

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1999 - 2004

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, June 22, 1999

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 11.15 a.m. on Tuesday, June 22, 1999.

PRESENT

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

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

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

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. Miss B. A. MILLER (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)

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)

Mr. D. CARTER (Chairman of Committees)

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)

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

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

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.

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

Hon. R. R. FARLEY, B.Sc. (Minister of Industry and International Business)

Prayers were taken by Canon Father Ivan Harewood

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, June 8, 1999.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its meeting of Tuesday, June 8, 1999, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

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

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

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

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

1. The Report of the Public Investment Fund for the quarter ending March 31, 1999.
2. The Report of the Social Investment Fund for the quarter ending March 31, 1999.
3. The Annual Report of the Central Bank for the year 1998.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay:

The Immigration Forms and Fees (Amendment) Regulations, 1999.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to give notice of the following:

Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of lands and the building thereon at Bush Hill in the Garrison, St. Michael for preservation as a heritage tourism site.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 4 - TO MOVE THAT THE HOUSE RESOLVE ITSELF INTO COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY TO CONSIDER THE GRANT OF SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE SERVICE OF BARBADOS

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

RESOLUTION TO GRANT THE SUM OF \$2 628 039 FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 1999-2000 AS SET OUT IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 2

HEAD 12- PARLIAMENT- \$244 044

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, this Supplementary is being sought in pursuance of Government's policy that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) should operate on a commercial basis to regularise certain of the outstanding debts due and owing to CBC.

Over the years, Mr. Chairman, CBC has been required to carry various types of programmes from Parliament on behalf of NGOs and cricket, so that the general public could see the fortunes or the misfortunes of the regional team. Always, the requests for CBC to carry these kinds of activities have been made, not on the basis of any formal legal agreement but more in the expectation and the hope that CBC would at some time be compensated for the services which it had rendered.

It is a well known principle of law which underpins this Resolution today. That where a person renders services or does work for another, without a formal agreement, but in circumstances where it is reasonably expected that those services or that work would be compensated, that the person performing the services or the work is entitled to what we refer to in law by way of a Latin tag, '*a quantum meruit*'. He is entitled to be paid a reasonable sum for the services rendered or the work performed.

Let us look at Head 12 to give an example of what has happened in the past. From time immemorial, CBC has been carrying the Budget Debate and the speeches of all Honourable Members, running into three days. During that time - I am going to interject here - we are dealing particularly with CBC television, not CBC radio. During the coverage of those debates, CBC has had to forego advertising revenue. Since 1995, Parliament, on various occasions has requested CBC to carry some of its debates. Again, those debates have been carried and during the coverage of the debates, CBC has lost advertising revenue. You cannot say on one hand that you expect the station to be run along commercial lines and on the other hand it gives up all this revenue and does not recover it. 11.25a.m.

We have determined to settle the arrears of debts due to CBC once and for all, Sir, and hereafter to instruct CBC to enter into proper formal written agreements with the Management Commission of Parliament and whoever else it is rendering these services to, so that in the future the basis upon which claims can be made would have been settled

pursuant to a written agreement. As I said earlier, there was no agreement which underpins any of these claims that are being made, Sir, but CBC's basis for payment rests upon a well accepted legal principle sounding in the Latinism of *quantum meruit*.

In July last year, the Minister of Finance met with CBC and advised CBC to seek to recover its arrears and its debts from the various agencies which were alleged to owe it. Full and complete billings were sent to the various agencies of Government, itemising the details of events which were carried and the loss of revenue associated with those events. In respect of the Management Commission of Parliament, the sums have been agreed as between the accountants of CBC and the Clerk of Parliament. Nothing in this sum that is being voted represents a claim in respect of Budget debates. The Corporation has not charged for that. That is being given gratis because of the long history of carrying such debates without charge. So, under Head 12, Sir, we are seeking \$244 044 being the sum found due and owing by the Management Commission of Parliament to CBC after a proper and conceptual accounting between the parties and that covers the period 1995 up to the end of last year.

Mr. Chairman, as we go along, I will explain the other Heads. We had a long debate in here some weeks ago on CBC when we were seeking to amend the Act and I have no intention of regurgitating anything that was said then. Today, the Government is more concerned with settling the debts which are found due to CBC and hopefully this will assist them in becoming financially viable. But I could not leave Head 12 or deal with this Resolution at all, without making the general points that all too often criticisms are levelled at CBC. I have been a foremost critic of CBC on both sides of the House as recently as last year, I believe, in a debate in here and though I believe that many of the criticisms are well founded, I think however that we must stop and consider ...

Aside.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: CBC is in a fairly unique position, not that it has a monopoly of television, but unique to the extent that it is one of the few television stations that I can think of which charges no licence fees.

Licence fees were abolished in 1986 and there went a substantial substratum of finance which used to support the corporation. On the other hand, having lost that financial plank, CBC has sought to diversify its programming through the introduction of Multi-Choice Television (MCTV). That is not yet a satisfactory island-wide service and of course the objective is to ensure that in fairly short order, the whole of Barbados has the opportunity which is now denied to certain parts of Barbados, to benefit from MCTV. That will call for a capital outlay to support the purchase of necessary equipment.

