

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 - 99

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, August 18, 1998

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.25 a.m. on Tuesday, August 18, 1998.

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.

Mr. B. M. TAITT, B.A. (Hons.) M.P.A., LL.B. (Hons.)

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

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

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

Hon. Sir HAROLD St. JOHN, K.A., Q.C., LL.B.

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

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)

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

Mr. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing)

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.

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

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

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 for Tuesday, August 11, 1998.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Minutes have been circulated and subject to any observations any Honourable Members may wish to make on the accuracy or otherwise of the Minutes, I beg to move that the Minutes be taken as read and be confirmed.

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.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the International Trusts (Amendment) Bill, 1998.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to move, Sir, that the International Trusts (Amendment) Bill, 1998 be read a first time.

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

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

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, Sir.

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. 8 - MARITIME INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION BILL, 1998

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move the second reading of the Maritime International Cooperation Bill, 1998.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is a necessary legislative complement to the agreement entered into between the Government of Barbados and the Government of the United States of America for more effective cooperation in maritime matters. But this Bill is not limited to relations between Barbados and the United States of America. The compass of this Bill is wide ranging and will allow any country that is a party to the UN Convention on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances to have the benefit of the provisions of this Bill. In that regard it differs from the Jamaica legislation which seeks merely to re-enact the agreement between Jamaica and the United States.

Our Bill is one providing for international cooperation in maritime matters. It is not localised but it is of international scope and width. It is a multilateral piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the need for this Bill has been occasioned by the world drug phenomenon. The position, Sir, is that the traffic in illicit narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances is now of international proportions. All countries, not only Barbados, all countries of the world are experiencing the negative consequences of the traffic in international narcotic drugs.

On June 9th this year, I addressed the United Nations General Assembly in a special session on the matter of drugs. Barbados was one of 185 countries, all 185 countries condemned the traffic in narcotic drugs and pledged by their new political declaration to give greater emphasis to reducing demand by the year 2008. There are other target dates for example, by the year 2003 all countries have pledged to have in place money laundering legislation. That new political declaration is superimposed upon the Vienna Convention of 1988. It would probably startle Honourable Members of the House, when I say that it came as a surprise, indeed a shock to me, when the appropriate Minister of Singapore explained to the House that in 1996 alone Singapore had 6 196 arrests for drug offences.

Now we know that for some types of drug trafficking in Singapore the penalty is death but notwithstanding the shadow of death hanging over drug traffickers they still recorded over 6 000 drug crimes in 1996. All states are affected, some more than others.

There is a phenomenon in Eastern Europe involving the new states that have emerged out of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the biggest problem in Eastern Europe is organised crime. There is organised crime on every continent and in every state, Sir.

Barbados, located as it is in the Caribbean between the drug producing countries of South America and the drug consuming countries of North America cannot escape the infiltration of drugs into our country. Fortunately this country is not a producer of drugs. None of the studies, none of the commentaries refer to Barbados as a drug producing country. Such marijuana as is grown here is of insignificance in the total context, I want this to be clearly understood, in the total context of drugs produced in the world. The small amounts that are produced in Barbados are really of no consequence. For example you will not find in Professor Griffith's book, *Drugs and Security in the Caribbean*, the most recent study and a study done by a Caribbean professor, any reference to Barbados as a producing country in this volume. However because of our location, because of the financial allurements of drugs we have been affected or infected with the problem which first became evident in the mid-seventies and then got very bad in the late eighties. That was the experience of the whole Caribbean region that the late eighties and into the nineties have been the worst years.

Notwithstanding the best efforts of law enforcement officials drugs have proliferated throughout the international community. The situation is now worse than it was in 1988 when the international convention was signed. As a country in the chain of islands that run from Bahamas in the North to Trinidad and Tobago in the South these countries of the Caribbean geopolitically are of the greatest strategic importance. The Right Honourable Prime Minister himself in an address in London last year, I believe, explained that as he put it in a very real sense, these islands form the first line of defence against the movement of drugs from the South into North America and Europe. But it behoves us as a country in the international milieu to play our part. Not only to try to reduce the incidence of drug trafficking through our waters into the north, but even more importantly, to try and reduce the incidence and impact of drugs on this very national society of Barbados. 11.35p.m.

We have a duty to reduce the impact of drugs in Barbados, because drugs distort the human persona. Drugs impact adversely on the health of people. Drugs have the capacity to undermine the stability of society or institutions. Drugs can corrupt public officials and institutions. Drugs work with disequilibrium both on the social front and on the economic front. Indeed, the handmaidens of drugs are illicit traffic in guns and money laundering and money laundering has been shown to have the capacity to destabilise financial markets. It is estimated that the impact of money laundering globally is between 2% and 5% of the world GDP and that is not a figure to be sneezed at.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is bigger than most economies, the Right Honourable Prime Minister said, and it is estimated that the drug trade itself produces revenues for those who traffic of the magnitude of \$500 billion. Those figures may indeed be conservative, but we are dealing with a very, very serious problem. Indeed in their report and I have used this excerpt several times, in the West Indian Commission Report "Time for Action" in 1992 they wrote and it has been reproduced in Professor Griffith's book, Sir, and I quote from this extract. These were very perceptive observations. They said:

"Nothing poses greater threats to civil society in Caribbean countries than the drug problem and nothing exemplifies the powerlessness of regional Governments more. That is the magnitude of the damage that drug abuse and trafficking hold for our community meaning the Caribbean community. It is a many myriad danger. At base is the human destruction implicit in drug addiction. But implicit also is the corruption of individuals and systems by the sheer

enormity of the inducements of the illegal drug trade in relatively poor societies. On top of all this lies the implications for Government itself at the hands of both external agencies engaged in the international introduction and the drug barons themselves, the new dons of the modern Caribbean who threaten Governments from within."

That is the problem explained succinctly by the Ramphal Commission. You cannot trifle with it. Now I said it is an international problem. In fact in the documentation for the UN Special Session in June, in the political declaration itself, the drugs problem is now referred to as the world phenomenon. It is now called in official documents "The World Phenomenon" because, as I said earlier, it straddles all societies and all continents.

The response of the international community to the drug problem concretised itself in 1988 in The Vienna Convention on Illegal Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. This Convention called for action by states on many different fronts. The Democratic Labour Party Government led by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South responded by signing and ratifying this Convention. They did more, they brought two pieces of legislation. I will deal with legalism and social conscience later on, but they responded by bringing two pieces of legislation, the Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act, 1990 and the Proceeds of Crime Act of the same year.

Those Bills were prepared for them by consultants outside of Barbados and they were enacted in legislation. I have no quarrel with the stance that the Government took to enact legislation as a response to the international problem. They took the legislation based on the Australian model virtually, lock, stock and barrel. In this legislation they went so far as to change the burden of proof for some drug offences, whereas in the Constitution of Barbados there is a constitutional presumption that a person is not guilty until he is proven guilty. They reversed the burden of proof for some offences and put the burden on the accused man to show that he is not guilty.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Yes. But they were responding to the pressures of drugs as a social phenomenon in the world community. They were responding to the pressures of America in particular to bring this legislation, or else be decertified and all of those responses were written as laws of Barbados. 11.45a.m.

They went to Sayes Court. They went in Christ Church on Sunday night and criticised this Government for bringing

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legislation, and talked about this Government not having any social conscience. I will deal with the importance of the rule of law later on in my address. But that response started in the Paper. I saw it yesterday in the *Nation* on the front page and today on page 3 of the *Advocate*, criticism of the Government of Barbados for trying to enforce the rule of law, and in 1990 the Democratic Labour Party's response to the drug problem was to bring the Drugs Abuse (Prevention and Control) Act and the Proceeds of Crime Act. I have a long time and a long list to deal with it today.

This Vienna Convention that the Democratic Labour Party signed as a Government in 1988, I have no quarrel with it, provides in Article 17 specifically for the illicit traffic of drugs by sea. It says:

"The parties shall cooperate to the fullest extent possible to suppress illicit traffic by sea in conformity with the International Law of the Sea.¹"

Then it spells out a whole set of obligations where a country has reasonable grounds to suspect that a vessel which flies its flag, is engaged in illicit traffic the country may request the assistance of other parties in suppressing its use for that purpose.

In Article 2, Rule 2, there is provision in here signed to by the Democratic Labour Party for States to cooperate and seek the assistance of other States in suppressing trafficking by the sea. In Article 17(9), this is what is provided, I quote:

"The parties (that means the States parties for this Convention) shall consider entering into bilateral or regional agreements or arrangements to carry out or to enhance the effectiveness of the provisions of this Article."

I will be dealing with other aspects of it later on. But suffice it to say that there is an international obligation upon Barbados in pursuance of its ratification of this Convention to take steps to cooperate with a view to reducing illicit traffic in narcotic substances by the sea. That is the bedrock for international cooperation.

Now, the Government of Barbados was presented in 1996 with a draft agreement by the United States of America for signature. That draft agreement was the same agreement that had already been signed by some other Caribbean States, notably, Dominica, St. Vincent, Trinidad and Tobago, and others. In fact, all except Barbados, Belize and Jamaica had signed an agreement popularly known as the Shiprider Agreement.

I wish to put in the records of this House for all time that the reluctance of Barbados and Jamaica, and I can speak for Jamaica because we worked closely with Jamaica on the final agreement, to sign the type of agreement that was entered into by other Caribbean states was because we had the best possible legal advice that the agreements as tendered in 1996 offended principles of public international law and would have offended the sovereignty of Barbados.

Now we know. Sir, that debate as to whether Barbados should sign the Shiprider, and what type of Shiprider it should sign became very acrimonious. It became emotional and it was distorted. It caused some dispute, argument, if you like, between the Attorney General of Trinidad and Tobago and myself because he gave a speech at a meeting of regional Attorneys General last year February in Trinidad and chided myself and the Attorney General of Jamaica, Hon. H. J. Nicholson, for "holding on to outmoded concepts of sovereignty." Unfortunately, the language that he used was identical with the language that the United States Attorney General Janet Reno had used a few weeks previously. I said this debate became acrimonious. It became abusive.

One American...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will tell you that when we were into the last 11 days.

One United States journalist, a man called McLaughlin, produced a television programme in which he not only berated our Prime Minister, but was positively rude, out of order and abusive about the Prime Minister of Barbados. I do not think the Prime Minister had a chance to see him face to face to respond in similar terms but he deserves to be met and answered in equal measure.

Members will recall that at the end of the programme done by McLaughlin he said: "It does not matter what Owen Arthur says about the agreement. The United States will still come into the Caribbean and do as they like." He said that.

After that agreement was tendered, we had all kinds of subtle pressures exerted on the Government of Barbados. I say subtle because no direct pressure was ever exerted on me, but a number of strange occurrences took place. For example, the *Sunday Sun of Barbados* carried a story under the authorship of CANA in which the question was asked: Has Barbados gone soft on drugs? Just because we refused to sign on the dotted line.

You remember seeing Sir James Mitchell on television after we had concluded Shiprider? You remember what he said, that the people brought him an agreement in St. Vincent, told him he would get a boat or two out of it. He signed on the dotted line. He now regrets and he applauds Barbados for the stance we took. But because we did not sign on the dotted line, all kinds of subtle pressures were exerted. It started with that CANA story. Then in November 1996 the International Wire Services reported that a vessel called the "Anita P" was arrested in waters off Spain i with a load of cocaine and they alleged in the story that the vessel had come from Barbados. So they put it out in the international arena that this vessel had come through 4- Barbados and picked up a large load of cocaine, not true, Sir. It was not true, but it was a deliberate attempt by some country or countries to discredit Barbados and to force us into signing what they wanted, not what we considered was in the best interest of Barbados. Many of us would have forgotten that the FAA, the Federal Aviation Authority, as part of the plan to destabilise us, to embarrass us, the FAA threatened to categorise Barbados airport at a different status from that to which it was accustomed. Because Jamaica were holding up, they gave them hell too. They threatened to decertify them and they went so far as to publish internationally that Members of the Government of Jamaica were involved in drugs. All of that happened. 11.55a.m.

Sir, when we received the agreement we explained to the Americans that it was impossible for us to sign that agreement even though we desired, most ardently, to co-operate to get assistance to help us with the fight against drugs on the seas. But in all conscience and in law we could not sign the agreement. It was agreed then that we would meet to go through the agreement. They set up a negotiating team for Barbados which included the Solicitor General and I wish to pay public tribute to these persons who helped me to fashion the final agreement. The Solicitor General and members of her staff, the Chief Parliamentary Council was Mr. Sherman Moore at the time, the Deputy Chief Parliamentary Council, Miss Herbert, Professor Menon of the University, Dr. Kathy-Ann Browne of the University, Mr. Carl Ince who was Permanent Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office at the time but a man who had been teaching public international law at the University, Commander Kirton of the Barbados Coast Guard and Mr. Anthony Wiltshire of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. That comprised the team, Sir. We met with the Americans in several meetings and their team was lead by a man called Captain Roach.

My remit to the negotiating team when the negotiation started in early 1997 was that the Government of Barbados should be guided by four over-riding principles and those principles were first of all, that Barbados desired to co-operate in the context of a comprehensive framework which

took into account marine co-operation as well as other activities relating to drug trafficking. For example, money laundering, deportees, illicit trafficking in guns and so on.

We were concerned and indeed the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister had expressed the view publicly that illicit trafficking in drugs by the sea was only one element in the total effort against drugs. We desired to have a more holistic, a more rounded framework for co-operation that provided mechanisms to deal with trafficking drugs on the sea but at the same time look at those factors which were related to drugs, deportees, money laundering and gun running, those kinds of things. If possible, we would have wanted one agreement dealing with all but it was not possible to get one agreement but we settled for two agreements and I will deal with that in due course.

The second principle upon which our negotiating strategy was founded was that it had to be clearly understood by the international community that Barbados was not refusing to sign a Shiprider agreement because Britain, France, The Netherlands and many, many countries have signed Shiprider agreements as part of their responsibility under The Vienna Convention. Our concern was that we were not going to sign any old agreement or any agreement that could not stand scrutiny in the context of public international law.

Thirdly, Sir, we wanted it clearly understood that any agreement which was ultimately signed would have been the product of negotiation and not the result of dictation by any super power. We had to put the documents on the table and go through them line by line and indeed, we produced our own drafters.

Finally, we established that any agreement that was ultimately concluded was with respect to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Barbados, recognised the self-interest of Barbados and the concept of equality in relation to states as a fundamental principle of international law, not because we are small and they are large and they are powerful that they can run roughshod over us. In this context each state has separate sovereignty and territorial integrity in international law which must be respected irrespective of size. Those were the bases upon which we proceeded to negotiate. Sir.

I had to emphasize the matter of sovereignty and as I said, the Honourable Attorney General of Trinidad and I disagreed over the concept of sovereignty because in this very Vienna Convention which Trinidad signed and Barbados signed, Article 2 said this:

"The purpose of this Convention is to promote cooperation amongst the parties so that they may address more effectively the various aspects of illicit

trafficking and narcotic drugs having an international dimension. In carrying out their obligations under the Convention parties shall take necessary measure:..

I wish the Opposition to hear this:

... including legislative and administrative measures, in conformity with the fundamental provisions of their respective domestic systems, the parties shall carry out their obligations under this Convention in a manner consistent with the principles of sovereign equality and territorial integrity of states and that of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other states."

In Article 2 of the very Vienna Convention the principal of sovereignty was enshrined and it was provided that notwithstanding the need for cooperation there must always be respect for the sovereignty of states. We were constrained to impress that upon the Americans.

I am not going into details about sovereignty but sovereignty is not an outmoded concept. It is still one of the fundamental principles of public international law as two Honourable Members on that Side would appreciate.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Three Honourable Members including the Rt. Honourable Member for St. Michael South. All of them know about public international law. Sir, the American Government shifts its position from time to time and changes its mouth as we heard last night from time to time depending upon the situation. 12.05p.m.

Now, Sir, in December 1994 the Barbados Prime Minister and the President of the United States, the still President of the United States, went to Miami to sign a declaration of principle at The Summit of the Americas. Do you know what that Declaration said, Sir? Two years before we started to negotiate with them the Declaration at the Summit of Americas said, we reiterate our firm adherence to the principles of international law and the purposes and principles enshrined in the UN Charter and in the Charter of the OAS. Hear this, Sir, including the principle of sovereign equality of states. That is what the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Barbados signed to.

I am sure that before that was signed the Attorney General of the United States of America would have vetted that on behalf of her President. So to hear her in 1996 talk about outmoded concepts of sovereignty was really injudicious.

Now, Sir, the elements of the Agreement. I hope Honourable Members have the documentation that

constitutes the Agreement between Barbados and the United States of America. It is important, Sir. We have the actual Maritime Cooperation Agreement otherwise called Shiprider and you have to read with that the Memorandum of Understanding that provides for ancillary and related activities to drugs. Then of course there is the diplomatic note and there is another letter referring to privileges and immunities and so on, Sir, and the letter from the United States Ambassador to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Barbados. Those 4 documents have to be read together to get a full appreciation of what we signed.

If I may summarise briefly for Honourable Members some of the main features of the Agreement. First of all in the very preamble, Sir, we are different from all the others. We speak of combating illicit traffic by sea on the basis of mutual respect for the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of states. In other words we imported into the Agreement the language of the Vienna Convention up front. No other country has that, Sir. In other words we agree to cooperate but we respect each other's sovereignty and we have incorporated in the Preamble the language of the Vienna Convention that speaks to that.

Article 3 of the Agreement, Sir, provides for combined maritime law enforcement programmes coordinated by officials of both countries and no operation can be carried out in Barbados waters without the express prior permission of the law enforcement authorities of Barbados. Our official must give permission. In other words the United States of America just cannot come into our waters and do as they please. In fact we go further. Trinidad and all the others do not have this provision. We have specifically written into the Agreement that random patrols are outlawed, that they cannot be any random patrols within the territorial waters of Barbados.

I ought to announce in passing that the coordinator for the programme, Cabinet agreed on Thursday, is the Commissioner of Police of Barbados.

Certainly, Sir, all operations carried out in Barbados' waters must be under the direction of the law enforcement officials of Barbados. If we go into their waters and that is possible because our vessels from time to time, the Trident, go as far as Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South would know that there are a number of exercises done annually including Trade Winds which sometimes require the Trident to go into US waters and in the event that our vessels go into US waters the position is reciprocated. Our agreement is the only one that defines US waters as including those around Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands for the reason that we may find ourselves. Suppose we are going to a Trade Winds exercise in Puerto Rico and

we come across a Columbian vessel with marijuana we want to be able to act in the situation so there is full reciprocity in that regard.

Many of the other countries just went ahead and signed agreements that spoke of suspect vessels and aircraft. But what is that? We have written into our Agreement that there must be reasonable grounds to rule out arbitrary conduct on the part of any state. There must be reasonable grounds for characterising a vessel or aircraft as suspect so there must be a factual basis for the suspicion and that factual basis must be communicated to the law enforcement officials of Barbados. You cannot just say, I suspect an aircraft.

Honourable Members on the Other Side well know of occasions when the Americans invaded our air space and refused to comply with the direction of the air traffic control officers at the airport. They asked for information and they refused to give it. They did as they liked. All that is now out.

In respect of aviation matters they have to give us information and they have to act in our air space in accordance with the directions of our people at the tower. The point is that we have to make very firm representations. Let me interject here now that to get this Agreement, I had to go into the negotiations because they had virtually broken down and sit through those for 11 straight days to bring this to fruition. One of the things I had to impress on the Americans was that we could not allow them to have free flight through our airspace because it is possible that if they were flying through our airspace without the control of our air traffic control officers, it might be at precisely the time that an American Airlines flight was coming in with 300 of them on board and there might be a terrible accident. Then they understood the importance of letting our air traffic controllers have supervision and control of our air space. So the Honourable Members would have seen the various provisions. 12.15p.m.

Sir, the Vienna Convention also requires states which have the capacity to provide training opportunities for those states which do not have that capacity. Our Agreement is the only agreement in the region that provides for training to be done by the United States in relation to searching, boarding, interdicting and so on. So that we have got in the Agreement a commitment that the United States will train our law enforcement officials in the procedures for giving effect to the Shiprider Agreement. How do you get out of this Agreement? Well, other countries have signed on and said they would give a year's notice. Barbados provides for three month's notice.

Sir, there was great argument and contentious acrimony in respect of boardings and searchings. The Convention

provides for boarding, searching and detaining vessels. That is an international requirement that we signed in 1989, but in our view boardings, searchings and detentions are essentially police powers. It was our argument which was ultimately accepted but after two or three days of stalemate that only Barbadian law enforcement officials can legally exercise police powers in our territorial waters.

We could not give over to the United States Officials police powers to act in our waters. That would be a denial of our responsibility, a denial of our sovereignty and would be contrary to law. So the Agreement, as Honourable Members...

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ...and it would be terrible precedent. Only our personnel can exercise police powers in relation to boarding, searching and detaining in our waters.

Sir, those are some of the main features of the Agreement. The Memorandum of Understanding provides for cooperation in combatting narco-trafficking and it sets out a code for exchanging information in respect to deportees. Now when I mentioned that the MUO provided for deportees, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South looked a little bit puzzled. I want to explain to him the connection. The connection is this. The United States has been pursuing a policy of sending back to the region, Caribbean nationals some of whom have only been in the United States comparatively recently, but many of whom have been there so long that they do not have any roots remaining in the Caribbean but they send them back for all kinds of offences. The majority have come back for drug offences, but we have places where some have been sent back for drunken driving.

Now, the impact of deportees on criminology in the region must not be underestimated. The Jamaican society has had to receive for the last four, five years no less than 1 000 deportees every year. Do you understand what it is for a small country to receive 1 000 deportees every year, many of whom have been highly practised in drug business in North America? You know in all of the literature that the Jamaicans are now given a special position in international organised crime and in criminology? You hear of the Jamaicans yardees and you hear of the Jamaican possees.

The United States has been pursuing this policy and the Jamaican authorities feel on evidence that these deportees have been contributing substantially to the relentless rise of crime in Jamaica. It was so bad that Jamaica had to pass a

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special piece of legislation after much difficulty, to allow the Jamaican police to trace, track and follow deportees who were returned to this society.

Now it is believed in Jamaica that many of these deportees who come back involve themselves in serious criminal activity and of course they have their contacts overseas and guns find themselves into the country and so on. Trinidad has been absorbing 400 approximately every year. In Barbados our figures range, they are fairly static, in fact there are about 135, 136 a year for the last three years.

But the key to this Memorandum of Understanding is that...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: For example, when I first became Attorney General you would get a fax from the United States authorities, "John Smith is returning on BWIA 424 at 5.25 p.m. this afternoon. He has been deported for..." - whatever - and we are expected to react. And we have made it very clear that that was totally unacceptable from a country which has all of the information about criminals on computer, up-to-date and easily retrievable. We therefore insisted and the Memorandum provides for that, that they must be timely and reasonable notice of the return of a deportee and as much information about the deportee as will enable our police force to analyse that information and put whatever operations they wish to put in place to monitor the person. That we got out of them. That was in the Memorandum of Understanding, Sir.

The United States has signalled their intention to assist Barbados in establishing an anti-money laundering capacity, Sir, and training requisite personnel and that will be followed up. The Money Laundering Bill will be with us when Parliament resumes and by then we would have put things in place to set up the Anti-Money Laundering Committee. Several countries have promised assistance to help us set up the Financial Investigations Unit that must be the core operational arm of the Anti-Money Laundering Authority.

We have provisions in the Memorandum of Understanding in relation to arms trafficking. Further than that, the agreement that was signed with President Clinton last May called for the establishment of a Convention on arms trafficking. The region was able to be party to the negotiation of such a Convention which was settled in Mexico last November. 12.25p.m.

The *quid pro quo* for the pure Shiprider Agreement has been the accompanying Memorandum of Understanding.

Now, Sir, that documentation which constitutes the framework for cooperation in maritime affairs provides the bilateral basis for the cooperation of Barbados and the United States of America but we needed to go further and we have brought the Bill. I will deal with the Bill later on.

Now, Sir, it amazes me to hear Opposition comments that we are not doing enough about the drug problem. You have to bear with me but I am going to be very detailed and factual.

In 1995, September 28, the Prime Minister of Barbados met John Major, the then Prime Minister of Britain in England, and in their discussions the Prime Minister of Barbados asked for assistance to deal with the drug problem, not only in Barbados but regionally. As I have said elsewhere the response of Britain and France was swift and decisive. Major pursued it with President Chirac and Chancellor Khol. The European Union took it on board and we are seeing the results of that initiative by the Barbados Prime Minister even as I speak. I will come to some of those outcomes in due course.

