

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1999 - 2004

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 8th June, 1999

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.15 a.m. on Tuesday, 8th June, 1999.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, B.A., Dip. Ed., (Speaker)

His Honour J. M. EDGHILL, J. P. (Deputy Speaker)

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

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

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

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

Hon. G. W. PAYNE (Minister of Tourism and International Transport)

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, J.P., B.A.(Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Minister of the Environment, Energy and Natural Resources)

Hon. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P. (Minister of Housing and Lands)

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL

Hon. H. F. LASHLEY (Minister of Social Transformation)

Hon. R. St. C. TOPPIN, LL.B. (Minister of Commerce, Consumer Affairs and Business Development)

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

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

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD, B.A.

Rev. J. J. S. ATHERLEY, B.A., B.Sc. (Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney-General and Minister of Home Affairs)

Mr. D. T. GILL, B.Sc. Mr. N. A. LYNCH, B.Sc., M.B.A.

Hon. A. P. WOOD, B.Sc., M.A. (Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)

Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, 18th May, 1999.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of 18th May, 1999, be taken as read and confirmed subject to any observations thereon in relation to amendments.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

I am to report that I am in receipt from the Accountant General the Accounts and Statements for the month of November, 1998.

PAPERS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Prime Minister I am commanded to lay:-

- (1) The Valuation (Fresh Valuations) Order, 1999.
- (2) Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Hydroqual Inc.) Order, 1999.
- (3) The Value Added Tax (Refund) (No. 4) Order, 1999.
- (4) Special Development Areas (Boundaries) Order, 1999.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

ORDER NO. 1 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT CHEAPSIDE, ST. MICHAEL FOR THE CHEAPSIDE REHABILITATION PROJECT

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Resolution before this House seeks parliamentary approval to acquire three parcels of land at Cheapside, St. Michael to facilitate the Cheapside Market Rehabilitation Project.

Cabinet agreed since 1987 that the vendors and staff at the Cheapside Market should be relocated to the Fairchild Street Market; also that the property which is opposite the Post Office at Cheapside be rented or leased for a period of twelve months to facilitate the vendors who now occupy the market at Cheapside.

The three properties, Mr. Speaker, measure 379.9 square metres for the first property, 2722.1 square metres for the second property and 177.1 square metres for the third property, bringing the total to 3278.5 square metres.

At the time the Ministry tried to reach a conclusion but unfortunately it was then decided that Government should compulsorily acquire the property and therefore the relevant Acquisition Act was invoked and the publication notice under Section III and the execution section before of the said Act.

It should be noted, Sir, that the Chief Town Planner and all the relevant government agencies support the acquisition

of the parcels that they are speaking of. These parcels, Mr. Speaker, are owned by the Rick's Supermarket and Miller Brothers.

In relation to the project for which these lands are being acquired, the draft contract for the construction phase has been negotiated with the representative of the Chinese Government. An agreement has been reached, Mr. Speaker, as I understand it on all matters and it is expected that when the Rehabilitation Project of Cheapside is completed it will cost over \$8 million. Funding will be provided by the Chinese Government to a total of \$6.9 million and the remainder \$1 million will be provided by the Barbados Government.

Mr. Speaker, when the Project at Cheapside is completed it will not only be the restored new market facilities for the vendors who now occupy the market. On observation one will notice the rundown facilities at this market. Over the last five or six years Government has been moving steadily ahead to reach a conclusion.

Mr. Speaker, the renovated market will include new facilities for fruit vendors, meat and handicraft vendors. It will also, Mr. Speaker, be a new Mezzanine Floor which will help to ensure that the building and that persons who use the building will be better served. At present, Mr. Speaker, I understand that there are over two hundred vendors at the market approximately. There may be another twenty or twenty-five vendors who are not necessarily registered with the market facilities. So, I believe that the total vendors using the market facilities may be just about two hundred to two hundred and fifty persons using the property at the time. I believe that these accommodations that we are acquiring today will be sufficient to house all those vendors who now occupy the Cheapside Market.

It is expected, Mr. Speaker, that the renovation at the Cheapside Market will commence in October of this year and it is expected that the project will last for about thirteen months. The Minister of Agriculture will further explain what the new facilities will look like, and why it is being done at this time.

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is rather interesting that this morning we are dealing with Cheapside, Sir. For nearly five years I have been hearing whether it has been through the Press or in this Assembly, I have been hearing about the wonderful work that would have been carried out on this particular site.

I want some commitment, Sir, from the Government as to when this particular project will be completed, how much it will cost the taxpayers and for how long they will continue to promise the small man in this country a right to have a piece of the cake in the surroundings of Broad Street.

It is regrettable, Sir, that whenever this Parliament has to discuss a matter pertaining to the middle class or the small man that this Government seemed committed to drag their feet. I want to know, Sir, I am not sure if the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is acting Prime Minister today or not or if he is just the Leader of the House. Seeing that he is the senior person and I know he tells me he does not like acting like a certain friend of mine but it is clear now that the same way they are acting in here by having so many acting Ministers that they are acting as it relates to the Cheapside Market. That Cheapside Market... 11.30a.m.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: On a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition is not acting as a Minister as far as I know and there is only one person on this Side as an acting Minister. So he could only be referring to the Leader of the Opposition. I would ask him to clarify what he meant when he said a lot of acting Ministers.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I realise that you have taken your rightful seat on the Back Bench because the tide is not flowing in your direction so you can leave this debate at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that if you are going to tell me that small businesses in this country are important to the economy you cannot have a situation where your major market, and there is no doubt that the Cheapside market is a major market, is allowed to be on the planning schedule for five years and everywhere we are hearing the same thing over and over. I cannot now leave this Parliament and go to Cheapside market and tell anybody at the Cheapside market when they will have proper facilities to be able to display their wares etc.

What worries me, Sir, is that I am not sure whether there is a policy as it comes to markets and as it relates to this Government because a year or so ago just across from this Parliament a structure was put up and I cannot understand what was put up there. It seems to be more confusion than anything else. I cannot even call it a market because I am not sure, Sir, whether it has been scheduled as a market or not.

Over there is bare confusion. There is no security. People are asked to do business there and they cannot even be assured of what will happen at the end of the day. The workers there, Sir, cannot even give a direction because that particular building is not under the markets so the people

who are supposed to manage the business have no power. Every day they are abused by people who sometimes do not work there or even people who work there. I am saying, Sir, that if you are asking civil servants to be committed and we are bragging about public sector reform - every time you turn on your TV a Minister is talking about public sector reform and those workers who are part of the public sector are not even sure whether they will be able to leave the market when the night comes to get home. Many of them have been beaten. Many of them have had to ask private lawyers to look into their cases and whenever they get to the courts their cases have been thrown out.

I want to know from the Attorney General or the Honourable Member for St. Thomas who is supposed to provide protection for the workers at Palmetto Square Compound. I cannot even call it a market. I want to know when they are beaten by some of the workers over there who is the person supposed to look after their interests.

I want to know, Sir, whether there is any air conditioning...

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. Lest foolishness masquerade as sense I would just explain that the public officers in the markets and the Palmetto Mall are not under the purview of the Attorney General or the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Must I believe, Sir, that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is saying that the Attorney General is not responsible for the safety of the citizens of Barbados?

That is exactly what I am speaking about, Sir. Whether it happens in a building that is supposed to be a market or not, Sir. I am speaking about the security of the government workers and also the security of the citizens of Barbados because as far as I understand, Sir, some people are scared to go there and I would like to be able to refer to it as a market but as it stands right now you cannot refer to it as a market because it has not been designated as such.

Sir, I am saying that we need to give some kind of protection to civil servants and that we would not like that when the Cheapside market is completed that we have the same problem that the workers and consumers are having over at that complex. As I said, Sir, I would like to call it a market but I cannot call it so because it has not been designated.

I cannot understand, Sir, that a government that has been able to rake in nearly \$400 million in surplus VAT could go out there and build a building located as the one is

located and cannot see it fit to put air conditioning facilities in that building.

I am hoping, Sir, that when Cheapside is built and if it has the same problems as the one next door that the necessary facilities and the necessary equipment will be put in Cheapside so that the consumers and the workers and business people in that complex will not have to go through the same problems as the ones operating next door.

I would also hope, Sir, that security will be put in place to protect the lives of the workers and the consumers in these markets. I know that some people on this Side will say that crime and violence are not a problem. They said it before elections and some were even prepared to say it after elections.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: ... The public proved it but not the reverend on the Other Side because right after elections the reverend was warning us about crime and violence. Even on Sunday, Sir, a reverend was warning us also about crime and violence.

We will hope, Sir, that the safety of Barbadians will be taken into consideration and that the Cheapside market will not be seen as a place where people just take goods and once the building is completed that that is the end of everything. People must understand that those people are business people too. They are expected to be treated the same way that the people on the west coast are treated.

Do you know what is amazing, Sir? When you go into the market you cannot see proper facilities but you go on the west coast on that road leading from Sunset Crest to Sandy Lane and all of a sudden you would believe that you are walking through someone's backyard in one of the Sandy Lane areas, well landscaped, good fencing; but yet the people who work at the markets cannot get those same facilities.

One has to wonder, Sir, whether the people on the west coast are part of the economy and those who work in the markets are nobodies. The question must be asked, Sir, how long are we going to continue having to plead on behalf of the middle class and the lower class or the other class or whatever you want to call it? Whereas, those who have money, the Government continues to spend enough to protect their money, but those who are striving to make money, like the people in the middle class who are striving, they cannot come to their aid. Every Tuesday, Sir, you have to come in here and you have to present the same case over and over again to a Government who is so committed in branding

themselves as Tower Puff people' but not looking after the interest of the people in the country.
11.40a.m.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: This is not time for showing who are the powerful ones. This is time when you have been given a mandate of 26 to 2...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: A lot of seats. That means that a lot is expected of you. So stop the in-fighting and deliver the goods.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: You asked for that I am saying, Sir, that Cheapside Market must be seen as a market where the Government can start and point and say, this is where we will begin the changes and this is where we will be able to deliver the goods that we were given the mandate for on January 20th. If we continue to feel that the West Coast is the only part of Barbados that need economic development and the only place that is supposed to get a large sum pumped into it, we will someday recognise that those people we feel are just listening and not doing anything, will someday wake up and let their voices be heard.

Mr. Speaker, the Cheapside Market project is a wonderful project. No doubt, Sir, it is a wonderful project but it must be treated with the urgency with which it needs to be treated with. These continued promises - Minister getting up all the time and promising...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I understand what happened a couple of years ago. I sympathise with the previous Minister of Agriculture because I know he tried hard but obstacles were placed in his way. I hope that the new Minister will not have the same said problems placed in his way to make sure that he fails. I know that (he Honourable Member is a CP student from the north and that he will rise again and make sure that he delivers that counter-punch.

I thank you very much.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to give support to this Resolution to compulsorily acquire three parcels of land at Cheapside in the Cheapside Rehabilitation Project. Let me begin where the previous speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy left off. I must agree with him that the Cheapside Project is a very important project. I must also

agree with him that the Cheapside Rehabilitation Project is a little bit behind time but I can assure him and this Honourable House that we are moving speedily at the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure that this project begins in earnest.

Mr. Speaker, the proposal on the Cheapside Rehabilitation Project should be considered in the context of the Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development's wider plan for the upgrade of all markets both fish and general markets. Some of the public markets in this country have fallen into a state of disrepair which makes them rather uninviting and unattractive thereby resulting in reduced trading activities. We will all appreciate that if the physical state of the area and the buildings where we conduct our trading activities, if the physical state is not very healthy that one would be discouraged from going to such locations in order to engage in trading activities.

Let me bring this Honourable House up to date with the type of work that the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is looking to undertake in the immediate future and more in the medium term and in the longer term, as it relates to improvements in the physical facilities. At the moment the Eagle Hall Market is getting a face lift. This work is being handled by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport and it is part of the Eagle Hall Junction Rehabilitation Road Project. Also on the cards is the Cheapside Rehabilitation Project. Later on in my speech, I will spend a bit more time on this particular project.

Next, we have the upgrade of the Fairchild Street Market. While the Cheapside Project is being undertaken, detailed planning for this Fairchild Street market will be done and as soon as the Cheapside Project is completed, attention will be turned to the Fairchild Street Market. What the Government is looking to do is to have a proper sequencing of this type of work so as to avoid a bunching of projects at any particular point in time. We want a smooth operation.

Further work planned in this area is the expansion of the existing Palmetto Mall. This work will include minor repairs to the Miami Mall to house as many as 43 clothing vendors. Also, we are hoping to construct a new market on an adjoining building formerly housing the Griffith Reliance Pharmacy.

With respect to the Fish Markets, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is hoping to complete work during the current financial year on the Tent Bay Project. We are getting closer to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. The estimated cost of this project should be in the order of \$400 000. For those folks in the east and this should please the Honourable Member for St. John, the

Consett Bay and Skeete's Bay Projects should be started any time now virtually. Recently, I signed an agreement which would facilitate the commencement of work on this project and I have been assured by the contractors that work on this project would have begun in late May. As we speak, the mobilisation of equipment should be taking place at the Skeete's Bay site and we are hoping that once this project is started that there will be no time delays and that we can move quickly from the Skeete's Bay area on to the Consett Bay area to have this project completed.

Also, during the current financial year we are hoping to undertake work at Paynes Bay. That project is a minor project in the context of the others which I have been speaking about. This project will cost in the region of \$260 000. Finally, Mr. Speaker, some time into the future a major project is to be undertaken in the north of the island. This project called the Northern Fisheries Project will involve the relocation of houses from Six Men's, the construction of a new road, jetty and market facilities.

Asides.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, you will see that the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development as part of its project work has quite a few things to do. We will organise our business in such a way that we have a timely delivery of these projects, so as to ensure that these places where trading takes place are restored to the sort of condition which makes them very attractive so as to encourage both vendors and the consuming public to make the fullest possible use of them. 11.50a.m.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy, sometimes I sit here and I hear him and he would want to give us the impression that the ruling administration is not one that is very sympathetic to the small person in this country. But, Mr. Speaker, I have just outlined construction plans for the Ministry. These plans relate to areas where these small black business persons that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy likes to come in here and give the impression that he is the champion of the cause of such persons, what we are doing here is to improve the conditions under which those small persons, especially those small persons, go to ply their trade and those who are members of the consuming public go to purchase their goods.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I do not like interrupting the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, because I think his heart is in the right place. But when he mentioned places building a northern fishing facility, Sir, for the poor people of Barbados, I must first inform him that to the north of the...

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

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: That the Honourable Member is misleading the House, Sir. He is giving the impression that all of these locations will be for the poor people of this country. Because to the north of this location in Six Men's, Sir, is a set of villas going up and to the south is Port Charles and the poor people will be removed. So I do not know who will be the poor people using these facilities in Six Men's.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, I have just said that the northern fishery's project will include the relocation of a number of houses from the Six Men's area.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member, I believe you are aware of the rules. We would not want to get into discussion on this matter. It was not really relating to the Resolution before the House. We would not want to anticipate any orders that might come before this House.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, what I have just described here relates to improvement in the physical condition of facilities where a large number of small persons, which the Honourable Member for St. Lucy came in here and gave the impression that he is the champion of their cause, where a large number of persons would be made more comfortable thereby giving them more encouragement to utilise these facilities.

When that is done, Mr. Speaker, naturally the vendors' livelihood would be improved and that is the type of effort on the part of the current administration which should come into some sort of praise. The type of funds which are being invested in these projects would leave us in no doubt that the current administration is moving, and moving at a pace to improve the quality of life of the small business person in this country.

For example, with the respect to the upgrade of the Cheapside project, the estimated cost of this project is about \$8 million. With respect to the Consett Bay, Skeet's Bay project, the estimated cost of this project is about \$5.1 million. So we are talking about fairly extensive work being undertaken on the various locations.

But, Mr. Speaker, we must view these projects in a wider sense because what we are looking to do at each of these projects is to go beyond the normal trading activity one finds at these markets and we want to maximise the economic potential of the various areas.

For example, and this should please the Honourable Member for St. John, just as we are hoping to stimulate wider economic activity at Skeete's Bay, in the very near

future we will be going to those areas and we will be impressing on the visitors in those elected locations to organise themselves in some sort of business association to take advantage of the opportunities which would present themselves when this upgrading work is continued.

Just as small persons had been able to take advantage of the monies spent at Oistins previously and we have a number of vendors, I have been told some of whom have been very successful, we are hoping to have small business persons establishing operations at Skeete's Bay, we are hoping to have that done at Consett Bay, so that the monies the Government intends to spend in upgrading these fishing facilities would have a positive exponentially whereby small business persons living in those areas can benefit in a tangible way.

Aside.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Back to the Cheapside project, Mr. Speaker, those of us who use the lower Bridgetown area would agree that the physical state of the Cheapside Market is one that we cannot be proud of. We cannot be proud of it. It is very unattractive. It is very undivided and we owe it to ourselves as politicians, we owe it to ourselves as citizens of this country to move at a pace to give the Cheapside Market a different look.

Asides.

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Now that the projects have been acquired, the intention is to have the work at Cheapside started no later than February or March next year.

In order for work at the Cheapside Market to proceed, we first have to relocate the present vendors. 12.00 noon

So at the moment we are trying to complete all the administrative arrangements so that work on the temporary accommodation, (the Miller site and the area adjoining the Miller site) to have the temporary structures erected. We are hoping that as early as September that all the administrative arrangements would have been completed. These administrative arrangements will include completion of the tendering process and when that is finished the work can start on that site.

We estimate that the construction time for the temporary accommodation for the vendors would be five months or so and as soon as the temporary accommodation is available we will shift the vendors from the present Cheapside Market to the temporary accommodation.

The Honourable House will be pleased to know that the amount of space we are making available in the temporary

accommodation should be enough to accommodate above two hundred vendors, twenty or so craftsmen and sixteen butchers. That was the original plan. However, we had to make a slight adjustment to the original plan because the twenty butchers who currently utilize the Cheapside Market they have agreed to and the suggestion was made by the Market's Chief to have the butchers move together to the Fairchild Street Market where the facilities are already in place to accommodate these butchers. Failing that, we would have had to separate the butchers, have a couple of them in the temporary accommodation and the majority of them will have had to go the Fairchild Street. But because the butchers are moving their cutting operations from the Cheapside Market it does not mean that accommodation would not be made for them at the temporary accommodation for the sale of their meats.

So we intend in the building that formerly housed the supermarket to make enough space available for them for their meat display counters. The cutting of meat will take place at the Fairchild Street Market but the butchers will have two options for selling their meats. They can use the Fairchild Street location or they can use the temporary accommodation at Cheapside.

Mr. Speaker, while this work is going on, detailed planning will also take place for the building which will be located at the former Theobalds site which is at Lower Cheapside and that Theobalds site will be the permanent location for the craftsmen. So the craftsmen who will also have to be relocated from their present location at Temple Yard, they will be temporarily accommodated just across the street from the lands which will be compulsorily acquired. We are hoping to move quickly to give those craftsmen (and this is what they have been asking for) to give them an area where they can establish their shops and this area the Government has already acquired that land and they will be moved to the Theobalds site to continue their operation.

With respect to the description of the Cheapside Project, the Project will include redesign and restoration of the existing structural framework, the ceiling and the roof and the addition of a Mezzanine Floor. A solid waste sorting facility will be located nearby.

The renovated market will contain stalls for butchers, a food stall area, a cold storage for meat, vegetables and fruits and the provision of new staff quarters. Accommodation in the new facilities will be provided for vendors of fruits, vegetables, meat, handicraft and clothing.

So what we envisage when the Cheapside Market is upgraded is to have all vendors who presently ply their trade in that area, move into a new spanking building. At the moment due to the state of disrepair of the present building we find that some vendors prefer to come into the forecourt

of the market and some people spill over to the street thereby causing some sort of congestion in the area.