I also wish to say, Sir, that there is truth in an article which recently appeared in the *Nation/Sunday Sun*, that there is a substantial body of evidence being obtained by CBC of dishonest practices in relation to the boxes and the antennas which are necessary components of the MCTV service. There are people who are stealing that equipment, but the matter will be discussed even more fully with the police than it has been in the past, to try to develop strategies for dealing with that kind of theft. I believe the thief is covered in the new Penal Act. It used to be in the old Larceny Act, a thief of electricity, abstracting electricity and telephone. All of that, though they may seem intangible, they were still criminalized in the old Larceny Act. I have no doubt that under the Telecommunications Act, legislation exists. But I would like to appeal to the public to desist from the practise of trying to rip off CBC through the theft of the signal boxes and antennas.

Mr. Chairman, I want also to say something that I could say later on but I take it now. Last Wednesday evening, I went to a Media Centre in The Belle and inaugurated a service on Channel 73 called the Visitor Channel and the two persons who have developed this service... work very closely with CBC to add another dimension to the first product. All that it took for me to start that service was to press a mouse and there was an automatic connection with CBC and you got it on Channel 73 and we have had it ever since then. 11.35a.m.

I am going to challenge CBC, and indeed I am going to issue a general direction to CBC, to investigate and report to the Ministry the implications for using a similar system to provide public service broadcasting to the public of Barbados.

In other words, if the two gentlemen could produce what they have done at the Belle ... I did not see, subject to memory, a whole plateau of antennae and dishes up there. I went into a room, saw a set of computers and I pressed a mouse and we have the Visitor Channel operation.

I believe that it is within the competence of CBC to collaborate and get the technology that will allow them to dedicate a Channel - let us say, Channel 71 or 74, I do not know - but a channel. Not Channel 8 or what shows on my box as 59, not the normal CBC, but another Channel where all these public service things can be dedicated.

Over the years, CBC has been requested by Ministries on behalf of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), very worthwhile causes such as the Cancer Society, UNIFEM and PAREDOS to carry programming. They cannot pay for it. It is not in GIS time, so it is not part of Government's reserve time which is 10 per cent under the broadcasting system.

This impacts on CBC's advertising revenue because at the time when they carried these things they could have had advertising.

Now, I believe that all of these public service things; parliamentary debates and documentaries about Barbados - I spoke during the last debate about some of the ways in which CBC can become proactive by creating local programming - and Government Information Service (GIS) information should be on one separate channel not interfering with Channel 8 but on another dedicated channel operating just as the two gentlemen, Mr. Davis and I cannot remember the other gentleman's name from the Media Centre, who are operating from the Belle. In other words, if they can do it, CBC can do it too. When they set up the channel, they had cooperation from CBC's engineers. So the technology must have been transferred perhaps both ways.

It seems to me that last week we proved once and for all that you can use a separate channel on CBC for doing virtually anything you like without any unusual and exorbitant expense. I am saying therefore, that I am going to challenge CBC to let us work together to see how soon we can develop this.

All public service broadcasting and all public information can be put on a channel so that when we are in here debating the Budget debate we would not have to interfere with the general public's privilege or right to view *Days of Our Lives* and all these kinds of stuff that they like to view and we can do our own thing on a dedicated channel and who wants to watch it will turn to that channel and they will see it.

I give the House the assurance that I will be taking early steps to have this matter investigated. I believe in the past that there were all kinds of arguments put forward about the need to have all kind of repeater stations and transmitters and so on. The people at the Belle - the Media Centre - do not have that. They operate out of a blue building with no big lot of antennae, just some computers and are sending the signal onto CBC for transmission into 3 000-hotel rooms in Barbados. Just as they can do it, CBC has to be able to do a public service channel.

Mr. Chairman, with those remarks I beg to move that Head 12 in the sum of \$244 044 stand part.

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

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would have been much more comfortable in this debate if the new Minister responsible for CBC was in fact making this \$2.5 million available for the establishment of a public sector broadcast station.

If the Honourable Member for the City was listening, she would probably have been kicking the Attorney General under the table because years ago a Committee of the Management Commission of Parliament was set up which met with the previous Minister - who twiddles his fingers all day long, now the junior Minister in the Prime Minister's Office - and who was to put in place mechanisms for the broadcast of parliamentary debates and I assume for a dedicated channel for public service announcements. Almost five years after that mandate was put in place by the Management Commission of Parliament nothing has transpired.

I think that the Honourable Member for the City had an obligation to pull him by his jacket lapel and let him know that he is merely reinventing the wheel because all of this had been done previously by the Management Commission with no creative solutions being put forward by the same CBC, which the Honourable Member said or have the faith in, to do something either better or the same as other people in the private sector have done.

If that were possible at CBC, we would not have had to guarantee in excess of \$20 million for capital improvements every time CBC goes to the expense of taking information off a satellite and putting it into our homes because I am certain that the owners of Direct TV did not spend 10 per cent of what this Parliament has had to approve down through the years for CBC to do almost the same thing that they are doing with a better form of technology.

We are wasting time and if the Minister really believes that because somebody else can do it CBC can do it then I do not have that faith and have never had it. There is nothing that giving them \$2.3 million or millions more will do that will convince me that the CBC has either the ability or interest in undertaking those kinds of things.