The first thing this Government did, following on the Prime Minister's initiative and the support of the British Government under John Major, was that the Prime Minister and Cabinet agreed that Barbados should join with the United Nations Drug Control Programme and convene a regional meeting in Barbados to formulate a plan of action against drugs in this region.

In May 1996, Sir, I had the honour and privilege to chair a large meeting at which every Caribbean State was represented. Many of the countries in the European Union, Britain, France, the Netherlands, the U.S. all of those countries were present and in the three days of the meeting we drew up this document. We drew up what is known as the Plan of Action for Drug Control Coordination and Cooperation in the Caribbean. I am not going to play down this because this Plan of Action is now known throughout the world as the Barbados Plan of Action.

The new Executive Director of UNDCP, Phena Alachia, said that this Plan of Action, comprising some 82 strategies, is the only one of its kind in the whole world and it represents the first attempt to produce a coordinated and balanced approach to the drug problem. As a Barbadian who chaired the meeting that developed this Plan of Action, I feel a sense of pride and satisfaction in this document, the Barbados Plan of Action, which has never been criticised.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Now, this Plan of Action provides the basis for every country nationally, bilaterally

and multilaterally to cooperate in the region against the scourge of drugs. Following this Plan of Action, a team of experts was provided by the European Union to go through the region and do studies in various areas from intelligence to equipment, from training to law enforcement capabilities to look at money laundering, a number of areas and to study these areas and make recommendations.

The studies were done and presented last June to all Caribbean Governments. The result of this Plan of Action is that the European Union has committed over five years 100 million ECUs to assist in the fight against drugs in the Caribbean, from the Bahamas in the north through Belize down to Suriname in the south. So funding is committed to the tune of 100 million ECUs to support regional efforts against drugs and Barbados will get its share like everybody else.

Most recently, to deal with maritime coordination, we have set up a Project Management Office. It is located there in Roebuck Street and we shall shortly be taking to Cabinet a headquarters agreement to invest that office with the privileges of an international organisation. The Project Management Office is functioning. It is headed by a Barbadian, Commander Kirton. The French have sent an officer. The Spanish have sent an officer. The British have sent an officer and we are working as a coordinated team. I am Chairman of the Steering Committee to make sure that it goes and we meet every two months. We have developed a statute which was just sent to the European Union in Brussels. I have good reason to believe that the draft statute for our Maritime Cooperation and the Project Management Office will be accepted by the European Union.

This Government has been in the forefront, really in the vanguard in taking steps to ensure that the fight against drugs is a coordinated, properly planned and organised effort.

Of course, Sir, members will be familiar with the other Plan of Action, what is called the Partnership for Prosperity and Security in the Caribbean that was signed by the Heads of CARICOM Governments and President Clinton last year, May 10th. Again, I was privilege to chair the joint sub-committee of U.S. personnel and Caribbean personnel that drafted that aspect of the Plan of Action dealing with justice and security. This Plan of Action is formulated on two bases. One, the trade development and finance and environmental matters and secondly, for justice and security matters. I think Honourable Members will be familiar with this. 12.35p.m.

What I am concerned to show is that we have the UNDCP Plan of Action, the Barbados Plan of Action 1996, as it is called, followed by the US/Caribbean Plan of Action of May 1997, the two working together and the other one

filling any gaps that may exist in the other except that as between ourselves and the US, it is at a bilateral level. In the last two years, we have been able to develop in the region two very detailed plans of action, that will assist the region the better to fight the drug problems.

Sir, that brings me to the question of the national response to drugs. The Government of Barbados has consistently articulated that our strategy for dealing with drugs is focussed on five fronts.

- (1) to reduce demand through education.
- (2) to reduce supply through enhancing the detection capability of the Royal Barbados Police Force.
- (3) by pursuing deeper international cooperation.
- (4) by introducing relevant legislation such as is called for by the Vienna Convention.
- (5) to give attention to the matter of rehabilitation.

Sir, let us see what we have been doing in respect of the fulfillment of those five separate strategies but yet coordinated. Take first, demand reduction.

This Government for the first time in the history of Barbados and as early as 1995 enacted legislation to bring into effect the National Council of Substance Abuse with the Drug Resource Centre as its operational arm located and staffed at Trents, St. James. We have to move them from Trents, St. James. We fixed up a building there that has been left by the last Government but it is now too small and too hot. It was a kind of prefab-building. We are going to be doing more work so we will require more staff and the plan is that as soon as we have finished refurbishing the old ICB Building at the top of James Street, we are going to move the National Council on Substance Abuse into that building.

The National Council on Substance Abuse has been doing excellent work. I saw a feature on them in the *Sunday Sun* two weeks ago. Unfortunately, I do not think they are publicising their work and I have spoken to them about that. They are funded by a subvention from the Government and I am going to be approaching the Prime Minister in the next financial year to put even more meaningful funds into that organisation. They are funded by a contribution of \$300 000 from the United Nations Drug Control Programme. There is a board of very excellent people who assist in the running of that Council.

The officers in that Council go out into the schools and preach the message against drugs to the school children, both

the primary schools and the secondary schools. The time has come now after three years operations to increase the number of field officers. We have about two or three.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We are not swiping like blind Elder, Sir. He may be swiping like blind Elder. We are approaching this thing in a scientific systematic way. We have a statutory board and the statutory board must develop the programme.

I have spoken in here before but it bears repetition. There are six programmes being done on the ground. What we call integrated demand reduction programmes, where the Council out of some of the funds provided by Government has gone into six communities in Barbados and is doing work in those communities with young people from those communities and empowering them by actually putting schools into those communities.

Take Deacons, has anybody in this Honourable Chamber been to Deacons and seen the old school at Deacons? We took it, refurbished it, equipped it with computers, sewing machines and all kinds of things and people go there in the day and in the evening and do wonderful work. Look at the quality of the building. We have rehabilitated that place and we are using it as a centre to produce worthwhile and productive work that is the total antithesis to involvement in drugs. I was present at the graduation recently where Dr. Downes from the University helps. People like that go in there and help. Dr. Downes the economist helps. We have gone into the City and set up computer classes and classes for women. The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister sings the praises of that programme.

In Silver Hill and Gall Hill, knowing their attachment to football, we have outfitted teams in the Silver Hill and Gall Hill at various levels, 7 to 11 level, 13 to 16 level, 17 to 20 level and so on. The Council funds those programmes. We have gone into Eden Lodge where we have a programme, again working with the young people. That is ongoing.

Asides. ^

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That got distorted by one of the people who was in charge doing foolishness and breaking financial rules.

In the Pine, the National Council on Substance Abuse is supporting the development on those 30 micro-businesses that Honourable Members have heard about. We need to carry these kinds of programmes more widespread throughout Barbados. That is why I am going to have to

speak with the Minister of Finance sincerely about the need to expand these programmes.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is a form of poverty alleviation. Since this Government has been the Government we have sent to Washington a number of police officers and specially trained them and those police officers are working in the schools with the young people. What more do you want us to do? We are working in 6 communities. In fact there is a rapid assessment survey of drugs in Barbados that is going to Cabinet shortly where we just studied the problem as a separate problem by rapid assessment with the assistance of the UNDP and certainly by next Thursday the Cabinet will have the benefit of that. So those are some of the things we are doing on the demand reduction side. 12.45 p.m.

Honourable Members will see only spasmodically on your television at night, little messages from the National Drug Resource Centre. We need to intensify that kind of campaign and that will happen.

Now on the supply side, I will leave the supply side until later because I will have a few things to say on that.

Let us look at rehabilitation. When the Barbados Labour Party left office in 1986 there were 6 drug addicts at the Psychiatric Hospital. I will say that again. When we left in 1986 there were 6 drug addicts at the Psychiatric Hospital. In 1993, the year before the Democratic Labour Party left office there were 212. We are committed to pursuing rehabilitation of addicts as a strategy to assist in the reduction of drugs.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It was 212. That is what I got from the Psychiatric Hospital itself. I will get it after lunch for you. Leave it.

I was making a comparison. You will tell me what years I should use? No. I have said publicly and I repeat in here that I do not think that we have been doing enough at the rehabilitative level. There are studies coming out of California which are showing that you can achieve good success in rehabilitation if you work with the addicts. That is evidence that is coming and it is getting compelling but the Government pledged itself to cooperate with the private sector in providing facilities for rehabilitation of addicts.

Mr. Harold Hoyte and Mr. Peter Boos, Mr. Kyffim Simpson and others, Mr. Desmond Nicholls, they decided that they wanted to see a private sector run treatment centre

linked up with Teen Challenge of the United States and established at the old Presentation College, a lovely facility.

The Prime Minister of Barbados this year has committed \$100 000 to that institution and has agreed to cover the deficit every year thereafter. We think it is important to have that linkage between the private sector and the public sector at this level of rehabilitation.

The Minister of Health when she speaks she will be able to tell you what the Ministry of Health is doing from a public sector point of view. So this Government has not been idle in this matter of drugs.

Now, Sir, I said in introduction of the strategy that one essential component is international cooperation. I can only say that the Government of Barbados not only cooperates well and fully with other states, indeed any UN Report that you read, for example the UNDP World Report, any country report, always speaks of the cooperation, that the countries get from Barbados. We have excellent relations with the UK, the US, Canada and certain Caribbean countries.

I will give an example of how we have been able to cooperate with Canada. Year before the last we noticed a trend where Canadians of Caribbean extract would come to Barbados, stop for 2 days, go to St. Vincent, return to Barbados and connect to a flight going to Canada. We established that that is how drugs were being moved from the region to Canada and we put certain measures in place and a number of Canadian citizens have been arrested and incarcerated for that movement. We worked closely with the Canadians to develop the profile and intelligence and we were able to crack down on that particular operation.

Of course with the British there is on-going cooperation, particularly between British Customs and very often we allow people to go through knowing that when they get at Gatwick the intelligence has gone through and they will be arrested there. But international cooperation is going very well.

Now, Sir, what about the supply side? I believe, Sir, that we have got a handle on drugs coming through the airport. I cannot go into the details and the reasons why. They are of a highly secure nature but every week we are catching people coming through the airport and intercepting them. Our weakness remains on the sea. There are several beaches and bays at which drugs can be landed, Sir. We do not have the human resources or the equipment and material to adequately police our waters. The Trident has had necessarily to be refitted and will be out of action until September. Now these facts are known to the drug barons but particularly they are known to the drug producers and exporters in St. Vincent.

I am not apologising for anything I am now going to say, we had intelligence as early as November last year that certain persons in St. Vincent planned to carry out raids on banks in Barbados. The banks were alerted and various measures were put in place. We also had intelligence that big drug operators in St. Vincent have come into Barbados from time to time. If they have convictions and so on we do not let them land. Some who have no convictions when we find that they are here I deport them. But there has been growing linkage between drug barons in St. Vincent and drug barons in Barbados. 12.55p.m.

At the end of February this year, we had two robberies that were unusual. The Simpson's robbery and the CCB robbery at St. Philip. They have special features. But there was also information that some of the robbers spoke with a foreign accent. We were able to get information as to the Barbadians. There are three whom we are looking for. They escaped to St. Vincent, we believe by fishing boat. There were found in St. Vincent. The police in St. Vincent reported that they got away from them and are now in the hills of St. Vincent.

One of the Barbadians was ordered to be executed by a drug baron from Barbados and he has been executed in St. Vincent. The other two are still, we believe, in St. Vincent. The police in St. Vincent have not confirmed that any of them...

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ...by a drug baron in Barbados. Now, Sir, at the end of May, early June, we noticed that almost weekly attempts were made by vessels coming from St. Vincent to land drugs in Barbados, as many as three attempts per week. Some of those attempts were successful to the extent that drugs actually landed in Barbados. Some floundered. The Government in the face of that information had a fair duty to act. Troops are not there to police the waters. They are there therefore exposed, but at the same time as we are exposed you know that you are being bombarded three times a week with vessels coming from St. Vincent with marijuana.

The Government therefore met with the security officials of Barbados and a strategy was developed. If we cannot be out on the sea, we can at least be on the beaches and we have a Governor-General proclamation to use the Defence Force and the Police in a cooperative and joint exercise to police the beaches of Barbados at night. That operation has been going on for about the last six weeks or so and is being very successful. I think there has only been one attempt to land drugs since that has been in operation

and that was about three weeks ago some drugs were found at Silver Sands. Fortunately, the police were there in time and the drugs did not get into Barbados. They were captured by the police.

Now, Sir, that exercise has resulted in there being a shortage of marijuana in Barbados. The information I am giving this Honourable House is information given to me by the police authorities of Barbados. Local drug barons however, have felt the impact of the shortage and as it were we have seen in the last two weeks a scramble for the drug territory. Eighty pounds of marijuana was in the possession of one group in an eastern parish. Another group in the south east wanted that 80 pounds, went for it and carried it away. The group from the eastern parish pursued the group from the south eastern parish, kidnapped two or three of them and subsequently let them go. But on the Saturday night following the kidnapping, I think the kidnapping was the Wednesday, members of both groups got killed.

Nobody has gloated over the fact that this drug shortage has resulted in internecine warfare. But I have a duty to the public of this country who are easily made apprehensive by violent murder to assure them that from all the evidence in our possession the recent murders of young people killing each other have been of a sporadic nature, limited to persons who know each other and who are acting out reprisals against each other. That violence is not directed against members of society generally. I do not see how we can otherwise give the truthful facts to the country unless I explain what is the nature of the recent violence, and having given that explanation, I believe on Sunday night I was pilloried for it.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Right. Thank you, Sir. Those recent events have been perpetrated by persons who are involved in criminal activity and who are involved in drugs and who see the need to scramble and get hold of such limited quantities as are in Barbados.

But I want to go further. The exercise of policing the beaches at night will not stop. It is a continuous exercise. It is a necessary exercise and my Ministry has made proposals to the Minister of the Civil Service in the Prime Minister's office for special rates of pay to be paid to the policemen who carry out these operations.

The rates of pay in the past have been very, very poor. It used to be something like \$6 an hour. I think they were last raised when I was Attorney General 1985/86. I think I raised them to either \$6 or \$8 and they have remained at that level. The new rates are up to \$20 an hour. I cannot tell you off the top of my head. I know it is in that vicinity.

We are supporting those efforts by recognition of the particular difficulties and dangers to which the law enforcement officials are exposed. We have authorised the Commissioner of Police to pay the special rate to support those exercises. That is a proper place for me, to break.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

I now ask that further consideration of this Bill be postponed and that this House be suspended until 2.15 p.m. when I will continue my speech. I am not yet finished. I have a long time to go.

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

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 2.15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly. 1.05p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, when we took the Suspension, I was indicating what Government is doing in pursuance of its five-prong strategy to combat illicit narcotic drugs. I have dealt with demand reduction strategy, supply reduction strategy, international cooperation strategy and what we were doing for the rehabilitation of addicts.

I had indicated earlier that an element in that strategy, as commanded as it were by the Vienna Convention, was to ensure that there is a legislative infrastructure to bolster any other efforts at drug controls.

In that regard, I mentioned earlier that the Democratic Labour Party had never articulated a drugs strategy for the period 1986 to 1994. Indeed, when the Director of the UNDCP went to the Government about a national strategy on drugs in 1987 the Government's response was: "We have no plan. Can you help us develop one?"

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Government said that. I am only reporting what a senior public officer told me when I assumed. I was not present.

It is recognised throughout the world that legislation has a role to play in social control. But more important, we live in a society where the rule of law is a fundamental underpinning of good governance, and from time to time Government has to introduce legislation where there are weaknesses or where, as I said earlier, social control must be maintained.

The Democratic Labour Party in 1990 thought it desirable to bring legislation in support of the drug effort by that Government at the time. This Government has determined that that legislation is still adequate but there is a need to keep it under constant review and where necessary to amend it.

Today's legislation, the Maritime International Cooperation Bill, is our contribution on the legislative front to support drug interdiction and reduce supplies.

I also said earlier, Mr. Speaker, when I did not have the law with me, that the Democratic Labour Party in 1990 reversed the burden of proof in several cases under the Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1990. That Act, in my view, collides with the Constitution in regard to the presumption of innocence which is incorporated in the Constitution.

Take Section 42 of that legislation. It says: "Without prejudice to any other provision of this Act

- (a) where it is proved that a person imported anything containing a controlled drug it shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved, that such person knew that such drug was contained in such thing.
- (b) where it is proved that a person had in his possession or custody or under his control anything containing a controlled drug, it shall be presumed until the contrary is proved, that such person was in possession of such drug."

2.25 p.m.

Paragraphs (a) to (d).

I remember when those came to the House. They were delivered a Saturday morning. One about 90 pages and the other was about 70 pages and the Government insisted on doing them the following Tuesday despite my protest. I am only concerned to make the point that both Governments have of necessity to introduce legislation from time to time to deal with the drug business. The Firearms Bill which we will be debating sometime soon, if not today, next Tuesday, one what is called by criminologists, tertiary crime prevention where legislation is enacted that is stiff and

whose purpose is one, not so much of specific deterrence, but rather one of general deterrence and to mark down and underscore society's condemnation of certain types of conduct.

Legislation has a role to play. I am not saying that it is the panacea, I am not saying it is the be all and end all. What I am saying is that it is a factor, an element in social control in any democratic country.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic Labour Party on Sunday night went to Sayes Court and they have been for the last few months parading across the country complaining about the crime situation. It really does not lie in the mouth of the Democratic Labour Party to speak about the incidents of crime in this country. Let me look at the matter historically. In 1987 when they were in the Government the number of reported crimes was 8 750. That number increased every year from 1987 without let until 1993.

I will go slowly:

1988 - 9993

1989 - 10834

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You have not heard anything yet. You want the numbers slowly? If you would publish them I would really go slowly but nevertheless, here I go.

1987 1988 1989 8715

1990 1991 1992 9993

1993 *Asides.* 10834

II 615

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: From 8 715 to 13 047. If anybody has a calculator they can work out the percentage increase.

1285? 12817

We have given the figures several times in this House to show that from 1994 there has been a 34% reduction in

up-to-date reported crime. Let me bring you right up to date. For the first six months of 1998 overall report in crime is down by 5%...

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: For the same period over last year. Five percent down already this year. The actual figures are these.

January to June 1997 5171 reported crimes.

January to June 1998 4 924 reported crimes.

A difference of 247.

Let us run through some other statistics that my shadow Minister on the Other Side may want to hear. The only division showing an increase is the Bridgetown Division which embraces Central, District A, Black Rock, Hastings and Worthing. Crime in the first six months in those station area has gone up 4%. In the Southern Division crime is down by 6%.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Hilford Murrell? This is, the Royal Barbados Police Force statistics. I am nothing to do with Hilford Murrell.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: In the Southern Division, let me give it again, crime is down in the first six months of the year by 6%.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: If what he was talking about is District "C", Yes, it is up by 1 % in the District "C" area. It rose from 344 crimes reported in 1997 for the same period to 347 for this year. It just rose by 3.

Spectacularly, in the north of Barbados which is represented by the Barbados Labour Party people, hear this, crime for the first six months of this year is down 31%.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let me give you the figures. That is the difference between 969 reported crimes for the same period last year and 672 reported crimes this year.

These statistics will therefore call for a strategic response by the Police Force. We have to concentrate our area operations into particularly central areas like Hastings and St. Philip.

I must compliment the Police Force for the work that they are doing to reduce the incidents of crime and indeed I think that the police in the Northern Division, that is District "D", District "E", Holetown and Belleplaine deserve special commendation. Holetown has always been a problematic area and yet crime is down in Holetown by 36% for the first six months of this year. I think they deserve special commendation. Let me look at some of the substantive crimes. Sir, serious bodily harm is down. In the Bridgetown Division, for example, in 1996 serious bodily harm cases for the period January to June were 103. This year they are 57. Robbery slightly down from 1996 of 127 down to 99 this year. The problem area in the Bridgetown Division however remains burglary in dwelling houses. That, Sir, is what we have to concentrate on. In 1996 there were 396 cases in the Bridgetown Division. In 1997 there were 397 and this year 416.
2.35 p.m.

In the Northern Division, consistent with the earlier statistics I gave it is down from 184 to 120. Theft from motor vehicles is also another area that is bothersome. In 1996 theft from motor vehicles was 131. It went up to 186 last year and is still holding in that area of 183. That is not good enough in the Bridgetown Division. There may be some need for the public to be more sensitised about crime prevention in terms of keeping their cars properly locked and making sure that those things are done. It is just in this Bridgetown Division that we are having that problem, elsewhere not many. In the North 12. In the South 60.

Now, other theft is showing a downward trend. Bridgetown Division in 1996 there were 382, this year 262. In the Southern Division 127 in 1996, this year 107. The Drug Crimes Bridgetown Division 312 in 1996 and 372 in 1998. The Southern Division 105 in 1996 and 141 in 1998. Northern Division 87 in 1996 and 103 in 1998.

When you look at drug crimes I wish to add a rider to the bald statistics and it is this that drug crimes showing an increase may indicate more drugs in circulation but at the same time the bald statistics do not reveal that there is heightened police activity therefore greater attention being paid to the drug problem and as a result of that strategy of trying, to deal with drugs seriously you are going to find a bulge in the numbers as a direct result of increased police activity as a direct result of our ability to better share information with other friendly countries and improve intelligence arrangements. Honourable Members would not like me to discuss publicly some of those arrangements.

Sir, for the sake of completeness I wish to give the figures for crimes against visitors. This is an area of criminality that excites a lot of emotion and encourages people in the hotel industry to call for all kinds of responses.

The Prime Minister has set the tone for this Government. He has made it clear to the public that he is not *an* adamant man and I am saying it just as the author of that phrase walks into the House. I am not an adamant man and I am going to arrange next week to meet with the hotel association and the police and persons concerned about tourism and crime to discuss the matter of crime against visitors because one needs to have ongoing dialogue but the figures on crime against visitors do not bear out any allegation of burgeoning of crime against visitors. These figures are very good.

Let me go back to January to June 1994 just before the Democratic Labour Party went out of Government. For January to June 1994 the police recorded 369 crimes against visitors. For this year the figure is 185.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I do not wish to interrupt the Honourable Member but Your Honour will recall that earlier when the Honourable Member was giving statistics. Sir, he had indicated that he would bring statistics. I submit, Sir, that the Honourable Member now by not having brought those statistics is bringing these statistics and he might be misleading the House and we are not able to follow him.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not able to follow your point of order. No point of order.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I promised the House if I could get the figures on addicts at the hospital I would give them. I am not now dealing with addicts at the hospital. I am dealing with general crime and I am dealing in this case, Sir, specifically when the Honourable Member walked in, with crime against visitors.

I am saying, Sir, that for the first 6 months of 1994 the last period of the Democratic Labour Party minimalist Government crime against visitors was 359 for that 6-month period. It is now down to 185. What it has to do with the 2 parties is that you all should not go out and mislead the public about a big crime situation when the figures do not support it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. Mr. Speaker, Sir, is the Honourable Member saying that the Democratic Labour Party is committing the crime? I am saying the Honourable Member is misleading the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: A point of order is not to be a question. That is the rule. 2.45 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is your point of order, Sir?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am suggesting that crime occurred during the time of the Democratic Labour Party as opposed to the Barbados Labour Party. He is suggesting that either the one party or the other committed the crimes. The Honourable Member is trying to suggest that under the Democratic Labour Party crime occurred and under the Barbados Labour Party crime is reduced.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I gave overall statistics earlier to show that during the period of the recession, indeed the depression under the Democratic Labour Party, crime went from 1991, 12 000 to 1993, 30 000. It can be argued. Sir, that during that recession there was high unemployment. And to that extent it is arguable that one would have expected an increase in crime having regards for the high levels of unemployment. And conversely now that there are high levels of employment and we have reduced unemployment from 26.1 that you all had it at in the first quarter of 1991, now when you reduce unemployment, crime is correspondingly being reduced in Barbados. And it is a misleading mischief to tell the public of Barbados that crime is at an all-time high as you all tried to do on Sunday night.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. He is saying that Your Honour and other Honourable Members in here excited people to something and that never happened.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Proceed, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South even called me an idiot on Sunday night. Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South said that it is idiotic for any thinking person to deal with the crime situation as a legal problem.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I am sorry to interrupt the Honourable Member, but the Honourable Member for St. Philip South has not spoken so far. It cannot be correct that the Honourable Member would say that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, however true it may be, I did not hear the Honourable Member for St. Philip South say that the Honourable Member is an idiot. He cannot do that, Sir. He cannot put that in the record.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member is free to refer to any notes he has.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not referring to anything. I am only saying that he called me so Sunday night, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not quoting from anything. I heard what he said. The meeting was attended by 168 people, Sir.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Now, Sir, I want to be serious about this debate. We cannot deal with the crime problem purely on the basis of statistics. I accept that, but the first measurement of the extent of crime in any western society is the official police statistics. There may be reasons why you have to use statistics guardedly, because there is a dark number there of crimes that are not reported but we can only deal with these matters on the basis of reported statistics. Even when you say that crime is down that does not mean that crime is not being committed.