So I think it is incumbent on the Government to provide upgraded facilities and when those upgraded facilities are provided, the expectation is that the vendors will once again move into the market and occupy their rightful place. So we are hoping and we will have to seek the cooperation of the Attorney General's Office and the Police Force to ensure that there is a certain degree of order brought to bear to the business activity that an upgraded Cheapside Market will have.

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

Hon. A. P. WOOD: Mr. Speaker, let me spend a couple minutes on the Palmetto Mall. It is no secret that all is not well at the Palmetto Mall and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy (I have been told that he somehow found his way into the Palmetto Mall to engage in constructive discussion and I hope it was constructive). I was told that the Honourable Member for St. John accompanied him so that made it constructive discussion. So I would advise him in the future when they need to speak to the Market staff or any other group by the Ministry of Agriculture that they go together so that we can conclude that the discussions were constructive. 12.10p.m.

It is no secret that all is not well at the Palmetto Mall but I can assure this Honourable House and in particular the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that we are doing our best to bring some sort of proper order to bear on the activity at the Palmetto Mall.

About three Sundays ago I met with the vendors. We had a very important meeting. They were very frank. They put their problems on the table. I was very frank and my staff was very frank because we need to get these things out in the open if we are to prescribe solutions which at the end of the day are not misplaced.

I want to assure the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and the other Honourable Members in this Honourable House that we are taking steps to improve the ventilation at the Palmetto Mall. The place will be airconditioned and that work will commence in the very near future.

One of the other grouses of the vendors at the Palmetto Mall relates to the hours of business they claim, and in that respect it is justified. We are taking steps to adjust the hours of business to make them more conducive to market operations.

Also, we have been in discussions with the relevant Government agency to see how best we could police the Palmetto Mall. I would agree that we need to take a long hard look at security and we are doing that. The staff needs to go to work, be comfortable and work in an environment in which there is little or no tension, so that is being addressed.

Also, because of the frequency with which staff members have to appear in court to defend themselves having been wickedly and viciously abused by certain undesirable elements in the market, we are making moves through the Attorney General's office to have them represented properly in the law courts.

While we are trying our best at the Ministry to improve the physical conditions of the Palmetto Mall, while we are making moves to increase the level of security and make the place of work more comfortable for the staff, the vendors themselves have to understand, and I have made this clear to the vendors that they have a responsibility to the other vendors. They have a responsibility to the market staff. They have a responsibility to the taxpayers of this country. They need to improve their level of behaviour so that a more cooperative spirit...

Mr. SPEAKER: At this point I will have to ask the Honourable Member to conclude, please.

Hon. A. P. WOOD:...could exist at the market.

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

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I have one good thing to say about the Honourable Member's speech and a few criticisms to make. Since I am so overwhelmed by the good thing, I will start with that first.

I have been in this Chamber, next month will be 12 years, and I must say I was pleasantly surprised that the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, having discovered that Opposition members visited an entity under his direction and control opted not to follow the usual path of accusing them of seeking to stir up strife and refusing to accept that we have a right to be informed and to understand what is happening in this country, and in fact, took the opposite approach and I assume accepts that it is legitimate, and that under his direction of the Ministry of Agriculture that he will truly open it up to the kind of scrutiny that is necessary and desirable, not that the previous Minister did not try, but his hands were tied. Like a former Commissioner of Police, his hands were tied. We know his hands were tied and that is why I now have to continue, after praising you for that approach because I was once a Minister and the way Ministers get on, you would believe that they would feel - and it has happened in here. I once

called the Transport Board to talk to the Public Relations Officer and he told me he would accompany me on a visit in St. John. The then Minister said and issued a directive to the Transport Board that no official is to meet with any Opposition member unless the Minister is present. He has never responded to a request to be present and never showed any interest in being present but that was the edict that was laid down.

We live in an era of modern Government and no Minister in a Government of 26 people and an Opposition of two should feel that any time somebody is seeking out information that they have to do it against a background of suspicion and low motives. I compliment the Honourable Member for St. Philip South. That may be inexperience. I hope it is not. I hope that it is a freshness and a uniqueness in his style that will be emulated by the more seasoned members on that Side who have never extended that kind of courtesy to members of the Opposition or even back benchers because I know what it is like to be on the back bench. I heard the Honourable Member for St. Michael East in a recent debate in a similar, though not directly on point, vein.

Let me move on now to the criticism. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South has to understand that the Ministry of Agriculture is a continuum and all the information that was given about the positive things happening in the Ministry, an area of the greatest amount of potential corruption in the previous Barbados Labour Party Administration, was the Markets Division. I am not saying so lightly because the Auditor General's Report - and I am not saying that it extends to the Ministers either. That accusation has never been made. In fact, the Minister himself absolves himself from such an accusation by on one occasion saying that he knows nothing about the activities that were going on.

I want to know if the investigation was conducted into the way in which contracts were handed out for work to be done at the Markets in Barbados, all of them. And whether the new Minister is going to make available to the public of Barbados before the Public Accounts Committee has to do it all of the information in relation to the shenanigans that led either to the removal or resignation of a senior public officer who was responsible for the Markets Division. Let us clean the slate. 12.20p.m.

I will listen to all of the nice talk about Conssett and thank you for it. Your suggestions on Cheapside - good idea. The things that you raised about Palmetto were some of the things that we discussed afterwards and thought we were going to raise in a Parliamentary Question appropriately. So you are on the right track but you have to make sure that you

have the wheels properly aligned. In doing so you have to ask why there was such a mad rush under the previous Barbados Labour Party administration to have all of this work done in the market and some of it was wasted money, money that was paid before the tenders were put in place, before the work was done, contracts that were broken up to get around the old financial rules. One of the most scandalous and nonsensical projects was undertaken and the Honourable Member lives in St. Philip so he should know about it, it was the one that was done on the Six Roads market. In terms of what is happening in St. Philip it was the worst location to go and spend money in putting up a booth or flea market.

Already the Attorney General had identified the closed Six Roads complex as a suitable location for various kinds of activities. It was accessible from the road and people could see it - the ideal place to put those booths. Maybe the lawn in front of that.

I would even go a step further and say an even more innovative project. The roundabout at Six Roads is so big that instead of just beautifying it because nobody goes and plays on the roundabout it could have been possible for Government to have put a number of crossings and to have constructed those booths in the centre of that roundabout at Six Roads so that the vendors would be seen, their wares would be seen and, as long as you controlled the speed limits and people used the roundabout properly it would be an ideal location.

Instead of that, the Government spent thousands of dollars putting up booths in the old Six Roads market which are closed all week long which are only open on weekends, and even on weekends I am certain that the vendors in those areas only go there because they have no other location to go-

The fact is that what the Minister needs to do is to revamp totally the direction of the Markets Division of the Ministry, look at each of the markets, have an integrated plan to cater to all of the different types of vendors in Barbados and also seek to ensure that you are not going to make a serious distinction between the vendor who is in Palmetto market - the impression of whom is given that you just raked him up off the streets and put him in the market - as distinct from the vendor who is selling in better conditions at the new Pelican Village complex. We want to know something about that.

Is that coming under the Ministry of Agriculture or is it going to be run by a different Ministry and does it make sense to bring it under the Ministry of Agriculture? The role of vendor is very important. When we visited Palmetto Mall I asked the prices of some of those items and did a very brief

calculation. I am not an economist. In fact, if I were an economist I would only be able to bring it within a reasonable estimate as I am not good at forecasting. If I were an accountant like the Honourable Member for St. Lucy I would be more accurate. I am somewhere between the economist and the accountant.

It is clear that each of those vendors, particularly the ones selling craft and clothing have about \$20 000 to \$30 000 in stock locked behind some flimsy doors, the kind of doors that you would put on a clothes cupboard at home, the ones with the thin jalousies, a closet. That kind of door is what is used to secure the goods - a bi-fold door - of vendors in the Palmetto Mall. That has to be madness.

It tells me that obviously somebody was locked into some arrangement with somebody else to buy substandard materials at a higher price than was reasonable which is always the case with Government hoping that those things would break up in a short period of time, that Government would recontract them to put in new bi-fold doors and that we would be in a continuous cycle of corruption, not always at the highest levels of Government but at a mid strata of Government.

People were allowed to do this. While everybody was closing their eyes the Auditor General was talking about it. We raised it in here. The Government said it was going to deal with the situation and yet it persisted until the officer left the public service and left in the wake of that resignation a complete mess in the Markets Division in terms of the financial arrangements and somebody should be prosecuted for the way in which that Division was run, because not only was there that level of corruption but there was also a level of harassment and intimidation of people who lawfully were entitled to be in the market, as well as a very selective manner in which licenses were issued to new persons to sell at new markets which eventually came on streajn. A very high handed manner.

You created a tin god in the Ministry of Agriculture, vested him with all kinds of powers, never elected by anybody. All he had was a very close association with the political party in office and, thank goodness, he left the public service, if not the Government would be faced with a major scandal, assuming there is not a major scandal and I cannot prejudge the Minister because if he finds out anything I assume he is going to tell the House in the spirit in which he spoke today, assuming that there is not yet one. If he had persisted in office there would have been a major scandal in that department and yet nothing was done for the entire four- year period.

There are a lot of problems at the Palmetto market which brings me to the point that we were constantly told in

here that the Palmetto market was the market that was going to set new standards for vendors in Barbados. So when I went there I could not believe the conditions under which the vendors were operating.

No wonder you get a situation where one or two lawless individuals are terrorising the workers who are legitimately there and I believe are trying to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay as well as other vendors who simply want to go about their business without confusion. People cleaning the market tell you that while they are mopping and sweeping, somebody is pelting oranges at them and when they look around they do not see anybody. The general conditions in that market are not something that people would be accustomed to even when the markets were not regulated in the way in which they are regulated now.

When we met with the staff you would not believe that a market has that number of staff members for such a small area which tells me that every effort has been made to ensure and I do not know if the Honourable Member for St. Lucy agrees with me, but I believe he does because we met about ten staff members in a small market which is open in the morning and closes at six o'clock. Adequate staff, nice physical area, no proper ventilation, lack of discipline. Security is not the issue. That is where we are going to have the problem. I warned the Attorney General because he misinterprets our talk about crime and violence to mean only that you have to put 15 000 policemen on the streets and so on.

There is also an element of dealing with the causes of indiscipline and the causes of crime which have to be brought into the equation. Unless standards are going to be set at that market which require members to discipline themselves, in other words, persons who are selling in that market discipline themselves and undertake a fair day's work in that market in a spirit in which they accept that they are part of an organisation now and not just a one-man show, then you are going to have problems.

You will not need any policeman because when I was a youngster at school the headmaster could go home and give us the key and say, "Gentlemen, when you all are finished with the school hall, please lock it and push the key through the letter box and in the morning the porter will take it up." Why is that 12 year olds and 13 year olds, left in a school could do that and big men for whom facilities have been built to help them earn a daily wage cannot find some means of self-discipline. The rest of the people in that complex are not doing enough in my view to ostracise them for the kind of behaviour that they are displaying. This is characteristic of Barbados in 1999. It has nothing to do with Opposition or Government. It has something to do with a culture which we are adopting that is fuelled by a situation where Government provides these facilities and then does

very little to create an environment in which people feel that they have to police themselves to be responsible and be respectful of those facilities which are provided. 12.30p.m.

I am saying that no Government or Opposition could accept that that kind of behaviour is good enough. Do not come to this Opposition to expect any succour where you have failed to be a reasonable, respectable member of the organisation and where collectively people are trying to make their way forward and find that one or two lawless individuals are creating problems for everybody else. I do not know if I have to describe the situation as it is, but that is as I saw it. I saw people who had made a significant investment to bring in goods, to secure those goods to survive in our society to make a living and one or two individuals creating problems for them. As a result of that, the whole culture of the institution is suffering.

I am also glad that the Chinese Government is going to be involved in the project. There was money left from the Chinese...

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: This was something agreed since 1994, I believe, when there was \$5 million or so left and we were trying to work out how to use it. I am glad that it is going to be used for the Cheapside Project because there was sharp division of opinion on how the balance of that money should be utilised. I always felt that it should be used for a commercial project like a market or a fishing venture particularly because a large portion of the money which the Chinese spent in Barbados previously was spent on a project which is not really an income earner. If the Prime Minister attends functions there too often, it will not earn any income at all because apparently he has the power to waive fees for use of the Barbados Gymnasium, built by the Chinese, which power I do not know a Minister of Finance possess.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The Minister of Sports is not here so he cannot correct me. There are still problems with vendors that need some attention in all of the markets.

The other point that I want to make relates to Consett Bay. I want to appeal to the Honourable Member for St. Philip South as I did to his predecessor. What I saw being built at Consett Bay was a Fish Market which appeared to me to be backing the sea. All of the recreational facilities were facing the land.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: In other words, facing the hills. A fisherman would be sitting down playing cards and dominoes facing into the hills and facing their boats. There was also the potential, in my view on that site for the creation of additional recreational facilities. A small mini park like at Bath in St. John and other facilities which should compliment Consett Bay because I still believe that if you are going to put in a fishing project like that, that one of the best ways to secure the standards of it, to ensure that the community feels a part of it, is to include some resources whether from your Ministry or elsewhere to beautify the entire area and to make it a place where people would come and buy some fried fish and so on, as has happened in Soufriere in St. Lucia and places like that in St. Vincent. In all parts of the world you have fishing villages like Oistins - not necessarily in built up areas where people would go off the beaten track and where people other than the fishermen or boat owners can make a living and feel that they are part of the development of those facilities.

There are places in the world where a Fish Market has lasted for 50 years or more - wooden structures - because that is all the community has. They are fishermen and they have that market and they care for it.

In our system, you build a market and when a tile comes up off the floor, a fisherman wants the Chief Fisheries Officer to come and look at that tile and put it down. By the time the Fisheries Officer gets there four years later there are no tiles on the floor. Nobody feels that they could get some tile cement and put back in the tile. If a washer is missing on a tap, nobody feels that they can spend thirty cents to buy a washer and put it on a tap. Sothewater runs and the building gets black, the rock gets slippery and the facilities degenerate because of simple things that officers in a department, neglectful of it, because they do not live in those areas, may not do, but which the community should feel a duty to do as a matter of their own well being and their own interest. I think that that is something that I was concerned about when I looked at the plans for the Consett Bay Project. It follows for Skeete's Bay too because Skeete's Bay is a very beautiful unspoilt area in St. Philip and an area where I am certain that more people would like to be able to go and enjoy the facilities. No point in building a Fish Market and then when you have hundreds of Barbadians looking for somewhere on a Saturday and Sunday to go and swim or exercise or hold a picnic or whatever that they cannot use those facilities which Government has invested in those areas. I think that is going to be very important that you must find more integration in the development of those kinds of projects. I think those are the major matters that I wanted to raise.

I want to perhaps just raise one more point with the the Honourable Member for St. Philip South and in a sense the Honourable Member for St. George North. It relates to the

area of land opposite St. John's Parish Church. I still believe that the entire church yard at St. John's Parish Church should be sealed off as a sanctuary. No cars should be driving up under the arch. The buses should not be parking in the church yard and all of the commercial and other activity should take place across the road where there is an adequate area for parking, where booths can be created to create jobs and opportunities for people who live in that area. I think that the Minister of Housing should urge upon the Town Planner and the Planning Authority...

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It should be agreed that at least part of that area opposite the church could come out of its present use, which is agricultural but nothing is growing on it, and permit the development of that area. It is a project that I think the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Agriculture should be interested in undertaking. I hope that the Honourable Member for St. George North who has been kind so far...

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Yes, it is in the St. John's Development which you say do not exist. You are building houses in an area which was designated in the plan for housing but you say that the plan does not exist. You put up lights at the hard court but you say the plan does not exist.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: You stop the Polyclinic. Or rather, would not resume it. I do not want to agitate the Honourable Member for St. James South yet, but would not resume the Polyclinic, but then tell me there is no St. John's Development Plan.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The area opposite the church - I believe that every tourist who goes on a tour to Barbados visits that area. All there, is a little shop which the church runs but there is a lot more that could be done. People could be selling fruit juices, they could be selling home made ice creams or they could have craft. A whole set of other things could be done which would create jobs in that area.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am not saying that all the jobs must go to people from St. John. I am saying that I would like to see physical development. Seal off the church

yard. There is a place in Trinidad called Mount St. Benedict. There are other parks where you cannot go and there is no traffic. I remember the last time I visited Mount St. Benedict I met a young lady who was in law school with me, she was having problems with her husband and she was just sitting on the wall, reading the Bible. She took the day off and was relaxing. 12.40p.m.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I did not offer any advice or assistance but I would suggest that Barbados needs more places like that, without noise, without traffic, where people facing various kinds of pressure, can park their car, take a walk, look out over the East Coast.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Clear your head, precisely! Look at the plants and the flowers and get things back in order. These things are very important. There are many locations where that could be, but I think St. John's Parish Church is one of those ideal locations and it can be done with a project undertaken by the Government of Barbados, between the Ministries of Agriculture and Tourism as long as the Town Planner agrees. That is where the investment can come from, but I am not focussing on Tourists, I am focussing on locations that will also have some relevance to Barbadians as sanctuaries for our mental peace and so on. So I think those are the key points that I wanted to make.

I enjoyed the milk and honey speech by the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, but I think he should temper it in the future, if he wants to get our sympathy, with some clear statement and rationale for the reason why the Government has not responded to the major infelicities that took place in the markets division of the Ministry of Agriculture between 1994 and 1999. We need that point clarified and we need to move on from there. And, once you have clarified that point, you can rest assured that you will receive the critical support, but in a sense as long as these projects are aimed at helping small people, I know you will receive the unequivocal support of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and me on this Side.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am just going to use the ten minutes before lunch to make a few points, in particular in relation to wayside vending. There is an area of land opposite the petrol station at Redman's Village which had been identified two years ago February, by the Rural Development Commission, the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Agriculture for the creation of a wayside facility for vendors. There used to be regularly - not so regularly now - a man who sold coconuts, corn and so on from a

push cart. It is that site I am talking about on the other side of the road, Sir.

The land had been identified as owned by a Barbadian who died and whose children died also. The children had inherited the land and there is an old house under the breadfruit tree. It is a dilapidated, pink house that we wanted to acquire. The plan that was developed then and I remember the morning we were there, Mr. Abdul Pandor had just put in the layby for a bus stop on that side of the road. They were there and they developed a plan with MTW for paving the area, creating, I think there were five or six parking areas for the mini buses.

The mini buses come from Hoyte's Village to the junction, cross the road, turn into that area and park and people would catch the mini-buses there in that mini-bus stand. Behind the mini-buses you would have a line of kiosk type facilities for vendors. Nothing has happened, Sir. I raise it because I wish my colleagues, the Minister of Housing and Lands and the Minister responsible for Rural Development to get on this project urgently.

The Ministry of Housing would have to acquire the land from the Estate of Mr. Austin and the development of the land is a small thing. Just pave the area and create the vending opportunities, but it would give us an opportunity to establish a well laid out and structured vending facility right beside the highway there at Redman's Village. I knew that work was going on on it last year, but I have not heard anything. Recently, when I checked with an officer in Ministry of Housing, it seemed to have slipped back. So I just want the relevant Ministers to bring the matter forward, because I think that in short order we can develop a nice facility there.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I support what the Honourable Member has just said, but there is also another piece of land, Sir, between the old road and the new road that could easily be added to this, Sir. Because we need to make sure that the middle class and what we regard as the small people in this country get ideal locations to sell their ware. I think it would be a good thing, Sir, to compulsorily acquire this piece of land from Mr. Alleyne at the Shamrock and also add to this particular project.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, I am grateful for the support of the Honourable Member for St. Lucy on this that in addition to the Austin property, we should acquire the Alleyne property and make a proper facility there. That would provide the access from Welches and Gibson Land into the facility.