Asides.

11.45a.m.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: The Government, I believe, needs to look at the provision of this \$2.3 million against the kinds of technology and the kinds of other services that it could have purchased with \$2.3 million to the benefit of the viewing citizens of Barbados.

We are paying CBC to broadcast parliamentary debates and I wish to know whether we are paying them at commercial rates or what is the basis on which these payments are being calculated. We are paying CBC for public service announcements. We are also paying CBC for outstanding sums as a result of broadcasting cricket. Now there must be some reason why the others who were described as "late" can find this kind of activity suitably profitable, whether it is in Barbados or in other parts of the

world but the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation has to rely on Government to make a direct payment to it to the tune of \$2.3 million simply to satisfy the broadcast of parliamentary debates, the televising of one cricket series and expenses relating to public service announcements. I think the Minister has to satisfy Parliament of that.

It is a large sum of money taken against the background of other commitments which one assumes the Government has and other calls on Government expenditure and there must come a time when the Government before it returns to Parliament has to identify what its media policy is, what its policy in relation to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation as a publicly owned broadcast station is going to be and what kind of resources the taxpayers of Barbados will be expected to put into it.

I assume that this Cabinet Paper did not have to come through the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs because he could not feel comfortable giving CBC an additional \$2.3 million to broadcast the kind of violence which impacts on our young people in the way in which he said that it impacts on them. I agree. We are not disputing it. What I am saying is that I know he must have made a note on the file that it is with the greatest reluctance that he could approve an additional \$2.3 million to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation to do, as I said, the same thing that the owners of Direct TV are doing except for the fact that they run a local broadcast channel and facilitate the development of a tourism channel.

It should not tax the mind of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas for too long to work out why it is that two or three men who did not spend \$2.3 million could develop a dedicated station for tourism and yet the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation working under successive Ministers with the help of the Management Commission of Parliament, the Government Information Service, the goodwill of the Opposition and all of the other crutches on which it is entitled to lean to carry out its mandate is unable to put in place a dedicated channel.

In yesterday's time on the Internet they announced that in addition to whatever they offer Parliament a dedicated website for up-to-date parliamentary debates as well as up-to-date information on the work of committees in Parliament so likewise you could take the mouse on the same computer, go on that site and get that information on what is happening in the Parliament in the United Kingdom. You can do it in the United States at very little cost to maintain that website.

We are giving CBC \$2.3 million with the vain hope that at some point in the future it would see its mandate as moving away from the re-broadcasting of violence which is doing so much to impact on the lives of our young people and to focus on the need for additional public service

broadcasting, the broadcast of parliamentary debates and other kinds of activity which would be wholesome and useful in the development of our society.

I have to support this with great reluctance. If the Honourable Member for St. Thomas came here today and asked me to support the grant of \$100 000 to the two gentlemen who just set up the tourism station, Channel 73, because I have looked at it, I would be happy to help them because they have demonstrated a level of creativity and ingenuity and I am certain at a fraction of this cost and we are pouring money year after year, capital, and I assume at some point even though the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is essentially telling us that we owe all of this for parliamentary debates, that that is just concealing the subsidy which the Government has to give to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation.

If you gave a young person one-tenth of that and asked them to set up an Internet site as well as broadcast it, gave them some room at the GIS building on Bay Street and told them to broadcast the parliamentary debates - they do not pay us to act in here so there is no cost to them for what is said; they take it directly from this and send it through the equipment that is here - they can do it at a fraction of the cost we are asking for CBC.

Of course, as I understand it, the one channel which CBC actually operates is the commercial channel and it is not really a public service broadcast channel anymore. So everything we do, the \$40 million that CBC has had over the past few years, apart from taking information off satellite and beaming it to our homes has been to prop up this great creativity in running one local channel in Barbados. It is financial madness and some Minister of Broadcasting at some point in the future development of Barbados, not coming now, will have to put a stop to that and nationalise the operation of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, get serious about it.

I hope the Honourable Member for St. Thomas himself will look at that aspect. I have to be very frank about it because I feel strongly that the debates of Parliament should be broadcast on a dedicated channel. I feel strongly that election advertising is something that should be subsidised. I feel strongly that public service announcements should be on dedicated channels and I believe that all of that could be done at a fraction of the cost which we are going to be giving to CBC via this Resolution.

No doubt there will be other Government departments, the National Cultural Foundation (NCF) and others, privately and publicly owned statutory corporations which are also going to have to pay at commercial rates for the broadcasting, what in some cases may equate to important public service announcements.

Something has to be done and I urge the Minister not to come back here for any more money for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation or anything else for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation unless a media policy is put in place and unless a very firm perspective is adopted by Government on the future of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, what it will mean to the taxpayers of Barbados and why we should be subsidising it. Why we should be subsidising it essentially to transmit many other channels of other peoples' culture in the homes of Barbadians and maybe, to operate one local station and to facilitate the operation of a tourism channel, which really has very little to do with any creativity emerging from CBC. That is the frank question that we need to ask ourselves today. 11.55a.m.