Brandon, the Commissioner in New York who has written the book "The Turn Around" has had great success in New York. But there are still murders being committed in New York, but crime overall is down and crime in Barbados overall is down, Sir.

Now what we have had is in the recent spate of internecine murders. We have had a sporadic outburst of very violent crime among persons who know each other and who want to get their hands on drugs.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is not a trend. That is a sporadic outburst. I do not want to say a one-off thing because there were two incidences, but it is not a regular systematic occurrence. But as much as we can report a continuing decline in the rate of overall reported crime, and I must emphasise 'reported crime', all of us including Members of the Opposition I am sure, are concerned that there are too many guns in Barbados that are illegal and the Government is trying its best, through the Police Force, to contain this situation.

Our first response is going to be the introduction of the Fire Arms Bill which will increase substantially the penalties for illegal possession of firearms. I discussed this Bill the week before the last with the Caribbean Judges who were here from overseas. I discussed the type of Legislation, Sir, with the 64 Caribbean Judges who were in Barbados. We were fortunate to have with us some Canadian Judges and the Chief Justice of Melbourne and when I told them what

we were providing, the Canadian Judge and the Melbourne Judge both said that the proposed legislation is too mild, because in Canada and in Melbourne possession of illegal guns is mandatory imprisonment.

Now, we are not doing that in Barbados, but I only put before Honourable Members another view from two other countries about the way some societies view possession of illegal firearms. For some societies it is the most grave offence. They do not even give you the choice of a fine, straight in prison. And we can be no less serious about illegal firearms in this country.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. Now, Sir, I am not going to deal with the Honourable Member's statement but the Honourable Member knows the rule about anticipation. The Honourable Member knows that it is not proper to anticipate a Bill that is before this House. The Honourable Member is the Attorney General and the Honourable Member is in here now discussing a Bill that is to come and that is contrary to the rules. I submit that, Sir, that the Honourable Member is incorrect in doing that.

Mr. SPEAKER: As far as the Chair is concerned, the Honourable Member is just making a reference to the Bill and this is what he can do.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Well, if the Chair says so, Sir, he can do that. The Honourable Member made reference to the Bill that is to come.

Mr. SPEAKER: Thanks for your observation. I am sure the Honourable Member is aware of the rule of anticipation. 2.55 p.m.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, let me also give some figures about the Prison population. In 1986 the Prison population was 355. In 1994 when the Government changed, the Prison population was over 700. Last week Wednesday when I was up there to receive some equipment from the British Government, it is 697.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to look at the truth or otherwise of the allegation by the Democratic Labour Party that the Attorney General and the Barbados Labour Party Government are too legalistic in their approaches to the crime problems. I want to look at the truth or otherwise.

We have always said that we do not see law as the only solution to the problems. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South and the Leader of the Opposition would give the public the impression that the Attorney General is indifferent to humanity, indifferent to the feelings of people, is blood-thirsty, has no conscience, and strangely enough,

last year when the Rehabilitation of Offenders Bill was passed in this House, a well known deep and devout Dem, a former editor of the *Advocate* newspaper wrote in the *Nation* newspaper that it took David Simmons to be the conscience of this nation in relation to this Government's approach to crime and punishment.

If this Government, after four years, could have boasted of the emptiness of the Democratic Labour Party for the eight years that they were in power in relation to crime and punishment, I would have gone a long time. But we have a proud record in just four years, the Barbados Labour Party Government.

Now, Sir, I am going to enumerate them one by one. For eight years and 15 before that when they formed the Administration, that Democratic Labour Party never tried to understand why young people in Barbados were committing crime. They never tried to understand the causes, what were the factors at risk out there, never. One of the first things this Government did was to establish a Task Force on Crime Prevention.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just one minute, please. The Honourable Member you will get your chance to speak, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The first thing we did, Sir, was to establish a Task Force on Crime Prevention staffed by Barbadians who had been trained in Criminology, or Criminal Psychology, to carry out a study of the Prison population to try and identify the factors that were causing Barbadian youth to be so lawless and criminally oriented.

Rt. Hon. L. E. S ANDIFORD: On a point of order, Sir. I know that you like Honourable Members or prefer if Honourable Members refer to the particular Standing Order so I am referring to Standing Orders 28 (9) and (10). The Honourable Member for St. Thomas, the distinguished Attorney General, called the name of one Robert Best and there were some descriptive epithets and the assignation of political affiliation of that member. I think, Sir...

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, please!

Rt. Hon. L. E. S ANDIFORD: That is why I am seeking the guidance of the Chair. I am asking the Honourable Member through you, Sir, to withdraw the reference unless he can satisfy this House that the...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member did mention a name and he also did call a political party. Are you saying that the placing of the two together is something derogatory?

Rt. Hon. L. E. S ANDIFORD: I am not saying that, Sir. All I am saying is that in my view it is contrary to the rules of the House and I am asking you to rule.

Mr. SPEAKER: As far as the rule is concerned here we have always interpreted it as meaning as long as there is nothing derogatory. That is why I was asking you the question if you were saying that because he did call the name and associated the name with a party if you are saying that is what is derogatory.

Rt. Hon. L. E. S ANDIFORD: I am not saying anything like that, Sir. I do not wish any particular imputation to be assigned to me.

Mr. SPEAKER: As far as the Chair is concerned, the reference was made but I do not think there was anything derogatory. It was very descriptive. I do not think there was anything derogatory about the name. Could we proceed, please?

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: For the abundance of doubt, Mr. Speaker, I was using the words deep and devout as terms of endearment. I was not referring to the gentleman in any derogatory way, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us proceed, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I think people ought to be proud of their political affiliation.

Let me say, Sir, that we have attempted to try and identify the problems which give rise to criminality. We have produced a report. There may have been flaws here and there in the report. 3.05 p.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. I am a Parliamentarian and I have nothing but time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please make your point of order, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Sir, Your Honour ruled about the derogatory nature but bearing in mind that the Barbados Labour Party's major spokesman has always suggested that anybody who was even remotely connected with the Democratic Labour Party should starve, we are very worried that a citizen of this country should be described as a devoted Dem because then starvation might face that citizen. It was on that basis that we raised the question for Your Honour's judgement, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: No point of order. Honourable Members, please I know that it is within the rules to rise on a point of order but surely the Honourable Member to whom I have given the opportunity to speak, he has to conclude his speech. You will get your turn to speak later.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order. I referred to Rule 28, (9) and (10) which makes no reference at all to any derogatory aspect of a reference to any persons. All the Rule says is that there should be no reference except on a substantive motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, before you go any further. This Chair is guided by the Rules, it is guided by precedent, it is guided by practice. Since I have been in this Chair it has been my observance that this Rule is interpreted that if there is something that is said that is derogatory that is where you have to follow this Rule to the letter. We, over the past three and a half years, have been observing the Rule that where there is something that is not derogatory, it is not absolutely necessary. The Rule obviously is ambiguous. Could we proceed, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. Your Honour has just ruled but for my own guidance. When Honourable Members on this Side refer to anybody as a Dem, that is a term of endearment. In the light of what I have said, we fear for citizens who may not be members of the Democratic Labour Party who are identified as Dems by the Honourable Members on that Side, bearing in mind that the principle is that any Dems identified by them might be endangered.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, Honourable Member, I have already ruled on the point.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: As Your Honour pleases.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the first point I was making about initiatives of the Government...

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order. Sir, through you I am appealing to the Honourable Member to withdraw the epithets that he has applied to a citizen of Barbados. I do not believe that in this Chamber we should be getting up and making those kinds of insinuations to members of the general public because that is really creating pr can lead to the creation of problems in our society. One's political affiliation should not be part of this debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have made a ruling. Can we proceed, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I want to just say that I meant no offence in the description. I have known people as supporters of a party and I admire them for their loyalty to the party. What is wrong with that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Proceed, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, the Task Force Report was laid in here and for the first time in my memory a Government took the opportunity to have the public participate in the discussion on crime. No previous Government ever went to the public in open forum to say, let us discuss crime, let me hear what you have to say. A national consultation which I attended was held at Sherbourne Centre.

Asides,

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The whole place was full. It was held for hours last year. Members of the public came and expressed their views about crime. We dealt with the Task Force and we went through some of the recommendations in the four hours that we had and I involved the public fully in the debate. No previous Government ever had the courage to do that, Sir.

The recommendations of that....

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for St. Michael West, please take your seat. Let us proceed, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I give the Honourable Member the assurance that I will not even tease him. Mr. Speaker, there are 27 recommendations of the Task Force. We have begun the process of consultation with interested parties. You cannot implement the recommendations of the Task Force just so. Those recommendations call for interdepartmental consultations. Some relate to community development because we have found for example that a substantial proportion of the Prison population were anti-social and did not have any involvement in community groups, clubs and so on because they were not properly socialised. We have found problems of intellect and intelligence quotient and those would involve the Ministry of Education. And so, for example, the Youth Service, there has to be cross fertilisation of the views of all those agencies which interact and the Task Force has been there trying to coordinate these things. They have discussed recommendations 7.1 and 7.2 which are related to community and organisation involvement and they have been meeting with the Division of Youth Affairs and representatives of several community councils. So that work is going on with a view to implementing the recommendations of the Task Force. 3.15p.m.

Now the Task Force also has a special important mandate, Sir, and that is to examine, analyse and review the existing methods.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member for St. James North is sitting in the wrong seat, Sir. He is sitting in the seat of the Minister of Labour and it is disturbing me, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Would you prefer to be over there.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Yes, Sir. He is sitting in the seat of the Minister of Labour and maybe there is something wrong with that seat.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is a reason why he is there. Let us proceed, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I am saying that one of the terms of reference of the Task Force is to analyse existing methods or systems used for collecting and collating statistical data concerning the incidence of crime in Barbados in order to determine the adequacy or otherwise thereof and to make recommendations for improving the said method or system.

Sir, there is a severe dearth of information in Barbados about criminal behaviour. We get the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police. We get the Registrar's Report. We get the Report of the Superintendent of Prisons. We get a report from the Probation Department. None of these reports, except from the Commissioner of Police, none of these reports really help us with the understanding of crime. There was a time when the Superintendent of Prisons' Report was 4 pages. No information was kept at the Prisons in any organised or easily retrievable form that would help in research and what we are trying to do now in the age of the computer is to create the necessary statistical bases in these departments which would enable us to pull and use that information for strategic planning purposes. That was the first initiative, Sir.

The second initiative that ran hand in hand with that, Sir, was the appointment of the Steering Committee on Penal Reform which has reported. Again we had public consultations across the island on the Steering Committee Report. We met with the Press on the Steering Committee Report to inform them of the findings and recommendations.

The next two steps to implement that report, Sir. First of all the enactment of the legislation to provide a regime of non-custodial sentences and secondly the appointment of staff to carry out the functions. That legislation is going to provide for community punishment and I have spoken in here before about what we envisage and how it will enable the courts to have wider options than they presently have.

The first draft of the legislation, Sir, has been submitted to me. I wish to include in that legislation the provision for mediation where the court can order mediation

services if one party applies and the other one has no objection. Rather than bring a separate Bill on mediation, I wish to incorporate that kind of dispute resolution procedure in the Bill on sentencing. That Bill should be with us by the time we return from vacation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you would have thought, from hearing Members of the Opposition, that this Government was not trying to tackle crime at source by interaction with young people and I am therefore amazed to read about this legalistic approach when again one of the early initiatives of this Government was to create the Department of Youth Affairs and staff it with 34 Youth Commissioners across Barbados. One of the functions of the Youth Commissioners is to interact at the grass roots level with young people who are at risk or who have problems, try and work with them and guide them into wholesome and productive activity. That Youth Commissioner Programme is working well, Sir. I have no doubt about the Government's intervention at that level, before you even conceived of punishment, but rather working in a dialogue with young people. I have no doubt that that strategy is working and the benefits will be shown in time. Right now I am advised that the Department is very happy with the success rate of the programme and it can only get better, Sir.

Sir, this Government has not approached the question of crime only by passing a law. We are out there working in the communities, through the Youth Commissioners, with young people.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not fooling myself. I know the value of dialogue. I know what happened in 1990, Sir. I remember in 1990 there was a dispute between ...

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There was a dispute between young people in Airy Hill, St. Joseph and young people in Proute in St. Thomas which manifested itself in some violence between the two groups and the television station was sufficiently insensitive to put these people on television saying how they are going to beat up, kill people from various districts if the one district went into the other and so on. I thought it was very, very poor television.

However, Sir, on Independence Day 1990, I arranged some football games at Lears playing field between Proute and Airy Hill. The resident beat officer, I think his name is Marshall, worked with me to bring those two districts together. When I said to him what I had in mind, he told me

it could not work. We talked to those young people, Sir, before the game and they played the 2 football games. *CBC* filmed the games but they never telecast them. We had a party for them after the game that went on about 10 o'clock or 11 o'clock the night. 3.25 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There was no violence. There were no bad feelings between those two districts then or since. A similar thing I have found useful is between Shop Hill and Melrose where about the same time you were having those interdistrict problems...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I went in there and spent time with the young people and talked to them. I feel that those of us in here can assist in charting proper courses for young people by interacting with them and having dialogue with them.

Sir, when the Democratic Labour Party Administration had responsibility for the prisons, no attempt was made to put staff in there...

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I said already, Sir, that most crime in this country is drug related. We have rehabilitation officers working in the prison with prisoners in a very positive way and one of the things that we have done...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There was an exhibition held in London last weekend...

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I wish respectfully to submit that the objects and reasons of this Bill which say,

"This Bill will enable Barbados to corporate Barbados with other countries in maritime matters for the purpose of suppressing illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and would provide for related matters."

I wish to submit that the Honourable Member is straying from the substance of this Bill as I understand it. I draw it to Your Honour's attention. The Honourable Member is now discussing the details of the prison in Barbados and I merely submit, Sir, that we have had that debate in this House during this session before. If

Your Honour is mindful of my submission, I do not wish to curtail the debate of the Honourable Member, Sir, but draw it to his attention. We are getting into details which could carry us now where we could debate for the next week.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, I thank you for your observation. May I remind the Honourable Member please that the Honourable Member's point is one which we have to take into consideration and while it is of course still drug related and you are free to make those elections... We still would want to proceed not only with a focus of such specific matters.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is why I am glad that you were following, because the point I was making was that if we do not have this legislation in place, we will continue to be overrun by drugs. And we will continue to have criminal conviction and young people ending up in prison. And the Government is concerned to reserve prison only for the worst types, this Barbados Labour Party Government and that is why we have rehabilitation officers actively working in prison with young people, Sir, to guide them.

I am trying to do something about the self-worth of the prison population so that when they come out they would not go back into drugs but will find themselves in useful, productive enterprises. At the exhibition last weekend in London, do you know we had 33 paintings done by prisoners on display?

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We have local people working in the prisons on an anti-drug programme and we are getting within the next couple of weeks assistance from the United States Government with other people to come and do anti-drug programmes in the prison.

Mr. Speaker, I take your warning, Sir, and I will not therefore go into the value of the prison farms and the satisfaction that the general public has in what we are doing at the prison farms. I would not discuss those. But I must say, Sir, that the Prison Advisory Board has been working very well in the interest of both prisoners and prison officers. Some weeks ago we passed a Bill to set up an advisory board for the Government Industrial School and we want to maintain some links between what we are doing in the Steering Committee on Penal Reform and what we want to do to assist the management in improving things at the Government Industrial School.

Sir, I would like to take this opportunity, Sir, to announce the composition of the Advisory Board for the Government Industrial Schools. Father Paul is the Chairman.

Ms. Heather Clarke is the Deputy Chair Person. The Superintendent of Prisons is a Member and the other Members are Mr. Hensley Robinson, Mr. Maurice Estwick, Mr. Henderson King, Mr. Hallam King and Mrs. Wendy Small-Knight.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will give them later on, Sir. Mr. Speaker, Sir, before I come to wind up, I think I have a duty to explain to the House that we have been accused recently by the Democratic Labour Party of pursuing policies which alienate young people from the mainstream of society, and that these youths who are alienated involve themselves in crime and violence. It even goes so far as to make a connection between the purchase of land by non-nationals and crime.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: But they taped it, so I only have to listen to the tape. And what is being sold out there in the society that could in fact lead to social confusion and unrest, is an argument rooted in emotionalism and not in fact that wishes to accuse the Barbados Labour Party of selling out Barbados to non-nationals and thereby denying young people in the future a stake in this society for which young people may yet riot. 3.35 p.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I submit that the Honourable Member is irrelevant. The Honourable Member is in contravention of the rule that says that all Members should be relevant to the Resolution.

I submit that enough Resolutions have passed through here in which the Honourable Member can raise those issues. With all due respect, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is now moving far beyond what the Objects and Reasons of this Bill call for. If the Honourable Member continues in that direction, this debate will then be able to take in the entire gamut of social and political activity in this country. The Honourable Member knows better. He is the Attorney General, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Thanks for the observations. Proceed, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I am dealing with some of the alleged causes of crime and some of the warnings that the Democratic Labour Party has been issuing to who would listen to them.

When you look at the number of land transfers to non-nationals under the Democratic Labour Party you would get

an idea of where the truth is in this matter. In 1990 they allowed 154 transactions to non-nationals. In 1991 - 100, 1992 - 118, 1993 - 144 land transfers were made to non-nationals under the Democratic Labour Party Government. In 1993 - 148.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: In 1989 - 123.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Continue please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I accuse the Democratic Labour Party...

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member, Sir, I submit is misleading the House.

I submit further that the rule regarding relevance is being broken. The Honourable Member is now discussing land transactions and I repeat the Bill will enable Barbados to cooperate with other countries in maritime matters. I submit that land transactions in Barbados have nothing to do with maritime matters. I submit it for Your Honour's ruling, Sir. Maritime matters - this is cooperation in maritime matters. The Honourable Member is discussing land transactions.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member clearly stated that he is looking at the causes of crime.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: But I am not discussing what he said. I am discussing what Your Honour is to rule in relation to this.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have ruled, Sir. Thanks for your observation.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Very well, Sir, and I understand where we are in this debate. I understand very clearly.

Mr. SPEAKER: Thanks for your observation: Will you proceed, please?

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is a pity that we are discussing criminality, you know. Will you proceed, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: As he walked out....

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Proceed, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I am coming to the close of this.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Glendairy is in your constituency, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is correct.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: And I have to make sure that up there is stable, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, in relation to the Bill itself, I think the Bill is sufficiently clear and simple. The Bill applies to Barbadian ships, ships registered in Convention States and a ship not registered in any country or territory.

A person is guilty of an offence if on a ship to which the Act applies wherever it may be held that he has a controlled drug in his possession or he is in any way knowingly concerned in the carrying or concealing of a controlled drug on the ship.

The authority for the management of the Bill is the Minister of Foreign Affairs. What we have done in the Bill is to make certain of the provisions of other legislation apply to this legislation so that a controlled drug has the meaning that is assigned to it under the Drug Abuse Prevention and Controlled Act and Barbadian ships, for example, have the same definition under the Shipping Act. I think those are the only two that are really important in this Bill.

The powers of law enforcement officials are, if a law enforcement official has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a ship is engaged in the illicit traffic of narcotic drugs, he stops the ship, boards it and if he thinks it is necessary, requires it to be taken to a port in Barbados and detain it there.

The Bill, as I began, Sir, has to be read hand in hand with the two agreements that constitute the framework for maritime cooperation and that is why in advance of today's debate we circulated the Agreement and the Memorandum of Understanding. As I say, the Bill is very straightforward. Some of the details have been culled from the British legislation of 1990 on international cooperation.

I have the greatest pleasure, Sir, in commending this legislation to Honourable Members and to remind Honourable Members that in this country the rule of law must operate and that the rule of law is a matter of paramountcy in this country and to suggest otherwise, indeed to try to brainwash people, especially young people that law has no place in this society is to be condemned in the strongest possible terms. 3.45 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please, order.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is why you would not find anybody on this Side trying to paint out marks on the road that were legitimately painted or trying to tear down signs.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: On a point of order. It is well known in Barbados that this Member of Parliament, meaning myself, painted the road. The Honourable Member is accusing me of painting marks that were legitimate in the road and that I was in fact committing a criminal offence. Mr. Speaker, I was protecting the people of Barbados from the onslaught of the Barbados Water Authority who were embarrassing Barbadians and they stop doing it since I painted out those marks. They were cutting off people's water and they were terrorising people all through this country.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have made your point, could we proceed please.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Honourable Members, please. A few minutes ago when the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, I believe was leaving this Chamber, the Chair made the point about criminality. I am understanding that the Honourable Member seems to be believing that he was referred to as a criminal by the Chair. Let me assure the Honourable Member that the Chair never meant such a thing. The Chair would never refer to the Honourable Member as a criminal. The Chair respects the Honourable Member and it is therefore expected that the Honourable Member would respect the Chair and therefore would show the kind of behaviour that would be expected by the Chair.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Since Your Honour referred to the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, I am grateful that the Speaker has made it clear to all who may have heard the remark of the Speaker that the Speaker was not referring to the Honourable Member for St. Michael West. I am grateful to Your Honour. Of course, Your Honour is fully aware

that I have always shown and will continue to show respect for the Chair.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, we have had a long time and I wish to commend the Bill to Members of the House as an important piece of legislation in the whole panoply of strategies that have to be used to rid our country of the scourge of illicit drugs.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Mr. F. J. STUART: Mr. Deputy Speaker, unlike the Honourable Member who has just sat down after well nigh four hours, I have nothing much to say. The difference between the Honourable Member and myself is that whereas he took four hours to say nothing, I will be kinder to the House and take just a few minutes.

The Bill before the House is a Bill which will enable Barbados to cooperate with other countries in marine matters for the purpose of suppressing illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and would provide for related matters. This Bill is brought to the House first as an agreement which was signed between the Government of Barbados and the Government of the United States of America. More than one year ago on the 25th June 1997 it was signed. I am aware that there has been full debate in the country on the issue of Shiprider and full exposure of the contents of the Agreement between Barbados and the United States of America on the issue of suppressing illicit maritime drug trafficking.

There has never been any divide between the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party on this issue, no divide between the Government and the Opposition. In fact, my information is that during the hottest and most acrimonious period of negotiations between the Government of Barbados and the Government of the United States of America, there were consultations with the Leader of the Opposition and he extended his full support of Honourable Members on this Side of the House to the Government. So there is no divide between the Government and the Opposition on this issue and really the debate is now a very stale debate. Nobody in Barbados discusses Shiprider anymore and therefore I was at a loss to know what was the basis for the rather expansive contribution of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas to this debate.

The issue of drug trafficking, Mr. Speaker, is an issue which transcends political parties in Barbados. It is a national issue because drugs know no party and a bi-partisan or all-partisan approach is required in dealing with the issue of illicit trafficking in narcotics. As the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, the learned Attorney General, said in his speech it is not known that Barbados has ever had a problem with the production of narcotics. Barbados' problem has always been related to the issue of trafficking and the issue of consumption and therefore the strategy of the Government, any Government, has to be targetted at those two areas of concern. 3.55 p.m.

I am happy to learn today, Mr. Speaker, that drugs existed in Barbados before the year 1994 because I always got the impression when the Democratic Labour Party was in power between 1986 and 1994 that there were no drugs in Barbados so all the crime in Barbados could only be explained by the incompetence of the Government and today crime in Barbados is explained by the drug problem. Presumably drugs only came to Barbados after September 6, 1994. I am glad that the Vienna Convention was signed in 1988 by the Democratic Labour Party acknowledging the existence of drugs in Barbados and that it was a problem with which the Government of the day had to deal.

Of course only persons with very short memories would want to forget that the 1986 general election campaign was fought substantially on drugs and we were not in power in 1986. So the drug problem has spanned both administrations and in a sense it is very unfortunate that the Government has now got to the stage where everything in Barbados that is going wrong is explained in terms of the drug problem.

I am not going to delay the House in this debate on that issue. I have my own views on the drug problem. I recognise its internationality and I know that there is need for cooperation between nations, particularly on the issue of trafficking and in that regard we cannot disagree with the Government on striking up alliances with countries who have similar concerns to deal with this problem.