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have to concede that on the morning of the opening of the Palmetto Market or Mall as soon as I went in I made the comment that I could not stay for the opening ceremony. I think it clashed with a meeting of the House, but that was not the problem. The obvious lack of ventilation was very very stifling and I quickly left. It is amazing that that project was developed by the Ministry of Transport and Works and I think they are responsible for the building and nobody realised until that morning we were there all sweaty, that it was poorly ventilated and too little attention is being paid...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: You could see, they had some small windows. I mean, it has changed since the original opening. It is a lot better now than it was before, but it is still uncomfortable, Sir. I feel that enough attention is not being paid to the ventilation of public properties in Barbados.

I have a theory which I have not tested...

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: That is why I am making sure, Sir, in the design - I mean it is finished, for the Supreme Court must have proper ventilation.

That property that we are in at the Attorney-General's Office, the new National Insurance Building is a good example, but if it did not have the kind of central air-conditioning it would be even better. But sometimes I turn off the air-conditioning. Every day I open the windows. I scarcely use the air-condition, because the culmination of air-conditioning and carpeting in Barbados and in tropical countries is a disaster. When I was a boy, I never heard about asthma. I never knew anybody who had asthma. Nowadays it is common place and it is an environmental consequence. 12.50p.m.

The third point I wish to make is in relation to the delay that there has been on this Project. Part of the reason for the delay in bringing this Project to the stage of opening has been that under the agreement with the Chinese they have been responsible for doing the drawings. MTW has been working as counterpart ministry with them but there have been problems largely spawned by difficulties of language that was so bad that the local architects or draughtsmen at MTW could not understand some of the drawings.

Last year I think it cost us \$12 000 to send a team headed by Wendell Smith (perhaps I should not call names) but by officers from MTW to China to try and resolve some of the outstanding technical matters that had to be resolved

before the final drawings could be completed and that was a reason for the holdups.

I have been advised that most of the difficulties have been cleared away now and the way is clear for starting the project later on in this financial year.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: With those few observations I beg to move that this House be now suspended until 2.15 p.m.

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

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 Sitting accordingly. 12.58p.m.

RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will just like to wind up this Resolution and to thank all Members who have spoken on this Resolution and just to point out that we have taken into heart and we are trying our best to put in place some of the recommendations that were made firstly by the Honourable Member for St. John. We recognise that Gall Hill, St. John, that area especially to the west of the St. John Parish Church, there really is a need to provide an opportunity for vending especially those tourists who visit St. John Church from time to time. I believe it is one of the landmarks where tourists frequent. But of course in our Manifesto Mr. Speaker, we outlined areas such as Belleplaine, Oistins, Glebe, St. George for vending opportunities.

I will also like to reiterate our plan to develop the Redman Village area. A piece of land has been identified to the east of the existing gas station there and that area had become very populated over time and we are hoping that within this financial year we can do something at Redman Village.

I will also like to mention the fact that the Honourable Member for St. John identified that there are a few problems within the Ministry Market Division and we hope that we can see some plans to have that division renew.

With those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ORDER NO. 7 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND
SITUATED AT WESTON, ST. JAMES
FOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, some time ago one Honourable Member wrote the then Minister of Housing and Lands, the Honourable George Payne, asking him to intervene on a very important matter. The Minister wrote the Ministry of Housing sometime around June 1998 outlining that the property at Weston, St. James was about to be sold and he asked the Ministry to compulsorily acquire this property and at the same time to allow the person who occupied the premises for a number of years to continue.

I speak about the gentleman by the name of Lamont Adamson, proprietor of the shop commonly known as John Moore's Bar. The Member of Parliament in his letter made mention of the fact that it was or still is a cultural setting where a number of persons frequent and it has become a sort of an institution in itself commonly known as a watering hole. But persons from the north have frequented this joint or facility for a number of years and it is indeed an institution in itself and it was felt at the time that we should preserve the setting and preserve this institution.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we set about to compulsorily acquire this portion of land at Weston. Also, attached to this cultural institution is a tenantry which is owned Mr. Speaker, by Mr. James Worrell who now resides in Germany. But it is felt that the tenants who live at Weston (there are six people living at Weston, St. James) that they are entitled under the law to acquire their land. They can buy it if the landlord cannot be found. They can through notices ask the Registrar to intervene on their behalf. So they have a right to buy the tenantry. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is not envisaged that we would have to intervene at this time but we can give the House the assurance that we will not want those tenants to lose their right.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. I do not like to interrupt the Honourable Member in his introduction and I do not want to blame the previous Minister but it seems as though he should be blamed for misleading the new Minister because tenants living on the foreshore under the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act do not qualify under the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act and as long as that tenantry is on the foreshore they cannot purchase the land. If you are saying you are acquiring it for a different reason that is something else but I think the previous Minister needs to apologize as a lawyer for misleading my

learned friend and making him come in here and totally mislead the House on a very simple issue which should require his intervention.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member is obviously misleading the House. I know that he is an excellent lawyer but in this particular case his knowledge of law...

Mr. SPEAKER: Which Honourable Member are you referring to?

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: The Honourable Member for St. John. There are certain facts that he is not aware of in this particular case because I believe the Honourable Member for St. George North is referring to land on the land side and not on the seaside. Part of the land is on the seashore but the lands to which he was referring from my knowledge of the area refers to tenants on the other side of the road. So I just thought I will mention that especially seeing that the Honourable Member for St. John referred to the former Minister. 2.25 p.m.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: I would like to thank the Honourable Member for St. Andrew for his explanation because as far as the Ministry of Housing is concerned, there are two separate parcels on the seaside where the shop is. The shop is on the seaside but the tenantry is on the land side, as far as we know, unless the guy has more than one parcel of land.

Mr. Speaker, I would just want to say that the tenants have rights and they can buy under the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act.

Aside.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: The piece of land we are talking about, Mr. Speaker...

Mr. SPEAKER: So that is not part of the Resolution before the House?

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: No. The Minister of Agriculture at the time wrote the Ministry asking us to acquire both parcels but we believe that the tenants have their rights.

Mr. Speaker, we intend in this Resolution to acquire the 1 123 square metres and this is on the western side to preserve this cultural setting as I said before. The other piece of land the tenants will have the right to purchase as well.

The Chief Surveyor has carried out his work. The Attorney General has given his blessing to this Resolution and Parliament is asked to approve the compulsory

acquisition of this 1123 square metres at Weston, St. James to preserve the cultural integrity of this village. Thank you.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I must admit that this Parliament sometimes finds it very difficult to bring very important matters to this Parliament. I must congratulate the Government for the speed with which they came to this Parliament to acquire a rum shop. I hope they would understand that to the south of this rum shop there is a property...

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Less the record might reflect something that does not really reveal the truth of this particular matter, this acquisition has nothing to do with any rum shop. This is an acquisition of a parcel of land and the buildings thereon to preserve the cultural heritage of the area. I am a little surprised that the Honourable Member is referring to it as a rum shop. It is not a rum shop and I would like the record to reflect that fact.

Mr. SPEAKER: Would you like to rephrase it that it is land with certain types of buildings?

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Andrew cannot educate me on what is a rum shop. My great-great-grandfather, my grandmother, my grandfather, my mother and even now we were all part of rum shops so we know rum shops whenever we see them I need no help from the Honourable Member for St. Andrew in outlining what is a rum shop to me because I am well versed in what is a rum shop and that is why I do not drink.

I would also like the House to understand, Sir, that situated to the south of this business place there is a house belonging to a lady who for years has been fighting to have the right to keep her house on that particular property. Even before the owner of the shop was threatened with removal of his shop this lady has been fighting to remain on that particular spot.

You, Mr. Speaker, in another session of Parliament would have heard me talking and mentioned a name called the late Mr. Black. He also was fighting to have the right to live on that same tenantry but nobody listened to him. Nobody helped him. I am hoping that this Resolution will be amended and that the parcel of land to be compulsorily acquired will be all that said land to the north of the fish market butting and bounding to the other properties after the shop in Weston.

I will support any Resolution that takes into consideration the rights of the owner of the shop and also the lady next-door. I am hoping that the Honourable Minister would make the necessary adjustment and he would understand, if he does not understand now, that there

is also another person in the same said location asking Government for help. I am asking that both parties be helped and not one. This lady cannot rightfully have a claim to this land the same way that the owner of the shop can have a claim to the land because this land is what we call the foreshore so they have no rights as tenants. Government, recognising that they do not have rights as tenants, has come here today to compulsorily acquire the piece of land to allow this business place who has a right because there is a history to this shop.

From the time I was a boy, Sir, I have always heard about a John Moore shop. It has a significant meaning to the tourist industry and also to the social gatherings of Barbados. You would be surprised, Sir, to know the people who frequent that shop. It is a historical location in this country, a place of importance from the top to the bottom, from the highest ranks down. From all circles you find at that shop.

I have no problem, Sir, in supporting this Resolution but it will be regrettable if this Parliament can only see the rights of the shop owner and cannot see the rights of the lady next door. I feel, Sir, that this Parliament, if they are not prepared to amend it, must give a commitment that if this is the route they are going that they will also take into consideration the rights of the lady next door.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am hearing from your side, Sir...

Mr. SPEAKER? My side? I have no side, Sir.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that if there was any one Speaker that does not have a side it is this Speaker. What I meant is the other side of you, Sir. That is what I meant.

Mr. SPEAKER: Oh!

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am saying, Sir, that we need to deal with this particular matter because if you are going* to tell me that where the lady is living now is a watercourse, I am saying that the Government of the day would have wasted taxpayers' money by building a fish market in a watercourse because right next door to the lady is the fish market. I cannot buy the argument, Sir, that the Government would have built a fish market in a watercourse. So there should be no excuse for not coming back to this Parliament and compulsorily acquiring the next piece of land for the old lady in Weston who is fighting and who refuses to be removed from the spot. The Government went after her and she refused. The owner went after her and she refused. Now today, Sir, I am saying she has justifiable rights to be

where she is because the same way you can come and compulsorily acquire land for the shop they must come back and compulsorily acquire that piece of land for that old lady. She is somebody too. She never complains, Sir. That lady never complains from the noise that emanates from the shop and that is justifiable reason why she should remain. If she was complaining you could easily say she is always complaining about the noise and remove her from the noise but she is quite happy, Sir, to be sitting and sleeping where she is and I am calling on this Government and as I said I will support this Resolution but providing they give me an undertaking that they will compulsorily acquire the next piece of land in the same way they compulsorily acquire the piece of land for the market because there is a precedent. 2.35p.m.

There will also be an acquisition for the shop so they can do three. I hope that with the help of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas that he will use his power to make sure that the right thing is done for once by this Government in looking after the interest of some poor person in this country. I know him, Sir. He is a man who treasures his record and who likes to know that when he sleeps at night that he has done the right thing. I know I have his total support on this particular matter. Thank you, Sir.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: For over fifty years at Weston in St. James there has been this legendary establishment known as John Moore's Place. Some persons who frequent this place from time to time would fondly nickname it John Moore's Establishment. Ironically, Mr. Speaker, the original owner of this particular business place was never properly known as John Moore. John Moore was his nickname. His correct name was John D. Ifill, a person who had a flirtation with politics at the local government level and in his last political attempts he was a strong supporter of the political institution which is represented by two on the Other Side.

Over time, Mr. Speaker, this shop at Weston attracted a big and varied clientele. I remember as a small boy going to Leacock's Primary School passing there and in those days it was a rum shop. In time renovations were done and in time after the renovations were done the clientele became bigger. There were school teachers assembled there from time to time, famous West Indian cricketers, batsmen, bowlers and all-rounders would frequent this place.

I was surprised, Mr. Speaker, to have learnt fairly late that after all those fifty years that the person who occupied the chattel building had no title to the land on which the chattel building was situated. In addition, Mr. Speaker, one would come along in Barbados and see something that has institutionalised itself and one would assume that all property rights attendant to this physical institution would have been in proper place.

I was taken aback, therefore, Mr. Speaker, to have heard that a notice to quit was served on the current proprietor in circumstances where the story is interesting. There is in St. James the belief that even those claiming to have superior title to the occupants may not have had title at all. Interestingly, Mr. Speaker, there are actually three pieces of land and if the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is to be taken as being accurate there are four pieces of land.

We know that it is believed that the person who served notice on Mr. Addison, the current proprietor of the shop, is alleged to own a tenantry in Doughlin Road above a place called Jackie's Shop. He is also alleged to own two or three plots north of John Moore's Shop. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is saying that there is a problem south of John Moore's Shop where the old lady feels that her rights are being prejudiced. Personally, Mr. Speaker, that old lady has never said anything to me in my capacity as a Member of Parliament for St. James North but I am not going to dismiss what the Honourable Member for St. Lucy says as being untrue because just as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy knows some things about St. James I would also have to say that as a member for St. James I know some things about St. Lucy. Sometimes the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and myself will trade information.

I recall that the gentleman to whom the Honourable Member for St. Lucy referred to as Black was making attempts to get assistance from the National Housing Corporation before his unfortunate death. But to get to the meat of the matter, Mr. Speaker, the situation in that area is a situation that invites, and I am going to investigate more closely, the closest possible scrutiny. Too many people who have occupied lands for thirty and forty and fifty years would forever complain that they do not know who the true landlord is.

Sometimes an attorney receives instructions from a person holding out himself to be the landlord. The attorney rushes to act in accordance with those instructions and then lo and behold the person holding out that he or she has title really do not have title. What we sense is that there is the possibility that the person who served the notice to quit or the person on whose behalf the notice was served is an absentee landlord with no intention of coming back to Barbados.

I heard through the grapevine that three people immediately north of John Moore's Shop may be his tenants but they are unclear as to who the real landlord is. I am hearing there is a fairly sizeable tenantry in Doughlin Road and I am hearing all sorts of stories about who the landlord was, who the landlord changed into, who the landlord became and all of these were so unsatisfactory that I wrote the Ministry of Housing and Lands and said that in a

situation where we were unclear as to who owned the tenantry which had more than ten houses on it that perhaps the best thing to do was for Government to take it over and become the landlord and eventually vest title in the people after surveys of the land were done and things like that.

I am going to carry out further investigations into the situation immediately south. There is a possibility that there might be a spot there that is Crown land. There are areas between the creek and John Moore's Shop that are Crown lands. What the member for St. Lucy did not say and I believe it is the core of the problem, in relation to the old lady whom the member for St. Lucy mentioned, is that at one point the Coastal Conservation Unit had reached a conclusion that it would have been dangerous to locate any structures on that side of the road because of a severe problem with coastal erosion. Perhaps the Coastal Conservation Unit suggested to Government that no building at all be there.

What I am sure, Mr. Speaker, is that the Coastal Conservation Unit said that John Moore's place was an establishment of such historical and cultural significance that every effort should be made to preserve it. In other words, the Coastal Conservation Unit came close to assessing the site on which John Moore's Shop stands and it was a touch and go situation and they said they would do their utmost to do works to ensure that the land would not slip away.

As the Honourable Member for St. Lucy knows, within John Moore's Shop there is a side establishment called the Cabana where Carmichael meets, where a fellow called Dick T meets, where many other characters meet, Luther Francis is there, a whole host of people, some are retired civil servants, some members of the Royal Barbados Police Force go there. The BBC did a documentary on that institution.

The thing about it is the Coastal Conservation Unit has come to the conclusion that whatever it would take to prevent the problem of beach erosion immediately behind John Moore's shop, that the shop has defined a particular significance on the coast, that by no stretch of the imagination should it go. 2.45 p.m.

I want to mention, Mr. Speaker, that this is an institution that has been around on the coast of St. James from my boyhood. Honourable Members on Both Sides, some of them at least, would have gone there. It is a place of peace. I do not recall one single violent act occurring there. What is also significant, Mr. Speaker, is that the Honourable Member for St. John once went to St. James and in a different shop in Rock Dundo made a pledge to come back and socialise with the people down there from time to time.

Asides.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, what is significant here too is that the current proprietor is in many respects a self made man. Without the benefit of a university or even a secondary education he took over this shop from its original proprietor and constituted himself into a highly successful indigenous businessman. He was a small man. He had worked at a couple of hotels and restaurants along the coast and had been out of a job and used his life savings to invest in this consequent upon the death of the late John D. If ill and he has developed a highly successful small business.

I believe Honourable Members on Both Sides of this Honourable House had subscribed to the view that as far as possible we should encourage and promote indigenous businesses in Barbados. It would therefore have been tragic, Mr. Speaker, if we in this administration, at a time when the proprietor Mr. Lamont Adamson told him he had to quit the land had abandoned him. Instead of doing that, we have hit upon the enlightened policy of coming here and asking this Honourable Parliament to do its utmost to protect him from being evicted because the consequences of his eviction would be (1) that a small proprietor of a successful business would have lost his business (2) a lot of people who look forward to socialising there on weekends in particular, would have lost the opportunity to continue socialising there and (3) the tourists who come would have had to go elsewhere to be able to have their fare.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to look into the other matters around the area generally because, if it is indeed true that there is doubt as to whom the true landlord is for the properties north of John Moore's shop, or if there is doubt about who the true landlord is as respect to the properties immediately south of the shop and elsewhere on the east, then I think that this Government would have to intervene and intercede on behalf of those residents down there who, after such long occupancy, should not be prejudiced. People get accustomed to taking up occupation in a given place, they settle and to root them up and send them elsewhere is often to create a type of dislocation which people seldom recover from.

I therefore, Mr. Speaker, am supporting this Resolution. It is an important Resolution. It is going to preserve a very important landmark on the coast of Barbados. It is going to bring a tremendous amount of solace to the proprietor of the shop and certainly to the clientele but at the same time I will not rest because, since the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is of the view that something has to be done for others in the area I will certainly, as is my duty, do my utmost to ensure that their rights too are protected.

With these few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: We are not going to oppose this acquisition but I think that the Government and the Attorney General in particular should be mindful of this. They are setting a very strange, even unsustainable precedent in using this method to secure the rights of an individual. I have no argument for or against John Moore's shop. I agree, if it is an institution and so viewed, that it should, as part of our culture, be maintained. There is nothing about the Act that this House is taking today that means it will be maintained. If, for example, God forbids, the proprietor of this shop were either to pass on to another world or opt not to run the business anymore, what would have been the reason for us to have gone to all of this trouble today?

Therefore, what Government needs to do and I cannot help the Government to do it, is to find a much clearer rationale for the acquisition of this property. There is no principle argument that the Honourable Member for St. James North has advanced. It is a very subjective argument. I do not mind subjectivity, if in the circumstances, you can bring it within a broad principle.

For example, if tomorrow I came to this Chamber and pointed out to you that there was landmark in Barbados where a young Barbadian is trying to run a business, his father left the business heavily indebted to a Government institution and they are about to sell it and it will move out of the family business. Is the Government going to acquire that property because, in a sense, there are strong historical reasons why it should be maintained in that family? There are strong reasons why it should be maintained as the kind of business it is, but this has never been the basic before for invoking the Land Acquisition Act. I am saying that it is fortunate that in relation to John Moore's shop, that you are not going to get any legal problem because the ownership of the land is not settled but where the ownership of the land is settled...

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I am talking about a supermarket property in St. John. If I were talking about the GEMS I would say because I am not a coward. You know if I was talking about GEMS I would tell the House that I am talking about GEMS. I am talking about a site in St. John. I can think of one which, in similar circumstances, need to be preserved but I do not think that is the purpose of the Land Acquisition Act. You are going to get away with it in these circumstances because the ownership is not settled and nobody can bring any claim against the Government for using the Act to acquire this land for the purposes, not of Government using it to establish an enterprise or to facilitate

a new business or a new use, but to continue exactly the use that the land is under now...

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, to prevent it from going into foreign ownership cannot be a reason under the Land Acquisition Act. It cannot be because if that were so, that would be an infringement of the constitutional rights of the owner, if the owner was identifiable to sell his property. That cannot be a basis. I am saying to you that while we will go along with it because of the subjective arguments which appear on the face of them to be sensible, the Land Acquisition Act is not the appropriate mechanism for dealing with the issue of John Moore's shop. They may have been many other approaches that Government could have used. I think that all of those approaches should have been exhausted.