I think that very serious attention needs to be paid by the Minister of Home Affairs who, in other capacities, has to look at the impact of television which promotes a culture of violence supported by taxpayers - including those who do not agree with what it transmits - should continue to do so and to pay regard to the comments of the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, who, in a previous debate raised concerns about the transmission of that violence and its impact on our young people in Barbados. All of that has to come under Government's media policy. I am certain that, as I have said, the \$2.3 million which we are required to support in here today could have been much more creatively used to promote the kind of values which, collectively, we can agree are important for the development of our nation.

I reiterate that we are very reluctant to support this particular Resolution. We know that it is essentially for expenditure which, though subject to agreement, were incurred in good faith and that nobody can turn their backs on the requirements of sustaining the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, short of shutting it down tomorrow, which is not something that we recommend.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak in this debate to give support to the Resolution which seeks to compensate for the matter of parliamentary broadcast to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation.

Let me say, fundamentally, that I support the concept of a dedicated channel to allow the work which is done in this Chamber to be communicated to the people whom we represent across this country and equally as important, also to be accessible by other persons living within the Caribbean, because I believe that the movement of information as it pertains to policy-making and decision-making in each Caribbean territory, is important enough that it should be shared amongst all of the citizens of the Caribbean. That we should not assume that only the citizens within the national boundaries of a territory should be entitled to listen to it.

The reality is, Sir, that we live in a world where it is cheaper to move information than to move people. We also

live in a world that has changed substantially, largely because people are engaged in all different types of activities to keep them busy. One only needs to look at the absence of people from this public gallery today during this debate to know that we have a responsibility to pass on the information and to pass on the discussions which we engage in, in this Honourable Chamber, if we are truly to remain relevant to the needs of the society and if, Sir, we are to engage also in a level of public education in terms of the issues which will confront this nation together.

It is very rare that we would be able to deal successfully with national issues without the involvement of the entire population being seized of the very same issues, to the extent that they understand why as a Government, or why institutions must take certain policy decisions, if they are to improve their lot and to meet the challenges that face us as a country.

What is even more so, Mr. Chairman, is that the whole issue of development requires in large part, the capacity to educate people formally and non-formally. There is no more powerful medium than the transmitting of audio visual data, telecasting, broadcasting, whatever you want to call it, in terms of making an impact on other persons, and changing their mind-set and changing their emotional approaches to a number of issues.

We, therefore, as a Government must recognise the strength and the power of the medium of broadcast as a tool of technology to develop the kind of society that we would wish to develop and to recognise that the principle of formal education operates on the basis of a teacher imparting knowledge to a group of persons within a particular room. What television allows us to do, is to be able to impart that knowledge to many rooms and to many thousands of people at the same time, thereby improving our productivity in terms of getting across that message.

I am not satisfied, Mr. Chairman, that at any stage during our period of Independence, we have satisfactorily understood the power of television as a tool of public education in this country. Indeed, Sir, we have allowed that same power to be used by forces that do not set our agenda for development. By that I mean, by the importation of foreign programming, we have allowed the persons who make those programmes to have a direct influence on the attitudes and beliefs of the people of this country by allowing them to have access to that foreign programming night after night after night.

I do not believe, Mr. Chairman, that we can seriously live in a world where we cut off ourselves from the rest of the world. Indeed, Sir, we rely, as a small open economy, on industries that require interaction with the rest of the world - tourism, international finance, *etcetera*.

We, therefore, have to recognise that it places a greater responsibility on us as a nation to develop the type of programming that could counter what inevitably will come in, if not officially by way of broadcast on a national television station, but through movies and videos which circulate openly in our society.

It means, therefore, that there is a fundamental responsibility that as a Parliament - I am not even dealing with the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation now - that we, as a Parliament, must see to it that somewhere within the allocation of our national budget, there are sums devoted to the development of programming. Not just to deal with the national developmental agenda in terms of publicly educating our people but also to deal with our responsibility to educating and interacting with our citizens who live in the diaspora and who account for almost the same numbers that live here in Barbados in terms of absolute numbers. That we also have a responsibility to understand that if we are truly to play our role in the 21st century that size alone, which hitherto has been a handicap for us, will now become irrelevant because we have the opportunity to use technology to put forward the ideas and beliefs of a country that is only 166 square miles. We have the responsibility, Mr. Chairman, to determine what kind of message and what kind of image the rest of the world must have of this country. We do not do it by just setting up missions in countries across the world as was the practice and had to be the practice, in a world where technology was not available. That will always still be necessary because nothing will replace face to face contact and the building of trust in humankind. In addition to the capacity to have missions and embassies across countries in the globe to give people a perception of ourselves that we would wish to define ourselves, we must now be able to use technology as a way of framing that vision that we have of ourselves as a country and articulating it to the rest of the world, particularly in the context of the challenges that we face at the level of creating new markets within an international trading environment that is indeed harsh for us. 12.05p.m.

I believe, Sir, that it is a task that we must address, not as a single nation, because there will be some level of investment required to make it happen. I believe, Sir, that our interests in terms of our CARICOM neighbours are sufficiently common that if we can find it expedient to work together, in the context of a regional negotiating mechanism to advance our interests in the new international trading environment, we should be sufficiently confident with our common aspirations to recognise that the Caribbean as a whole, the English, French and Spanish speaking Caribbean, can utilise their common resources to have a common message broadcast to the rest of the world in terms of how we would wish to be perceived as a region in the early 21st century. This becomes all the more necessary, Sir, when we recognise that the major conflict and the major concern of

the world today, lies in the capacity for ethnic groups to be able to live together in peace in the same geographical space.