Obviously the negotiations between the Government of Barbados and the Government of the United States of America led at times to a certain amount of tension between the two countries as the agreement which was eventually signed was being hammered out and many issues were raised.

Certainly the issue of the sovereignty of Barbados was raised during that period. It was again mentioned today by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and he gave the country the assurance that under no condition would a

Barbados Labour Party Government contribute to or acquiesce in any abrogation of the sovereignty of Barbados and that is a laudable position.

The issue of sovereignty of course is not a black and white issue. It is not an open and close issue. The significance of a word or the strength of the meaning of a word is intimately bound up with the relevance and the strength or the meaning of that which the word denotes. The whole issue of sovereignty has gone through many changes as societies have developed and as cooperation between nations has become deeper and deeper. The concept had its genesis in the sixteenth century and was a response to the rise, like international law and like foreign relations, a response to the rise of nation's state as we know it today.

The globalisation, if you will allow me to use that word, Mr. Speaker, that had basically characterised the middle ages, the period between 500 and 1500 AD, historians give that periodisation, that period did not allow to the existence of the nation's state as we know it today and therefore the concept of sovereignty had no particular relevance around that time. So in a sense sovereignty as a state of national being and globalisation are contradictions in terms because there was no concept of sovereignty in the old globalisation and therefore since sovereign states came into being only when the old globalisation was dismantled it stands to reason it seems to me that with the new globalisation which all people admit to exist in 1998 that a review or a re-examination of the concept of sovereignty is now an agenda item.

The old approach to sovereignty cannot enjoy an undiminished existence in the context of a world that is becoming more and more integrated and where the barriers between nations are being torn down. While I therefore agree with the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in his defense of Barbados' sovereignty, in terms of Barbados' right to make decisions in the interest of its people, I have to express the view that we cannot push the issue of sovereignty in the old sense too far having regard to the fact that we now live in a different kind of world environment where the barriers between nations have been torn down substantially and where there is a greater degree of interaction than at any other time since, perhaps, the end of the 15th century.

So, having made that point I do not have to belabour it. As I said there is no divide between the Government and the Opposition on the Bill before the House. The Bill flows naturally from the agreement signed between the Government of Barbados and the Government of the United States of America and the contents of this act; cement have been largely canvassed across the country.

The struggle against drugs locally again is an issue on which both parties have to be agreed. It cannot be said that the Democratic Labour Party does not care about the problem and I would not dare say that the Barbados Labour Party does not care about the problem. The parties may differ in terms of their approach or approaches to dealing with the problem but only the benighted and the unenlightened would want to sit back and do nothing about a drug trade that is destroying so many of our young people and is corrupting or threatening to corrupt so many of our cherished institutions.

So far as the national crime situation is concerned the country now has two views. It has the views of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas expressed in this House today and it has the views that have come from the Democratic Labour Party's platform. 4.05 p.m.

I have an implicit faith in the good sense and judgment of the people of Barbados. I therefore do not have to get too hot under the collar when I hear views that are different from mine because at the end of the day the people of Barbados know how they feel about the crime problem in this country. They know whether they are influenced by the loud and live recitation of statistics or whether they are more influenced by the reality of not being able to go to sleep comfortably at night. They know,

That is not a matter over which I can preside. It is not a matter over which the Honourable Member for St. Thomas can preside. The Honourable Member can say what he likes on the figures and I can say what I like on the crime situation, but the people of Barbados know what their reality is. I myself understand that statistics can be used to tell any story. I believe it was the 19th Century British Politician Benjamin Disraeli who said that they are damn and they are statistics. So when I hear a recitation of statistics I am not moved and just upwards of one year ago, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and myself among others participated in and spoke at a rally at King George V Memorial Park on violence against women.

On that occasion, speaking as Attorney General and not as a man living in Barbados, he tuned into the realities of the country. I seem to recall that there was a self-congratulatory recitation of statistics on the state of domestic violence in Barbados. Contrasts were made between the Government of the past and the Government of the present. And a veiled enlightened intervention followed the speech of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. That intervention came from, and I am not calling that name derogatorily, a Miss Karen Dear who spoke figuratively at that rally and reminded the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that violence against women was not a matter of statistics that one case of violence against women was a case too many.

Therefore, I know that people in this society understand the limited role that statistics can play in debates of this kind. It is no consolation to the old people in the constituency of St. Philip South or St. Philip North or St. John or St. Michael West Central who feel that they have to pin their houses down whenever they are leaving home, who feel unsafe when they are walking in the street and they see any group of young men assemble anywhere. It is no consolation to them if they turn on their radio this evening and hear a news item saying that the crime figures in Barbados are down. That does not change their psychological reality and therefore the recitation of statistics is of limited value.

I am not suggesting that the Government should not take credit if it thinks it must for bringing to record a reduction in reported crime. That is a matter for party manifestos, in-house meetings and political parties and for chest stumping of the persons responsible. But the reality in the society is where the politics is to be found and if the average householder or the average young woman walking the streets of Barbados feels no safer today than they felt ten years ago, even if the crime figures are down to 1% in their minds and according to their psychological reality there has been no reduction in crime. This is not a partisan matter from my point of view.

I speak about crime as a national of Barbados because I have seen the social reality change over time and it has made everybody uncomfortable. I do not believe that I am wrong in saying that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is uncomfortable about it. He has to be and I happen to know that and this is no secret that he himself has been a target of crime in the past. But when you get past all of that the Honourable Member still has to say whether he feels safer in Barbados today than he felt ten years ago.

Does the Honourable Member for St. Thomas feel safer in Barbados today than he felt ten years ago? That is still a pertinent question. Does his family feel safer? Do the families of Honourable Members of this House feel safer in Barbados today than they felt ten years ago? That has nothing to do with statistics. That is a matter of the actual experiential reality of people who travel on buses every day, who walk the streets every day, of girls who go to classes in the evening and a whole set of other people who do various things in the work-a-day world in Barbados.

So I am not discussing crime in terms of whether the Democratic Labour Party did better or the Barbados Labour Party does better. If the Honourable Member for St. Thomas can expunge crime from the face of Barbados, I would be the happiest man in the world. And that would have nothing to do with our partisan affiliation because crime is not a matter for him nor is it a matter for me. It is not a matter for Stuart

versus Simmons. It is not a matter for the Honourable Member for St. Thomas versus the Honourable Member for St. Philip South. This is a reality that grips the people in Barbados that has the entire country uncomfortable and it is a reality to the expungement of which both parties in this country are committed.

So when I listened to the Honourable Member today, I went down memory lane, Mr. Speaker, to the days when the Honourable Member for St. Thomas was shadow Attorney General. And if one listened to the Honourable Member then, one could not help but believe that Barbados was about to collapse and fold up under the weight of the crime situation. I remember participating in a radio discussion sometime in June 1994 with the Honourable Member for St. Thomas and sitting in the studios of VOB. I could not connect what I was hearing in the studio with the reality I had left outside. I got the impression that all Barbados was in a state of seize because the criminals of Barbados had taken over. There was no Government, nobody in the corridors of power cared and that...

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the point was that for every year, as I gave the figures, from 1989 crime was increasing right up to 1993-1994 when we had the debate. The difference is that now it is decreasing. So I had to be in a state of constant fear because it was relentless, Sir. The spiral upwards was relentless.

Mr. F. J. STUART: I heard the Honourable Member's intervention. The country was in an economic crisis at the time and it is well known it is an axiom of politics that economic crises will increase criminal activity. But I remember on that same discussion programme when I said to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that there was a need to examine the causes of crime before one got around to prescribing solutions that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas urged on and assisted by a Mr. Byer, again I do not call his name derogatorily, said to me that that work has been done already. Richard Carter has done the work. It is the Government's fault. When I hear today that nothing was done by the Democratic Labour Party, when I hear there was no work done in the country and the Honourable Member had to come and start from scratch... 4.15 p.m.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I think the Honourable Member is a little mistaken. Mr. Richard Carter did a study for the ISER of a very limited scope. It is like telling me that Catherine Murray did a study into the penal system, something that was about 9 or 10 pages. Just a little paper that somebody wrote. That is not a study.

Mr. F. J. STUART: I am glad that the Honourable Member's views on Richard Carter's study have changed. That was certainly not the view he held in June 1994, but we are entitled to that. Perhaps he had not read the study then. He has read it since and has come to grips with its limitations. No problem with that.

Now, the recitation of crime reduction across the country I found very interesting. The northern part of the country is a success story so far as crime reduction is concerned, according to what we heard in this House today.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, everybody in Barbados knows that the Government's thrust in the area of job creation, capital works, roads, investment and all those things, is concentrated in the northern part of the country. Everybody knows that. That is a truth that most Barbadians take to be self-evident.

Now, I have said over and over again that there is a link between crime and unemployment. I would have been glad to hear the Honourable Member tell the House or give the House some indication as to the unemployment situation in the northern part of the country he identified. It would be interesting because it would tell the story that we on this Side have been trying to tell for some time that where young people have no hope, where they cannot meet their basic needs, where they are not gainfully employed in jobs that they enjoy, they are likely to turn to crime of various kinds.

It is not without significance that there has been an upsurge in crime in the southern part of the country, embracing the constituency of St. John, the constituency of St. Philip North, the constituency of St. Philip South and the eastern part of Christ Church because nothing is happening up there. Nothing is happening in that part of the country and perhaps, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has made out the best case to date for the resources of the Government to be more equitably distributed across the country.

I know that it is a case with which he will not want to readily identify because, as he said in his speech, the northern part of the country is controlled by the Barbados Labour Party. That was said in here today, so the southern part of the country is not similarly circumstanced. One can expect that this situation will continue, but no matter how long a night lasts, dawn has to break. I hope that when dawn breaks and that there is a shift to the southern part of the country, that we hear no complaints from anybody.

The young people of St. Philip, St. John and upper Christ Church are entitled to the same benefits as persons who live in the northern part of the country.

I am very glad the Honourable Member has spoken in this debate. I could not make contact with the relevance of many things he was saying in relation to the Bill before the House, but his statements on that aspect of the country's national life at the present time was of critical importance to me because it bears out the contention that if there is a sufficiently equitable distribution of the nation's resources across parishes, across constituencies, that we can bring this crime situation under control.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. That is a statement riddled with illogic. The Honourable Member is entitled to read the reports of the Commissioner of Police from 1986 to 1994. He will see that despite the fact that the Democratic Labour Party denied me any assistance in St. Thomas, crime was always at its lowest in the parish of St. Thomas when we were in Opposition and now we are in Government. I got nothing from the Democratic Labour Party and yet crime was always down in St. Thomas.

Mr. F. J. STUART: I do not know what the Honourable Member means when he says that what I am saying is riddled with illogic. If rural St. Thomas is an exception to what I am saying, I am prepared to concede that there was a time when St. Philip and St. John, rural parishes, were almost free from crime.

It just happens that a lot of physical development has taken place in St. Philip over the last few years. It has become a suburban area and a lot of the crimes committed in the parish of St. Philip are not committed by the Philipines at all but that is the nature of the challenge we face in the politics of Barbados today.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really do not need to detain the House on this Bill. I have heard the Honourable Member's story of the prison population between 1986 and 1993 and what it was when they left office in 1986. I have heard that speech before. I have heard the crime statistics that were recited in this House today. We have heard that in a speech in this House before. I well understand the Honourable Member taking advantage of the opportunity he had today to deliver a second reading speech to reply to criticisms which were made against him at a public meeting of the Democratic Labour Party at Sayes Court. If, as we now understand, long speeches will be the result of our public meetings in the future, the House can be prepared and stand prepared for a long day's journey into night because many meetings are coming. 4.25 p.m.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. Let me assure the Honourable Member that when they make statements on the platform in the absence of us and without an opportunity for immediate response, when we come in

here we will respond. Do not think you are going to get away with it.

Asides.

Mr. F. J. STUART: One of the illusions of Westminster politics, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that politicians can easily believe that when they are talking to one another they are talking to the whole world. I do not suffer from the illusion. When I am debating in this House, I am aware that I am not talking to the whole world unless we are having a televised debate. Dealing with political issues in the Honourable House is really of limited value in terms of the masses of people out there. As far as I am concerned, communicating directly with the masses on the issue of the day counts for a lot more than coming into this House and in adolescent exhibition of political machismo to show that I can out debate somebody on the Other Side.

I believe in politics of dialogue and politics that aim at genuine problem solving. I was glad to hear the Honourable Member today trying to tell the House how he is coming to grips or trying to come to grips with the crime situation in the country. That is important but that does not alter the reality that out there in the country there is a view that the crime situation is acute. People do not feel comfortable and they hold this Government responsible, having regard to the fact, that in its 1994 Manifesto it promised the country solemnly that it would create a Barbados that is safer than the one it found when it came to power. People in Barbados do not feel any safer now than they did in 1994. That is the reality. The tourist do not feel any less harassed, if that is important, than they felt in 1994.

Asides.

Mr. F. J. STUART: No matter what the statistics say, I really do not know what all of this self-congratulation is about. I am glad that the number of reported crimes have reduced. I am glad but the reality out there does not say that. People still feel that the country is in a crime seige. At the most cursory glance it will disclose the accuracy and the truth of what I am saying.

I want to applaud the Honourable Member for St. Thomas for the efforts that he is making. His approach is different from that which we on this Side would use but we accept the genuineness of his efforts. We cannot assure the Honourable Member that he will be free from criticism. The Honourable Member was an unsparing opponent of the Democratic Labour Party between 1986 and 1994 and he has to live with the consequences of facing us on the issues for which he has responsibility.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not want to detain the House on this Bill. As I have said, there is no divide between the Government and the Opposition. The Bill will have our support and we wish the Government well in its attempt to suppress the illegal trafficking of narcotics and in its attempt to deal with the very serious drug problem which we have here in Barbados.

With those very few remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I think that it was important that we have this debate on the state of crime in the country because I do not think that we can deny the recent events, particularly in a small country. The recent events of gang violence and deaths resulting from the violence have given rise to some concerns among right thinking people in the country. As I have said earlier, this can easily happen in a small community, a few sensational tragic events can suddenly distort the picture and can create the perception that things are really worst than they are.

It is against that background that it was necessary to put those events in context and to really look at the pattern of crime over the last seven to ten years. In that regard, I think it is fair to say that the Attorney General and indeed the Government deserve credit for the reduction reported in crime statistics and for the multiple techniques, not only legislative but human development techniques which have been employed in order to tackle this problem of crime.

I was impressed myself with the mastery of the subject matter which the learned Attorney General brought to bear and happy too with the reminder which he gave the House of the determined efforts made by this Administration in particular to tackle this problem of crime in Barbados.

There has been considerable emphasis on the question of drugs and rightly so because drugs in these small communities not only destroy the lives of individuals but they threaten the institution, the family and in some small countries in this area too, we have seen a few drug lords assume so much power and give the impression of being able to create so much terror that they have an effect on the law. I think it fair to say that that situation has been reached for example in the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis. The drug situation crime is important and we must not ignore its likely effect on these societies and the extent too to which it can corrupt the political process. There is a view, however, that ever since the collapse of the Cold War which at its height employed millions of people in the United States and elsewhere that men who were in danger of losing their jobs have come together and have been promoting the threat to Western democracy resulting not from ideological warfare but from drugs as the new terror in the Western world which

needs an army in order to fight it. In short, this preoccupation with the drug situation is in part also driven by the fact that a large number of people, particularly in the United States need to keep their jobs and maintain their careers. I was at a conference on trans-national crime a few weeks ago in Vienna and that was the view expressed by two or three speakers which is very interesting, in that there was no major denial even from representatives of the United States of America. There is something to that.

We need to get this matter in perspective and the particular point that I need to make here is that in dealing with drugs, as I said, it is important we must not overlook the devastating impact which alcohol abuse has on this society. In fact psychiatrists are arguing that it is doing more damage to the individual than those who are involved in substance abuse and we all know of the negative impact on family life, the destruction of individual careers and also the loss of productivity at the work place that results from alcohol abuse, but there has been no emphasis whatsoever these days on that big social problem in Barbados and throughout the region of alcohol abuse. We are all preoccupied with drug abuse and the crimes that result from drugs. I think we must get our focus right because both of them are important and we must not now be focussing on one at the expense of the other. 4.35 p.m.

Now, to the extent that what drugs certainly brought to the fore is the need for international cooperation, increasingly we are living in a stateless world, a world without boundaries and we need the cooperation of our neighbours, we need the cooperation of the entire world if we are willing to effectively deal with the whole question of trafficking in drugs. But we in this region, small vulnerable states, have got little bargaining power and I think that the Right Honourable Prime Minister was right when a few days ago he made the point that insofar as cooperation in combating drugs is part of the Bridgetown Accord that we should insist, important as it is for us the cooperation in drugs with the United States, that we ought not to be over enthusiastic in implementing that aspect of the Accord if the United States does not demonstrate its readiness and its enthusiasm to deliver on the economic aspect of the Accord. I think that the linkage point which he made is an important one and even though I was not here earlier today before lunch, I take it that the learned Attorney General accepts that that is an important linkage which has been made and which ought to be borne in mind as we move forward on this matter.

Now, to some extent the recent outbreak of gang violence relating to drugs reflects the success of the Government's policies in policing our beaches and in

controlling the entry and the distribution, particularly of marijuana in the country. The thesis that I am hearing in responsible circles is this, the explanation for what is happening, is that there is a scarcity of marijuana in the country to the extent, resulting from the tight policing that is going on, particularly of our beaches. The result is that some of the gangs who are involved in the distribution of marijuana have found themselves stealing limited supplies from rival gangs and that that has resulted ...

Now, as I understand it the penalty for stealing marijuana from a rival gang or any form of drugs for that matter, the penalty is death. So it is as a result of scarcity resulting in gangs stealing the limited supply from one * another that has been recently reflected in the loss of life which we have been seeing resulting from gang wars. That is why I say that to some extent this recent outburst is a reflection of the success of the Government's policy in policing our beaches and in cutting off the supply of marijuana and to some extent too of cocaine in our country.

The situation however calls for eternal vigilance on the part of the Government and the agencies that are involved in combating this matter. There can be no resting on our laurels because those who are involved in drug trafficking have demonstrated an enormous capacity to find new techniques to circumvent the police broadly defined and to that extent we have got to keep this problem under constant review and make sure that the control which we believe we have recently achieved in the country is not lost.

I just want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I am impressed with the efforts of the Government outside of the legislative framework which is useful but has limited usefulness in trying to point our young people away from crime and in constructive directions for the use of their energies. In particular I wish to refer to the work of the Youth Affairs Department which is an important aspect of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

As I understand it that department came into being in 1995 but it can to date claim a significant measure of success. Its work is ongoing and it will be many more years before we can measure with any degree of precision the full impact of that work but in the Barbados Youth Service, the Youth Development Programme and the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme, in those 3 inter-related programmes a significant impact is being made in terms of giving our young people self-worth, in providing them with training opportunities and in inculcating the right values of discipline for nation building and also in imparting to some extent skills. I think that that is really the answer to the criticism which we are hearing that the Government's approach to combating crime has been purely legalistic.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would the Member, please give way?

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to draw to your attention that there is no quorum in this Chamber or is certainly not likely to be if anyone would go out.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am saying that if some duty calls from this Side you would not have any quorum. Sir, I say no more.

The bell was rung and a quorum obtained.

4.45 p.m.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: As I understand it, Sir, over five thousand young people have participated in the Youth Development Programme particularly as it relates to national sports and cultural training programmes. Some 900 young persons have enrolled in the Barbados Youth Service Programme since its inception and indeed that was a programme which predates this Administration. But the Party came to power in 1994 and some 400 additional young persons have participated in the programme.

But not withstanding this impressive evidence of participation by our young people in the programmes of the Youth Affairs Division of the Ministry of Education and Culture, it is still my senses that there are large numbers of young people out there who are unaware and who have not been touched by these programmes. Therefore I am making the case, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for greater outreach and publicity on the part of the Government so that more and more of our young people can be touched by these very useful and important programmes.

I am concerned about the development of gangs bringing their own set of values which normally run counter to the values of the mainstream society and often in collision with the values of the mainstream society. I seem to remember that a distinguished member of the last Democratic Labour Party Administration denied not many years ago that gangs existed in Barbados. I do not think there was any attempt on the part of the Honourable Member for St. James South, as he then was, to deny the evidence. I do not think that that is the nature. I just think that he was misadvised or that he misperceived what was going on in the country.

I think we have suffered however for what was perceived as a policy of denial, because what actually happened was that these gangs gain roots to the point that very robust measures are now necessary if they are to be

stamped out. My understanding of what is happening in the country, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that there are about 1 000 young people across Barbados who are causing trouble and whose activities are causes for concern. But 1 000 young people in a small society can have a disproportionate impact on the crime situation and can really be a cause for considerable concern. The happy event is that for the most part there has been an identification of where they are in the country physically, who are their leaders and basically where they are and to that extent the police resources can be concentrated to a large extent on them.

I hear the criticism made from time to time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this Government is over concerned with the protection of the tourist at the expense of the locals and I think that that is a criticism which is baseless and which has got to be addressed. The Government as I understand it and that has been the position with successive Governments in this country, is concerned to ensure that all those who live here, whether they are short stay or long stay visitors, residents and citizens are safe and secure within our boundaries.

I think that that is a responsible approach and it is really unfair to accuse the Government of concentrating their police resources on the protection of visitors and not on making the entire country safe and secure for all those who live here. At the same time, it needs to be emphasized that the single most important factor influencing repeat visitors to this country are their feelings that Barbados is a safe place and that you can go to Barbados as opposed to a lot of other countries, both outside the region and to some extent in the region and likely not suffer violence of one sort or another.

And so, we cannot ignore the importance of making sure the visitors, short stay or long stay in our midst are protected, but equally we owe a serious responsibility to those who live here. I think it must be said in fairness that there is no evidence of which I am aware that the Government is making any distinction and that attention is being paid to visitors at the expense of locals.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that this is a useful debate insofar as it has allowed us to put the crime situation in context and see the recent events for what they are, a passing of gang violence which from the best information available seems to be springing from the factor of scarcity of marijuana, in particular among the gangs, to the extent that they have now been raiding one another's camp.

I think that the debate has been important too because it has served to correct the distortions which are abroad. Some of them politically fuelled and politically inspired that crime is out of control, is galloping in Barbados and that there is reason for people to go in at five and six o'clock and lock themselves in because there is an outbreak of crime in Barbados of unparalleled proportions. That is not borne out

by the evidence and if there is one useful result from this debate today and I hope that the Press reports it accurately, it is that though we have had a few sensational incidents of violence, even death, particularly among gangs that the general picture over the last few months, particularly since the Barbados Labour Party has come to office, has been one of crime reduction and that we all on both sides of the House ought to take pride in that achievement, while at the same time continuing to fight for the further reduction of the crime situation in our country.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a short contribution in this date. You know my contributions are always short. The first point I wish to make Sir, is that I totally support the efforts made by successive Governments in Barbados to deal with the question of crime and criminal activity. And I wish to add, Sir, that I believe that in the fight against crime that national borders become less significant than the need for international cooperation. Because those who operate in the murky field of criminal activity, they develop their linkages with other countries and this is particularly in areas where they are fairly close to one another and there is easy communication. 4.55 p.m.

All kinds of inter-connections are set up, Sir, and it is therefore necessary and desirable that there should be international cooperation in these matters. Therefore, as the Honourable Member for St. Philip South indicated, this Side of the House gives support to the efforts of the Government in seeking to reduce, if not eliminate the incidence of crime through the development of international instruments to deal with those situations.

I believe it is important, particularly for small countries, in dealing in that international arena to hold fast to what the Attorney General referred as one of the continuing principles of public international law, which I believe is the phrase he used, and that is the concept of sovereignty.

In a learned treatise, the Member for St. Philip South took us back into the 15th or 16th centuries. He went a little farther back too, which may be a little far, but he did take us back into those years. Sovereignty today, he is quite right, is not the same thing as sovereignty in those days but there is still a basic core of information and actual law and practice which determines that sovereignty is an important concept. After all it is a concept on which the United Nations itself and other international bodies are based. We must hold fast to those things while accepting and recognising that the nature of sovereignty on sovereignty itself is a dynamic concept that is constantly changing.

In a recent book two writers, I believe connected with one of the international accounting firms, referred to the modern state or the modern corporation that will be successful in the age of globalization as that state or that corporation which would operate on the basis of kinetic energy. They refer to the kinetic state or the kinetic corporation.

It is always ready to move in relation to moving times, even though it may not be able to predict or to control the movements or the factors that will affect its well being, it operates on that basis of kinetic energy and Barbados must always be prepared, if it is to position and reposition itself, to be on the move, and ready to move, in order to deal with these new and challenging situations.