It sets an extremely dangerous precedent in Barbados. A Prime Minister can get in his car, drive up and down the country, identify specific properties that in his subjective opinion should be acquired under the Land Acquisition Act because he believes, in his subjective opinion, that they contribute something to the heritage of Barbados and yet at the same time there are other properties, other deserving business people who may be in similar circumstances, but in his, and the Government's subjective opinion, they are not entitled to the protection of any legislation.

I want to repeat. Nothing has been said on that Side which bring the acquisition of this land under the four corners, the purpose and intention of the Land Acquisition Act.

I am not going to complain about it. But this much I will say, do not use the Land Acquisition Act again to go this route, because there may very well be people who own land* in Barbados, who for very curious reasons advanced by the Government find that their land is acquired, using the precedent of John Moore, which is not a fair and just way to use the Land Acquisition Act to acquire land. There are other ways to do it and there may very well be a strong reason to try and retain John Moore's shop. 2.55 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: There may be good reason to do that. What you are doing is acquiring it for essentially a business operation. What is the difference between Mr. Adamson and...

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, I do not want to call any other names because if I do that, the Honourable Member for St Andrew is going to get agitated too... on the same west coast, but I am not calling it. I am going to keep the debate at a certain level.

What is the difference between Mr. Adamson and a poor old lady who has a house on the beach which a rich white owner of an international bank privately owns, who wishes to extend his personal property? The Land Acquisition Act must not be used in this way in Barbados. I am saying while John Moore's...

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. I just wish to point out to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that section 3 of the Land Acquisition Act is drafted in such a way as to allow the need for subjectivity:

"Whenever it appears to the Minister that any land is likely to be acquired for any purposes for which the Crown is authorised by any Act to acquire land or for any purposes which, in the opinion of the Minister, are public purposes, a notification to that effect shall be published in three successive issues of the Official Gazette and of a daily newspaper in this island under the hand of the Permanent Secretary to the Minister." So that the determination as to public purpose is entirely subjective to the Minister.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am very disappointed in the Attorney General today. I am absolutely flabbergasted to hear such an interpretation put on a discretion exercised by a Minister - that it is simply subjective.

The expression, public purposes, had been settled very clearly in British administrative law. Every time you pick up an administrative law book or case book, you see that that is what the argument is constantly about in the United Kingdom when a Minister invokes his power and his discretion. No Minister can invoke that discretion subjectively. It has to be done fairly. It has to be done within the four corners of the Act.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Well, we have some brilliant lawyers on that side. I do not know what has gone to their heads in this debate. Mr. Speaker, Sir, something has gone to the head of the Government and what I suspect has gone to the head of the Government is that they have now recognised by the arguments advanced on this Side that the Land Acquisition Act is not the piece of legislation that

should be used to acquire land to allow a man to continue to do exactly the same business that he is doing on that land. That is not the purpose of the Land Acquisition Act.

Now, I am not saying that the Government should not have a power in certain circumstances to do that kind of thing. What I am trying to explain is that there is a valid reason for the existence of a Land Acquisition Act. If a Minister gets in his car, as the Minister of Housing appears to want to do and I am only going based on what he is saying *sotto voce*, and drives around Barbados and based on what is in his subjective knowledge, what somebody told him last night at dinner, or yesterday at lunch, he sees an old house somewhere and he believes that that old house should not be there because the person he had dinner with or lunch with yesterday wants that property to improve their standard of living - extend their property, give them beach access or something. Are you telling me that the Land Acquisition Act should be invoked in Barbados to acquire that land, because the Minister in his subjective opinion believes that that is a public purpose.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: It is not. The Attorney General should not subscribe to that view and I am saying that he should withdraw the interpretation that he just put before this House, because if we were to follow and it remains in Hansard, it provides the widest and most reckless and irresponsible way for a Minister not guided by the principles of fairness and social justice, could walk around Barbados and in his subjective opinion, acquire any piece of land.

We have always felt and I have heard Members on that Side, when they were over here, and when they were over there, take the position that that is not the way that the Land Acquisition Act is supposed to be used. And all we are trying to say on this Side is, we are not opposing the acquisition of that property. We are saying that it is just fortunate that you cannot identify the owner of that land, because if the owner was identifiable and the Government sought to invoke the Land Acquisition Act, he would have a very clear case against the Government of Barbados and there are settled cases on the use of the Land Acquisition Act in circumstances such as this.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Now, the Honourable Member for St. Andrew asked me to give him some examples, but he is the expert in this area. I would defer to him. He may not want to do the research but I will defer. I admit that the Honourable Member for St. Andrew in this particular regard is extremely well qualified: Planning

applications, land matters. So the Honourable Member does not have to get hostile and agitated simply because we are making this position and it is not in consonance with his objective view. He knows if he takes up any planning law book, if he picks up any book on administrative law, if he picks up any book on constitutional law that there is a very clear way in which the Land Acquisition Act is used and in which the Minister determines what is for a public purpose.

There are privy council cases on it and it is not subjective.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of order. The language of the Act itself is subjective. The Minister applies objective criteria as to what is implied as public purposes, but he has to make the decision. He cannot say that it is public purpose if the criteria for determining are foolish. You have to determine public purpose by an objective standard, but it is for the Minister to decide. That is why I said it is subjective. That is all I am saying, Sir.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Now, you have now said what you are saying. And I am glad that you said that. It now makes sense. What you said earlier did not make sense. Go back and read the Hansard when it gets published and see if what you said earlier makes sense. The objective standard is that the public purpose must be for things that fall within Government's capital works programme for the improvement of the common good and there is a whole list of categories that fall into that.

The whole reason why there is a section in the Act that if the land is acquired for a particular purpose but not used for that purpose, it must revert to its owner, is because there must be a very clear standard and objective standard on what a public purpose is and the Minister must have in his mind a particular use. So he cannot acquire it for a school and then next week say,

"Look I am not going to use it for a school, or let me only use half for a school and let me give somebody else the other half."

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Precisely, but there is a reason for that. Because there must be some standard which the Minister applies in coming to that judgment. 3.05 p.m.

There must be some distinction between those different scenarios. Now, I repeat we are therefore not disputing that it is desirable to keep John Moore's Shop in the way that it is. But what we are talking about is the question of the use of the Land Acquisition Act in any capricious or arbitrary way.

That is something that one has to watch very very carefully. I cannot think of another occasion in which in recent times I have seen the Land Acquisition Act being used in this way.

There are other solutions available to Government*. Government does not have to use the Land Acquisition Act. Government can, one assumes, enter into some arrangement with any and all of the potential owners of the property to purchase the property when the owners identify them and leave the owners to work out who owns it. Take over the property because you do not have any need for the fee simple to the property at this stage. You are not selling it. The man is not mortgaging it to do anything. He is already operating the business so there is no urgency for the title to be transferred to Government unless Government is hoping to do something else with it. I can see why you would wish to acquire the land on which the tenants are situated because they may very well wish to purchase the land and go on to get mortgages and put houses on it and so on.

But in relation to the shop as I understand it and nobody in here has said anything differently. The shopkeeper is not doing anything new. He is not about to expand the premises. He is not about to enter into an arrangement with the Government for paying more rent or anything like that. This is why one has to be careful. We must not always assume that the Land Acquisition Act is used by a Government in a charitable way. Land Acquisition Acts have been used by some Governments to deprive poor people of land in a very capricious and arbitrary manner.

There are thousands of Barbadians who have seen Government from time to time enter on their premises and do all kinds of things without even the basic courtesies being extended to them. Not just under this administration under previous administrations. All I say to the Attorney General is that I do not think that this is the most appropriate way to use the Land Acquisition Act and the Government could very well say that look, this is not the way we are going to use it all the time but we feel in these subjective circumstances that we have to use the Land Acquisition Act to achieve our ends. If that is what the Government is saying then you have no problem with us. But unless you are going to address it from that point of view then in our view it is not the most appropriate use of the Land Acquisition Act.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I will just want to make a point that as far as we are concerned the Resolution speaks in the Schedule that the land in question is owned by a Mr. James W. Worrell and he lives apparently in Germany. It is also believed that when the proprietor of John Moore's Bar was given the letter to quit operation it was believed that this land would have been transferred to non-residents of Barbados. The present Government believes that the Land Acquisition Act was used not in any derogatory manner but

to facilitate not only the cultural integrity of this institution but to provide opportunities for other recreational facilities as well.

I will want to say that the Land Acquisition Act has never been used for any other purpose than for public purpose. We will continue to use the Land Acquisition Act and at times we will also negotiate with the owners of properties. We use from time to time, Mr. Speaker, the private treaty, when we can identify the owners of a land we usually go into private treaty with the owner so that the Land Compulsory Acquisition Act will not be invoked.

But I want to make the point over again that from time to time we will have to use the Land Acquisition Act especially since there are a number of properties on the seaside in Barbados and Government will have to use the Act to preserve the land integrity of this land. We will have to use the Act to make sure that the lands remain...

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: On a point of order. First of all I do not believe that the Honourable Member wishes to say that and therefore should be cautious in saying it. But the second point that needs to be made is that that is not the purpose of the Land Acquisition Act. Zone the land. Zone it. Say that these areas must be for Barbadians but the Land Acquisition Act is not the legislation that should be used to acquire land that you do not wish alienated. That is not the legislation. It has never been the basis for using the Land Acquisition Act. Zone the land. Read our Manifestos. Zone it.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ORDER NO. 4 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING
CORPORATION UNDER SECTION 5
OF THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING
AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225
OF LAND AT FARMERS,
SAINT THOMAS FOR
HOUSING PURPOSES

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the Resolution before the House seeks permission to vest an additional 6.882 hectares of land at Farmers, St. Thomas in the National Housing Corporation for housing development. One will recall that we undertook a long debate on this when the acquisition came up.

Mr. Speaker, the previous acquisition of this parcel here that we are vesting was 6.882 hectares of land and it will give more I will think about thirteen acres of land which would provide more than fifty-two lots for the people who have to be resited from Whitehill, St. Andrew and from the areas of Hillaby and Turners Hall.

It is important, Mr. Speaker, that the we vest this land in the National Housing Corporation so that the relocation of those persons in Whitehill can continue. Already, I understand from my Ministry that over fifty-two houses have been relocated to date and there is still a need for forty-four more persons in the Whitehill area to be relocated.

So with those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I beg that the Resolution do now pass.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.
3.15p.m.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, you know there is an ongoing debate in this country about the National Housing Corporation and the cost of the various houses they are building. One or two weeks ago, Sir, I saw the astonishing statistics that the National Housing Corporation is building chattel houses at a cost of between \$140 to \$160 per square foot.

I am saying that if at every Estimates we have to come to this Parliament to vote money for an organisation to build houses for poor people between \$ 140 to \$ 160 per square foot for a wooden structure I am saying that this Parliament should call on the National Housing Corporation to stop building houses for poor people because, in my opinion, they are wasting taxpayers' money and those houses for the poor people of this country that the cost is too high and I will tell you why.

About a day after we last had a session in this Parliament and I spoke about housing for poor people, the National Housing Corporation came out with statistics. The day after, Sir, I saw where there is a private citizen in this country selling greenheart houses, the same thing, for \$34 000. I am saying that any Government that asks any poor person to buy a house from them between \$ 13 0 to \$ 160 a square foot should resign the same time because to me that is highway robbery.

I am calling on this Parliament to mandate the Minister to dictate a policy to NHC that they stop building houses and buy greenheart houses and put on all the lots. I will tell you why, Sir. If that happens, each house and lot would only cost the poor people \$50 000, land and house. It would be \$34 000 for the house and 3 000 square feet at \$5 will be \$15 000. That would be \$34 000 plus \$15 000 is \$49 000. You still have \$1 000 to knock around out of the \$50 000.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: The same 630 square feet that you are selling for over \$80 000. The National Housing Corporation is robbing the poor people in this country, not the Minister. He would not do anything like that. He is too nice a man to do something like that.

You know why it hurts me, Sir? I voted for the National Housing Corporation to get land to sell to poor people but instead of their selling the land to the poor people, they go to bed with people to build houses for \$80 000 when you can get the same said house in a faster time for \$34 000 plus \$15 000. I am telling the NHC to call all of those poor people and pay them a cheque tomorrow for \$31 000 because they would have deprived the poor people of over \$31 000. I think it is a shame that you get a Government Corporation that is supposed to be helping poor people going to bed with people to deprive them of their financial gains that they would have accumulated over the year.

I am telling the Minister now, Sir - I do not know the name of the gentleman who builds the greenheart houses but I am asking the Minister tomorrow to call that gentleman in and give him a contract for all the houses to house poor people because those poor people will save \$31 000.

Sir, this mad scheme where Government is running around to build 2 000 for the year 2000 is going to cost...

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am saying, Sir, that if the Minister continues with this policy that by the year 2000 when he builds 2 000 houses he would have extracted \$62 million from poor people, 2 000 by \$31 000. This policy would have been worse on poor people than VAT because it would only be on housing, alone. I am saying this is disgraceful.

You know what is hurtful, Sir? Those same people went to the polls trusting this Government so much that they gave them a mandate of 26-2 and now this Government in repaying them is extracting \$62 million more in housing alone from these poor people.

I know, Mr. Speaker. I think you have heard these statistics and there is no way you would allow NHC to go anywhere in your constituency and build houses for your constituents because every one house they are building you can get two point something from the private sector. I want to know from NHC where the money is going because if it was happening to people who could defend themselves, I would not mind.

It is rather interesting, Sir, because they came up with the policy of how much money they were going to lend the people first, upfront. Then all of a sudden they came up with the price they were, going to hit the people with. In other words, Sir, even if the house did not cost the \$75 000 or the \$80 000, they recognised that the poor people had a facility for the \$75 000 to \$80 000 so they said this would be the cost of the house. That is how it appears to me, Sir. Then it appears to me that they said at least you could come and get a loan because you do not have to make any down payment. You will have 100% mortgage and low interest, 6% interest, so they call in all my poor people, and some of the middle-class and they say: "Come and get these houses. You do not have to pay down anything. You can go and live in them from tomorrow" and they fell for the trap. Only did they know after they signed up that they could have purchased that piece of land for \$15 000, 3 000 square feet at \$5. They could have gone and entered into an arrangement for a greenheart house.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Not only that, Sir, but with that \$75 000 those same poor people could be driving a car too. I do not really support reconditioned cars but it would have given them a reconditioned car too. What NHC is doing is depriving people from having a reconditioned car, a house and a piece of land. The private sector and the people who are supposed to be so bad, what they are doing is offering a greenheart house for \$34 000 and hopefully they can get the land from NHC 3 000 square feet at \$5, which would be \$15 000.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, that is why I am going to tell you that at Plum Tree which is in St. Thomas, and Farmers, in St. James, Apes Hill, all of them are in that area and you have to pass Shop Hill to get there. That is why when I pass Shop Hill I had to curse the houses I saw up in Shop Hill that Eastern Land Development was building when I was going to Farmers and Plum Tree because I know that that land development was set up with good plans because they knew.

I said that in this Parliament, Sir, and no one listened to me. I was saying that all the time and that is why I am calling on the Honourable Member for St. Thomas to make sure that no constituent from St. Thomas purchases any of those houses when they go to Farmers.

Aside.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: They have gone? If I was the parliamentary representative for St. Thomas I might have

have to resign because I could not have advised my people to buy them. Then again the St. Thomas people would not have bought them anyhow. We are different from that. So I am saying that the National Housing Corporation must understand that they are the offspring of poor people too and they must understand the feelings of poor people. It hurts me because it is not only NHC, Sir, there is another Government department where poor people were paying \$13 and they were able to use that facility to plant crops and things like that. Do you understand what I am saying, Sir? The problem is not only in NHC but in nearly every Government Department you can think about.

Can you imagine paying \$13 a month and then all of a sudden somebody brings a gadget and attaches it on to the one you have and then all of a sudden they do not bill you for two years but you are paying \$13 and all of a sudden you get a bill from them for \$9 500 telling you that you owe \$9 500? Yes, the Water Authority, Mr. Speaker. 3.25 p.m.

First they do not tell you all the time that you owe them but all of a sudden two years after, they come and tell you that you owe a bill for \$9 500. I am saying that that cannot be fair because if you had said to the person up front you are incurring this cost and they did not pay it they would be entitled to pay it. You cannot tell a man two years after he has incurred a cost where previously you have asked him to pay only \$13. You cannot and I am saying to the citizens of Barbados that if something is not done about it everyone should stop paying their bills. If you were paying something you cannot jump to \$350 in the same month. Somebody in this country must have a heart. The problem in this country it seems to me is that all of a sudden nobody has a heart and everybody is for self and they are forgetting where they have come from. Nobody remembers that it is the pigs and the kitchen garden that took them to school and now has them in Government positions and big jobs in this country. All of a sudden we have forgotten where we came from and we are doing things to our own that I cannot believe that I would ever see in this country. Do not ask me to be a part of it because I cannot be. Don't ask the Speaker to be part of it either or my comrade because I know this triangle cannot be.

That Side will have to defend themselves on this particular matter and must tell the public. I am saying that at Farmers this land where the vesting is I would hope that when the people are relocated that if there are any lots remaining that NHC would not be allowed to touch one to build a house.

I have said to this House before that when NHC came to this House they came for land not for lots to build houses and that is what should be given to them, land to sell because they do not have a good record with building. If they are going to build let them build for the rich. I do not want NHC

building for the poor. The rich can defend themselves against NHC but the poor cannot. That is why I am saying that all of these lots should be put out and sold to the people and let them go to the person who is offering a greenheart house for \$24 000 and let them buy it but please do not stop the \$75 000 loan because some of them still need a little transportation because of the bus service in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I hope I would have put a case for yourself because I know, Sir, that if you were standing here today you would have put the same case and that is why I feel committed to putting the case for you also. Thank you very much.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I really did not intend to speak on this matter. This is a vesting of a property which has already been acquired and a full debate on this matter has already taken place in this House. It is interesting to note that every time the Honourable Member for St. Lucy speaks on any particular subject if he has to speak on four or five different occasions on the same thing he says something different. His contribution in this House when this matter was debated was something completely different from what he is saying now.

I would not normally want to respond but here again lest the record is distorted I think that it is incumbent on me to clarify a few points. The Honourable Member is attempting to make one believe that the National Housing Corporation is selling property at exorbitant prices. This is not true. What has happened is that the National Housing Corporation has been making land available to persons who would not be able to get that land on the open market at competitive prices and at the same time satisfying the need for the same poor black people to which the Honourable Member for St. Lucy so frequently alludes.

What we did in the National Housing Corporation was to compare the prices on the open market with respect to the chattel houses that he is speaking about and the houses which are sold by the National Housing Corporation are the lowest in prices for any house anywhere in Barbados. When he is talking about the size of the houses it is totally misleading. It is so misleading that I cannot understand how a member could come to this House and so mislead the House. If I were not in this House I could say openly tell lies, when he knows that what he is saying is not true.

You are dealing with houses which have 10x10 bedrooms. I have a 10x10 bedroom in my house where I live. I do not know what the Honourable Member is speaking about. The cost of the land is less than the cost of developing. The cost to the purchaser is less than the development cost to the National Housing Corporation. I do not know where he has got his figures from. The cost of the

actual housing first there is no question about the sizes. We have had about 1 200 requests in Apes Hill for 40 houses. I do not know where he got this 62 million from.

We are responding to a need. With respect to Farmers the houses which are being built were built to accommodate persons who have to be relocated as a result of land slippage so I do not know what he is talking about. The houses at Eastern Land Development is a private development and even Land Development is satisfying the need and in respect to that need there are more people for those houses than there are houses available. That goes to show the popularity of those residences. So I really do not know what the Honourable Member is talking about. It is making it appear as though the National Housing Corporation is constructing houses and ripping off poor people.