I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that the Caribbean represents one of the best examples of that ability for persons of different ethnic and religious backgrounds to live together in relative peace. And that is a story that needs to be told to the rest of the world and it is a story for which the world will have the patience to listen, largely because they themselves do not have the solutions in dealing with the problems that arise whether Kosova or Rwanda or Bosnia or wherever else.

I also believe that there has to be a level of confidence on our part to recognise that the time has come for us to facilitate a public and private sector venture that sees to it that the programming which already exists, without further investment, the news in each and every territory, the entertainment in terms of the music and other basic programming from national festivals, the sports which continues to reach world class levels in both football and cricket - although we would like to think otherwise after the World Cup recently, that that programming, if just used on a 24-hour rotation now coming from each of the islands can help define how we would wish the rest of the world to see us.

We have lived for too long, Mr. Chairman, as an independent country with our messages being defined and interpreted by persons who do not have our national developmental agenda at heart. And I want to suggest that a region that has as many people and has the resources that we have, has simply to make the paradigm shift in recognising that quality and foreign policy may be more effectively carried out now, utilising tools of technology that exist. Not necessarily the same way or in a way that will threaten the traditional ways that Governments use, but to supplement and to create images of ourselves that will allow people to want to trade with us, to want to become tourists to our destination, to want to invest their money here, because they have a sense and an appreciation of whom we are as a people, what we stand for as a people, and what indeed we intend to do to develop our country and our region.

I believe, Sir, that the CBC Union must become the hub to organise a network that will see both the Governments of the region and significant elements of the private sector of the region coming together to form a single company. They will be able to broadcast within the diaspora and I speak specifically of North America and Europe initially, but then by satellite to every other region across the globe, programming that we use now, that we already pay for now, that already exists, that will cost us nothing more to broadcast it other than the capital cost of establishing the technology to broadcast.

The consumable cost will not increase because we are producing news every night for Barbadians, we are producing news every night for St. Lucians, Jamaicans, Cubans and Martiniqueans and that news simply will feed in just as how Communication Network News (CNN) operates, into a channel that will then feed it back out. The difference is that when the rest of the world hears that news, it is not a story being interpreted by a CNN interpreter - and by interpreter I mean relayed by a CNN journalist - but a story being defined by the people about whom the story relates. And if we do not understand that that capacity to define our own news and to define our own agenda is as critical as fighting the influences of violence and pornography that we witness within our shores, because of the influx of foreign programming.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has got two minutes.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The only way, Mr. Chairman, therefore that we can do it is by committing ourselves to a policy for that regional framework that will see the establishment of a station. The irony is that the United States can broadcast into us, but we cannot put up a station here and broadcast into the United States, because the Federal Communications Commission says that they will only take programming once it is broadcast from a US territory. So that we can get around that for television...

Aside.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: So we can get around it by having the same regional Governments and regional private sector form a company with Caribbean persons who live in North America to be able to broadcast within North America to our people which exceed ten million in North America alone and then to use satellite technology to reach the rest of the world.

I am suggesting, Sir, that before December 2000, we as a region must recognise that whatever we do in terms of the regional negotiating mechanism, whatever we do in terms of our individual foreign policies can only benefit by us being able to meet and greet the individuals in their own countries, in their own homes in a powerful way and particularly our people from the diaspora who live in those countries who can become a significant lobby to assist us politically in many of the things that we are trying to do now.

You know there is a habit of remittances coming back to the Caribbean to help people who are suffering. I want to see, Sir, instead of us dealing with those remittances coming back that we develop a culture among our people living in the diaspora, to be able to make investments instead of simply sending back remittances. Also, to be able to demand of their merchants in their communities that they start to

import Caribbean goods or that their politicians start to be cognizant to Caribbean political issues.

We have spoken about it on both sides of this Chamber, but I believe, Sir, the time has come and I appeal to the Honourable Minister of Information that as part of his fundamental policy for the structuring of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation that he sees it in the context of what are the regional challenges that we must face in terms of development. And that he sees it in the context that while Barbados may not be able to do it alone, that he plays a fundamental role in bringing together the regional Ministers of Information and regional elements of the private sector, to see how we can set up such a company to be able to help define our own agenda and to be able to help define to our own selves and how we see ourselves. Also, to ensure that the confidence that we need as a nation to move forward is capable of being there largely because we will now be interacting on a new level which is a global level.

Mr. Chairman, there are a lot of other things I would have liked to say but, if possible, I will come back in this debate.

Thank you, Sir.
12.15p.m.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I want to speak in this debate because there are certain things I will like to say in this particular debate.

I want to start off by saying that it is clear to me that present and past Governments have not recognised the importance of CBC. We in Barbados have been in tourism for a long time and have always prided ourselves by having some of the best tourism plants in the Caribbean and sometimes in the whole world.