Sir, I am not just interested in the theories of sovereignty or in the theories of international law, or international politics for that matter. I am particularly concerned about what steps we are taking, and can take, in order to improve the situation. Certainly, Sir, throughout Barbados, and in my constituency, we all want to know that we have a greater sense or feeling of security.

I do not mind what kind of statistics or how many statistics are put out. The important factor in a community like St. Michael South, or if we take the community of Barbados as a whole, the important thing is, how do we feel when we leave home about the security of our castle, and those whom we leave in the castle, or what kind of conditions we are going to encounter out there. That is important and that is a situation that we have to deal with.

I have heard this argument about gangs. I am not getting into the argument about when gangs arose in Barbados. I am not going to get into the argument as to when first the gangs started using drugs, whether you use the name psychotropic or other designation for those drugs.

Let me illuminate the mind of the Attorney General somewhat. This is not a hit or miss situation. When I speak on these matters, I speak from some kind of experience in the field, not in the using of drugs. I have never felt that my growth and development depended upon those kinds of crutches.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am glad I could awaken you.

Sir, what I do know is that in the latter part of the 1970s, from about 1977/78, I actually devised and taught a unit on drug education. There was no such unit anywhere else in Barbados. I devised it myself and taught it. 5.05 p.m.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: It is not a secret, that is why I said I was illuminating your minds.

Sir, I simply make that point to make another point and that is why my approach may not be the combative arena of the law courts where you come to grips with those situations and problems on a day-to-day basis, mine was within the classroom basically as an educator.

I think that is very important because it was out of those experiences that I have come to the conclusion that unless we do something positive about this problem, it will get worst rather than get better. I believe that we have reached a stage now where across this Chamber and across the country we should be putting our heads together seeking to find some solutions to this problem which affects families in all economic and social categories in this country. This is not a matter of Bees and Dees, this is matter of calling the names of citizens who are seeking to be law abiding residents of this country. That is why I was so annoyed that they were dragging the names of citizens of this country who are carrying out their own functions and seeking to contribute to the development of the society. We must forget that kind of development in this country. We must become positive rather than negative.

I believe that we have to place considerable importance, greater importance on the teaching of values in this society and do not be sidetracked by those who say that the curriculum is crowded. You are not bringing in a whole subject. It is units of information which can come at different points in the curriculum and it can be accommodated. We have to get out of this idea that we have to give 80% of the time of our children in school to English and to Mathematics and anything else will be crowding out the subject and to get a broader base of education in which the things of value can be taught in our schools and more attention paid to them.

I am calling for it. It can be ignored but the problem will still be there and at the end of the day we will be throwing up our hands and saying what is happening to our society. I do not know what is happening to the young people. Although in the year 500 to which the Member for St. Philip South referred, they were also complaining about their young people.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: You go back into classical times, they were complaining about the youth then too. Where we are today we have to deal with the problems that confront us and that calls for a rethink of our curriculum in terms of introducing the subject that will give strength, educational experiences that will give strength to our young people and those who pretend that they are young.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: We need to get some vital information that will give that sense of self-worth, that will give, using psychological terms, that sense of self-actualisation, which the Member for St. Philip South uses. That will give a kind of inner strength so that our people can say, I accept this and I reject that. On the basis of a moral code that they have thought through and that they accept.

Secondly, Sir, if the argument from that Side is that gangs have increased and that today there are about 1 000 person in gangs in Barbados...

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. The Honourable Member noted the fact that the Member for St. Joseph was not watching him so he distorted what he said. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph said that there is information that there are probably 1 000 young people across the whole of Barbados who are causing problems of disorder and so on. He did not say they were in gangs, he never said that. In every constituency you have little pockets, in every parish you have little pockets of restless wayward youths, many of whom want to drop out from the system and do their own thing through their own subculture.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I will take the point made by the Honourable Member and I know, Sir, that I do not seek to distort anything that any Honourable Member has said. I thought he said that and one can be mistaken. When the Member for St. Joseph was speaking that is what I thought he was saying that there were about 1 000 persons in gangs across Barbados but I want to be quite clear about what he said.

I wonder if the Attorney General could give me an estimate of how many gangs there are in Barbados and how many people might be involved. I will sit, Sir, and he can give me the figures.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have been here a little too long to fall for those ruses. I do not have the figures available but I have information that there are about two or three near groups, I do not know if you can properly call them gangs in the classic sense of the criminologist who studied the gangs of America for example. I prefer to call them 'near-groups' and there are three or four. I will speak to the Honourable Member privately about them.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member may continue.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Sir. I will not pursue that line but I think we may have to develop some new strategies to deal with what may be a problem which down the road may get out of hand.

Sir, the other point I wish to make relates to how we view ourselves as a people. From what seeped out to me or was conveyed to me or leaked out to me, the Attorney General did have in the international discussions to stand up and take a strong position for Barbados in the discussion and I would like to pay a tribute to him although when he was in Opposition he never found it possible to pay any tribute to me. 5.15p.m.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will have to search my memory, Sir. I believe that I was given to more charity than that which is now ascribed to me by the Honourable Member. I wish to give him this assurance and the House, that the way I ended my presentation in the Budget last year would be the last occasion in my parliamentary career in which I would speak like that of the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South. I was misled by a telephone call by a member of the Democratic Labour Party explaining to me that certain things that had been said in the reply to the Budget had been inspired by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South. I fell for the bait and ended my speech by lambasting the Honourable Member. Never again would I do

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, like the Honourable Member I have been in here too long and will be in here too long to fall for that kind of ruse. Anyhow, Sir, I think this is a very important debate and as a House we should be paying more attention and more serious attention with deep analysis of the situation to subjects like drugs and their impact on the social climate in Barbados. I certainly hope there would be other opportunities in which we can examine various aspects of this subject for the benefit of Barbados and developing a better community in Barbados. I thank you.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I understand it, the purpose of this Bill is to give legislative effect to a position agreed between the United States of America and Barbados on cooperation in the interest of the suppression of illicit imports of drugs, in the interest of the suppression of undesirable practices like money laundering so that the two sovereign states could better work with each other in the interest of mutually agreed principles.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to make a couple of preliminary observations. I believe 40 or 50 years ago anybody hearing that this House was debating this Bill as it is in its current form would wonder why the need to bring such a Bill before this Honourable House.

Many years ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a gentleman who was a legal philosopher called John Austin doubted very much if international law was law and John Austin,

Mr. Deputy Speaker, was of the view that where international law clashed with municipal law, international law was nothing more than public morality and since then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the courts and parliaments throughout the world have been looking at the nature and character of public international law, especially when it is compared with municipal law.

I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in a fairly recent case, I speak subject to correction, but I believe the name of the case is the Black.....case, the British House of Lords set out some principles where they indicated quite clearly that it was a very well known principle that where municipal law clashed with public international law, municipal law * prevailed but that if you wanted to be serious about your international obligations what you could do would be to pass international law as part of the local law then it becomes municipal law and that would bind you to obey. What we are doing today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is important because what we are doing is passing a piece of legislation to make it Barbadian law. It would then assume the character of municipal law so that if any other law clashes with it that is relevant on point this law would prevail. But what we have to watch, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that this is a situation showing that Barbados intends to live up to its international obligations. The big question is, would the other side who agreed to this be equally serious to pass it as part of their local municipal law and would they want to carry out this to the spirit with which it was negotiated?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reason for this is important because over time we have had situations where States would agree treaties and then back off. If Barbados as a reasonably small state, which has only been recently free as a sovereign state for the last 32 years, is showing the kind of determination to be serious enough about its international obligations then the rest of the international community, as a mark of respect to Barbadians, should ensure that the type of spirit in which Barbados approaches these matters is reciprocated.

Speaking on the whole question of reciprocity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we in this Government have done was not to rush head long into anything that was put to us by the United States. What we did do was take into account our own special interest, our own special needs, the need to cooperate with the other state and such like. We did not rush head long into a situation where the first proposals that they put to us were accepted.

Indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, before Barbados finally put one word in writing and before we would have heard from at least one other so-called sovereign state, a leading member of their Government said, that the time had come to review the question of sovereignty and the way he said it was as though he was preparing to back away from it entirely.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I mention this because many years ago there was a man called Grotius and Grotius said that fundamental to agreements among nations is the whole concept of consent and that in public international law the primary consideration is always sovereignty. But that countries can, through consent, cede some sovereignty in the interest of international harmony. You cede, virtually based on consent, rather than letting somebody apparently bigger and more powerful take it from you. You cede it based on consent. 5.25 p.m.

I want to make these observations, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the outset. Now, we in Barbados have never had the type of resources, whether financial resources, whether resources by the way of aircraft, whether resources by way of ships, whether resources by way of information gathering to truly take on this terrible spectre of international drug trading and its counterpart international gun running.

Barbados, Mr. Deputy Speaker, has never had the wherewithal by which it could truly tackle this problem. This problem, as the Honourable Attorney General said, is a problem where conservatively those involved in international drug trade, set in control in excess of \$500 billion a year as a conservative estimate.

Now this country's economy, this country's resources, Mr. Deputy Speaker, do not readily permit us to be able to, on our own, tackle this problem as the ancient Romans would say, *sua sponte*. It therefore means, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have to work in harmony with friendly states to be able to deal with this menace.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, but at the same time as I said earlier, even though we are prepared to cooperate with friendly states in tackling the problem, we in Barbados decided to look exactly at what we wanted by way of cooperation and we therefore mapped out a position based on a strategy that takes into account our special needs. So as far as I am concerned, this, whether it is called "shiprider" or whatever it is called, is no imposition by a foreign power on this sovereign power. It is not a unilateral situation. It is an agreed position. But, what I would want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that as much as we are very concerned about the problem of the trade in drugs, we also have to be equally concerned about money laundering.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a relevant question is in the absence of assistance from abroad, in the absence of being able to source information from foreign powers, do we have at our disposal the resources to be able to get that type of information that would warn us against those who would want to launder money in Barbados? If the answer is a clear 'no' then we need naturally to cooperate with those who can help us.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the other thing about money laundering is that, as I have said, it is always the counterpart of trading in drugs, but a very frightening thing about it is the extent to which laundered money can usurp an entire nation. As I say so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I consider the military power of Barbados or lack thereof. I consider the size of the population and I consider our level of development. A related question would be, do we in Barbados even when hard pressed for money ever want money laundering to become an established feature in this country, especially since every indication is that over time compared with other jurisdictions Barbados has been careful and cautious not to catch at the first dollar.

Barbados⁹ reputation is that of a clean, prudent jurisdiction that operates on the principle of caution. We do things, Sir, out of an abundance of caution, and we cannot afford having worked for this reputation, both under the former Administration and this Administration to ever overnight come over as a people so desperate or greedy for money that we would go and take dirty money, blood money and such likes. It must be a tribute to all those that have served in positions where they had to seek out sensitive information and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South would know these things. It must be a tribute to their dedication and integrity that over time they must have heard about, (a) interested in investing, (b) interested in trading, but they were prudent enough to seek them out and check them out before permitting them to come here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I feel that this aspect of this agreement for cooperation which has isolated money laundering as a concern for Barbados has to be stressed. I would want all those of us who are manifesting any interest in this debate to stress that point. I am not sure whether apart from Jamaica, other Caribbean countries have gone that far. I doubt it. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know as well as I do what a threat drugs and related activities can be to the stability of society.

It is a frightening thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that persons involved in the trading of drugs would go to any length either to protect territory, to protect themselves or to ensure that whomever they perceive to be threats against their businesses must be destroyed. It therefore must be, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a source of grave concern that those of us who would want Barbados to remain a stable society would want to ensure that any possible threat to our stability, to our reputation for dealing with friends firmly be dealt with quickly and resolutely.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, even though there is a belief that it is the young people who would normally be the ones more threatened by drugs, I believe that for the amount of drugs that would have come here over time there must be people who are no longer users, who would have been touched and

affected by it. And even if they were not users directly using drugs, certainly there must be people in Barbados in the fifties and sixties whose lives are affected by drugs because they have relatives on drugs whose behaviour, whose irresponsibility, whose inability to be a proper family member impact on family life.

In fact I was very surprised when I heard of a man in his fifties who died from excessive drug use. And I do not mean the drugs to which the Honourable Member for St. Joseph referred. The Honourable Member for St. Joseph was careful to say that the most legal drug in Barbados is the most lethal drug in his estimation. I am saying that a man in his fifties had died from excessive use of marijuana. It had destroyed his brain and such like and when we searched out what had happened, we had learnt that he had belonged to that wing in society that believes that marijuana should be, if not legalised, be decriminalised. So he used to be a habitual user of marijuana.

Now, after we were saddled with the death of a man in his fifties in Barbados which was marijuana related, we did some investigations. And many people who were involved in it said that the active ingredient in marijuana, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a drug called tetrahydrocannabinoid and that it cannot dissolve in water. It can only dissolve in the fatty tissues of the brain. Now for those people who might want to decriminalise marijuana or legalise marijuana, if this substance which is the active substance in marijuana cannot dissolve in water but will only dissolve in the fatty tissues of the brain, then for those people who want to see it legalised they must know that they are dealing with a substance that is potentially very harmful and that if you take marijuana and there is not a sufficiency of fat in you, then clearly it will eat the fatty tissues of your brain and eventually lead to brain damage.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I certainly cannot vouch, as my friend, I am sure the Honourable Member for St. Philip South would agree, for any policy that would ever support the question of making this thing legal.

There is also a theory among medical people that even if marijuana is not as dangerous as other substances that its use encourages users to want to experiment with other harder drugs. A fellow on marijuana for some time might say, "Let me see what another drug like cocaine or whatever can be compared in terms of its effect" so that we in Barbados have to be most careful, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to make sure that we are very responsible on this whole issue of whether or not to decriminalise or legalise.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that those forces in Barbados that were interested in importing cocaine in Barbados had an initial theory that because of our relatively high income, that because persons had the relative wherewithal, that persons with relatively high incomes would be the market for cocaine. I have lived to see that belief go because when people are interested in trading drugs they trade to whomever. And a lot of ordinary working people normally law abiding, have had their lives badly affected by exposure to drugs.

I am told, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the thing about drug addiction is something called craving. I understand that years ago, a doctor called Dr. Jellinek said that there was this thing called the phenomenon of craving where once the drug is addictive and you take it the chances of taking it in a very strong way are very strong. 5.35p.m.

Many years ago there was a United States President called Mr. Lush who in 1856 said that when he saw evidence even at that time of drug addiction, he recognised that drug addicts had special needs for help, but he was helpless. Ironically, in time, his name was latched to persons who became users of alcohol. They used to call them "lushes."

This phenomenon of craving is such, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that as the Honourable Attorney General said, if we are going to come to that aspect of this problem which is pertinent to rehabilitation, if you are going to speak about the issue of rehabilitation, then we have a general health concern. If this thing called "craving" is so strong, and if a fellow takes one unit of the substance and craves a second unit, and then takes a third until he loses control, then the challenge to us as persons trying to do our best for health is indeed a very strong challenge.

I support the Honourable Attorney General who at a political meeting in Weston four or five years ago spoke about the five approaches. He talked about a five-prong attack to this problem. He mentioned the question of reducing demand through education, or reducing supply obviously through measures like what we are debating here this afternoon, of deepening inter-regional cooperation, of relevant legislation and of giving attention to matters of rehabilitation, so he is consistent.

At a political meeting in Weston when he was raising his own vision for a policy on drugs before coming into Government this was his attack and he has been consistent. What we need to do now as a Government...

Aside.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I heard it from the Honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we are working toward the reduction of demand, and there is considerable evidence indeed that demand is being approached because supply is being cut, so the reduction is very much in Barbados is a reduction of demand caused by a reduction of supply. It might very well be that fellows who want drugs cannot get drugs. They might still have the demand for it but since the drugs are in scarce supply then clearly they cannot get it, or in as plentiful enough supplies as they were before.

We are deepening our international cooperation through the relevant legislation before us but, certainly, medium term and long term we are going to have to find programmes by which we seek to foster rehabilitation. I take it that the United States of America and Canada do have meaningful programmes for rehabilitation. I am told that a lot of hospitals, including private hospitals, are involved heavily in promoting the whole question of rehabilitation for persons who need help.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I go, I want to say something in this debate that I have to say because in a situation where as an island over time many people would have depended for a livelihood on fishing, and we are hearing all sorts of stories about what happens on the high seas. We are hearing that there are fishermen with no intention whatever to get involved, who are sometimes approached and when they say "No" they are threatened.

We are hearing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that a lot of people lawfully going to sea to fish for traditional fish to earn a life in a legal way are approached and when they refuse to get involved they are threatened. We are also hearing that some people who have gone out to fish have vanished. Could it be that they saw something? Could it be that they were treated by the drug pushers as potential witnesses and the evidence was destroyed with them and their lives?

There is a fellow from St. James who I believe is known to the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, a fellow called Alfred Jordan who went to sea with a fellow called Richards. They were never known to be involved in anything wrong. They were just ordinary law-abiding fishermen. They have vanished in a situation where nobody can understand.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, why I am mentioning these things is that this drug trade has potential to so usurp unless we work to do something against it, all of us will have sleepless nights.

As I conclude, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really want to make an observation that I cannot help making. We in Barbados are a people who traditionally have been accustomed to a set of values and a lifestyle that we have treasured. Now, where you have drive-by shootings in a culture which 30 years ago would have considered such unthinkable, when you have what are popularly called executions, where somebody can go into somebody's house, go in their bedroom and execute them with no lawful authority to so execute, clearly such things would shake us up and we will likely become sensational.

I am going to accept what the Attorney General has said that, generally speaking, the crime rate has gone down. The problem the Attorney General has to realise is that even as crime is declining, sensational type crimes will still be so catching in terms of being catching to those who report news, and would be so unusual to persons accustomed to a different lifestyle that, in fact, they would definitely be shaken.

I do not think that the Honourable Attorney General when he said that unfortunately those involved in these actions are all involved in drugs that he meant that he did not care. I am saying that when he said that he had evidence that these were people involved in drugs he must have been saying that the vast majority of law-abiding people not wanting to be involved in drugs would not have to worry except for if being directly affected. He is not saying that he did not care or that there were only drug people. He was not saying so, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have to protect our youth. We have to protect the poor against attack. We have to protect Barbados' good name for being a law-abiding country. We have to give assurances to Barbadians that we are so sufficiently serious about safety in this country and about protecting that we are doing our best to so protect.

I am satisfied, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the police have been trying their utmost to do for Barbadians what it would require to make Barbadians safe. I have reason, quite frankly, to be on the streets quite late, at least six times in the last seven days, and it amazed me that between Six Roads, St. Philip and St. James where I was going eventually at 2 o'clock in the morning that the police presence was very strong and that they were determined. I saw them. They saw me too. I saw the police presence in those dark hours and it happened not just the night coming from Six Roads to St. James. I did not meet the Honourable Member for St. Michael South on that particular trip. I meet him sometimes. What struck me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the fact that there was this very strong police presence in the night. 5.45 p.m.

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order. My representative for St. James North has said that he did not encounter the Member for St. Michael South on his travels from Six Roads to St. James. I do not think that neither you nor anybody else will encounter the Member for St. Michael South. I believe he meant the Member for St. Philip South and I am submitting that he would not meet him there either.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I did not intend to mention St. Michael South. I was about to say that some Members from constituencies ending with South are so careful to look after their constituents that I found it strange that I did not see them on that occasion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the point I wanted to make is this. That there is a lot of evidence there that the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force are showing the type of devotion to duty and the type of conscientiousness in trying to deal with this problem and I am trying to show Barbadians that it is worthy of comment. Sometimes if you move from home at 4.30 a.m. to 5.45 a.m. to get an early sea bath as the Honourable Member for St. Michael West will tell you, who goes early to the beach, you will see police presence mopping up the work from the night before.

I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Members of the Royal Barbados Police Force especially those involved in special operations should be commended publicly for the very great work that they are doing in securing Barbados and in treating the drug problem especially when it comes to obviously taking the chance to get persons apprehended who try to import by sea.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that those remarks that I have made are sufficient at this time. I believe that the challenge ahead is to continue the good work to ensure that we keep our good name in Barbados but in addition I would want to see us in the future devise meaningful programmes by which persons whose lives have been complicated by drug abuse and by drug addiction be allowed to be given some type of sensible and workable rehabilitation. With those remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to wind up this debate. I wish to thank Honourable Members who have contributed to the debate. A number of very important points were made and Government will bear those comments in mind.

I think I need to reiterate, however, that the Government and the Attorney General are not insensitive to the perceptions about crime. Sir, in a small society any unusual type of crime attracts attention and can conduce to raising fears and apprehension among the society. I had to

speak to some judges from the United Kingdom in discussing the death penalty and I said to them that they would not understand why the vast majority of Caribbean people wish to see the death penalty retained. A lot of it has to do with geographic size. I will give you a simple example.

If I get on a tube at Marble Arch and buy a newspaper and I read that somebody killed another person in rather distasteful circumstances in Liverpool, when I get off the tube at Bethnal Green, I am not going to expect that I would meet that man because the place is so vast that the fact of murder does not have any impact on me. I am too removed from the scene. In the Caribbean, we only have to cast our minds back to 1984/85 when Hall and Bradshaw had this place terrorised. Everybody wanted to be in his house by 6 o'clock barring up because you do not know where this fellow is coming from. You hear all of a sudden that the night before George Gardner was tied up and his gun taken away and left in his car. Then somebody else's house was broken into near by. Then you heard there was something happening in Rising Sun and in a small society people are thrown into panic.

I deeply appreciate that when we get crimes, particularly crimes involving the use of guns and young people lose their lives, all of us feel the trauma of the situation. Therefore, I can empathise with the Honourable Member for St. Philip South and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South when they lay emphasis on the perception of crime among the society. I accept that. But I can only, from my point of view, as much as I understand it, seek to allay fear and to import into the debate a certain basis of fact by saying that these are the figures that we have that help to guide us, that help to shape our strategic operational strategies and so on. I do not believe that the society at large should be alarmed.

I think that Government has a responsibility as far as possible to try to set its citizens at ease but let me say thanks to the Honourable Members for emphasising the reality of perception. I am very grateful to them for that. I am not grateful to them for speaking in the open air that I approached these matters in a legalistic way, but that is their function. They are in Opposition and they are entitled to make their comments and one has to understand that. I gave very, very hard when I was on that Side so I understand it at a certain level.

Sir, I just wish to end by saying that I trust that we will see a cessation in armed conflict among young people. I am very grateful to Father Paul as the Chairman of the Steering Committee on Penal Reform and now the Chairman of the Advisory Board to the Government Industrial Schools for making an appeal to young people to lay aside their

weapons. The time will come shortly when we pass the Firearms Bill when I will be announcing an amnesty for a period of time and asking young people to turn in their guns. It will be up to them because when the amnesty is over and they do not comply and they are caught with guns, I expect the full weight of the law will be visited on them.

I just wish also to wind up by saying that too many young lives have been lost. I know that there will call for the death penalty again. That matter will be dealt with after the Constitution Review Commission has reported on the death penalty. There are only two persons in Glendairy Prison to whom warrants have been read. In other words there are not people available to be hanged. Those two are on appeal to the Privy Council. 5.55 p.m.

In other words there are no people available to be hanged. Those two are on appeal to the Privy Council. Others who were on death row have had their sentences commuted either because of the Pratt and Morgan rule or because of judicial misdirection or for whatever reason. The fact is there are only two, James and Bourne who are before the Privy Council. I do not think their appeals would be heard until October. So there are only two persons in Barbados.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: We are waiting for a decision from the High Court on the question of what are reasonable fees to be contributed by Government for those cases.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The matter was argued because when you look in your Constitution you will see that the Constitution does not oblige the Government to pay anything.

Sir, I also wish to indicate to the House that there is an aspect of criminal activity that is very distressing I am sure to all of us and that is the area of domestic violence. There would seem to be an increase in domestic violence, some of it being acted out even in murder. The interesting feature of the murders that we have had this year is that they can really be categorised into two, domestic - men killing women, women killing men within some kind of relationship, or drug related.

I cannot explain why there is this apparent upsurge in domestic violence. I do not know if it is that people are becoming more assertive or that more of it is being reported

but it certainly appears to me that there is more of it. It is a matter, Sir, which is not featured in the classification of criminal offences and I have to discuss with the police whether we should not put in a separate head for domestic violence.