I do not think that an Honourable Member should come in this House and make those sorts of statements. This is the reason why there is this 26-2 which you alluded to because the people could not believe you. "Crime and violence" - the people could not believe you.

To come to this House to mislead the House like that I think that he should be ashamed of himself. The Honourable Member is misleading this House. The Honourable Member for St. George North since he was Minister in this House I heard him articulate a policy which is in our White Paper in respect to the construction of 2 000 houses. This is the plan of the National Housing Corporation.

We are embarking on a similar policy in order to satisfy the needs of the poor black people from St. Lucy, St. Michael, St. John and all over Barbados. I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, that we should dwell on this point because this is one case where I am sure that the Honourable Member is not speaking out of ignorance. He is being deliberately mischievous.

With those brief remarks, Mr. Speaker, I am obliged to you. 3.35 p.m.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank the Honourable Minister of Tourism for his explanation. I also want to say, Sir, that the Honourable Member for St. Lucy apparently has been able to convince some people in Barbados who do not necessarily analyse data. I speak particularly about the Press. Some members of the Press carried an article recently in which they were saying that the National Housing Corporation is selling lots of 640 square feet. I must say, Sir, that the lots which the National Housing Corporation is selling are between 3 000 to 4 500 square feet...

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order, Sir. The Honourable Member knows quite well that he is misleading the House. I have never spoken to this House about any lots at 640 square feet or 630 square feet. It is impossible to build anything on 630 square feet. The example that I gave today, Sir, was 3 000 square feet. If the Honourable Minister wants to talk about a house size, that is a different matter.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, I am saying that the Member gave this House and Barbadians the impression that the National Housing Corporation is taking people for a ride and that we are in bed with the private sector. We have always had joint ventures. Not this Government only, that Side as well had joint ventures with the private sector. That Side and this Side had always sold land between 3 500 square feet and 4 000 square feet for low income earners.

It is also important to know, Mr. Speaker, that the size of the houses vary from 430 square feet to 640 square feet - starter houses for low income earners. We are building two-bedroom masonry houses as well as three-bedroom masonry houses and wooden houses which are two bedrooms and three bedrooms. As the Minister of Tourism has pointed out, the average bedroom is between 90 square feet and 100 square feet. This is an average size.

I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that when you look at the size of the houses, for a starter house, that is admirable. I have gone in the last three weeks to Kenya. We have looked at houses in Great Britain and these starter houses compared favourably to the houses in Africa as well as the houses in other Caribbean islands and in Great Britain. The cost of a 3 500 square feet lot or 4 000 square feet lot is between \$16 000 to \$20 000. The cost of the lot, Mr. Speaker, varies from \$3.50 per square foot to \$4.50 per square foot for low income earners. When you look at what the private sector is selling, many private developers are selling lots at \$10 and \$12 and I believe it goes as high as \$15 per square foot. We, in the Ministry of Housing, are keeping the price of land right down.

I want to say to Honourable Members that a first time home owner does not really pay the true cost of the land because the acquisition cost is not included. The cost of developing land today is between \$3.50 and \$4.00 a square foot. This is the cost of developing including putting in water, road, electricity and so on. The cost is quite high. The other point, Mr. Speaker, is that we have to be involving the private sector. The private sector has to construct the homes. The National Housing Corporation cannot construct all the homes in Barbados. We have to construct the houses that you are talking about. We are constructing today, 20 timber houses in St. John. We are constructing houses in Briar Hall in Christ Church. We are constructing houses in Fanners.

Across Barbados we are constructing low income houses to give low income earners the opportunity to own something. Therefore, it is not fair to say that the price of the house is too high.

I do not know of any contractor, Mr. Speaker, who can build three-bedroom houses at \$31 000 per house. If the Honourable Member knows of such contractors and these contractors are legitimate contractors and are worth their salt, let us know. We have gone out to tender and most of the contractors who tendered for these homes came in at \$175 and \$ 174 per square foot for the masonry units. Some came in at \$ 129 and \$ 138 per square foot for the wooden structure. When we got the contractors together, we met with them and offered a reduced price and all of them accepted our prices. The masonry prices was \$ 125 per square foot and the timber houses was \$105 per square foot. Again, our prices were lower than the prices that the contractors stated in their tender.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Honourable Member would have to be misleading the House because some two weeks ago I saw a release from the National Housing Corporation quoting \$ 180 per square foot as building cost and between \$130 to \$160 for the cost of a wooden structure. I do not know if at the time when the Minister made that agreement with the contractors the Board made a change, but it appears to me that what the Minister wants and what he is getting is completely different.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: I am simply saying that the negotiation prices with the contractors after we went to tender, that many contractors came in at various prices and I made the point that they ranged much higher than the \$ 125 that we offered them to build the masonry units and \$ 105 to build the timber units. Mr. Speaker, I am also saying that when you look at the cost of construction today, nobody in Barbados can get a proper three-bedroom home for less than \$50000.

Asides.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: What are you talking about? The cost of labour has gone up tremendously. Are you saying that the guy who is building the house for \$31 000, is he putting in toilet and bath? Is he sinking the well? What type of house are you talking about? If you are talking about only a shell then, are you talking about only a wooden shell or are you talking about a house that a person can put a key and turn and live?

Asides.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: This is what we are providing. We are providing a complete house. As the Honourable Minister of Tourism has pointed out, we intend to keep our promise to Barbadians. We intend to provide low income

houses. The demand for these houses is very great and we will continue on our path.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say too that the costs of terraced units have increased tremendously and we have to look at that too. He knows that the building costs have gone up. I would not want to tell you the cost of building one unit in a terrace block. You will see that it is much cheaper to build a three-bedroom home than to build a terraced unit.

Mr. Speaker, with those remarks, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ORDER NO. 5 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING
CORPORATION UNDER SECTION 5 OF
THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING
AND DISPOSAL) ACT, CAP. 225
OF LAND IN ST. ANN'S
SAINT JOSEPH FOR
HOUSING PURPOSES

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the land at St. Ann's, St. Joseph was previously acquired by Government in 1978. And it was acquired at a time for the World Bank project with the Ministry of Education to provide a school at St. Ann's in St. Joseph.

Over the years, Mr. Speaker, it was realised that the school population of St. Ann's was dwindling. In fact, the school has not been relocated and I understand there is one school now at the St. Joseph Primary School which is now situated at Horse Hill. A new school was built at Horse Hill. The land therefore became vacant. The 7513 square metres of land became vacant.

Over the years the Ministry of Labour and Community Development intended to put a community centre at the site. This never materialised and in 1994 when the Government took office we carried out a survey of all the lands that were owned by Government and to look at its use. It was agreed that the land at St. Ann's, St. Joseph would be better suited for housing development. The surveys were carried out. We discussed the plan with the people in the area and with the representative and it was agreed that the land at St. Ann's should be vested in the National Housing Corporation.

When this land is vested in the National Housing Corporation, Mr. Speaker, it will be used primarily for housing development. The National Housing Corporation will either undertake a plan to see how it can be used in terms of either cutting it up in lots - sites and services that is

or erecting terraced units or we could even sell it to persons who would want to buy it for housing development.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we believe that this 7 513 square metres of land is ideally suited because it is situated not very far from the St. Ann's Church, right in Parris Hill and it is just in a community. It will also add additional house spots for the people of St. Joseph, where I understand there is a strong demand for housing.

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ORDER NO. 6 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
VESTING IN BARBADOS TOURISM INVEST-
MENT INCORPORATED UNDER SECTION 5 OF
THE CROWN LANDS (VESTING AND DISPOSAL)
ACT, CAP. 225 OF LAND AT PRINCESS ALICE
HIGHWAY SAINT MICHAEL

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, again when we took office in 1994, it was agreed by the Government to also look at the lands that were owned by the Crown in the Bridgetown areas. There are a number of properties that are owned by the Government and we have so far vested a lot of these lands in the Barbados Tourism and Investment Incorporated (BTII).

The land that we are talking about, Mr. Speaker, is 3 352.3 square metres at Princess Alice Highway which will be vested in the BTII. It is a car park near the Furniture Limited and it is temporarily being used now for vending and other recreational purposes. I believe that when this property is vested in this tourism body that they will use it to not only benefit the tourist industry, but it will be an added attraction to Bridgetown and its environs.

So far, Mr. Speaker, we have looked at other properties in Bridgetown which we have vested or are about to vest in the BTII. We have vested properties in Bay Street. We have vested properties on the Princess Alice Highway already and this additional piece of land will no doubt help the BTII to invest and to go out to the private sector where they can get their added funds to carry out the work that they are doing.

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution to vest the property in the BTII be accepted.

Hon. Sir HAROLD St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to ask a question because we do not have the benefit of a plan of this particular piece of land here. But what I would like to know is the relationship of this particular piece of land to that building which was known as the old town hall. I do remember that in relation to the temple yard that it was envisaged a considerable period of time ago that the Town Hall, Temple Yard and Cheapside Market, including the land that is fronting on Princess Alice Highway and also including the land that is now used by the Abattoir would be the subject of a comprehensive redevelopment scheme. I notice that considerable developments are taking place in that area, so I would wish to find out how the whole scheme would be implemented. As I understand it, somebody has to be responsible for the comprehensive planning. The Government obviously is going to retain their ownership of the market because I noticed in a release recently that the scheme for the redevelopment of the Cheapside Market has now almost reached finality. I want to ensure, Sir, that by vesting this land in the BTII that the use that is made of this land will be compatible with the comprehensive redevelopment scheme for that whole area. The whole of that area is really ripe for development and it is a principal gateway and an outlet for people coining off the ships to come right up to Bridgetown. So I would like to know about that, Sir.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, the property at Princess Alice Highway will be used as a multi-storey car park. It is proposed to develop the old town hall into an office complex and therefore this property will help the users of that complex and you know that we have a problem of parking around Bridgetown and it will no doubt add to the attraction of the area and I do not believe that it will impact negatively at all on the development of Bridgetown. 3.55 p.m.

The Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. (BTII) has assured us that there is a heavy demand for office space in Bridgetown. There is a heavy demand for investment opportunities in Bridgetown and as I said before this parcel of land that we are vesting in them will help them to achieve their objectives in the near future.

I thank you.

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

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the substantive Chairman of Committees is out of the Island. If the House can concur, I beg to move that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central be appointed for today's sitting to be Chairman of Committees

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

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

On the motion of the Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, the House resolved itself into Committee of Supply, Mr. D. T. GILL in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

ORDER NO. 8 - RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$2 692 328 FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 1999-2000 AS SET OUT IN SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 1

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, this sum of \$2 692 328 a relatively large sum early in this financial year is really for the purpose of settling certain outstanding claims and fees due at the end of the financial year. There are a number of claims and fees which the Ministry had thought we would have been able to deal with at the end of the financial year. It was not anticipated that we would have been in the situation where they would not have been settled. As a result, provision was not made for all of these items in the Estimates of Expenditure.

There are four principal items, first of which relates to final designs for certain infrastructural improvements. This dates back to December 1996 an agreement entered into with Island Engineering Ltd. and the Government for provision of the final designs and services for infrastructural improvements for Princess Alice Highway, Hincks Street, Broad Street and associated Streets. This figure is \$18 262.

The second figure relates to fees which are due to David Shorey & Co. as a result of a contract which was entered into during the last financial year pertaining to consultancy services to the preparation of a new fiscal legal and regulatory framework for the tourism industry.

As you know there is a new Green Paper on tourism, which will shortly be published, the details of which I will deal with at some later stage. It will be necessary as a result of the interventions which were made in this consultancy to make certain changes to certain legislation in connection with the tourism industry. The sum of \$375 000 is required to meet the contractual obligation in this financial year. It is anticipated that we would be able to have the final report completed by the middle of July.

The third outstanding claim relates to the restoration of an area surrounding the Jewish Synagogue. About two years

ago Cabinet had approved a contract with Tomlin Voss Associates for certain design services pertaining to the area surrounding the Jewish Synagogue. There are certain outstanding contractual payments and Tomlin Voss has to reimburse certain expenses which were payable by them. That figure is \$14 066.

The largest component, Mr. Chairman, relates to part of the Urban Rehabilitation Project which is being dealt with by the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. as a separate project. There will be a special bond issue which will be guaranteed by Government in order to deal with this entire programme. This programme envisages improvement and upgrading of large areas not only in the urban corridor but certain areas as far as Speightstown. It is a massive project which will cost in the vicinity of some \$85 million but it will be over a period of about five years.

This particular project in respect of the St. Lawrence Gap and the Bridgetown Street Lighting Programme as well as the lights for the Parliament Building was pulled from the Urban Rehab. Project. This was pulled from the Urban Rehab. Project together with the Wharf Road you would have noticed that there are some works which are taking place at the Wharf.

These are projects we felt that were critical and we had to deal with them. The Wharf Project is one which will cost about \$10 million but that is under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Works and I believe that later in the year they probably will be doing the same thing if the funds are not adequate for that purpose.

We were hoping with respect to the street lighting programmes that Everson Elcock and Co. the contractor would have been able to complete this project when it was first conceptualized and when it was thought that it should have been pulled. But it so happened, Mr. Chairman, that this was not possible. As a result we need these funds in order to complete the project. The contract has already been executed, the mobilization has already been paid to Everson Elcock and the remaining fees in the sum of \$2 285 000 is required in order to complete the project. That makes a total of \$2 692 328.

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that this Resolution stand part.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.
4.05 p.m.

Hon. Sir HAROLD St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, some of this money is related to the provision of street lighting in an area which generates periodically a tremendous amount of publicity particularly in the area of the concern of businessmen, residents and others to the high level of crime in that area.

Now, St. Lawrence Gap has been developed for the tourist industry certainly since the early 1920s in Barbados. What we do have in St. Lawrence Gap is the fact that over the course of the last 15 years there has been a tremendous increase in business activity in that area.

I remember I was the Minister of Tourism in the early 1980s when a decision was taken that in view of the congestion that arose from traffic in that area that the road should remain a one-way street. Since then, considerable economic activity has increased. There is no question, about it. It does attract on a nightly basis a considerable number of visitors, not only from abroad but visitors from other parts of Barbados. It is badly in need of rehabilitation. Street lighting is only one part of the problem there. There are many other problems, the problem of parking and the problem of adequate security arrangements particularly in the form of policing.

I myself believe that the simple creation of a police post in that particular gap will not necessarily solve the problems and I will give you my reasons. Less than 20 yards from the entrance to St. Lawrence Gap is a police station. That is a fact. If you pass there during the night, you do see an increased number of police officers. In addition to that I know myself that for a long period of time in addition to the regular police there has been the presence of a number of island constables in that area. It is true that only recently they are now dressing in a manner in which they can readily be identified but we do have real problems in that area. I believe we need to have a comprehensive policy to deal with all aspects of the problems in that area.

Certainly there is a need for increased policing or increased police presence. Certainly, there is a need for additional business outlets. I hope that sooner or later that the other facility at the beach area in St. Lawrence will be built.

In 1984/85 on an experimental basis the beach vendors were taken off the beach and some put into an enclosed area in a building which was attractively designed. It was supposed to have another beach facility. That was never built. I hope that is resuscitated and built because the vending in St. Lawrence Gap, in my opinion, some of it is taking place now in a very undesirable way because of the fact that people are actually vending on the sidewalks. When I say vending, I want to make it clear that I am not only talking about people vending art work and things like that. There are people who are actually selling timesharing units in the road. We always understood that that should come under the general control of the Vending laws.

Now, if there is a defect in the law, I feel it should be plugged because my understanding of the position is, and I have done a lot of work in this area, that when the police try

to enforce the law in one area that people tell them: "Why are you harassing me? Why do you not go and harass those other people? They are doing the same thing I am doing."

I go further, Sir. There is a strong feeling of lawlessness in the whole Gap arising from the fact that a number of people have infringed the Town and Country Planning laws and actually built in the road. There are restaurants there that when you pass the roads you see on top of you, so to speak, tables serving drinks. Now, I always heard that in St. Lawrence Gap, since the 1960s, that there were strict rules that you could not build a building or operate nearer to the road than what is known as the building line. If you go through St. Lawrence Gap you will see a number of people have taken upon themselves and extended their establishments virtually into the road.

All of this is what has created some of the indiscipline in the area because as soon as one set of people know that laws are enforced in one area then other people who are affected say: "Why are you enforcing the law against me when there are others who are equally breaking the law?" I mentioned that to say that there is a complex problem in that St. Lawrence Gap area. Lighting will certainly improve it but I do not think that is going to be the solution to all of the problems. We need to have a comprehensive look at the area.

Sir, in respect of Bridgetown, I am hoping that at some time we will be able to have the rebuilding of the Swing Bridge. I also feel that in Bridgetown to the east of the Duncan O'Neal Bridge that it is possible to have a development which will allow vending to take place there. That is an excellent market site. There is no question about that. A modern engineer would be able to do a span which would be able to cover the bridge area and have an enclosed area overlooking, so to speak, the river and overlooking that square.

I recall that it was part of a project which was envisaged by a former Minister of Communications and Works who was in charge of the Ministry at the time when the Fairchild Street Market was built that where Julie ⁵N is now and where the Bus Terminal is now that for some part of that area there would be a covered area to allow vending. Again, unless you provide facilities for the vendors in such circumstances as the public can get the clear impression that they have an alternative to vending on the road we are not going to be able to enforce the law effectively.

I want to say this, Sir, that I personally believe that sometimes why the law is not enforced is because of a fundamental feeling by the law enforcement authorities that the Government is asking them to pick on people when they do not have another alternative means of earning their living.

Now, if you pass by the Duncan O'Neal, particularly on Fridays, you will see fish vending, vegetable vending and everything taking place. One must admire the spirit of the entrepreneurs. I would expect, Sir, that it should be part of the policy of the Government to ensure that those entrepreneurial activities are not prohibited but they are regulated and an integral part of the regulation, in my opinion, is providing an alternate physical place for them other than the public streets to operate in congenial circumstances. I would be glad if we could hear about those two areas. 4.15 p.m.

With respect to the consultancy, I was surprised when I began taking an interest once again in Government and its function that there is a large amount of work being done now by consultancies as opposed to work done in house. It is not only in this country that it is happening because if one follows some of the journals in other areas of the world, the democratic countries in particular one would see that it is a complaint too of other governments that the consultancies have taken over the function in areas in which the research departments of the public service used to carry out.

As a matter of fact, in private enterprise I saw a statement the other day by a chairman of a very big private company in the United Kingdom who had some very caustic things to say about the standard of work of consultancies. He said that their board had taken a decision that in future they would look seriously at the utility and the usefulness of some of their top quality employees because those top quality employees spend all of their time encouraging the board to hire consultants instead of doing the work for which they were hired. So perhaps we should have a look too at that because there is a tremendous amount of work that is done and the important thing is not that you should not have work done by the consultants but that mechanisms should be set up to ensure that when the recommendations are made that they are either implemented or they are openly rejected so that you would know in the future that you do not have to go over some of this work. There is obviously some duplication of effort.

I am very glad to see that the Government is now well in a position to deal with the fiscal, legal and regulatory framework of the tourism industry in general. I do not believe that a comprehensive look has been taken at that for a number of years. I believe the Hotel Aids Act was last revised in 1962. I know that what has happened in the interim is that because of the deficiencies in the Act the Minister of Finance either in his capacity as Minister of Finance in relation to the Duties, Taxes and Exemptions or in relation to the powers granted to him under the Customs Act that as a result of representation a sub-regime so to speak - there is a sub-regime in that area which is in existence. Concessions have been granted in relation to duty free entry

for goods outside of the Schedule that you have in the Hotel Aids Act.

The time has come for a comprehensive review and I would urge that if we are to remain competitive that we understand that all over the world in the developed and in the developing countries and here in the Caribbean, the whole of the OECS groups, Jamaica and others, have got a new regime far more generous than ours in many respects in relation to incentives in the tourism area.

