party will not support the package so that the admission of a possibility for a division on a matter that is contentious and fractious, Sir, is created. I have said, Sir, let me refer the matter back to the Management Commission of Parliament before I act and I have not taken an action on any of the recommendations made to me by the Management Commission of Parliament to improve the conditions.

I believe, Sir, that the matter should go back and come out without the need for a law. I am trying to find a way forward. I do not believe that there is a need for a separate law and the matter has been referred back to the Management Commission and there will be no law on the matter full stop.

I am obliged to you.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be adjourned to Tuesday, December 2, 1997, at 11.00 o'clock in the morning.

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

The question that the House be adjourned to Tuesday, December 2, 1997 at 1 LOO o'clock in the morning was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 5.15 p.m.

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