We have all the usual and traditional crimes itemised and accounted for but there is nothing in the criminal statistics about domestic violence but I am sure that Honourable Members from just reading the newspapers, have to ask themselves sometimes, what is happening. I do not know if it is a breakdown in family life, if it is because people are out to work and there is not that closeness between husband and wife or man and woman, but I do not know. It is something that requires study but it is also a matter of great concern. So with those few remarks I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time, Sir.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 20 inclusive were called and passed.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Schedule be the Schedule to the Bill.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee to Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER who resumed the Chair and reported accordingly. 6.05 p.m.

On the separate motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. G. W. PA YNE the Bill was read a third time, passed and the title read and agreed to.

SUSPENSION

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that the House be suspended until 6.15 p.m. today.

The question that the House be suspended until 6.15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

RESUMPTION Mr. DEPUTY

SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

ORDER NO. 20 - CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1998

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this is a very simple Bill where we are providing for a change in the type of verdict that can be returned by a jury where a person who is affected by mental disorder is found guilty. There used to be a verdict of "guilty but insane" and the better view that has been accepted since the 1960's is that the verdict that should be returned by a jury should be "not guilty by reasons of insanity" and that is all this Bill is about. It is to provide for a special verdict where an accused person found guilty but suffering from insanity will have the appropriate verdict recorded against them. So it says that,

"Where, in an indictment, any act is charged against any person as an offence, and it is given in evidence on the trial of such person for that offence that he was insane, so as not to be responsible according to law for his actions at the time when the act was done, then, if it appears to the jury before whom such person is tried that he did the act charged, but was insane when he did the act, the jury shall return a special verdict to the effect that the accused person is not guilty of the act charged against him, by reason of insanity."

That is all this about.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE, the Bill was read a second time.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His

Honour, the DEPUTY SPEAKER, the passing of the Bill in Committee and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE, the Bill was read a third time and passed and the title read and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 19- MENTAL HEALTH (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1998

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill too is a matter of law reform and is a consequence of the previous Bill. We are proposing to amend Section 13 of the Mental Health Act by deleting paragraph B and substituting the following:

"(b) is found not guilty by reason of insanity, or

(c) is found guilty but is suffering from diminished responsibility."

And since diminished responsibility is a defence under our law when the Mental Health Act was first proclaimed it was not a defence. It is now a defence and this is just tidying up. We are now tidying up to provide for diminished responsibility. That is all this is about.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE, the Bill was read a second time.

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE, the Bill was read a third time and passed and the title read and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 21 - THE BAIL (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 1998

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you will recall that in 1996 toward the end of the year we passed the Magistrates Court Bill and the new Bail Act. We are still grappling in the Drafting Department with the Rules for the Magistrates Courts Bill. They are voluminous and are taking a bit of time to get them ready. 6.30 p.m.

Fortunately, the Bail Rules have been completed and have been approved by the Rules Committee. I sent them down last week and they should shortly be brought to the House for laying. So we have new Bail Rules to support the new Bail Act. In a couple of months the whole new law on Bail should be effective.

We have a number of forms in the back of the Rules. We have to get the Printing Department to print sufficient numbers for distribution to the various courts but, certainly, by the time we come back from vacation, the new Bail law in its entirety should be applicable.

In the meantime, it has been drawn to our attention that the substantive Act itself needs certain amendments consequential upon the two Bills that we dealt with this afternoon. This Bill is to make provision for the sake of standardisation and harmonisation by deleting the word "conviction" in section 2 in respect of persons with mental disorders and instead of finding a person is not guilty by reason of insanity and consequentially arising out of the Mental Health amendment we make a similar amendment for the Ministry to consider as it is provided for in Clause 2 (c).

The previous Bill did provide for the Attorney General to make regulations but that has now been subsumed by the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee will make the Rules and have made the Rules.

I therefore move that this Bill...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sorry. Paragraph (b) is to limit the right of the accused to run from judge to judge saying the same thing all over again and again. That we construe as an abuse of process. Elsewhere in the Commonwealth there is a restriction on the number of times you can go. We are following that precedent and just limiting the accused or the person applying for bail to once in the High Court. That is the effect of Clause 3. I am sorry I missed that in my original opening.

Subject to those observations, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 -5 inclusive were called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Bail (Amendment) Act, 1998.

ORDER NO. 14 - THE FINAL APPROPRIATION
(1997-98) BILL, 1998

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, every year at about this time we bring the Final Appropriation Bill in respect of the financial year ended in March of the particular year. There is never a debate on the final Appropriation Bill for the reason that the matters dealt within the Bill would have been subject to debate over the previous financial year and this is just a legal requirement for the sake of good order.

I therefore beg to move that the Final Appropriation Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE, the House resolved itself into Committee, Mr. D. CARTER in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable House is now in Committee.

Clauses 1 - 4 inclusive and the Schedule were called and passed. 6.40 p.m.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE the Bill was read a third time and passed and cited as the Final Appropriation (1997-98) Act, 1998.

ORDER NO. 12 - A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT WELCHES, CHRIST CHURCH AND BAY STREET, ST. MICHAEL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF PUMPING STATIONS FOR THE SOUTH COAST SEWERAGE PROJECT

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a Resolution for the acquisition of two parcels of land at Welches, comprising 330.1 square metres and Bay Street, St. Michael comprising 1 203.4 square metres for the purpose of construction of pumping stations for the South Coast Sewerage plant. As a result of the construction of the South Coast Sewerage plant, it has become necessary to construct a number of pumping stations in the south of Barbados. A number of sites have been looked at and these two sites are four of the sites that have been agreed on with the contractors and this Resolution therefore seeks to acquire those parcels of land for the purposes of the South Coast Sewerage Project.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Resolution is not one that we are against on this Side since when we were in office we initiated the initial plan for the acquisition of land to facilitate the implementation of the South Coast Sewerage Project. In addition to that, we were conscious of the need to avoid what occurred with the project in Bridgetown and that it was necessary to acquire lands to ensure that all of the pipes in the pumping stations were properly connected to the main pumping station.

In this particular instance, there are a number of questions that remain unanswered. I came to this Honourable House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and indicated to the House that the South Coast Sewerage Project was in trouble and I indicated at the time that it was likely that the contractors would pull out of Barbados because Government was unable to satisfy claims that they had made against the Government which therefore meant that there were insufficient funds for them to continue operation. There is an impasse, which this Honourable House was given the assurance would last for a very brief period and that by some time early in May or June, that that project would have restarted and we would have seen new contractors put in place and the public presently affected by the project would have been spared the environmental hazards of having to put up with the dust and the fact that many of their yards have been dug up and large holes had been left in their backyards which run the risk of breeding mosquitoes if rain falls or water settles.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order. For the correction of the records since the Honourable Member is misleading the House. A subcontract in respect of the reparation of all these properties was awarded since earlier in the year and all of these properties that were so affected have been rectified.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, you can safely accept that since the Honourable Member made that statement that you know that it is not true.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can leave here now....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael East you cannot say that. You will have to withdraw that statement. You cannot make that accusation that you have just made.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will withdraw the statement but I will say this. I do not accept what the Minister is saying and there are Members of the public who will agree with me.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may continue, Sir.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: We have as a matter of urgency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to find out exactly when this project will be restarted.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: On a point of order. The project has restarted and several contracts have been awarded to continue the work. I do not have the list of all the companies in front of me but one of the companies carrying out certain aspects of the work is C. O. Williams & Company.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have not been given the benefit of any award of any contract.

Asides.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: This Parliament deserves the decency to be told what is happening with a project that has an impact where millions of dollars will be spent and we can see no evidence of a contract being restarted apart from a few roads that were left in a disgraceful state that were covered in a small way to try to keep down some of the dust that is still affecting people in the area.

There are no signs on the horizon, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this project has properly been restarted because the mitigating circumstances that exist are such that there is total confusion and it is very difficult to understand the cost that is involved in the completion of this project and contractors are today weighing their thoughts to find out if it is at all feasible for them to go in and meddle with this particular project. 6.50p.m.

So the Minister is giving the impression, yes this is a project that has been started. But this House is fully aware that that project has come to a standstill. Millions of dollars are involved and this House does not know what we are involved in. We have not been told what contract has been awarded and for how much. So we have to believe that all is well, just like how Greenland has come to an abrupt halt. No amount of threatening or jumping up will solve this problem. This clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a clear indictment on the part of the Minister. It clearly demonstrates the incompetence of the Minister of Health and these matters are not just simply a question of bringing a resolution into this House. It is not simply a matter of passing a resolution to acquire a piece of land for the construction of a pumping station for the South Coast Sewerage Project when the project is not going anywhere. It was in the middle of a piece of land and now they have moved it to the end of the land. We saw the maps and so forth. So the residents are uncomfortable. The Barbadian public is uncomfortable. We do not know how much money is involved and just to simply do these acquisitions in this Assembly really begs the question. It is an exercise in ignorance. It is disgraceful to come to give the impression that the South Coast Sewerage Project is alive and well. It is dead.

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Even if I am dead I will still be able to satisfy you.

Loud Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for St. Michael East address the Chair, please. Order.

The Member for St. Michael East, two things. You do not have to hear the asides. You are addressing the Chair. The Member for St. Michael East, continue please.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we need some answers and I think that the Minister should be able to take this opportunity. There are a number of questions on the Order Paper that the Minister refuses to answer. There are a number of concerns by business people who have been affected in the area as a result of the South Coast Sewerage Project, many of them have indicated to us on this Side that their businesses are in a state of collapse as a result of the South Coast Sewerage project.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, again the Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber. He is attempting to give the impression that large numbers of businesses have been adversely affected and are on the verge of collapse. In fact only between 6 and 9 businesses have made application of one sort or other to the project. I think only one is claiming collapse.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister cannot just simply say that only 9 businesses. Nine businesses employ a significant number of people and even if it was one business that was affected you have to show some degree of concern. The attitude that is being displayed is that this is a must. We are the Ministry, we are going in and I do not care how it affects you. You have a very callous attitude towards business people.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: A unit was actually set up to deal with all claims which does in fact demonstrate that there is some degree of caring and those businesses have been asked to produce evidence of their loss.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: The Barbados Labour Party is accustomed to setting up units and all kinds of glamorous looking things for public relations purposes but the realistic position is that people are hurting and you have not handed over any money. It is just like the Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission. You set up these commissions, you set up all of these institutions but in reality it is a question of delivering relief to persons. So if this situation is allowed to continue where we have no answers I feel nervous about what is going on in the Ministry of Health. It has to be of prime concern when we lump this to what is happening with the disposal of solid waste and all waste in Barbados, when we understand the confusion that is taking place at Mangrove, when we see the confusion that is taking place at Greenland. You are announcing all kinds of large sums for another repeat of Greenland. You are spending an enormous amount of money in this Ministry.

It is very, very worrying, the entire South Coast as an area in the tourism belt is in chaos and coupled with the GEMS Project, my God, we have a problem that really confronts us and then the Minister sits idly by and does not say a word to this country, just believing that it will simply go away as she believes the garbage will simply go away. It will not enter into St. Thomas. It will not enter into Greenland. It is going to end up in nowhere.

These are areas that need a very serious examination in Barbados. This South Coast Sewerage project is a necessary project. It has been totally mismanaged by this Government. I do not know what kind of negotiating they entered into but they made a complete mess of the contractual arrangements. I warned them about it. I came in here and I told them the project was in trouble and it was likely they were going to have claims exceeding \$ 15 million. I was deemed to be an alarmist. All of those circumstances are still outstanding. They will get it back together in a couple of months and this is now August. 7.00 p.m.

Now, I accept, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that given the track record of the present Government when they say they will shut down a dump in 1994 and that it takes four years for them to shut down the dump, the public of Barbados can safely say that they have no intention of restarting this project. It means that when the Democratic Labour Party comes to office later this year, or early next year...,

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member is planning some insurrection in Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member is certainly picking up the vibes on the streets of Barbados and understands that the people out there are getting angry when they understand that their VAT money that they are under stress for...,

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: I am dealing with the Resolution. I am dealing with the people's money that is being spent on this project. It is a concern of all of us but I would never plan any insurrection or to overthrow a Government. I accept that Governments will change and they will change for the right reason and when the Democratic Labour Party comes to office either later this year or early next year...

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: You came into this House of Assembly and said that I wanted to be Prime Minister from since 1991.

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we cannot continue in this House to simply accept that there is tokenism going on and covering down a little pumping area with some galvanise and so forth, thinking that this project is going anywhere. This Parliament deserves a full explanation as to what is going on. This is not the Minister of Health's problem. This is a problem that will affect all of Barbados and we do not want her to absorb this problem as her personal problem or anybody has any personal attack on her. The taxpayers' money is at stake and I am concerned that with this rapid expenditure, coupled with the excessive expenditure at Mangrove and Greenland that all of the excess VAT money that has been raked in will simply be wasted and we will find ourselves in a situation where we have a deficit confronting us within the next year. And again this country will be faced with economic problems in terms of trying to restrict the spending that is taking place in this country.

So this is not an issue that we can just gloss over it. This is a costly matter and this Parliament has to be told upfront and maybe I am going to suggest that we ask for an extension of the work of the Commission to see if Dr. Haynes can take over the responsibility of trying to understand what is going on with the Commission relating to the Ministry of Health.

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Do not talk about permits because you are issuing more permits than I ever dreamed about issuing in my life. You do not want to talk about any permit.,! wrote a letter...You wait.

Aside.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael East, please stick to the Resolution.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am going to suggest that we ask Dr. Richard Haynes to examine what is going on in the South Coast Sewerage Project because we clearly cannot accept the words of the Minister and we have to ask him to extend his work...

Asides.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: You are coming to this Parliament asking for a lot of money for studies and to do reviews, *et cetera* and as far as I am concerned, you have to come and

tell this House what is going on. I am not satisfied. There are a lot of issues that I have to raise on the entire Ministry of Health and the Environment.

I sat on my computer last Sunday and there are over 200 issues related to the Ministry of Health and the Environment that remain a concern and if anyone doubts me I will come and bring the entire list and table it in this Parliament. The Right Honourable Prime Minister, the entire Cabinet and the entire back bench are just sitting by and watching one Minister destroy an entire Ministry, and destroy every aspect of the Ministry almost to the extent that she is creating history. And we come into this House of Assembly without presenting the facts to the people of this country and just simply say that...

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Right. That is true. Now, when we look at the cost, as I indicated, I am very concerned about it and this Parliament has to account for every cent that we spend. The Minister is not sure about what is happening now with the disposal of garbage and sewage, *et cetera*. So we are hearing this week again that we have to spend another large amount of money now to review Greenland. After four years and millions of dollars spent in consultancy fees together with all the environmental madness, this country now has to be confronted with more money to work out whether Greenland was the right decision or whether Greenland was the wrong decision. How much more are we expected to take? The Minister came into this House and gave this House several assurances that she will be opening Greenland in 1995. Then in 1996, this is 1998. Then in 1998 she comes and tells this country that she is now going to do a review of Greenland. It is a monumental disgrace.

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Now, the Minister as well does not say to the public what is the cost of setting at Mangrove a transfer station that has to be put in place before you can start placing garbage at Greenland. She says nothing about the transfer station that she promised in 1995 and she expects us to come and accept in 1998 that she is competent to carry out any work on the South Coast Sewerage Project. This country every month has to extend a pay cheque to her and there are hundreds and thousands of people unemployed in this country and she gets into this House of Assembly and in her corridors or wherever she is and just because I raised issues of cost, I raised issues of environmental concerns on behalf of the people of this country, she seeks to curse me and make the most derogatory remarks every time she sees me as if it is something personal that she has to deal with me. 7.10p.m.

Aside.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Some foul language, some very bad language and you would believe that she is a born again Christian.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I make a point of avoiding the Honourable Member for St. Michael East because I know he is so fundamentally dishonest.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James South, you will have to withdraw those remarks.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James South, you made remarks about fundamentally dishonest about the Honourable Member for St. Michael East. I am asking that you withdraw those remarks please.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in saying that I abuse him, the Honourable Member for St. Michael East was not truthful to this Chamber. He therefore misled the Chamber. You may draw, Sir, whatever...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. James South, I will ask you again to withdraw the remarks.

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: I will withdraw the words "fundamentally dishonest" and instead say that he says things that even his mother would not believe.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, you can hide from everybody.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael East, please continue the debate that is before the House, please.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this issue of being honest...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael East, let us continue the debate and let us forget about honest and dishonest. The remark has been withdrawn by the Member.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: I am not referring to it. I am just saying that this House has to be treated to an honest disclosure of all facts. The Honourable Member gets annoyed when you are simply asking for information to be

provided to the public but the Honourable Member prefers and I say it, and I will repeat it, the Honourable Member uses some very bad language. Regardless of whatever she said in here today, God knows, and if you are a born again Christian...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael East, let us get on with the debate. Let us get on with the matter before the House and forget the Member. Please continue.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I humbly suggest that if the Honourable Member says the Honourable Member is a born again Christian you cannot ask him to withdraw those remarks. Even if it is not true, you cannot ask him to withdraw those remarks because the Honourable Member would then be in difficulty.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael East, please continue. Wind up.

Mr. J. O. TUDOR: This is not a matter for the Minister to get on a high horse because there are over 200 questions. I have all of them lined off. David Simmons taught me. I learned from him. Write out Harry Right and Harry Wrong, right down. I learned from the political spin doctor. The mistake that you all make is that you do not pay attention to him. You spend too much time listening to the wrong people. Listen to him. He is a good spin bowler.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am asking, and the Minister is not in any personal engagement with me or in any personal battle with me. The Minister has to account to the people of Barbados through this Parliament. She has to treat this Parliament with some degree of respect and no amount of grandstanding is going to stop me from debating in here because if I cannot debate in here you know we are going to go to the streets and we are going to still have..,

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for St. Michael East, please wind up the debate.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member your time has expired.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 7.20p.m.

ORDER NO. 17- A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
VESTING IN THE BARBADOS AGRICULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING
CORPORATION OF LANDS AT
PRINCESS ALICE HIGHWAY
ST. MICHAEL

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I cannot hear myself.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael East, please, the Honourable Member for St. Andrew has the Floor and he is making his contribution so please desist from the talk with the other Members.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Resolution to vest 747.4 square metres of land in the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation has become necessary because of the fact that the BADMC has sought to sell this parcel of land to a company, incorrectly believing that the land had already been vested in the corporation. Because of the subsequent requisitions that were made it was determined that the land was not properly vested in the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation and it was agreed that in order to rectify the omission it would be necessary to bring this Resolution to the House.

That agreement, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was entered into with the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation prior to 1994. This Resolution seeks to correct that omission.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker. I really am disappointed that the Minister responsible for Lands did not feel that he had any obligation to explain this matter, notwithstanding the hour, a bit more than he did. It makes no sense to me, Sir. The BADMC was a successor organisation of the Barbados Marketing Corporation. The Marketing Corporation, as far as I recall, is not in the business of buying and selling property. It seems to me that every agency under the Honourable Member seems to feel that they are free to buy and sell land at will.

The Barbados Marketing Corporation was created for a specific purpose and the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation was created to succeed that organisation for a specific purpose and buying and selling land was not part of that purpose. I do not understand how the Government can come down to this Parliament to say that they wish to correct some error that

was made by an agency that was acting outside of the four corners of its capacity and you are going to ask this Parliament to support you in this foolishness. We are not going to support that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Minister wants the assistance of this House, he owes a duty to this House to explain the transaction much better than he did. I do not understand it and we have been trying to find out what it is and the Minister comes down here at this hour and says that the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation sought to sell some land that they did not own, so we are going to correct that.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Honourable Member is saying that it is a fact. Well, it is a fact that we are not going to support it. We want to know who they are selling the land to, why they are selling the land, where the land is, what it is about. All of these are questions, we need answered.

This would have had to be a Cabinet Paper. The Honourable Member for St. George South, and the Honourable Member for St. Joseph, if they were in the Cabinet nobody could go to them with this rubbish.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am surprised that the Attorney General did not get up and answer these questions on this. It does not make sense to me.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Why do you think that this House is to be here, that you can just come down here when it suits you...

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Do not tell me to let you get up and explain it. I am addressing the Minister who brought it here and it is about time that he understands that when he comes down here with these kinds of resolutions that he cannot just walk in here and say that we are going to sell some land and that we made a mistake and are going to correct it.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am not going to get a heart attack. I want to know what is going on. That is why they sent me in here. I am disappointed that the Minister constantly does this. Why should the BADMC be selling land and to whom?

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I see, this is a matter now, that anybody from Combermere can do anything now and get away with it because he went to Combermere. As a matter of fact, that is the reason why I feel able to get up and take him to task because he is not behaving like one of the boys. And he will not be in here for much longer if he continues this way.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: He has already mashed up St. Andrew but that is another matter. I am very serious. What is this about. How much land is it? Who are we selling it to?

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Let him row his own boat. He is the Minister responsible for Lands, all the Government lands are in his name. I want to know if C.O. Williams is buying this, I want to know who is buying it.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It is not relevant! He is arrogant also. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you would wish to know. I speak for Your Honour in this matter and you would wish to know since a number of your constituents work in this corporation. Are they selling out the whole corporation, is this a matter where they are selling the Queen's warehouse? I thought that the Marketing Corporation and its successor would be acquiring land not selling land.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, since the Minister is so arrogant, could I invite you to ask the Honourable Member for St. Andrew if he could be so kind as to tell us. I really do not wish to seem as though I am precocious or presumptuous or anything because apparently...

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If you were on your feet, I would have to withdraw it but you are addressing me from the Chair. That is the arrogance, that you feel able to address me from the Chair because you feel that the Deputy Speaker is not going to pull you up. But you are the Minister, Sir, and he has a duty, a responsibility, he has a personal responsibility. Were it not for your own disability, Sir, I would speak for another half of an hour. I accept that Your Honour has some constraints and we do not feel that we should punish you unnecessarily.

I believe though, Sir, that if the Parliamentary Secretary was the Minister, if you would allow the Parliamentary Secretary from time to time to introduce some

of these resolutions, we would have a better chance to find out what is going on. On the occasion when the Parliamentary Secretary has the opportunity to perform these duties, they are performed in a much different manner. Quite frankly, I think you should stop ill treating him. You should not be treating him as if he is a boy in the yard. If it is a matter of selling a piece of land, you could at least let him introduce one or two especially now that he is sitting on the front bench. You bring him in here all the time and when he is in the back and he tries to answer us properly, you tell him to shut up. When you come to do the matter you are not giving us proper information. He comes in here in a little two-word introduction.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am amazed that the Attorney General would allow a Minister who is selling the property that belongs to all of us to come in here and not give us a proper explanation.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Did he give the Cabinet a proper explanation. If the Attorney General gets up and says that he is satisfied with the explanation which he gave the Cabinet, I will take the Attorney General's words.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am willing to give way to the Attorney General.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You were not present! Now this is even worse, the Attorney General was not present. Who was acting Attorney General at the time.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT No, no. The Honourable Member for St. Michael North would never allow this to pass the Cabinet in those circumstances. As a matter of fact, I can speak to the Honourable Member's capacity to understand land law. I can speak to that. He would not have allowed this to pass him without some comment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, have you stopped to figure out how this Government is functioning. The Attorney General came back from wherever it is that he went, must have seen these papers and apparently did not raise a question until now. What sort of bully is this Minister? The Minister of Lands is a bully in the Cabinet? Some say that he is on a frolic of his own. I do not accept that, Sir, because I wish fervently to be in his corner but he keeps coming down here

with these pieces of legislation and throwing them up in this House. I am amazed at the Honourable Member. I cannot understand how the Honourable Member for St. Joseph could sit in this House and see his colleague from St. Andrew behaving in this manner and say not a word. 7.30 p.m.

We are trying to get an explanation. It makes no sense. We have fished according to the Honourable Member for Christ Church South to see if we could find anybody over there with credibility who could say to us it is all right. Not a single word is raised in support of the Minister on this and we do not trust the Minister anymore in matters of land.

The Minister of Agriculture is telling me he will explain it. You promised to explain it. Now this is the last time that I am going to give way for you to rescue the Minister responsible for Lands. I am going to give way shortly and I am going to expect that he will get up and give an explanation that is plausible.

One of the things you cannot do is stop me from talking. If you are going to give us an explanation, I will sit down and get the explanation but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and with all deference to your needs, I cannot accept the sort of response that is coming from the Honourable Member *sotto voce*.

You cannot hear them, Sir, but the Minister of Agriculture has given me the undertaking that he will explain. Under the circumstances I will trust his word but I give him warning that if the explanation is not acceptable that the very next time that the Minister of Lands comes down here he can expect a marathon on the issue.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, prior to 1994 and unfortunately I do not remember the exact time, the entity operating on the Harbour Road which is now called the BADMC and which was subsequently put into the possession and operation of Budg-Buy said that they owned land at the Harbour Road just as they had been sure that they owned other land elsewhere.