From the time I was a boy, CBC was being broadcast to the whole Caribbean and up to now nobody seems to recognise that that particular channel should be one of our main marketing tools in promoting tourism within the Caribbean and to the wider world.

I am saying that it is regrettable that we cannot point to any one particular programme that has been developed by CBC over the years to help develop our tourism. I think it is a shame for the simple reason, as I said before, that for many years we were broadcasting throughout the Caribbean. Many of those Caribbean countries were watching our television and none of our Ministers of Tourism or Ministers of Information have recognised the fact that we could have used CBC in a progressive way to help develop our tourism.

I am saying that because we have a government station we cannot just come to Parliament and give money to these statutory boards without one first asking them to return

something to the citizens of Barbados first. I do not believe that any Minister of Finance should take the taxpayers' money and give it to anyone or any statutory board without first demanding something in return for the whole country.

If we count the amount of money that has been given to statutory boards like CBC over the years in this country and count the amount of the demand we have made from those statutory boards we cannot equate the two.

If I am being asked today to help give CBC more money from this Parliament by the means of a vote, I am asking CBC to recognise its role to help develop the tourism industry in this country.

I am also asking the Minister of Information, the Minister of Tourism, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in this country to recognise that we need to have a situation in this country where we must recognise that tourism is falling badly. We need to have an independent channel to help develop our tourism industry once more. We are in a sad state and I do not expect when the true figures are shown that anybody will come and tell me that our tourism problem only has to do with the Hilton or Sandy Lane Hotels. We must recognise that we have failed because we have a television channel which we have not fully utilized.

I can see something coming out of this particular debate. Last Wednesday, one week ago, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas went to the Belle and he gave us Channel 73 with a lot of praise. Today, the Honourable Member comes to this Assembly and tells us about the amount of money that is being spent on CBC. He also tells us the amount of money that it might have cost us to set up the particular channel in the Belle. He has been able to give a very good argument and has been able to show us that it does not take much to set up another television channel.

I will say, if I were to play the devil's advocate, that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has been able to convince me that he is quite prepared to support the channel that has been developed in the Belle by those private individuals and has shown a good case why CBC should not be supported today in this large sum. I hope and I know that they will not go back on their word to CBC and that they will give them the money.

I hope, Sir, that after today that the new Minister now that he has all the powers he needs, because he came three weeks ago and was vested with all the power he needed to control CBC, that we will not have a situation in this country again where we will have to come to Parliament, vote money for an organisation and have no say in what it is doing.

I am saying that Barbadians must understand that there is a relationship between broadcasting and our tourism industry. If we cannot understand that we will not be going anywhere in this country. We feel just because we are political parties that we can only see the relationship between broadcasting and political parties. I am saying to all Ministers that we must understand that if we can recognise there is a relationship between political parties and broadcasting stations that we must see the relationship between broadcasting companies and the tourism industry and that CBC must recognise that it has a role to play in developing the tourism industry.

At the next CARICOM meeting, I will like to see on the Order Paper something dealing with a CARICOM policy on broadcasting as it relates to television. I want to see the CARICOM meeting not just being used as a talk shop but I want to see constructive suggestions going to that meeting and seeing constructive ideas coming out. That is one thing I will like to see. If it means that CBC has to play the role where other CARICOM governments can help formulate a channel to broadcast our tourism plant and all other amenities throughout the world it is time that we do it.

We must recognise, throughout the Caribbean, that if tourism is what we are going with that we have to travel at higher heights and stop behaving like crabs in the Caribbean and learn to come together and focus on the outside world with one voice.

I am not sure who we are prepared to go to bed with or that those are the right people to go to bed with right now. I will not say anything on this matter at this time. I am saying those who have tourism plants to protect are the people to go to bed with. There are a lot of countries who want to use Barbados and the rest of the Caribbean to help develop their tourism plant. When their tourism plant is developed, how it should be developed, I am telling you that they are going to jump off the bandwagon and leave us. I am telling you that.

So this 'pappyshow' that we are seeing going on right now, must stop. I am saying that in the Caribbean we need to go and look at those nations who have a common policy like us and who believe in the same things that we believe in and that we need to develop the tourism plant not only for Barbados but for the Caribbean as a whole.

The Honourable Minister also mentioned licence fees for television and how they were abolished etc. I want to say that I will never like to see the day when licence fees come back to Barbados because I cannot understand how a Minister can admit that the types of programmes which are coming from a particular television station are not the ones that people should watch but at the same time want to inflict pain on the people by asking them to pay licence fees.

I want to say from this Side that I do not support anything about licence fees because I believe that any channel or any television station that has attractive programmes would not have to depend on licence fees for its revenues. I do not feel that you should inflict things on people like that. I am saying that once CBC does what it should do, there will be no need for it to reintroduce licence fees in this country.

I am also expecting CBC to understand that it has to develop programmes by going through Barbados and finding out those important things that need to be highlighted.
12.25 p.m.

I find in Barbados that sometimes we tend to dwell too much on the negative and we are caught up on a mould where we deal only with the negative and we seem not to be able to go forward. If we are going to go into the year 2000 behaving, the way we are behaving I am sorry for Barbados because I will say to you that we have no hope and this country will go no further.