I am very glad, Sir, that we are coming to fruition in that area. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Chairman, when the last Parliament was prorogued there was a question which had been on the Order Paper for about three years relating to consultancies which the previous Government had engaged. That question remains unanswered and I cannot think that in the life of the last Parliament that other than the Green or White Papers that were laid that the Parliament was ever privileged to see a copy of any consultancy report which had been prepared for the Government of Barbados. That is a very important point because I think the House should take note of the comments made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that particularly the economic Ministries had been denuded over time of their professional staff so that by 1991 when the Democratic Labour Party went into the stabilisation programme you could not ask - other than the Ministry of Agriculture which had more professionals per capita probably than the IMF, other than the Ministry of Agriculture there was no other Ministry which had a corps of professionals including the Ministry of Finance.

The Ministry of Finance had ceded its best talent to the Central Bank. The Ministry of Tourism had one research officer and was relying on the Board of Tourism. The offshore sector was broken up into all different departments and, as I said, the Ministry of Agriculture had a corps of professionals but had not produced anything of significance and had done everything in its power to shut down the sugar industry up to that time. That was my assessment of the situation.

The Government therefore had to move quickly. One of the reasons why we brought the new Tourism Authority Act was to make a clear distinction between the role of the Ministry in making policy and the role of the Tourist Board in relation to its responsibilities in Barbados.

I remember distinctly the Minister of Tourism at the beginning of the new Government term in 1994 telling me that she could not even put together a project because she had no staff and I recommended to her an officer in the Ministry of Finance who I believe is now with her to design specific projects. I think that every effort must be made for

those economic ministries to have a corps of professionals to do the work, particularly in the design of policy and the critique of the reports of consultants because very often what consultants do is bid for this work, then they do a little search on the Internet or in other territories, find another consultant's report, amend it, adjust it slightly and regurgitate it so that you can go through the Caribbean and you can see all of these consultants' reports reflecting the same recommendation or distilling the recommendations of previous reports and none of those previous reports were acted on. That is the point I believe that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South was making and it seems strange to me and I am not saying that I have anything against the particular consultants but the choice of consultants. For \$375 000 this same consultant did studies in transport, David Shorey and Company, cricket, tourism and I believe that there must be other Barbadians with some expertise, both individuals and with consultancy companies, who could be using that expertise more creatively if Government would spread some of that consultancy work around. One of the developments in the new Government in the U.K. has been that there are now a whole new core of professionals which the new Government brought on board, not part of the established staff, on the basis of consultancy. Each Minister has now one advisor for every five members of the established civil service.

In the Ministry of Health the new Minister brought on something like seventy brand new professionals who will go with him. In the Finance Ministry, the new Minister brought a whole core of professionals on a contract basis who come in and go with him, but their job is to design policy for the Government based on the Manifesto,, monitor the implementation and where special expertise is necessary, they may even hire somebody on a one or two-year basis to deliver that programme. We have to determine whether \$375 000 to prepare a report on the development of the tourism sector, whether the Government could not have put together a core of three professionals for two years or even longer to design and implement the fiscal, legal and regulatory framework at a cost of less than \$375 000. When the consultant does the report, you pay him \$375 000, he puts it on your desk and if the Minister is a work horse, he will take the report, read through and start to break it down into a workable programme. If he is not a work horse or stubborn, he will do his own thing, and the Government would have wasted \$375 000. 4.25 p.m.

That scenario repeats itself throughout the entire public service, particularly in the economic Ministries. I believe that the warning signals that the Barbados economy has had over the past few months should direct the Government's attention to the fact that it is quite possible that an element of fatigue may have set into the administrations policies and that it needs to intensify its works particularly in the economic Ministries. In response to what is happening, we

are not seeing any major new initiatives which will carry Barbados to a new tier of economic activity. There are no major new initiatives in the offshore sector and I have not heard of any suggested either in the private sector or by Government which is going to attract new business, provide new jobs and create new investment. There are no major new initiatives other than those which the Government itself has announced in relation to Sandy Lane and the Hilton Hotel which will come on stream a lot later in any other economic sector. The sugar industry does not seem to be going anywhere and I do not know that there is anything that anybody can hold on to as representing a new direction, or a sustainable direction for any of the major sectors of the Barbados economy.

The Honourable Member for St. Andrew has a major and herculean task ahead of him because, we find ourselves in the situation in Barbados today in which we place so much emphasis on the development of tourism and the continued growth of tourism that any slight tremble that affects tourism, all eyes will be on him to provide a policy direction or to lend some comfort to those who are concerned.

Which brings me to the point made by the Democratic Labour Party night after night in December and January 1999. That crime poses the biggest threat to our economic stability. The Government can pretend that that is not so, but indications are, both from what Ministers are saying as well as what is being said about what is happening in St. Lawrence Gap and elsewhere, that it is posing a major threat. The incidents of serious drug use...

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: We talk about statistics as if the reported statistics represent all that is happening on the streets of Barbados in relation to crime. As crime increases, people start to take precautions and therefore, you will expect that there will be some movement up or down, and then they have to start taking newer precautions. Crime is a major factor...

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Yes, crime and violence. Very much crime and violence. Violence which comes as a result of criminal activity particularly the gang activity from drugs and the violence among young people as a result of drug use or as a result of Government failing to deal with the causes of crime, is what can contribute to a serious economic crisis in Barbados. We were, of course, all on tender hooks when the young lady from England had been shot in a robbery because one incident can have a very lasting impact on the tourism sector.

Let us not fool ourselves about that. Particularly the kind of tourists that are coming to Barbados. When you go

to London now, all of the cartoons about the tourism sector, you see Barbados. The most recent one which I saw in the mail was a policeman on vacation. They had up a sign that he was on a street in Barbados. He was putting up his hand stopping a black driver of a motor vehicle and his wife was nudging him and telling him that he could relax, that he was not in England, he was in Barbados. Because of the problem with the police in England stopping and pulling over all of these black drivers and so on.

The features on television, in the newspapers, in advertisements, in comedy shows and even among this generation of yuppies, travel to Barbados is like owning a pair of good Bally shoes or having a Gucci bag or whatever.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: All of that can change very quickly if attention is not paid to the impact of crime. St. Lawrence Gap is one of those areas of concern but it is not the only one because there are other areas in Barbados which need attention. Not just attention from the point of view of putting up street lights. Those are precautions that you can take at a general level. There is a lot more that needs to be done to deal with the problem of crime, particularly in communities and particularly high levels of crime to which the Honourable Member for Christ Church South mentioned in the area of St. Lawrence.

Earlier today, we spoke in debate about the element of ill-discipline in the Palmetto Market. Here it is, rearing its head again, because in my view, of a few individuals who go into an area and not enough is done by those responsible vCitizens who have been operating in the area to ostracise those who are creating problems and to identify those who are creating problems. Everybody believes that as long as their business is doing O.K. and nobody is affecting their business that they have no responsibility collectively, to ensure that the area in which they operate is free from crime and that there are certain basic standards which obtain. Those would be our concerns.

I am going to ask a parliamentary question again about the number of consultancies: To whom were they awarded; the cost of those consultancies; whether the reports have been received; whether the reports are being responded to; whether there are any recommendations which are being implemented.

Of all of the studies, I think the Transport Board is the most interesting. They had about four studies.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has about one more minute to wind up his speech.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Thank you. Then they ask the General Manager to do a study which they probably

could have asked him to do from the outset. They paid out thousands upon thousands of dollars for studies and none of the recommendations in any of those studies has made any difference whatsoever to the transport system in Barbados. None of the changes which have been recommended, whether desirable or not, have originated from the costly studies which the Government has undertaken. In fact, the debt of the Transport Board has increased. The problems on the rural routes have returned, where everybody wants to drive a new bus so the older buses stay in the yard so you still have the same rolling stock on the road as you had when you had the older buses.

Asides.

4.35 p.m.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is what the Supervisor and others say. If you would listen to them instead of the consultants, you would not have that problem. Whenever I call the Transport Board to find out why we do not have buses in St. John, they say that the drivers like to take the old buses back into the yard so that they can drive the new buses, so therefore they have a limited number of buses on the route. They would have to be telling lies if that is the case.

But having done all of those studies and paid out millions of dollars to Barbadians and foreigners we are back to square one. Likewise in many other sectors, it has been exactly the same scenario, whereas hundreds of Barbadians with professional degrees are sitting down at home twiddling their fingers or getting jobs on substandard wages, when compared to the foreign operators in the offshore sector, who could get an opportunity to do some creative work in some of these areas, if Government would only divert some of these resources to employing those individuals to help in the formulation and implementation of policy.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I cannot speak at any length about crime and violence in this debate because we cannot do justice to that in 15 minutes, but I want to comment on a few matters raised by Honourable Members who have spoken in advance to this. Let us get straight to the Gap.

Sometime ago I was away and when I came back, I read very acrimonious correspondence passing between the BHTA and a very full and strong response by the Commissioner of Police. I did not get in it and I am not proposing to get into it. I heard things on the radio, the President of the BHTA speaking emotionally about the problem of crime in the tourist industry, particularly focussing on St. Lawrence Gap. I have not said a word to the Press. I have read Mr. Donovan as recently as today. Every couple of weeks he has something to say.

On the first Friday of May we had a Cabinet meeting and I left the Cabinet meeting and went to District "A" and

met with 120 Island Constables, until about 7.00 p.m. in the evening. The purpose of my address to the island constabulary that evening was to explain to them their role and functioning and the need for closer cooperation between the island constabulary and the police force in fighting crime, particularly in the tourist sector. By that time, we had put 17 uniform policemen on regular patrol in the area of St. Lawrence Gap and Maxwell Coast Road. In addition to that, on that first Friday in May, I asked for six island constables who were prepared to volunteer to do special assignments in the Gap. I had a ready set of offers.

The very next day, the six that were chosen the night met with Assistant Superintendent Beckles and went on assignment in the Gap. That first Saturday night in May, island constables - not the police, made certain arrest in the Gap. That is why you will see Donovan saying today that there has been a fall in crime. More than that the presence of those island constables and the uniform police has in fact had an impact, but this is what has happened and this is what we have to face. It happens in Barbados, it happens in other countries. The one man in particular - I am not calling his name, who felt that he was the boss in the Gap, and that first Saturday he was run out of the Gap, do you know what happened after that? The next week he went by Harbour Lights and started making the people at Harbour Lights miserable. We ran him from Harbour Lights. He went down by the Boat Yard.

It is a problem because some of the crimes that they are committing are really nuisance crimes, harassing people and so on and they are not put up for those. But I want to assure the tourist industry that the Government and the police are sparing no pains to deal with the problems which directly affect the tourist industry for all the reasons the Leader of the Opposition said. We recognise the importance of tourism to the economy. One does not have to go on about that.

We are making certain operational responses to the challenges. I cannot disclose them publicly. I do not think anybody would wish me to do that. In addition on Tuesday next week, I am going to have a meeting with the Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Member for St. Michael South and the representatives of the industry and the police, to further sensitise everybody else as to what we are doing and what we are expecting. But, as I say, we have to be aware that even though in the last month, there is evidence which is being acknowledged publicly of a reduction of crime in the St. Lawrence Gap. We have to be prepared to recognise that when you do that, you shut down one area, you open another. It is like a balloon. The problem moves elsewhere and we have to try to anticipate and deal with that movement in criminal activity.

Sir, the increased lighting, of course, will assist in the area in the control of crime. We had started that. MTW had

put in a number of additional lights in the Gap as early as 1995. I have been present at a site visit with them and you could see that, but they want more lights. The point the Honourable Member for Christ Church South raised is one that we have to give a lot of thought to. It is his view that a police post in the Gap will not necessarily make a difference. There are other views to the contrary. The same Mr. Donovan wants to see a post in the Gap. The problem has been the identification of a suitable location in the Gap. There is not a lot of land available in the Gap for that.

In terms of principle, I express my own position on this. As I said, there are two diversions. My own position is that if it is considered by a consensus that that is what they want and we can find it in location, I will be quite prepared to establish a post in the Gap. I can see how it can be done quite easily.

We have built a post in Haynesville with prison labour. I have no compunction about doing similarly in the Gap and I would ask the hoteliers when we finish building to furnish it and equip it and we will have it and we will have it ready made. I believe we can put that up quickly, but we need to identify a location. That will enhance in my view, community policing because - let us face it, Worthing cannot remain there all the time. There is an argument that Worthing should come down, that that road should be widened, take out the bend...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: ...it is in a bad location in fact when you think of it and to put a post there, then we are going to have one in the Pine Plantation Road area at the old Pine livestock station. Those two will take some of the pressure off District "A". So it is entirely feasible to do that. As I say, I am going to defer a decision until next Tuesday when I meet with a wider cross section of persons to get their views, Sir, about the siting of something in the Gap. 4.45 p.m.

The problems of Town Planning are for other ministries to follow. Indeed, the selling of timeshare in the road. I have never had a formal complaint about it, I used to hear about it when I was in private practice prior to 1994. I have come across other cases involving timeshare but not the complaint of timeshare being sold in the road and constituting a nuisance or harassment.

But I think that if there is a problem somebody should write and invite us if there is no law that exists apart from the general law of nuisance or obstruction or something and let us look at it and see what we can do about closing the loopholes. I am glad that the Honourable Member for Christ Church South has raised it and I will look at it independently but if something is written to me I will also act on it.

Sir, I am happy to say that in my Ministry in the last four and a half years I have only appointed one set of consultants, two people who had experience of Canadian law to draft the new Bankruptcy Act and Bankruptcy Rules. Apart from that there are no consultancies, I use local people and the people in the Ministry. But there is a lot of good sense in what the Honourable Members for Christ Church South and St. John said about consultancies. I think we have to be careful because it is very easy in Government to collect a lot of paper and not to act on it and we have seen that over the years.

So it is important that the Ministries restructure and I hope it comes as part of Public Sector Reform that Ministries are so restructured that you have a core of researchers and analysts who will apart from doing research and analysis will take documents prepared by outside consultancies or whatever and go through them and pull out what is important, prepare a matrix for implementation and recommendation and so on. That could come as a matter of public sector reform in the strengthening of Ministries generally.

But at the same time the Honourable Members must be aware of the need to keep the public service within reasonable limits because a bulge in public sector wages will put us in the problems of the pre-1992.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one more minute to wind up.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I just want to wind up to say that the type of criminal activity that is causing a problem to the tourist industry is understood by the police and people must not get the impression as perhaps as has been represented from sectors of the tourist industry that the police are insensitive. It is not true at all. The police understand but the police cannot respond emotionally to some of the comments that come from the tourist sector. You have to deal with the question of crime in a cold clinical manner.

Every time somebody is robbed they shout out like they do not expect to find crime in Barbados. I get letters written in very emotional language from people in the tourist industry not really analyzing the situation at all. You know one of the things that we have paid for in Barbados - let me just give one example before I finish. The question of burglaries in hotels.

You know that an analysis over the last few years has shown that a number of visitors to Barbados have deliberately reported that they were robbed to collect insurance back in their home countries. Our people in the tourist industry respond emotionally to that kind of thing

when it is a whole international fraud that has been practised. That is why I say you have to deal with this business of crime and tourism in a cold and rational way.

I want to say finally, I am going to say it in here. There is a hotel near St. Lawrence Gap, last year the termites had eaten down the roof of my house I had to leave home and go to that hotel for a week while my roof was being repaired. A morning I was leaving a person shouted to me and I looked back and saw who it was, it was a retired senior police officer and I said to him but I do not know that you were out here, what are you doing? He said I am in charge of security here. I asked him what about the state of crime in this area right next to the Gap. He said not on this property. For four years he had been in charge of security at that particular hotel and there has been no crime because that hotel has invested in providing its own security. They have not had to rely on the police and that man has controlled crime there. I say to the hoteliers go and have a seminar with him and let him tell you all what he is doing because ultimately the hoteliers must contribute to the provision of their own security.

My time is up, Sir.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chairman, I too would like to lend my support to the debate in relation to the lighting of various areas and the debate before this Honourable Chamber.

I first will like to establish in this Chamber that anytime that I should stand in this Chamber to discuss an issue, I will first have to have the knowledge of the issue to discuss it. Since we are discussing the area of St Lawrence Gap as one of the issues, I will like to say that I have spent and still up to last night lots of time in the area of St. Lawrence Gap. While others might be sleeping, I am in the Gap for some reason or another. I have observed that there is a lot of talk about St. Lawrence Gap but nobody has started talking about Second Street at Hometown. Second Street at Hometown perhaps has a similar environment to the environment we are talking about in relation to St Lawrence Gap.

What I have observed in St. Lawrence Gap, I support the Member for Christ Church South. In St. Lawrence Gap, yes, there is a definite need for street lighting. If you should enter St. Lawrence Gap from the entrance of Worthing and you should travel all the way up to the Chinese Restaurant or you probably go beyond past the new hotel in Dover and go up you will see definitely yes there is a need for improved street lighting.

But one of the other major problems of St. Lawrence Gap that seemed not to be mentioned is that there is also a very serious drainage problem in St. Lawrence Gap. There are certain segments of St. Lawrence Gap that when it rains

it makes it impossible for the movement of the pedestrian traffic and also the movement of the many vehicles that have to ply the street. What I can tell you is that when you look between the area of the entrance to St. Lawrence Gap and you travel to the Ship Inn there are only about four vendors in that area. There is a vendor outside Cafe Sol. There is a vendor outside of the area of the St. Lawrence Hotel and there is a vendor just in front of the Ship Inn. There are three vendors within that area. 4.55 p.m.

When you move beyond the area of the Ship Inn and you travel in an easterly direction you then have a situation where most of the problems related and mentioned in terms of tourist harassment take place because that area is considered to be the unsafe area.

I believe that what leads to that, if you are going to talk about doing St. Lawrence Gap to the level that is expected to be done I, too, believe, Mr. Chairman, you have to have a very close look at the village on the other side of St. Lawrence Gap which is known as Paradise Village.

I believe, Sir, that if you are going to introduce a system of street lighting to St. Lawrence Gap you also must look at the problem of drainage. I believe that if you are going to introduce a system of street lighting to St. Lawrence Gap you also must look at Paradise Village because there is a strong belief that there is a link to what is happening because of the situation.

I am also wondering if you are hearing about St. Lawrence Gap because I did a little study and I realise that about 70% of the businesses in St. Lawrence Gap are owned by Barbadians. So we are hearing about St. Lawrence Gap, a prime marketplace for business, so whatever happens in St. Lawrence Gap seems to reflect that somewhere along the line the ownership of St. Lawrence happens to be an ownership of Barbadians.

You are hearing things and you start to put down St. Lawrence Gap as being an area that creates a problem but I would like to find out the statistics in relation to the violent crimes that have taken place in St. Lawrence Gap over the last couple of years. There have not been any violent crimes in St. Lawrence Gap different from any other place in Barbados but you do not hear about Second Street in Holetown. The reason why you do not hear about Second Street in Holetown is because there is a difference between the ownership of St. Lawrence Gap and a difference between the ownership of Second Street in Holetown. So one must wonder if the arrows are not pointed at St. Lawrence Gap because of... and I am only saying because of...

If I should continue, before I move on to make my other issue in relation to that area of St. Lawrence Gap. I

studied it. I stood there a couple of nights and I believe that in order to control St. Lawrence Gap you must first look at the removal of taxis on the street.

I have given you three areas that you have to look at. You have to look at the drainage problem in St. Lawrence Gap. You have to look also at the lighting in St. Lawrence Gap. You also have to look at the reason why the arrows are pointed at St. Lawrence Gap and then finally you have to look at the movement of the taxis who are plying business in the area of St. Lawrence.