Before 1994, under both the BMC and the ADC which were both...

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I want to save the Honourable Member a lot of time. When I was Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce the Barbados Marketing Corporation was told categorically that they do not own the land. The matter arose when they were discussing the Queen's Warehouse and the Attorney General's Chamber of the day made it crystal clear that the Barbados Marketing Corporation did not own the land. When I heard that they had sold to Budg-Buy I knew that

something was wrong. The record will show I was Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce from October 1971 until 1976 and the record will show Mr. Livy Greaves was the Chairman at the time and they were told categorically that they do not own the land and it was not vested in them, the BMC was formed...

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You see, Sir, he wants to condone foolishness. I am on a point of order, Sir, and I am not going to go any further but I just wish to put in the record...

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am not grandstanding but you must not allow malfeasance to pass by our coming in here and correcting malfeasance.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for St. James North, continue please.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was not even able to make one point. The Honourable Member for St. Michael West has waxed very energetic and is in a really pugilistic mood and will destroy all those who come in any range. He is like a Mohammed Ali and a Mike Tyson all of a sudden.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, before 1994 the Barbados Marketing Corporation as it then was, was behaving as if it was fee simple owner or freehold owner of the property on the Harbour Road which is now occupied by Budg-Buy Food Fair. They entered into a contract with the owners of Budg-Buy Food Fair and the legal entity with whom they entered the contract is called People's Incorporated. This was around 1992 or 1993. Now there was then to-ing and fro-ing and People's Incorporated went so far as to pay 1/10 deposit, were then let into possession on the assumption that with the passage of time when they raised the balance of the purchase price they could pay the BADMC and then get title. Meantime BADMC had no title. But what has transpired now is that one very messy legal thing has developed. BADMC has a lawyer who is liaising with the lawyer from People's Incorporated. I could call the lawyer for People's Incorporated if I wanted to. Then it got so far that the lawyer for People's Incorporated was about to approach the Court by order of specific performance against BADMC in a situation where BADMC had clearly entered into agreement by accepting the deposit and held up themselves as being owners of property.

We have come to put this thing right but this is something that preceded us. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not

want to detain the House unnecessarily but this is the point we are at and I think that the Honourable Member for St. Andrew has been saying so. It is just that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West feels in this pugilistic mood...

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I wish to assure the Honourable Gentleman that I do not feel pugilistic. I feel pure and I wish to see these matters done in a pristine way if possible.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to comment on the fact that the Honourable Member for St. Andrew in introducing this particular Resolution perhaps he should have had the benefit of a brief from the Honourable Member for St. James North on the BADMC itself.

It does not surprise me that the Honourable Member for St. Michael West is saying that the BADMC is now reduced to selling land because the BADMC, within a matter of months, is going to be closing down the Abattoir and when that allegation was made the General Manager of the BADMC denied it and then came back in the newspaper and said that he wanted to deny that and he denied it.

We are saying there are plans to further down-size and decimate the BADMC such that all that it would be doing shortly from now is selling land. In fact the entire Ministry of Agriculture has been so marginalised by this Government that the Honourable Member for St. James North has been asked to look for somewhere because the Government is even selling the property which is presently occupied by the Ministry of Agriculture because it is prime land for foreign investors. The Honourable Member for St. Thomas talked about it, the principal responsibility and mission of this Government. So the Minister of Agriculture has spent the past 6 months, based on written instructions, looking for somewhere.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Oh, yes, you may not have seen it but instructions have gone for your Ministry to look for somewhere. The BADMC soon from now would not be looking for anywhere because it would not have anything to do. It would not need anywhere because the abattoir is being closed and there are further efforts at further rationalisation of the BADMC. And I want the Honourable Member for St. James North to tell this Chamber what the position is with regard to the future of the BADMC. Because we were told a long time ago that a business plan was to be provided and that on the basis of that business plan, this Parliament agreed to advance money for the operation of the BADMC. 7.40 p.m.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: No, that was to clear the debt - a substantial sum of money to clear the debt, and then we were told that this new great management of the BADMC, inspired by the request of the Honourable Member for St. Peter for a business plan, the news speak of that administration to bring all of these statutory corporations under efficient management which has been a flop in nearly every single one of them. We are not going to talk about CBC because that will be out of our debate today. We are not going to talk about all of the other statutory corporations which have failed to meet their own target as set out in their business plan and the level of inefficiency and the hidden subsidies and back to the practices which obtained in the 1980s under previous Barbados Labour Party administrations.

So the point is that at the end of the day, you may very well have a situation in Barbados in which all that the BADMC is doing is disposing of land and disposing of assets because they own land in the prime commercial and coastal areas in Barbados. And the attitude of the Government is that operations like an abattoir and the location of the headquarters of the Ministry of Agriculture should not be located in those prime commercial areas because Government is looking, as is directed by the IADB since it really has no say in these matters, to ensure that land finds its highest economic use and that is the basis on which the Honourable Member for St. James North would be spending his every waking hour looking for alternative accommodation for the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture.

And I would not be surprised based on the signals which have come from this Government that there is no future for commercial agriculture in Barbados. If we do not hear in a few short months, as has been requested by the former president of the BAS consistently when he was president, the gentleman in the Other Place that the Ministry of Agriculture should be shut down. Just as he said that Barbadians should not believe that they should own houses. Yes, when we were in office...

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It does not matter who he is because I do not mix family with defending the rights of the people of Barbados. So that does not matter. That may interest you. When we were in office, he consistently made recommendations to us that we should shut down the Ministry of Agriculture because when they had done their calculations as they did with the number of house spots that will eventually be available for Barbadians to own houses in Barbados, it was not feasible to keep the Ministry of Agriculture running.

So we are making ground for him to run on by saying that commercial agriculture is not viable. We are making ground for him to run on by telling the Ministry of Agriculture that it has to look for alternative accommodations and we are making ground for him to run on by whittling down the role of the BADMC which as I understood it, from all of the old talk that we have had in here, is supposed to be a real research and development institution. We have had a lot of that old talk consistently since 1994. We had to clean up debts in the ADC. Of course, the Honourable Member for St. Peter says he did not leave any debts at all, but if the files are reopened, you will see that the BADMC on two occasions in the recent history of Barbados has received substantial sums of money for its restructuring and I want to know if the BADMC at this time is meeting the objective of its business plan and when the abattoir will be closed to make way for the private sector abattoir or for other arrangements. How soon is the Minister of Agriculture required to vacate the premises at Graeme Hall and what the role of the BADMC will be when as the Honourable Member for the City and the Honourable Member for St. Peter have declared to this country that in ten years time commercial agriculture will not be viable?

I really want to know. Tonight is the night, because I have all the time in the world. Those who are tired, I am not tired. And whether the Press is here or not it does not bother me. We need to have the answers to those questions because they are very, very important and the Honourable Member for St. James North, I have noticed, has avoided speaking on matters relating to agriculture in recent times. There must be a valid reason. His public profile is extremely low. He is functioning outside a radar like a stealth bomber.

You cannot pick him up in the governmental radar at all. All the others are boasting about their achievements. I am worried because I believe the Honourable Member for St. James North has a contribution to make and that contribution should not be minimised by people handing out edicts that he must vacate a building, and indicating that commercial agriculture in Barbados will not exist in ten years time when substantial investment has been made by the taxpayers in Barbados in seeking to prop up commercial agriculture even in the face of the threat of free trade. So I want to know what the role of the Honourable Member for St. James North is in 1998. Having heard that every pointer, every indication, every suggestion, every public statement and every initiative by this Government is aimed at the decimation of commercial agriculture and the destination of the Ministry of Agriculture and the whittling down of the BADMC, we need the answer this evening on that.

Thank you.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is always something putrid in the atmosphere that is

engendered whenever the Honourable Member for St. John purports to lecture people in this House about foreign ownership of land and about matters pertaining to the functioning of state enterprises, on matters pertaining to the role of the Inter-American Development Bank in helping to finance studies pertaining to the new land use policies. I am saying, Sir, that there is putrid atmosphere that always attend any lectures of this character, because if there is one person in the history of Barbados, who has not only been directly associated with the promotion of foreign ownership of land, but has introduced by far the most generous concessions ever given to any foreigners or local investors to develop land in this country, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is the Member for St. John. And the history of Barbados will have to show, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it was under his stewardship that Westmoreland got concessions that were extraordinary, that have now distorted the whole structure of concessions in Barbados, namely concessions to Westmoreland, Bushy Park, Kingsland, K-Mart and CLICO.

When I hear all of this discussion about foreign ownership and how he is in love with the Barbadian person owning land, Sir, I take account of how many letters are written to me by attorneys representing CLICO to cut up some of the best agricultural lands in this country, Sir, and to cany the Government to court to seek explanations as to why we are standing in the way of CLICO cutting up the best agricultural land.

When I call to mind, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, all of what is happening and then hear this discussion coming from the Honourable Member for St. John his putrid atmosphere envelops this whole debate. Not only, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was he associated with the support for the sale of the largest bloc of land to foreigners in the history of Barbados, Sir, but he was prepared to give them the most extraordinary concessions to the point where our system of incentives has been entirely distorted by him and him alone. The records are now clear. The Honourable Member for St. John started to introduce it but the facts are that the greatest transfer of lands to foreigners in recent times took place in the period 1989 to 1993. 7.50p.m.

Those facts will be revealed so that we on this Side, Mr Deputy Speaker, do not need to hear from the Honourable Member for St. John anymore about cutting up of land and selling it to foreigners and giving them concessions that small farmers could not get, manufacturers could not get, tourism people could not get to develop land that he said should remain in the fashioning of this country. I make that first point, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The question of the IDB. He has sought to make a crusade of this, Sir, but he would not tell the country that he

is the person who initiated the project under which the IDB financed, not land use policy, but the studies that were designed to prepare the new Physical Development Plan. That is all. He would singularly cause people to believe that because the IDB has provided the financing for the new Physical Development Plan, that it is an IDB policy.

If he was under the strictures of the IDB, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as he was under the tutelage of the International Monetary Fund, this Minister of Finance is under no IDB tutelage.

My first act, Sir, as Minister of Finance was to ask the International Monetary Fund to leave Barbados. We were one of the few countries in the world where you did not have an IMF programme in place but an IMF man was stationed at the Ministry of Finance telling the Minister of Finance what he should or should not do. I do not want to hear from him about any tutelage from anybody because he is the expert on tutelage.

As regards the role of the BADMC, the Democratic Labour Party amalgamated the BMC and the ADC. At the time when the amalgamation was taking place, we had a debate in this House and we pointed out that if you took two bankrupt institutions and amalgamated them without an injection of capital that all you would end up with would be one large bankrupt institution. That is a fact.

When the two institutions were amalgamated, we pointed out that arrangements would have to be made to restructure the balance sheets of the Corporation, or to inject capital, or to find some way of having somebody other than the Corporation assume its debt because it could not pay its debt. The restructuring that has taken place at the BADMC has been designed to take an institution that started as a bankrupt institution, and has become even more bankrupt, to restructure it in such a way that it could become a viable institution.

I am pleased to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have persons who were once employed by the BADMC as employees now running the Motor Tractor Scheme that they were engaged on before as employees, running it now as owners and providing a service to small farmers and have lifted the burden off the back of the BADMC.

Sometimes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Opposition, even the direction of its Leader is grossly out of touch with the Barbadian reality.

At the Transport Board, for many years there was a view that nobody could touch the workshop. We have restructured the Transport Board by hiving off the workshop,

allowing the workers to own it and where once they were employees of the State, they are now people who are owners of their own enterprise selling a service to the Government.

The same thing has happened in the case of the restructuring of the BADMC that a number of functions that were previously engaged in by the State at a loss are now being carried out by the same persons, not as workers or employees, but as owners of the business. They are doing so in a profitable way and in a way that reduces the subsidies required by the BADMC, so that the Honourable Member for St. John does not have to wonder about the state of affairs of the BADMC. The restructuring is well on the way but we are creating new businesses for new small black people in this country out of the same enterprise of the BADMC and that is what economic adjustment and transformation is truly about.

As regard the question of commercial agriculture, it was a Dr. Worrell at the Central Bank of Barbados who made the observation that in light of the adjustments that are to come with the common agricultural policy of the European Union and what they will mean for the price supports that Europe will pay to its pig producers and what those will also mean for the prices that will be paid by Europe for Caribbean sugar, because everybody should know, but the Honourable Member for St. John apparently does not know, although he happened to be a Minister of Finance, that the price that is paid for our sugar is related to the price that the European countries pay to their beet producers and that under WTO Rules Europe is under an obligation to reduce its price supports and that the next round of multinational negotiations will require further reductions in price supports paid to European agriculture with consequential reductions in the price paid for our sugar. The view was put by Dr. Worrell that, faced with such a scenario, unless there are fundamental changes in the structure of the industry to reduce costs even further, the industry will have a difficulty surviving under the new dispensation. That is unquestionably true.

The directions of change in the world trading system and the introduction of cuts in the price supports paid by the European Community to their farmers will pose a direct threat to the survival of the sugar industry as we now know it.

Now, to recognise that fact is not to commit yourself to a policy that says that you are going to come out of agriculture entirely and nobody on this Side has said so. What we have done is to ask the Ministry of Agriculture to prepare a study as to what measures can be instituted to have a positive response to the threat that is looming on the horizon.

The Honourable Member for St. John, rather than understand that sensible planning is taking place, comes to this House to indulge in all kinds of foolish scare tactics about nonsense.

As regards the location of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Agriculture was not always located in Graeme Hall, as I understand it. The Graeme Hall building was put there in the early 1980s. The reality is that a sensible judgment will have to be made, as it ought to be made, as to whether that land area in Barbados is better suited for what it is now presently engaged in or whether it could not better serve a national economic purpose by being utilised in an alternative use because it bears a closer relationship to tourism related activities than to a headquarters for agriculture.

I am saying, Sir, that if the Ministry of Agriculture had to move its headquarters, it will not be the first time in the history of this country that the headquarters of the Ministry of Agriculture has had to be moved because it was not put there in 1621 or whatever. I make no apologies for saying that we have to make sensible and serious judgments as a Government.

We have not told the Ministry of Agriculture that we are selling the land to foreigners, not at all. The Government has no plans to sell the Graeme Hall land to foreigners. That is the kind of wicked mischief that the Honourable Member for St. John can get away with on platforms when he cannot be counteracted, and if you were to ask him to produce evidence now to substantiate his statement that the Ministry of Agriculture has been asked to get out so we could sell it to foreigners he could not produce one shred of evidence about it. 8.00 p.m.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: You cannot, just as you cannot produce the evidence about the secret deal.

I am saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it is sheer propaganda of a kind that we have become accustomed to from the Member for St. John that typifies his style of politics, that the Government has a secret plan now to sell the lands at Graeme Hall to foreigners. Anybody who sees the lands at Graeme Hall and sees where it fits in the context of suburban development, tourism development in Barbados would have to ask, is this land being used to its most economic use from a national point of view.

Sir, it is unworthy of this House for a matter that is as sensible as that that the Minister of Agriculture is asked to look at, to be subjected to the kind of propaganda in which it has been enveloped by the Member for St. John.

I want to end, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where I began. I do not want to hear the person who was responsible for giving the most generous concession in the history of Barbados to foreign investors at Westmoreland, telling me about any foreign ownership of land in this country. I do not want to hear the person who was prepared to give the most generous concession to British people to develop Bushy Park telling me about foreign ownership of land in this country. I do not want to hear the person who was prepared to bring K-Mart and install them on 60 acres of land to drive every small man out of business tell me about foreign ownership of land in this country. I am not prepared, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to hear the person who is responsible for support of CLICO owning land in this country and is still now bombarding the Government to have CLICO....

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. Take a vacation and calm yourself down and recuperate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, every week, the Democratic Labour Party... up to leaving office in September 1994 and I have heard this allegation made by the Honourable Member for St. Peter and it is entirely incorrect. I made no agreement nor came to any consensus or understanding with the operators of any K-Mart. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it must be made very clear. There was a Barbadian who was building a supermarket, the largest building of that size in the Eastern Caribbean without a single concession under the Democratic Labour Party and we were giving our support to him first. It was the Barbados Labour Party which within a year sought to take away benefits which we sought to pass on to that Barbadian business operator through school meals contracts.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do not know what the Honourable Member is talking about, about our taking away concessions because I do not know how the award of a school meals contract can be a concession.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: That is what you said, that we took away concessions. How can the award of a school meals contract be a concession, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir? Unless it is in some sense related to campaign financing as the Member for St. Michael South told us, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But it is all coming out because the Truth Commission is at work. How can the award of the School Meals contract be a concession? I am glad he said it, Sir. I am pleased to be here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am saying that the facts have to be told. The non-national transfers of land in 1989 were 123; in 1990- 154.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. Sir, just last Tuesday in a debate in this House when Mr. Speaker was in the Chair, I sought to make a point concerning land and the Chairman of the Committee established by this House to examine the whole question of land in this country who is also Mr. Speaker, indicated to me that it was improper to divulge any information which might be under the consideration of that Committee. The Honourable Member is quoting information which I have reason to believe is information from the Committee that is examining land or information which the Committee examining land will have reason to examine. I want to submit that if the Speaker's ruling was correct, the Honourable Member is not at liberty to give information of that kind at this time.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Truth Commission will have to face the fact that the largest selling out of Barbadian land to foreigners took place under the Democratic Labour Party, the selling out of land proposed by any administration took place under the Democratic Labour Party and ending up with CLICO owning most of the land in St. John. Bushy Park being owned by British people, Westmoreland and Kingsland - I can go on.

What I am saying, Sir, that it is invidious that even while the Member for St. John is crying about foreigners owing land that lawyers on behalf of those entities, well known to him, are bombarding us to have these lands cut up for purposes that could not be in the best interest of this country.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. John, let the Honourable Member for St. Peter continue uninterrupted, please.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, he cannot take pressure. He comes in here and parade but he cannot face the facts.

Sir, you know what is so very sad about this, is that the Honourable Member for St. John will go down in history as the Minister of Finance who has done most to distort the structure of incentives to industry and business in such a way as to put all of the other sectors at a relative disadvantage and to put foreign owned golf courses at the apex of the concessions in this country.

I will go so far as to say that if the people who had owned Westmoreland had received the concessions for agriculture that was given to Westmoreland as a golf course, they would still be in agriculture. That is the destruction that has been caused by the Honourable Member for St. John. The most ludicrous set of concessions ever given. It does not rest well in his mouth at all.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Absolutely not, people in special developed areas have to pay consumption tax and they do not get concessions, Sir, that even remotely come close to those that have been given to golf courses.

The question of the BADMC and the abattoir. For many, many years...

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: The Leader of the Opposition is squirming in his seat and he goes in public and raises these issues and when you have to speak to him all he does is this whining as though he is a little child. 8.10p.m.

Certain remarks made by the Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: We all know, Sir, his nature. Sir, as regards the abattoir, for many, many years there were plans for dealing with the abattoir owned by the Government and the abattoir owned by the private sector and when we came into office, Sir, study after study, after study have been prepared and no action has been taken. When all these studies were going on, Sir, and dithering continuing, the facility at the Princess Alice Highway was going from bad to worse.

We made a clear decision, Sir, that the Government...

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Members on this Side, please let the Member continue.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member for St. John can give but he cannot take. I have discovered that. All he does is whine and whine and whine.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Member would want it now to appear as if...

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please continue.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, can I have my time restored, Sir?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will say when your time has expired.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Thank you, Sir. Sir, the Member would want me now to make it appear as if a definitive decision in relation to the abattoir is in some way a sinister decision and that is the point I am making, that for year after year, after year, people have been dithering about what to do with the abattoir and a decision has been taken by this Government that this Government will not build a new abattoir in the public sector, that we will support the private sector building an abattoir on the condition that we will make adequate arrangement for that private sector to provide services for small farmers in a way that does not disadvantage them.

I want to repeat that, Sir.

Now, Sir, we are now to be left to believe that if the old abattoir is not in use that there is something wrong in finding an alternative use for the existing building and facility.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Sir, if the Honourable Member would give way. On a point of elucidation, Sir. I do not want him to sit down. The point is, Sir, that the gravamen of my contention is that if the Government has made a policy decision to shut down the abattoir and sell the property, the Minister who is coming to talk to us about selling property has a duty to this House to explain the policy. We are not to discover it when the Prime Minister comes in like Sir Galahad. We are to hear it from either the Minister of Agriculture or the Minister responsible for lands.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for St. Peter, continue please.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, the Member for St. Michael West who could not persuade his side to put him in a position to tell them how to run their side is to tell us now how we must run ours.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, when we have the next budget I will get up and tell the people that I cannot live on my salary and who knows what will happen.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please continue.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, he might also repeat the gift that was given to him as a Christmas gift and I would urge the public to take both statements with the same degree of plausibility.

The point I want to make, Sir, is this. If we take a decision that we are not going to build a new abattoir, we are going to encourage the private sector to build one. We will give relevant support to enable that private sector facility to cater to small people who want a service. Are we to allow the existing facility to continue to crumble and go into

dereliction, Sir, or should not a responsible Government find an alternative and more economic use for the facility? That is the point, Sir, but the Member for St. John is not interested in these kinds of matters, Sir. He is right now in a mindset in which he believes that he can carry his party on the high wire again and carry the people of Barbados on that high wire with him.

The last thing, Sir. All that was in him as a leader of a party was to tell people come every night and hear about my expose about the secret deal.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for St. Michael t please let the Member continue.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Come and let me tell you about the secret deal. We will hear, Sir, come and let us tell you about the land deal and what is happening at the GEMS. It is the nature of the DLP politics, Sir, where a leader cannot create a cause rooted in a philosophy or in a concept of development, Sir, he does not have a cause to put to the people who would have supported his party in the past, the 82 000 people who voted for the Democratic Labour Party in 1986 who are now down to 48 000 and losing more, that there is no cause issuing from the lips of the Leader of the Opposition and all that is issuing, Sir, is a set of innuendo and gossip and propaganda and the belief that at the turn of a century, a political leader's responsibility is not to deal with uplifting and enlightening things, Sir, but to get down in the gutter and scavenge for little bits of muck to throw at his opponents. That, Sir, is what all of this kind of debate now is about, shrouded in terms of truth commissions and all kinds of commissions, Sir, but he does not have a cause and he is putting more and more propaganda into public debate in the absence of a cause.

I would like to repeat what I said, Sir, that there are many in here whom I believe could lead a country but every time I hear that Member speak and more and more it is reinforced in my mind that he brings something to Barbados politics, something that is invidious to the well being of this society. And that we heard again this evening in a manner in which, instead of dealing with a serious matter in a serious way, Sir, we had a range of snide remarks, hints and innuendoes, all intended to serve his most ridiculous purpose. 8.20 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member has two minutes to wind up.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: This is a simple matter that has to do with the vesting of land and I really believe, Sir, that it is part and parcel of a process of rationalisation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am pleased and proud to support the Resolution at state.

SUSPENSION

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be now suspended until 9.00 p.m., Sir.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.

RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, I join this debate really to try to understand what it is that apparently disturbed the Honourable Member for St. Peter.

The Leader of the Opposition had indicated a few things in relation to the abattoir and some other areas which he spoke of about commercial activity and the Right Honourable Prime Minister in fact did not disagree with anything that was said by the Leader of the Opposition. And therefore, it is particularly difficult to understand whether there was something outside of the speech of the Leader of the Opposition that caused the kind of response which we got from the Right Honourable Prime Minister.

But, there are a few things which I want to get his reaction to. I took note of the fact that the Right Honourable Prime Minister did not disagree with the view that commercial agriculture may be a thing of the past in the next ten years or so.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, please, may I suggest to you that we are^j concentrating on a resolution, Order No. 17 and at this point I am not prepared to give any kind of latitude at all. I would like you to link your comments to Order No. 17.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: I really cannot understand this. I sat and listened to the Right Honourable Prime Minister and the Right Honourable Prime Minister talked all kinds of things and now I am being told that I cannot respond to anything the Right Honourable Prime Minister said?

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have not addressed the substantive resolution which is before the House. If you need to make a reference to what somebody has said, it must be in relation, of course, to the substantive resolution.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: So I can just make mention of that and then discuss what the Right Honourable Prime Minister talked about?

Aside.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: No, I am saying that I am merely responding to the fact that we know that what happened at the BADMC with the vesting of land is an issue that has been dealt with in a very strange way. Because the evidence has surfaced that apparently the BADMC did not have the rights or the title deeds to sell such a property to the Budg-Buy or People's Corporation.