I am saying, Mr. Chairman, that CBC has come to us once again for more money. From the time I knew myself all we have been hearing about is money for CBC, \$12 million, \$20 million, that million and that million. It is the most regrettable thing that a Parliament that has voted so much money for an organisation now that organisation is behaving as if that particular Parliament owes it so much that it cannot even afford it certain privileges.

If we count the amount of money that this Parliament has voted for CBC and we had taken that money and given it to somebody else, that particular company or organisation would owe this Parliament so much money that at the end of the day we could go and ask them for the keys and we would be the owner of the organisation. Now I am faced where I have three documents saying we owe CBC this and we owe CBC that. That \$2.3 million, I would like to ask how much money is owed by CBC to the Government. Even if we had to add on a 2 per cent interest, I am telling you that the interest alone would be more money than what we owe them.

CBC has to understand that this might be the last time they will be getting this type of money from the Government and if they are going to treat their billings to us as if they are a commercial station, they must recognise that sometimes the Government must treat the loans to them as if they are a commercial organisation. The equation must be balanced.

I have no problem in supporting this money this time but I am saying that it causes me some problems because from 1994 when I came to this Parliament, I was told about a station to broadcast parliamentary debates and this is 1999 going into the year 2000 and I see no sign that anything has

been done, I am told by my comrade that it was discussed by the Management Commission. We had a whole Minister of State for five years to do something like this and you cannot even get a Paper on it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member has one minute.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am saying that is deplorable and we deserve better. That is why I wish CBC well. CBC must also understand that even though I have criticised them I still have their interest at heart. They must recognise now that this is becoming a very competitive world and if they do not do what they have to do, competition will look after them.

I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Sir Harold St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I was not present in the House on the last occasion when CBC was subject to a debate. I welcome this opportunity to make a few observations on what I regard as very important in relation to the determination of the future of CBC.

I am involved, Sir, in another island in a dispute essentially on the valuation of a cable television station. During the course of that dispute, a considerable amount of expert evidence has been led as to the methodology of valuing broadcasting stations and television stations. In addition, a lot of evidence has been led to the projections and prognoses to the future of some of these traditional television and broadcasting stations, the likelihood of the new regime that will come into existence and its impact in particular on monopolies or favoured licensed stations.

There can be no doubt that anybody who thinks that CBC in the future can continue as it is at the present moment and that its powers and privileges as they are at the present moment will continue, I think they are living in a fool's paradise. Technological change is taking place at such a rapid rate that whatever legal mechanism is in place at the present moment which would tend to make people believe that there is a monopoly in the transmission of television programmes and things of that kind that just will not continue.

The development of satellite technology has already come to us. Nobody has been able to find a legal mechanism to stop Direct TV operating in Barbados. The next stage and questionably will be that there will be an English-speaking studio attached to Direct TV which will produce its own programmes and then there will be real competition to CBC.

I say all of these things, Sir, with the hope that those who are responsible for the determination and the

administration of the policy of CBC at the present moment will recognise that they have to rethink their existing method of operation. They have to rethink and recognise that you cannot continue upon the basis that you can operate in the same way in which you operated traditionally.

When CBC was formed 36 years ago there was a completely different environment than what it is today. As a matter of fact, with the NDDS programme that CBC has and with the number of subscribers they have it is possible to put a value on CBC by virtue of having those numbers of subscribers.

There are valuations in existence for cable television stations which state that somewhere between US\$500 and US\$1 000 per subscriber is the method of valuation. As a matter of fact, within the Caribbean there has been a sale of cable television stations on the basis of a value to each subscriber and that value was US\$1 000, as I understand it. It is recognised that US\$1 000 per subscriber in the context of that sale was commanded because of the fact that there were three or four television stations. In essence what was happening was that one person was buying out two so he was trying to buy out part of his competition.

These are things that are taking place. I do not know how many subscribers CBC has here in Barbados but I know this that had it not been for the fact that you have constant interruptions by rain and interruptions also by Spanish language stations or the fact that the station produces Spanish instead of English, that there would have been more competition in that area. I genuinely believe that the technology from what I have read and heard is improving at such a fast rate that these difficulties they have at the present moment will be overcome. 12.35p.m.

Now all of us would like to see a situation in Barbados in which there will be in existence stations which can bring in programmes from other parts of the world. We would also like to see our own units in existence where we can transmit some of our culture and some of the information that we have about ourselves not only to the rest of the Caribbean but to the rest of the world. This is a very important area and I believe the fact that they have a studio, production capability, is probably one of the reasons why many of us are content periodically to make, by whatever means or fashion we do it, available resources to CBC.

All I am saying is that that cannot continue forever. The technology has changed to such an extent that there will be a rival and serious questions will arise constitutionally in an attempt to crush the rival. At the present moment, in other countries in the Caribbean with similar constitutions to ours, attempts have been made to break the monopoly on the basis that the existing legislation is an infringement of the

freedoms of speech. As a matter of fact, there is a decision to that effect but as to whether that decision will hold up on appeal or not is a different matter. The point is there is thinking out there that utilisation of the new developments in satellite broadcasting and things of that kind that if legislation is attempted in a country to ensure that only one person can take advantage of that technological advancement that that in itself would constitute a breach to the Constitution.