There are several taxis. There are a lot of taxis that work that stretch who do not work during the day but work at night. So there has to be a hustle as far as that is concerned. I am wondering if there can be a system that can be implemented because taxis block taxis in St. Lawrence Gap. It is a norm. The street is blocked and the taxi driver decides that he is not moving because as far as he is concerned this next job is his. So you have a whole line of traffic backed up because of that situation. So I think there is a need for some sort of regulation of the taxi movement in St. Lawrence Gap.

I personally have seen - and I would like to compliment the Attorney General and also the Commissioner of Police - the movement of policemen and island constables on a regular basis in St. Lawrence Gap. They work in twos so that they can easily be identified.

I would also say that what I would like to see done as far as the area of St. Lawrence Gap is concerned is that a sidewalk be put in place which would enable the movement of the pedestrians on the street so as not to clash with the movement of the traffic on that street with the lighting, together with the drainage and the sidewalk in place and the street lighting in the area of Paradise Village.

I have heard talk of a police outpost in St. Lawrence Gap and I have heard a position that there is no area in St. Lawrence Gap for it. I would suggest that the police mobile outpost which the police have could be stationed just opposite the South Winds Hotel in the car park area of the South Winds Hotel which seals the area west of St. Lawrence Gap and makes solid the area east of St. Lawrence Gap.

You are not going to build a police outpost. You will use the police outpost vehicle and you will position it right opposite the south coast hotel of South Winds and that should rectify your problem.

I would also like to say to you, Sir, Mr. Chairman, that what I have observed and this would be something that should be contemplated - I want to move away from St. Lawrence Gap - is the movement of traffic on St. Lawrence

Gap going in the right direction. Should there be a study to look at the idea of a downward exit of traffic more so than a western-eastern exit of traffic. You look at the possibility of the traffic entering St. Lawrence Gap from the Top Rock angle and exiting in that bottleneck of St. Lawrence at the far end.

You have a situation now where you can look at reversing the movement of the entry into St. Lawrence Gap. This might help solve some of the problems and you enter from the area of Top Rock, you make your right or you make a left which could take you to Upper St. Lawrence Gap and bring you out just in the area by Dover and those places or you make the right and you exit on the far end. I am just asking that that be looked at as part of the development plan for St. Lawrence Gap.

I personally believe that the arrows are pointed at St. Lawrence Gap because there is almost a 70% ownership of St. Lawrence Gap.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to look at the Wharf road in terms of lighting. I realise that the boardwalk is now being built and I also realise that if you are going to light the area of the Wharf road you cannot just light the area of the Wharf road and stop there. You have to have a continuous lighting programme that will take you down to the Princess Alice Highway. As you enter the Upper Wharf and travel on to Hincks Street, travel on to Princess Alice Highway then you will travel on to an area that is well lit. I am saying that this must be done. 5.05 p.m.

I am also saying, Mr. Chairman, that when you look at the area of Swan Street, that Bridgetown business people must also understand that they are part of any development plan that this Government or any Government introduces. I believe that it is the duty of the Bridgetown business community to also introduce this into their business establishments. When you look at some of the buildings in Bridgetown there is drab lighting, lighting with 60 watt and 75-watt bulbs. I am saying that if you are going to introduce a lighting plan to Bridgetown and Swan Street that it is also the responsibility of the Bridgetown merchant to involve a lighting programme in his programme as well.

We have to look carefully at the areas of Swan Street, Chapel Street, Hincks Street, Prince William Henry Street and also the area of the Wharf. Also we must bear in mind outside of this Honourable Chamber as you enter the area of High Street. If you are introducing a lighting plan as part of your development of tourism, then you have to introduce it across the board and do not select areas because you feel within yourself that those areas are going to be fully utilised by the people.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has two minutes more in which to wind up.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Thank you. I am also saying that when you come to Baxters Road, I am extremely proud in this Honourable Chamber to talk about Baxters Road. Since 1985 when I introduced the idea of the Baxters Road Mall to the many shopkeepers in Baxters Road, there was no covering of the sidewalks nor there were any lights, Mr. Chairman, but I can say that with the help of the many shop proprietors in Baxters Road that somewhere along the line, we have been able to have a better lighting plan in Baxters Road and we have been able to have a drainage situation in Baxters Road by the covering of the various covers. There is still a need for improvement in Baxters Road, Mr. Chairman. The need for improvement of Baxters Road is a simple movement. That is to say, that similar to St. Lawrence Gap, you have a lot of indiscriminate drivers in Barbados who believe that because they are on the street they can park as they like. I would like to see a situation introduced into this Honourable Chamber where Baxters Road on weekends becomes a one-way street.

I would also like to say, Mr. Chairman, that the fish vendors, the people who sell fish at Baxters Road, that some better provision be made for them, because when you consider the system of selling, the health problems involved and that somewhere along the line that fish is a big thing with the tourist industry, I am of the opinion that little cubicles can be built for those fish vendors in Baxters Road so that it takes them out of the dew and so that it will stop the fumes from the vehicles, the stuff from the road, whatever it may be that will alleviate the problem and that will help enhance the situation at Baxters Road.

In wrapping up, I want to talk about Pile Bay in my constituency. The same way you can develop Oistins and St. Lawrence, the same way you can develop Paradise Village, I have a little fishing village in Pile Bay that I believe that if you develop that little fishing village in Pile Bay where the residents of that area can benefit, it will become a unique little hamlet within the borders of the development of tourism. I am saying, yes, I would like to see the development but I would also like to see Pile Bay become part of that development where we can have on weekends, a similar set up to that which is in Oistins and Baxters Road.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like the Honourable Member to throw anchor in Pile Bay.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Sir. I hope that somewhere along the line that I have given what I have considered to be a picture of travel because it is said that you should talk about things that you are acquainted with. I think this afternoon, Sir, I had the privilege of talking about St. Lawrence Gap and of other areas because it is said you must travel the roads in order to speak about them.

Thank you.

Mr. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Chairman, thanks very much for the opportunity to speak. Let me begin by saying, Sir, that when the Honourable Member for St. Thomas made his presentation he started by saying that he wanted to focus on St. Lawrence Gap. I want to focus on this St. Lawrence as well.

When I look at the \$2 million that we are going to spend for this lighting, the first thing that strikes my mind is how many lights are we going to get for this \$2 million because this is a lot of lighting. I would like to see where these lights are going to be and how many lights we are going to get, not only in St. Lawrence Gap but in Bridgetown, and even lights for the Parliament Buildings. Let me say from the outset the banter, the dialogue and discussion that was created between the Royal Barbados Police Force and the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association, of which I am an employee, is one that I did not get involved in at all because I think that we have a President for that and I believe that this is the correct forum in here for me, wearing my hat as the representative of St. Michael South to speak very clearly on the issue as it relates to tourism and the effect that this St. Lawrence Gap issue is having generally upon tourism in Barbados and to put it in the right perspective. If tourism is hurt in Barbados, every citizen of Barbados will suffer, the residents of St. Michael South included.

Let me say, Sir, that in recent times there has been a substantial increase in tourism activity in St. Lawrence Gap. As a matter of fact, you cannot visit Barbados particularly as a tourist on the south coast or even some areas of the west coast without going to visit this St. Lawrence Gap. In recent times, St. Lawrence Gap has been the black eye upon the tourism industry in Barbados. Let me say this. It is an area which is a special development area at that and an area in which we encourage people, under certain fiscal incentives to get involved in, and to develop and here we are, Sir, with a situation where St. Lawrence Gap has begun to become a big stain on our tourism industry.

Let me say from the outset, I am not talking here specifically about crime, because I hear everybody making this reference to crime. But what we are talking about fundamentally in St. Lawrence Gap is the effect of harassment of tourists in St. Lawrence Gap. Forget about crime, there is not that much more violent crime anywhere in St. Lawrence Gap than there is, maybe, in any other tourism jurisdiction. 5.15p.m.

The fact is this. There is a certain level of harassment. Let me say, Sir, the people who determine whether or not they are being harassed are not the ones in this Chamber or the ones sitting down at home in their house, the only one who can determine whether you are being harassed or not is the visitor. It is the person that is on the beach, on the street

or wherever it is. Let me say this, Sir, with the increased competition that Barbados is facing, I wonder sometimes, particularly in a destination that is seen to be a very up scaled and up market destination, if we understand the damage that we could do to our tourism industry, just simply by the word of mouth, simply, Sir, by what is written by the media and when I hear people saying that the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association highlights crime, let me say this, Sir even the proliferation of electronic media on the Internet and everything else, do you really believe that when something happens in Barbados that people all over the world do not know? Nobody in the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association has to highlight everything for all of the world to know. The media highlights it first and foremost and then it is all over the world to other people.

Asides.

Mr. N. A. LYNCH: I am saying this, what we need is to create a comprehensive plan for the area. A comprehensive plan that looks at everything from development through to the issue of crime and harassment and how we deal specifically with the area. In recent time, the lobbying efforts and the back and forth that went on between the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association and the Commissioner of Police has created an environment where I have seen and where we have acknowledged that there have been increased patrols. We have acknowledged as well that there is a reduction in crime and maybe harassment in the area, but when we start to talk about harassment - and I do not even have the document here, I would like to have made that document a document of the House. The Caribbean Tourism Organisation just carried out a survey using two students from Bucknell University in Pennsylvania. Of the two students one was a white male and the other a Hispanic female and the two of them actually went on the beaches on the south coast and for a month studied this whole pattern of harassment. The report is not very flattering of Barbados, particularly not very flattering of our men, on our males on the beaches of Barbados, because some of these fellows do not even have the good common sense and decency to see a woman with a man and leave her alone, because there are instances where these people have been caught. There are incidences where people have touched people and I know the lawyers will tell me that that is assault, where people have hanged on to women's hair. We had an incident where hair braiders themselves saw people going into the water and actually tug them by their hair to tell them to come and get their hair braided. This is the kind of thing that went on, on the beach. This has been reported in the study.

The study went as far as to also say this, because whenever I hear people talking about the police...

Aside.

Mr. N. A. LYNCH: ...my father was a policeman for 35 years, I have a soft spot for the police too.

Whenever I hear people talking about the police and their response, I go back to the concept that has been done in other jurisdictions. Not everyone is suited to be a police officer, particularly in a tourism jurisdiction in certain areas. There are people that have serious psychological hang ups that relate to race, there are people that have some psychological hang ups when it comes down to dealing with tourists and people buying and selling. There are a number of issues and I do not think that the training we give to our police officers at the training school is adequate. Do we train them to deal specifically with people of different nationalities? With people of different colours, and creeds and races? We have had incidences at the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association where police officers were called in. I can cite one incident for you where a woman came to Barbados in a professional capacity and was almost raped in a hotel by an employee. When they called in the police, of the two young policemen that they sent, the first one that got there, his comment under his breath to the manager was this, that these white women come here, encourage these men to their rooms and then when they do not like them or something so, scream rape. That was his response to a very sensitive issue.

Even in terms of the way in which they deal with taking statements and dealing with these people, let me tell you straight, a lot of them do not have common courtesy, do not understand the issues of dealing with people of different nationalities and dealing with people in a very sensitive way.

Aside.

Mr. N. A. LYNCH: Sir, I am not saying that is everyone. I am not even saying that is the majority, but I am saying that we need to go through a more specific screening process as it relates to the choosing of policemen to work specifically in certain areas and also that the training be stepped up with teaching people to deal with people of different nationalities and different cultures, *et cetera*. I think that once we are able to do that, we are going to see a different kind of response.

I totally dismiss what I heard from the Commissioner of Police regarding that the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association or certain hoteliers do not want certain people on their properties. I dismiss that as dangerous nonsense being spouted in the 21st Century in Barbados. If you tell me that certain people go onto hotel properties, obviously we want to encourage people, but you want also to encourage people who are going to deal with the property and deal with it in a very stable, serious and mannerly way.

We do not want just everybody coming on and harassing people on the beach. We have had incidences of

men walking through a hotel lobby with a bicycle where a man is paying US\$500 a night to stay in a hotel, and going and using the pool and rubbing aloe on people in a hotel lobby. That is the kind of incidence that we have had.

When we talk about crime and harassment and reporting...

Aside.

Mr. N. A. LYNCH: ...the security is not a policeman and a lot of these fellows do not have any respect for these security people. He is not a policeman and a lot of these security people will not put their lives in jeopardy or in danger to deal with anybody on any property. They are not going to do that.

Aside.

Mr. N. A. LYNCH: I take the point that on some properties the issue is dealt with in better ways than others. The Attorney General cited a hotel property where they have a trained police officer - a man who has been a policeman for many years and he is able to deal with the issue. But we have got a serious problem on our hands and I want also to say this.

I do not know if people really observe the lifestyle activities of people that go to the west coast as opposed to the south coast of Barbados. You are dealing on the south coast of Barbados with a very young type of tourist. A tourist who is looking for more activity and fun as opposed to a person who is laid back, down on the west coast. These people are the youngsters who are going to come back to Barbados, who are going to encourage people to come back and who are going to grow up with Barbados. And what we are doing in this state is running those people out of Barbados.

Every day on my desk, without exaggerating, I receive some form of report from somebody - I am sure the Attorney General does as well and I am sure the Minister of Tourism does as well, from somebody who has come to Barbados and complains. Specifically they are complaining about harassment. If we do not do something about it, we can ignore the problem to our peril. We can ignore it because the way in which it is going now...

Aside.

Mr. N. A. LYNCH: The Barbados that used to be the big Barbados even in the UK, there are destinations in Asia now that are offering £300 for a week vacation in other places. We have Virgin Atlantic now flying into Barbados, not only British Airways, so the kind of tourists that you are going to get to Barbados, particularly for example when Sandy Lane is knocked down, the Sandy Lane that is being created is not the same old time "Ronald Tree House" that all

of these aristocrats used to come to and will flock to Barbados to. It is a different type of tourist and unless Barbados is clear where it is we are going, if we understand that a younger type of tourist is coming to Barbados, particularly on the south coast and we do not guard well what goes out of their mouths when they return to these destinations, we are going to suffer in the future.

I want people to understand, we believe you hear World Travel and Tourism Organisation quoting figures about increased growth in tourism globally, people seem to think that because global tourism increases that Barbados is automatically going to gain from the increases, but I am sending out the warning in here, unless Barbados positions itself to take advantage of the growth in tourism, do not believe that we can just do anything that we want, treat this island the way we want, even environmentally and expect that the people would come here? The environmental laws of Barbados are the other ones that need to be tackled and tackled viciously.

The Germans are starting programmes where tour operators are encouraging people to carry garbage bags and bring back the garbage to Germany in the containers that are supplied in those chartered planes, because they do not want the lands to be spoiled. They recognise that in the T&R and some other places which they really love and which are cheap, the disposal of solid waste is not easily accomplished as it is done in Germany in terms of recycling *et cetera*. Now they are even downgrading tourism destinations if you do not have a certain level of environmental awareness and laws, they are dropping you out of their tour operator programmes and brochures and these are the kinds of issues that we need to deal with. 5.25 p.m.

Barbadians believe that we can treat this country the way we want it and people will flock here. I am sounding the warning those days are over. The competition is intense.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Not only are those days over Honourable Member, but you must bring your speech to a closure.

Mr. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Chairman, I want to close by saying this, St. Lawrence Gap needs a comprehensive plan to deal with all areas of it but if there is one thing that must be made clear the whole educational aspect of it must be clear because this crime and harassment particularly is a perception problem. The person that foresees that there is a problem will deal with it.

The police in Barbados do not seem to believe that there is a problem because you hear about this small black man.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. I really have to object to the Honourable Member. I made it clear, Sir, he was not in here at the end of my speech. I made it clear that the police are very conscious of the problem of harassment but I do not think that he has had time to examine what are the allegations of harassment. If I speak later on, I may address that issue. But the police are very conscious of harassment.

Mr. N. A. LYNCH: Mr. Chairman, I am not in any argument on what happened with the Attorney General but I am clear on this. I say this again, it is a perception problem not that a man goes out into St. Lawrence Gap and he sees a person plying his trade there and you ask a woman "is this man harassing you?" I came out of Divi Southwinds with a hotel manager and I saw with my own two eyes a man standing on the sidewalk with a coconut in his hand and a long knife. Here is the man, he is cutting this coconut; it is only after we realized when the woman got back to the hotel she said she was charged US \$20 for the coconut and when we asked her if she was alright she said she was alright. You think a white woman in Barbados, with a black man standing in front of her bareback with a knife, is going to dispute anything about whether or not she feels intimidated or harassed. You think she is going to say it in front of the man.

I am making the point that unless we start dealing with the issue of training our policemen and the ones who we deploy... We need a tourism police task unit that deals specifically with the tourism areas and unless we can get down to that we are going to suffer. I want to make the point clear. I want everyone to hear because Barbados needs it.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, we have heard a lot on this particular matter this evening but I believe that this particular problem should not be a problem where we are prepared to blame one side or the other. I honestly believe that this is a matter that should be carefully studied because anyone growing up in Barbados would have to admit if what is being called harassment in the tourism sector that nearly everybody who lives in a village in Barbados that that same said person could accuse somebody else of harassing them.

We have to be very careful how we allow people to come to Barbados and redirect our dictionary for us.

Mr. Chairman, we also must understand that the tourism market is a very competitive market and that there are destinations which would employ people to come to Barbados and which will set up people as tourists to create an impression about Barbados. I am not saying that there is not crime and violence in Barbados but at the same time I must protect...

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order, order please. We must allow the Honourable Member to progress with his speech.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: We behave as if everything that is said about Barbados and I heard this nonsense in the early 1990's when Caribbean countries were quite prepared to also join the bandwagon and make negative statements about Barbados to destroy the economy of Barbados.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Right. Why it was regrettable was that the Opposition at the time were prepared to do the opposite to what I am doing now because instead of joining the Government against those vagabonds they joined the vagabonds. But this Side would not join with anybody to pull down the tourism industry in this country. One must understand that this is about business and people will use the competitive edge to develop their markets and if it means pulling down another country to develop what they want they will do it. People come in here and gloat as if they are the know-all on everything not recognising that they are people in this world fighting to strive to create what we have in Barbados. I saw it from the '90s.

In 1991 things were said about Barbados and when you walk through Barbados you could not see them but yet politicians were quite prepared to join them. This Side over here, we are not prepared to look at politics like that just to pull down a country to get a few seats. We are prepared to be subjective and see the facts and look through them and look ahead. The problem in this country is that there are people who are not prepared to look ahead. Let me give you an example of something. Why do you think that when you walk through Broad Street that sometimes you see people walking with people that you never figure -that that combination will come together. You think they are together just because they want to be together. They come together because there is a reason. It is true that there are other people looking like the same people who would not come together with the other people. So when that young man goes on the beach and he sees someone looking like the other person and he speaks to that person it is regarded as harassment.

Look, let me say this to you all. I have witnessed this thing for nearly ten years and it is something I have always asked myself whether these fellows have an art or not. Let me tell you something man, everything that you hear calling harassment is not harassment. It is not harassment. It is subjective. But yet still we get Barbadians who are quite prepared every time they hear a statement to pick it up and join the side because most of the time the person is white. Just because the person is white, they feel that once it comes out of their mouth and they happen to be a tourist everything they say is correct.

But when you look at the statistics of some of the same people, who accused Barbadians of harassing them and when you go and check the criminal record to see that many of them claimed to lose things and when they get back to their country and they are well investigated that some of them find themselves in trouble with the law.

That is why I will support the police because it is the police job to consider who is being harassed. They are the ones qualified to deal with that and I am backing the side of the policemen. 5.35p.m.

Let it be clear that I support the Commissioner on this. It is his job to understand what is going on and if he feels that some of this is being overplayed, I support him because I cannot see any Commissioner of Police of Barbados recognising that tourism is so important and behaving as if people who are interfering with the tourists that they have a right to do it. There is a reason and when the Commissioner makes a statement it has to be a good reason why he is making that particular statement.