Aside.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: I well understand that it is really an attempt to correct some injustice that prevailed in the past. But I am really suggesting further that what has happened is that the BADMC itself, has not in fact done much to correct the management of the organisation and has not reflected itself into any meaningful gains for the Government of the day. So that this organisation would have been established with particular policy guidelines and objectives which have not yet been met by the new arrangement under the BADMC which, as is understood is an amalgamation of the ADC and the BMC.

Now, while I can understand the nature of the debate, I am saying that the Honourable Member for St. Peter made a number of comments in this debate which I am proposing to respond to. And I am suggesting that there is a link between the management of the BADMC and the whole question of agriculture and its performance in Barbados. I stated earlier that the Right Honourable Prime Minister in his delivery suggested that the former Deputy Governor of the Central Bank is the person who put forward the view that commercial agriculture in Barbados may be a thing of the past. This was subsequently supported by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism but that is not what is at issue here at all. The Right Honourable Prime Minister gave a quite plausible explanation as to why he is in agreement. That according to the World Trade Organisation there would be the reduction of subsidies in agriculture to Europe and by extension the Europeans will not be in a position to subsidise sugar prices for the Caribbean.

I understand and agree to follow that. So therefore in some sense I perhaps also support the view that it is not going to be easy in the new global environment for certain kinds of agriculture to survive. But I would wish to make the point that the same way in which the Honourable Member for St. Peter is able to state so clearly that agriculture is going to be under pressure in the future as a

result of the changes in the World Trade Organisation that the Right Honourable Prime Minister should also be in a similar position to make it clear to the manufacturing sector of Barbados that that new environment will present them with equal challenges, in fact challenges which may be way beyond the challenges of the agriculture sector.

When we begin to argue sometime we get hot under the collar and we make certain comments which seem very innocent but which when fully analysed, can allow us to take an argument even further. It is similar to the kinds of sentiments that were expressed that the reason why we are embracing the OECS countries is because we have a trade surplus with the OECS countries. Therefore it is in our interest to embrace them and to become part of an integrated entity by extension and logic, since we have a trade deficit with CARICOM we should really be thinking of getting out of CARICOM using the Right Honourable Prime Minister's logic.

So it cannot be the case that you can use a simplistic argument of a trade surplus to embrace the OECS while having its trade deficit with the wider CARICOM and not by extension use logic to suggest that we should be pulling out of CARICOM. So when you get hot sometimes as happened to the Right Honourable Prime Minister you always open yourself up because anyone who is looking at the World Trade Organisation must extend the same kind of argument to the manufacturing sector of Barbados and the Caribbean and to talk about its survivability under the new environment as proposed by the World Trade Organisation. 9.15p.m.

I wish to ask the Prime Minister of Barbados whether or not he sees the challenges which he obviously is anticipating for the agriculture sector as similar to those for the manufacturing sector in Barbados and the wider Caribbean. Since it has to be a straightforward "yes" that the challenges are even more grave, then perhaps the environment for the manufacturing sector will also be equally grave, so we have to understand that for what it is.

The question of moving the headquarters of the Ministry of Agriculture using the fact that that land may very well be better used for some other purpose and that it is locked between commercial entities on the coast and some residential entities just off the ABC Highway, therefore, on that count, it may be a wise decision for the Government to actually move the Ministry of Agriculture and relocate it and utilise that land for some other purpose.

Now, I have been thinking that there are lots of acres of land in the Pinelands' Bowl, when you drive down from Pinelands towards town on the right hand side. There is now a cricket field. Then there is an extended grass area on the

right hand side. There is an extended grass area on the left hand side. I think there is an agricultural extension service provided at the bottom.

All I am asking really is that when you look at those acres, and they are blocked in by the residential Pinelands - on the other side you have middle-class and higher middle-class homes toward the town side. On the east is Ilaro Court and further down there are houses - should we not also be making a decision to take such lands out of its present agriculture use and put it to some other use for which the returns may be higher because on the basis of the arguments used by the Prime Minister that the present Ministry of Agriculture's location may very well be better used for some other purposes, I am suggesting that that area, since there is a housing shortage in Barbados, and since it is already locked Between residential areas, should possibly be used for some other purpose.

I am saying that I find it strange that we can choose that lot of land which is closer to the coast and which is closer to tourism activity to justify the decision to move the Ministry of Agriculture and we cannot use that same kind of argument to take other kind of land out of the present agriculture use to which that land is being put. I am simply asking the question. Can that be done?

We also heard a lot of reference to the IMF being put out of Barbados by the Honourable Prime Minister and he used the fact that there was one individual who occupied an office at the headquarters as justification. All over the place he went in this debate. I suppose it reflects the person in the Chair.

Aside..

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: I must say that perhaps I am entitled to respond to the previous debate and that is all I am doing.

I am saying that you cannot use the fact that you were able to take a Dr. Bernard Fritz Krockow out of an office at the headquarters as evidence that you moved the IMF out of Barbados. You cannot move the IMF out of Barbados and we proved that. It is in the Constitution, so stop making the point that you got rid of the IMF and the presence of the IMF because you moved Fritz Krockow. In any case, he deserved to be moved because, in all fairness to him, I do not think he had the technical competence anyhow to be present in Barbados after a while. I had my difficulties with him and I feel quite comfortable that he went anyhow.

He was one of those individuals who came down here with the notion that he could impose his will on younger Caribbean trained economists and felt that he had something

special. He did not have anything special. We proved that many a time in discussion with him so he went, thank God. But it did not mean...

Aside..

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Thank God he went. I am glad. I was very happy that he had to leave the shores of Barbados. But do not make it seem as though you got rid of the IMF every time you go this route.

Mr. Speaker, the question of the BADMC has to be looked at in its wider context. We got rid of over 400 people as a result of the restructuring exercise. We got rid of the Export Division in the Christ Church area near the airport. Four hundred people went home.

Aside.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: The Government of Barbados, not the Democratic Labour Party. I said that the Government of Barbados got rid of over 400 people as a result of the restructuring. It occurred at a time when the Government signed the second Incomes Protocol stating clearly that we should not, that is the Government, be in a position where it be allowed to send home people willy-nilly.

At that same time, the Government of Barbados broke the conditions of the Protocol by sending 400 people home from the BADMC at the time when the Government had, in fact, signed on the dotted line a protocol stating that should not happen to the good workers of Barbados and that there will be no downsizing, no restructuring, no reduction in the levels of employment without...

Aside.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Therefore, one is left to wonder what really has happened within the last two years to the BADMC, whether it has really been able to be turned around in a way that makes it profitable. There is no evidence of that. What we have seen, however, are individuals being able to sell their services to the BADMC, but the BADMC has not become a profitable, viable organisation and therefore we should not be boasting that such has occurred.

On the question of the abattoir which is to be removed, I do not know where it is to be relocated, but I get the distinct impression that the Minister of Agriculture is not on top of the ball in terms of the things that are happening within his Ministry because in the earlier debate he apparently was unaware that certain things were happening within the Ministry and in fact the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister in reference to the speech by an intervention by the

St. Michael West Member suggested that he did not get the opportunity to influence how things are done on this Side but was seeking to influence how things are done there. In a very strange delivery, he did not deny that a decision was being taken to move the Ministry of Agriculture without the knowledge of the Minister. He did not deny that the abattoir was being moved. 9.25 p.m.

The Rt. Honourable Prime Minister did not deny that he agrees in principle that commercial agriculture be a thing of the past. He did not deny several things raised by the Leader of the Opposition. I really was at pains to understand the nature of the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister's speech because it did not suggest to me that he had any major differences with what was said by the Leader of the Opposition..

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Of course, I listened very carefully. It is something that I do extremely well in the Honourable Chamber and I make sure that I keep my mouth shut and listen to the speeches of all Members of Parliament. That is why I am never at a loss as to what anybody has said. The Rt. Honourable Prime Minister was at pains, really earlier in the day to respond to the charges made by the Leader of the Opposition and he did not do a good job because he did not disagree with anything that was proposed by the Leader of the Opposition. Therefore, it may be the case that the very well orchestrated public meeting of the Christ Church zone of the Democratic Labour Party has triggered some discomfort on that Side. There were some responses that suggested that to me in today's debate.

On the whole question of foreign ownership of land. It is being suggested now that the foreign ownership of land, that between 1989 and 1993 that we had the highest level of foreign transfer ownership of land.

Aside.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Yes, it cannot be disputed but you have to be careful how you are using data. You must be extremely careful how you use data because that may just be an anomaly. It might just be the case that between 1989 and 1993, notwithstanding the presence of another administration that that happened. It could have been a lump sum occurrence and because of one deal like Westmoreland, which is very large in terms of size, several acres of land, that between 1989 and 1993 if you were to count the amount of land which was transferred to foreign ownership, it may be high because of this one deal with Westmoreland.

What is of greater concern to the wider Barbadian public is that several small pieces of land have since been

taken up by several foreign individuals and it has emerged as a major concern to Barbadians.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Of course, it has emerged a major concern. Small parcels along the west coast as far as Heywoods have in fact become a debatable issue in Barbados. How could you deny that the ownership of land by foreigners is now a matter of concern amongst the wider Barbadian public?

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: It is not supported by the evidence so we have to be careful. I wish just to draw an analogy. I have listened to the Attorney General trying to use information on crime to prove a point that crime has in fact been reduced.

I am saying that whilst in 1989 to 1993 we might have seen the transfer of land that its continuance would have caused it now to reach a level that is a cause for concern. In similar vein, if you take one year's crime statistics and follow that year by a year that has declined, you cannot say that crime is necessarily on the decline because if you had 300 criminals in 1996 and there was some reduction to 200 in 1997, those 300 in 1996 have not gone off the face of Barbados. The actual base of crime has now expanded so therefore there is greater concern about crime even though 1997 crime's statistics will reflect a reduction. There has been...

Mr. SPEAKER: I take it that you are using this point to prove another point.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, I am doing that. What I am suggesting to you that even there might have been between 1989 and 1993 the greatest level for a four-year period of land transferred to foreigners, I am saying that beyond 1993 once you continue that trend even though the amount may have been reduced that the ownership of land among foreigners would have had a wider base and therefore it becomes a greater concern even though you might suggest that after 1993 the actual transfer of land to foreigners have reduced. It means that more foreigners beyond 1993 are now in possession of land in Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Of course, it is true. It is a simple argument.

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, I have given you some latitude to make your point. You would not want to belabour that point.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. Speaker, I will move on but what I wish to say on that whole situation is that you have to be very careful how you analyse data. You cannot use one argument to suggest that crime is on the decline and in another use of information suggest that ownership of foreign land is also on the decline when I am demonstrating clearly that the two years are actually cumulative in their impact and effect. You cannot use those simplistic arguments. Let us not be trapped with this crime debate and foreign land debate by suggesting 'the less foreigners in this year or that year' thing.

I just want to put that across. It is not like a cricket game where you made 100 last match and this match you ijiake 50 and the two things are unrelated. You cannot use that "sort of argument. Then again, I understand when you are struggling and you are drowning how you feel about such data and interpret it as you see fit.

Let me conclude by saying that there is a wider concern here and the whole question of land use policy and the IDE that was mentioned earlier. We need to get particularly serious about how we are treating this whole thing. We need to understand that this whole exercise that we are going through with land is critical to the wider Barbadian public. We need to stop putting it in the context of politics and politics only. At the end of the day my children, hopefully, would like to get an opportunity to own some land in Barbados and they are entitled to that. Therefore I am saying to you that the broader issue is really how are we going about utilising the limited land which we have available to us and what kinds of decision are we making to ensure that land is available to Barbadians.

I am very concerned that we are being pulled into a situation where we are allowing foreign policy of every kind to dictate the affairs of Barbados. We are seeing it in terms of the legislation which we presently bring before this Chamber in terms of the World Trade Organisation and Intellectual Properties Rights, all these things are imported stuff, we are seeing it in terms of the influence that foreigners are having on land use policy in Barbados, we are seeing it in terms of the influence that even the BADMC is undergoing as a result of pressure being forced on us by international organisations.

All I am asking for is a full understanding that this debate as innocent as it appears really hits at the heart of several things; that is how we are managing the limited resources which you have in Barbados and are we really putting them to the best use possible in the interest of the wider Barbadian population and not just a narrow few who seem to be controlling the wherewithal of Barbados.

In short, while the grass is growing in Barbados, the horse is starving because there is evidence to show that there

is an even worsening distribution of income and wealth in Barbados since 1994.

I thank you.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Speaker, I hope to be fairly brief on this matter.

Asides.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Speaker, I will not allow these *Asides* to put me off because if the person making those *Asides* would use a little intelligence they would know that that is not the kind of comment they would want to make because instead of making a brief speech, I will speak for half of an hour and what I will say, he may not want to hear and perhaps the others who sat quietly would understand that empty vessels make the most noise. 9.35 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the BADMC comes before us again today and I am particularly disturbed, Sir, at this stage that we could not get a proper explanation up front on this matter. We almost had to protest to get an explanation. I think the best explanation came, I believe, from the Right Honourable Prime Minister and we did not hear very much from the Minister of Housing and we did not even get a clear elucidation of this matter from the Minister of Agriculture.

Sir, this is disappointing since agriculture is a key sector in the economy, since it is one of those sectors which will be faced with threats from the new order and one would therefore expect to hear much more coming from the Minister responsible for Agriculture but I guess he is not one for the bright lights as others are. Even if he is not one for the bright lights I believe that since this is an important sector that we should be hearing much more from him.

Sir a corporation that sends home 400 workers against a background of a promise of jobs is a serious matter. It is perhaps therefore not surprising that the Minister of Agriculture chooses to stay out of the line of fire because he does not want it to be put out that he is the Minister who took on the responsibility to be the big strong man, to be the man with guts and energy, the man with great self-confidence to send off 400 workers and not bat an eyelid about it. Four hundred of the workers whom I see daily up in Pritchard Hill and who were not even told where they could find another job opportunity from. In the private sector they would call you and they would tell you, you are going home. They would take your name down and so forth but we are setting a standard in the public sector where we will send you home and tell you nothing. Even Intel, many, many years ago when they left they called the workers, took their names down, retrained them and showed them new opportunities for job

placement. But the great BADMC with the big strong men, the men with courage and guts to send home 400 people cannot call the poor people of Pritchard Hill, the poor people of Fair View, the poor people of Fairy Valley and Parish Land and Silver Sands and Charnocks.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central should go up in Pritchard Hill and find the workers up there in the bottom of the gap who are still home having been sent home from BADMC and not being told a word about other opportunities. So that when I hear the Prime Minister saying that these same persons have got back jobs, who are these same persons. They are not the poor people in Pritchard Hill. They are not the poor girls in Packers. They are not those from Fair View or Charnocks, or Parish Land or Silver Sands or Fairy Valley. I can go and bring them and let them march in front of Parliament and if you get me vex I will bring them down to Parliament and you could stand up and talk to them there because you did not talk to them before. It is immaterial because they are poor ordinary people. So you can talk to them and show them where you are going to find another job opportunity. You need to tell them that. Where can they find a job opportunity? Women who are 40 years old and cannot find another job opportunity and you are not directing them where to find this job opportunity and you have a big maguffy chairman, instead of looking for alternatives for the people to be employed, can boast privately about having the energy, about having the panache to send home 400 workers in a day and age when you are telling me that job number 1 is jobs.

I refused to do that job number 1 because that job number 1 is for people whom they feel are number 2.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is saying he refused to do that job. At no time did anybody give him any specific, direct or indirect instructions to do what he decided that he refused to do. What he did say was that he was not competent to function and that somebody else who should be competent should be made to do it and now he is admitting it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Speaker, I will take my time because I will speak for every minute of half an hour. Because, Sir, if I am incompetent, if I accept that I am incompetent to do a job, I will not be distracted by any dishonest person telling me any foolishness.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: I will make my point and I will not be distracted by these idiots.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. Could we hear the Honourable Member, please?

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: I will speak for every minute. Keep noise. I will take my time. Sir, if I am incompetent to do the job and another man is selected to do that job and he can send home 400 workers he has to be grossly incompetent and if the Minister is doing his job he will send him home too.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The Honourable Member continues to mislead the House. The situation, Mr. Speaker, is that for years, before a crisis struck BADMC it was in financial difficulty. 9.45 p.m.

When it came into existence it came into existence without any capital. It had repeated problems and the Honourable Member, just after he resigned discovered that he had left with some people from his constituency as workers without reference to anybody.

Asides.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading the House, because the truth is, Sir, that this Honourable Member employed a man of ill repute from up in White Hall.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, please, please. One minute please, not tonight. Order please. The Honourable Member, please. I am not going to let this debate go down that road anymore. I would like you to address the Resolution before the House. I would also like the Honourable Member and all Honourable Members, please, to desist from the very personal insinuations and so on. We are still all Honourable Members and the Honourable Member, please could you conduct yourself with the dignity I know you can, please?

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will speak as an Honourable man, but I will not allow other Honourable men to tell lies on me in here.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, please, I am sure you are aware of the rules and you cannot refer to what an Honourable Member had said as a lie.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: What is it? It is an untruth. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Member is misleading the House when he says I brought people into the BADMC without letting people know. Which people is he talking about? I do not know who he is talking about.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. He is saying to this Honourable House that he employed nobody. I can say that he employed no fewer than 16 people, including a girl called "Chase" who said that her job there came in consequence of her closeness and intimacy with the present Officer.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, I am asking you to withdraw that last part of your speech.

- *Aside.*

Mr. SPEAKER: Those words you will withdraw and they will be struck from the record, please, relating to the closeness. Have you finished your point of order? Continue please and the Honourable Member for Christ Church East, I am asking you to conduct yourself with the dignity I know you can. Continue please.

Asides.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: I wish to make the point, Sir, that the Chairman who was expected to do the job of finding opportunity for those people who were supposed to have been laid off have not done the job and the Minister has done nothing about it. He is ultimately responsible and accountable and he is to resign.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, please?

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Sir, the Chairman was put there to do a job of improving the BADMC. The new Manager was also supposed to do the same thing and instead of things getting better, they have gotten worse. So I am saying that we are now discussing the BADMC and its competency and all that and we need to start where we should, looking at the people who are empowered to see that although change has to be made, it is made in a concept that will preserve the jobs and new opportunities will be opened up and that we will be able to have the vision enough to know that there are new opportunities within agriculture for these same people who are being laid off. This is a central point that we are making.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: On a point of order. I am saying for the record that we gave work to persons with motor tractors an equal opportunity.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Sir, the motor tractor scheme does not employ that many people, and I would really like to know...

Aside.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: Rather, the records of the BADMC will show that a lot of that equipment was old and subject to a lot of break downs. I am wondering how these people are getting through, whether the BADMC has not saddled these people with an operation, which in the long run will place some people to create a precedent. That is what I want to find out.

It is all right to talk about passing on these things to people, but you are placing a heavier burden on them. Whether these people are doing well financially is what we want to find out. In all this talk I want to hear what we are doing with this old equipment. If some of it is obsolete, I want to know what is happening because the prognosis for that division as a financial entity was not good. These are the kinds of things I want to hear and not just passing on something to workers.

I want to hear what is going to happen at the BMC now that the workers have gone home. I want to hear who will take it over, what they are doing about it, whether the workers who worked there will be reemployed, whether the new owners will reemploy these people or whether the new owners will employ whomever they want. My word is that the new owners do not want to reemploy those people. Many of them are worried and they came to me and asked me about it and I said I will talk to the gentleman. But that is what should be done to make sure that these people are given work. You should at least make sure that those people get the first priority to get jobs at BMC, or whatever it is called when it is reopened. But this is the talk I want to hear. This is what I want to hear from the Minister, not about who is drinking rum and who is not drinking rum and all that kind of foolishness.

Sir, the BADMC is not an easy matter. They have sent home 400 valuable people. They are poor. They are at an age where it is difficult to find new opportunities and the Government therefore has a responsibility to these people. They are approaching me about it. 9.55 p.m.

If the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central has any guts, he will stand up and defend the people of Christ Church and the Central as well because he frequents those areas. If he is doing his homework, he knows that those people are crying out.

Aside.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: This is an area of key importance and I challenge him to speak on behalf of the people of St. Patricks who have been ripped off and are now looking for work. The Government has a responsibility

to them to have them placed because many of them are vulnerable. If I cannot come into Parliament and address the issues relating to the people that I see on a daily basis, what am I here for? To come in here and talk about some legalistic thing about just vesting some land and that is it? That is not what it is all about.

The issue is about people and they have spoken to me and I have promised to do whatever I could in whatever I can to assist, whether it is begging some people for some jobs for them or whether it is speaking to the new owners of these places.

I have also mentioned in Parliament that the Minister has a responsibility...

Aside.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please proceed. Ignore the *Asides* and proceed, please.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: The Minister has a serious responsibility to look after these people. So, Sir, I am focussing on Job No. 1. Job No. 1 is jobs. A lot of those people are still at home. They feel very badly. They are very insecure about their future. Many of them have spoken to me as I move along the Christ Church area. I have come to Parliament and I have put a case before this Honourable Chamber.

I have done what I had to do. It is up to the Minister to behave in a frivolous manner and try to treat this as something that is of no importance. It is up to him but at the end of the day he will be held accountable for his actions.

Thank you.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I would not really reduce the debate to the level to which the Honourable Member who just spoke has brought it.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member cannot refer to a Member like that.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, this is a very simple debate and as we have said, we are moving into the silly season and it is quite obvious that in every simple matter a lot of other matters will be brought which are foreign to the matter at hand.

This Resolution, Mr. Speaker, seeks to rectify a problem which started during the Administration of the Democratic Labour Party.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. I stated categorically earlier that when I was Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce between 1971 and 1976 it was made crystal clear to the Barbados Marketing Corporation that the property in question was not at their disposal for use other than as directed by the Act of the Barbados Marketing Corporation. They were told categorically that they did not own the land.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have made your point.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member normally speaks the truth, and it is obvious from what he says that the people within the Democratic Labour Party never listened to him when he was in Government because, despite the fact that he made....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The direction was not to anybody in the Democratic Labour Party. It was to the Board of the Barbados Marketing Corporation and it was sent from the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce. It is therefore wrong for him to suggest that either the Permanent Secretary or the Board or any part thereof was a member of the Democratic Labour Party.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, despite the urgings of the Honourable Member, the facts remain that the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation still made a decision. They entered into an agreement to sell the property to a Budg-Buy related company.

They thought at the time that the property was vested in the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation. When they were about to close the sale, having signed the agreement, the lawyers realised that the property was not properly vested." That is all that happened and this Resolution seeks to vest the property in the BADMC. If they had listened to the Honourable Member we would not be here, Mr. Speaker.

There are very few other points that have been mentioned that I think I need to respond to. I would like to say in response to the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West when he was referring to remarks which were made by the Honourable Member for St. Peter, the Honourable Member for St. Peter in referring to the foreign purchases between 1989-1993 stated what could only be referred to as the policy of the Democratic Labour Party to encourage foreign ownership of lands in certain areas in Barbados.

The Honourable Member is trying to say, in refuting what the Honourable Member for St. Peter said, that between

1993 and 1997 there have been further purchases of land owned by locals by foreigners. If one would look at the statistics of land ownership and most of them are on the West Coast, all that has been happening in these areas are more or less a recycling of land which is owned by foreigners. Ninety-five percent of the land sales throughout Barbados where foreigners are concerned relate to land which is already owned by foreigners. That is a fact. That is something that cannot be disputed. Mr. Speaker, I really would not like to dwell on that.

Mr. Speaker, there is one other point which they have dwelled on which the Honourable Member for St. James North has dealt with quite well when he did mention that a number of people were engaged in the workshop, those people who were severed. But they keep dwelling on this 400. No 400 people were sent home from BADMC. The list was just over 200 and of those 200 persons about 90% of them have been rehired in various government agencies. I can attest to 29 persons who were rehired. 10.05 p.m.

Mr. W. C. C. CALLENDER: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is misleading the House. All statements made about this matter are totally at variance to what the Honourable Member is saying.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I can attest to about 35 people in a particular section going home in St. Andrew and 29 of them were rehired at the Soil Conservation

Department. It is not really true to say that there were 400 people that were sent home.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I really would not bring this debate, as I have said, to the level which the Member who spoke before me brought it to. You will notice, Mr. Speaker, that as he spoke even some of the Members of that side had to go to the bathroom.

With those few remarks, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be adjourned to Tuesday, August 25, 1998, at 11.00 o'clock in the morning.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: I beg to second that.

The question that the House be adjourned to Tuesday, August 25, 1998 at 11.00 o'clock in the morning was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 10.10p.m.

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