Those who are employed in tourism and those who own hotels would know why they want to make certain people feel under pressure and do not want them to come near their property and feel they have something to protect. Let me tell you something, we as politicians are destroying the tourist industry and we do not even realise it.

We allow this foolishness called "all-inclusive" to come here. Let me tell you why it is foolishness, from the time I was a boy I was being told that the best thing about Barbados was its people. We allow a system which alienates the people of Barbados and tourism to grow and we are now bragging about that, where every time you ask tourists in previous years what they thought about tourism they would say that you have some of the nicest people in the world. Now the nicest people cannot even get close to the tourists. So why they are coming to Barbados? There has to be another reason. It cannot be the people.

Do you know what is happening? Jealousy. Jealousy is what is happening here. Those people who have always believed they can get all from the tourists they feel they must continue to get all and that those fellows who ply their trade on the beaches do not have a right and the beaches belong to them only. I am saying it is wrong. We have to come together as a nation and we have to share in everything that the nation gives.

In the 1970s the watercraft sport belonged to what they would call the black boys. The hoteliers had the rooms and the restaurants *et cetera*. But now you understand that the hotels want every single thing for themselves and feel that Barbadians should not get a part of the tourist industry. They

are also getting the tax concessions, the special development areas and the same black boys have to pay taxes to support it.

Do you know what is amazing? If a man is accustomed getting something from something and all of a sudden you push him out, do you expect the man to continue to be the friend of that particular thing? I am saying that if there is an increase in harassment in this country, that the hoteliers would have to be the ones who caused it because they are depriving people who used to get something from getting something.

I have said in this House already that the hostility on the beach was created by the hotel owners and not the men who own the beach craft and I will explain that to the House. Previously in watersports you did not have to compete with the hoteliers. Now you have to compete. All business people who have to compete are aggressive. They have to go after their market. So I am telling the hoteliers if they do not want competition to keep out of the watersports business and let it go back to how it was in the 1970s where it was there for a particular group. It is getting competitive. It is like the legal field. Soon from now lawyers in Barbados are going to be advertising all over the place and some of them will be stopping down at the door and asking: "Do you want a lawyer today?" Would that be harassment?

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir. When I first came back to practise in the 1970s we had those about. They were known as touts in those days.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: So you see now, Sir, that even lawyers, if you put it in the tourism sector will be regarded as people who harass people too? I am saying, Sir, that as the market gets competitive and as the cake gets smaller that marketing is going to get more aggressive and people are going to call it harassment but it is not harassment. It is just that the people are getting aggressive.

In order for us to solve this problem, we need to tell the hoteliers that they need to leave a share of the market to those people who had that particular share at the particular point in time previously that they need now to reassess everything and instead of wanting everything for themselves to recognise that there are other players because if they do not recognise that there are other players, what they call harassment is going to get worse. Do not let us fool ourselves.

I know they are not going to want to hear what I am saying but I do not care for the simple reason; I understand the problem better than they do because they see it through their selfish eyes. I see it from a different level.

It is as simple as like the ZRs. The competition gets tough so the fellows have to fight to get their share of the market and it will happen throughout the world. I would bet you now that in all the destinations that have all-inclusive tourism and all the destinations that the hoteliers want a larger share of the cake that you are having this particular problem.

It means that if Government feels that these youngsters who used to work on the beach that they should not go and compete, well Government will have to find something else for them to do but this foolishness that we are prepared to go all over the world and tell people that we have harassment as a problem when you really study it is not really harassment.

I also want to hear some of the same politicians talk about the harassment that I see every Saturday and every Sunday up to about 11 o'clock at nights because they have people who harass my people every night. I do not call it harassment but people come knocking at your windows when you are sleeping to collect \$5 bills and so on. That is not harassment too? Nobody in here would talk about that.

We have to be very careful that we do not allow people to dictate what we regard as right and wrong for our market because, let me tell you something. The next thing you will hear is that the Cubans are down here spending holidays on the beach and they are doing surveys for other people and they will be telling the people do not come to Barbados but to go to Cuba.

Nearly every country in this world is involved in tourism and we must recognise that. If we want a survey of what is going on, we need to make sure we have the right people to do those surveys for us. We know for a fact that Barbados sometimes employs people to promote Barbados and when the record is checked most of the people sometimes move onto another destination so who would tell you that they would not do the same thing when they come to do a particular survey?

Mr. Chairman, I am saying that this is a matter where we need to use reverse psychology. It is foolishness if you are saying that we have a problem of harassment to tell tourists when they come to Barbados that they do not get harassed in Barbados. Tell them they might get harassed but try to solve the problem so that when they get to Barbados and they do not see harassment they would say: "At least we came here to be harassed and we did not get it" and they would go back and tell their friends but when you tell them the other thing, and it happens, well there is only one message to deliver.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute more.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: We want to make people believe that everything is good. Nothing is wrong then when they come it is a different picture. Mr. Chairman, I am saying to you that we have to be real and we have to be realistic in everything we plan to say and do in this country. I thank you very much. 5.45 p.m.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, before the Minister winds up, I would like to address two short matters.

The question of harassment. The law was changed in 1995 and subsequent to that in 1997 to give a comprehensive definition of harassment. It was published in court orders and all the officers are trained and instructed in what the law calls for. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is correct to the extent that the content of harassment is a difficult and elusive thing. When the president of the Hotel Association spoke in March, I believe, she quoted figures to suggest that some study had shown that harassment in Barbados had gone up to almost 80%. She had not read and understood the document properly because subsequently the same Caribbean Tourism Organisation had in fact said that that was a misinterpretation of the figures and it was no where in that vicinity. The same study adverted to by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South would have pointed out that some of the allegations of harassment when examined were not really harassment.

There is a classic one that the analyst of CTO, Mr. Sobers explained to me. One of these people, a man, was approached by a Barbadian and the fellow used contemporary language - Big man. The fact that he said "big man" was written in this study as harassment because he said he was frightened. He considered that harassment. An approach and an address in contemporary vernacular - "big man", and that amounted to harassment.

It is difficult for a policeman standing aside seeing two people, a Barbadian man and a foreign tourist, talking. Why must the policeman make the assumption that something is wrong, that it is necessarily harassment? The policeman can only intervene if he sees a trend of conduct. If the fellow is walking behind the woman and talking to her and pulling at her in public and she is moving aside and the fellow is persisting and besetting, then that is evidence that the policeman can draw an inference from, but seeing two people talking and he is down there by the Clerk he would not know what they are saying. Why must he make an assumption that it is something offensive to the law.

There are these difficulties in the analysis of harassment. There is a cultural aspect that has to be understood and a lot of what is alleged to be harassment in truth and in fact when you get down to it and look at it is not harassment. That is not to deny that there is a problem of harassment but it is overblown in my view from all the correspondence and the studies that I have seen and so on talking to people.

I will give an example of personal experience. Last year we had a regional AG's meeting here and I took three of my colleagues one evening in the Gap for a drink and we were sitting by this place by the side of the road having a drink and I observed a fellow talking to a couple of girls and it looked like the guy was really harassing them. I spoke to the police officer nearby and he went and intervened and asked the girls. Do you know what they were arguing about? Where they were going in the moke with the fellow, whether they were going to the Crane or Sam Lord's or somewhere on the west coast. From where we were sitting I must confess it appeared as though there might have been harassment but in truth and in fact it was not. So it is a difficult and elusive concept that you have to allow for the cultural thing.

The second point I wish to make is in relation to tourism police. I understand the need to have certain members of the Force perhaps trained in a certain way to deal with tourist areas. Policemen working at Oistins, Worthing, Holetown and so on might have to be sensitised. There might be need for one or two of them also to be speaking a different foreign language. That is different from using policemen who have had special training to work in those areas and interact from the concept of tourism police where you are creating a separate and distinct unit. Some people want you to put them in separate uniforms, short pants and tall socks and epaulettes and all kinds of things.

I am not going along with that. I would have to be convinced by the police because immediately the argument about discrimination could be constitutional because the constitution outlaws discrimination. I see a difficulty in asking the Barbadian public to accept that we must specially protect a set of tourists while we neglect people in Black Rock or Porey Spring that cannot get police because we have to protect only tourists. That is a dangerous thing and I am not in favour of giving special treatment to any one group of persons in Barbados. That is my position as Attorney General and I make it clear I am not in favour of so segmenting the Police Force as to create a special class of police for a special type of person in Barbados. I think it is wrong in principle.

I am not saying that and it must not be understood to be denying that in the training programme at the Training School where police are trained in a wide range of subject⁴ from handling trade disputes right through, everything you can think of is in the course content at the Training School. I am not saying that perhaps we do not need a shift in emphasis to devote perhaps more attention to the training, teaching them how to interact better with tourists and so on. There is nothing wrong with that but that is a far cry from having a set of police dressed in a particular way only looking after tourists. I do not think that that would be fair to the taxpayers of Barbados.

Mr. N. A. LYNCH: On a point of order. I need to say something. Mr. Chairman, when has it ever been that because you create a specific unit to protect a specific area, and a most important area of our economy, that that particular area only relates to tourists and that area? If you create a police tourism task unit to operate within the tourism belt I do not believe that the man is going to discern between whether or not John Brown is a tourist. He is protecting a specific area. If there is a crime specifically against a citizen who is not a tourist it does not mean that the man is going to come and say he is not a tourist and he is not dealing with him. The response that we want is a response to a particular need in Barbados to deal with a particular sector that we believe needs special treatment, in the same way that we have dealt with areas in other economic areas whether it be the minibus people or whoever else. I see nothing wrong with creating that type of unit.

I am not going down the road of dressing them up in all kinds of paraphernalia. I agree with the AG on that point but I believe there is a specific need in our country to relate to this.

If we had a pipeline running oil to the USA and somebody was abusing it with a hacksaw we would lock up the person. I am saying that we need a specific unit to relate.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, there is only a difference between us in empathy. The Honourable Member is not like members of the Hotel Association who met with me in 1995 or 1996 and put to me the position that we should have a separate unit of people dressed in a particular way, easily identifiable as tourism police on these mountain bikes. That is different.

What the Honourable Member for St. Michael South is speaking about is something different. When we meet with them and I am told we were going to meet next Tuesday but there is a tourism meeting. So-it will probably have to wait until the end of the following week. When we meet we can discuss the need for special training. Better response - no problem. That is fundamental throughout the Force. That means perhaps having more manpower. 5.55p.m.

That means perhaps more manpower certainly, more vehicles, better equipment and we can deal with that. It is just a question of putting resources against certain needs. That is not a difficulty but when you come to creating a special class of people, dressed differently and so on, Sir, I have concerns about that.

Those are the two points that I wanted to make, that harassment we need to examine carefully, to make sure that we understand the content of the concept in relation to tourism.

I am obliged to you, Sir.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I will be very brief in my winding up. I must say that whole issue of crime and harassment is a very sensitive one and I would not, from my position, want to say too much, lest certain comments might be misinterpreted. I would rather have preferred some of the comments which have been made both by Members on this Side and by Members on the Other Side, had not been made.

It is fairly obvious from the comments that we need to have a more public awareness of the importance of tourism to this country. I have been very surprised at the number of complaints of harassment attacks against visitors but I would not want to put the country in a state of panic with respect to these particular complaints. Certainly, if the Government sends out a signal to the public that these instances of harassment are not as serious as they should be treated, it certainly frustrates the efforts of those people in the sector who have been trying to ensure that a number of the real serious occurrences are not repeated. One bad incident for a small country like Barbados that depends so heavily on tourism is one incident too much. Certainly, I would not want to be on record as disagreeing with the comments of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas but certainly, I believe that there should be greater appreciation on the part of the police as to the type of problems which the Honourable Member for St. Michael South dealt with in detail. I must say, that I was somewhat disappointed at the comments which were made by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and while I have no control over what will be reported, it is a pity that the type of sentiments that he expressed might appear in the newspapers alongside the type of complaints that we are getting where in one country every single daily newspaper in that particular area highlighted one bad incident where a tourist was actually attacked by a cutlass.

This is why we have to be very careful to make sure that Members of the public are aware of the importance of tourism to this country. I do not see it as creating any special category of police, if because of the importance and because of the fact that we are welcoming these people to our shores, to make them feel safe while they are with us.

On the question of all-inclusive. The Honourable Member for St. Lucy did touch on certain aspects of all-inclusive and it is fairly obvious to me that there is a lack of understanding as to the all-inclusive concept in Barbados and as to the proportion of all-inclusive in Barbados. Certainly all-inclusive as it is practised in Barbados now, is not on a proportion which would call for any serious Government intervention. It is not at the same level as there is in places like Jamaica where there is a very heavy involvement of criminal activity and where the all-inclusive type product is more suitable to that particular destination.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West made some reference to the type of development in St. Lawrence Gap as being replicated in Holetown. The Urban Renewal Project, as I did indicate stretches as far as Speightstown and includes certain areas outside of the urban corridor. As funds permit, we certainly will be looking at areas like that. The areas which we have pulled from the Urban Rehabilitation Unit are priority areas and certainly St. Lawrence Gap is one of the priority areas in the Urban Rehabilitation Unit.

With those brief comments, Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 27 stand part.

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

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: With the consent of the House we will now re-commit to Ministers Statements.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Hon. Miss H. E. THOMPSON: The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Minister of Health are deeply concerned that while working to resolve the grievances of the hospital's nursing staff and while in discussion with the National Union of Public Workers on those issues, the Union, without notice and without breakdown of the negotiations, chose to call a strike on June 4th. On April 7th, 1999, the nursing staff at the hospital took industrial action. Arising out of that action, the National Union of Public Workers submitted a list of nurses' grievances to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Administration. These concerns were known to management and were already being worked on.

Within three weeks of the strike of April 7th, recommendations addressing the majority of those concerns were sent to the Ministry of the Civil Service. Those recommendations are being reviewed for decision by the Ministry of the Civil Service and funding will then be sought from the Ministry of Finance. The remaining recommendations were sent to the Ministry of Civil Service in May.

The remaining recommendations were sent to the Ministry of Civil Service in May. Discussions and exchange of information on the recommendations are taking place between the Ministry of the Civil Service and the hospital. 6.05 p.m.

On April 22, the Permanent Secretary with responsibility for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital wrote the National Union of Public Workers requesting a meeting to discuss the state of industrial relations. After there was no response from the NUPW, the Permanent Secretary contacted the Union by telephone and was promised a meeting in late May, but the Union set no specific date for that meeting. In late May the Union then indicated that the meeting would take place in early June, but once again did not fix a date.

On April 30, the Hospital Director, Mr. Andrew Watson met with NUPW officials, including the General Secretary and the General Nursing Body of the hospital and apprised them of the progress which had been made on the matters on which they had concern.

Since April 7, the hospital has instituted a number of measures to resolve the nurses' problems. One such initiative has been to establish a joint interim oversight committee, comprising hospital management, nursing staff and union representatives to monitor the progress on the grievances. That committee has been meeting.

The hospital has also employed 12 additional security guards, increased security lighting on the compound, deployed security personnel in the car parks, increased security patrols on the corridors, trimmed all over grown trees which were deemed a threat to security, improved monitoring of the hospital's entrances, reduced the number of entrances opened at night, developed an identification system for visitors, especially at night and provided communication equipment for security guards.

The nurses' complaints in respect of personnel matters are also being addressed. In addition to the matters referred to the Ministry of the Civil Service over the course of the last few months, ten nursing posts, 50 sessional nurses posts and 50 health aide posts were created and 60 staff nurses were appointed. Further appointments and recommendations for the filling of posts have been referred from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to the Personnel Administration Division.

It is of grave regret that the union chose to go out on strike while the matter was being addressed, that the hospital was not officially notified of the strike until eight hours after it had started and that the nurses are continuing on strike, even though the NUPW General Secretary has been quoted publicly as saying that 99.9% of their concerns have been addressed.

Further the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has today informed me that the General Secretary of the NUPW has refused to have the matter referred to the Chief Labour Officer for mediation. The Ministry and the Hospital Administration sincerely hope that this position will be reconsidered. Given the position of the Union, the measures put in place to remedy the nurses' concerns, the prompt and continuing action of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the readiness of the Ministry of the Civil Service for whom this matter now lies to resolve the matter, the hospital has urged the nurses to put patient care first and to return to work so that the negotiations can continue or alternatively, to allow the Chief Labour Officer to mediate.

While about 60% of nursing staff continues to come to work, services of the hospital have been adversely affected. The hospital remains willing to continue working with the NUPW, the Ministries of the Civil Service and Finance to

bring this matter to a satisfactory resolution which addressed the needs of both the patients and nursing staff.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that concludes Government's business for the day, I beg to move that this Honourable House do now adjourn until Tuesday, June, 1999 at 11.00a.m.

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

The question that the Honourable House do now adjourn until Tuesday, June 22, 1999 at 11.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 6.15p.m.

CONTENTS

MINUTES

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS

Confirmation of Minutes of Tuesday, May 18, 1999.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker announced he had received the Accounts and Statements for the month of November, 1998.

PAPERS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS

1. The Valuation (Fresh Valuations) Order, 1999.
2. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Hydroqual Inc.) Order, 1999.
3. Value Added Tax (Refund) (No. 4) Order, 1999.
4. Special Development Areas (Boundaries) Order, 1999.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS.....2

Suspension of Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 for the remainder of the Sitting.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND SITUATE AT CHEAPSIDE, ST. MICHAEL.....2

Hon. G. A. Clarke, 2; Mr. D. St. E. Kellman, 3; Hon. A. P. Wood, 4; Mr. D. J. H. Thompson, 8; Hon. D. A. C. Simmons, 12.

ORDER NO. 7 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND SITUATE AT WESTON, ST. JAMES 13

Hon. G. A. Clarke, 13, 20; Mr. D. St. E. Kellman, 15; Hon. R. C. Eastmond, 16; Mr. D. J. H. Thompson, 18.

ORDER NO. 4 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION OF LAND SITUATE AT FARMERS, ST. THOMAS.....

Hon. G. A. Clarke, 21, 25; Mr. D. St. E. Kellman, 21; Hon. G. W. Payne, 23; Hon. G. A. Clarke, 24.

ORDER NO. 5 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE VESTING IN THE NATIONAL HOUSING CORPORATION OF LAND SITUATE AT ST. ANN'S, ST. JOSEPH 25

Hon. G. A. Clarke, 25.

ORDER NO. 6 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE VESTING IN THE BARBADOS TOURISM INVESTMENT INCORPORATED OF LAND AT PRINCESS ALICE HIGHWAY, ST. MICHAEL 26

Hon. G. A. Clarke, 26; Hon. Sir Harold St. John, 26.

APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES 26

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, 26.

ORDER NO. 8 - RESOLUTION THAT THE SUM OF \$2 692 328 BE GRANTED FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 1999-2000 NO. 1 27

HEAD 27 - MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT 13

Hon. G. W. Payne, 27, 42; Hon. Sir Harold St. John, 27; Mr. D. J. H. Thompson, 29; Hon. D. A. C. Simmons, 31; Mr. M. Z. Williams, 33; Mr. N. A. Lynch, 36; Mr. D. St. E. Kellman, 38; Hon. D. A. C. Simmons, 42.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS.....43

Hon. Miss H. E. Thompson, 43.

SUSPENSION.....

13

44

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. D. A. C. Simmons, 44.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

CLARKE, Mr. G. A. (St. George North) EASTMOND, Hon. R. C. (St. James North) KELLMAN, Mr. D. St. E. (St. Lucy) LYNCH, Mr. N. A. (St Michael South) PAYNE, Hon. G. W. (St. Andrew) St JOHN, Hon. Sir Harold (Christ Church South) SIMMONS, Hon. D. A. C. (St. Thomas) ¹ THOMPSON, Mr. D. J. H. (St John) THOMPSON, Hon. Miss H. E. (St James South) WILLIAMS, Mr. M. Z. (St Michael North West) WOOD, Hon. A. P. (St Philip South)