These are very serious matters and I do hope, Sir, that those who are in control of CBC will look at it from all of these points of view. Really and truly, Sir, I do not think one can continue with some of the things that exist up there. I understand, and I have been told, that modern technology is such now that a station like CBC should have no more than 100 people to run it. I believe that these are matters.

What is going to happen ...

Aside.

Hon. Sir Harold St. JOHN: That is the position. Technological changes are upon us. Of course, one of the saving graces in the case that I am involved in is that when a purchaser buys and pays that kind of money he insists that you clean up your act before he takes it and the redundancy fee is deducted from the purchase price. That is a fact.

I just mention this to give the House an idea that we are really operating in a new environment which is part of a new international environment and also that the technological changes are taking place at such a speed that we just cannot continue as usual.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am very grateful to all Honourable Members who have contributed to this debate. More and more as I listened to Honourable Members it struck me that because of what is portended for the future and the ramifications for broadcasting and information that the decision that was taken by the House some weeks ago to amend the CBC Act to allow the Corporation to function within a policy framework and not in a policy vacuum was indeed the right thing.

Honourable Members have spoken about matters which are of far-reaching consequence not only to CBC but rather to Barbados and the development of the people of Barbados and those matters can only be addressed within the context of some policy matrix that is developed by the Ministry and the Cabinet in accordance with our constitutional remit under section 65 of the Constitution.

I wish Honourable Members to be assured that I am paying particular attention to the development of a broad policy for information. In that regard, I asked for, received

and have read a draft document not yet approved of infocom policy which was worked out, particularly with the assistance of the Broadcasting Authority.

I have had meetings with the Broadcasting Authority and I wish shortly to meet with the Broadcasting Authority again to revisit the infocom policy together with the Director of Communications so that later on this year we can put to Cabinet a revised and current infocom policy.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church South spoke about the pace of technology and the consequence for broadcasting and information as a result of the pace of technology. That is a matter that is very much within the purview of the Ministry and the Broadcasting Authority. I am particularly grateful to learn from the Honourable Member for Christ Church South that they have been discussing in the legal context the methodology for evaluation of broadcasting stations.

It will become relevant over time because the Government in 1994 did commit itself to a restructuring of CBC, safeguarding the interest of workers and indeed giving workers co-ops and so on and an opportunity to become owners in a restructured CBC and thereby broaden the base of economic ownership in Barbados. I think I said it in here and I know I said it to a Trinidad radio station when they called me some weeks ago: before we can even consider any of the offers that have been made from stations or interests within the Caribbean there has to be a proper and current evaluation of CBC and some of the expressions of interest in CBC, the two that we have received and there is a third that may have come by now having not necessarily seen it, two firm offers have been referred to the management accountants in the Ministry of Finance for their evaluation first. But at the same time, I am submitting that CBC has a responsibility to carry out a re-evaluation of its assets using current methodology, and that will be done.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy emphasised the fact that the station should have a regional focus and there is a lot more that can be done. That is a matter that I have addressed in here on the Second Reading of the Bill to amend the Act, Sir. 12.45 p.m.

The Honourable Member for St. John encouraged me to develop a media policy and to make it known. He can be assured of that. Those who fear that there is not the courage or commitment to supervise the rationalisation of CBC are invited to wait a while. Just give me a chance to come to grips with all of the aspects of CBC. Be assured that even now, I mean as recently as last month, the Board of CBC has been doing its primary and preparatory work to advise me as to how CBC can be reorganised, restructured and rationalised. Honourable Members need not fear that there is any foot-dragging on this.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I have not changed any Board. The Board is still there. I told the Board that they were appointed a year or 18 months ago and I have no desire to change them. When their time expires, I will look at if I need to change the Board then.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The Honourable Member for St. Lucy is being very mischievous.

Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful to Honourable Members for their contributions and assure them that I will keep the House informed about what progress is being made towards the rationalisation of CBC.

I beg to move, Sir, that Head 12 in the sum of \$244 044 stand part.

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

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

HEAD 15 - CABINET OFFICE - \$248,905

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Honourable Members may recall that on March 9, 1999, this House voted a large supplementary of approximately \$24 million for a number of projects. Included in that amount, was the amount of \$248 905 which was voted then to the Electoral and Boundaries Commission for onward payment to CBC in respect of services rendered by CBC for the General Elections of this year. Money was voted and somehow or other there was a bureaucratic bungle that resulted in CBC not receiving the monies from the Boundaries Commission. This sum of \$248 905 is a re-vote of an amount that was voted on March 9th, but because of bureaucratic bungling, CBC did not get the money. Insofar as this has been dealt with already, I do not anticipate any long debate on it.

I therefore beg to move that Head 15 in the sum of \$248 905, being a re-vote, stand part.

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

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

HEAD 28 - MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Honourable Members are aware that there is no separate Head or Subprogram for CBC in the Estimates. The opportunity is

being sought to supplement the vote of the Ministry that has responsibility for CBC by the provision of \$316 375.55 for cricket.

A short history of this, Sir, is that ever since 1995, every year CBC has been asked to carry Test Cricket and One Day matches, principally in the Caribbean, but also what I say applies to telecast of cricket from outside of the region. This year was no exception, Sir. CBC was required to find \$142 716 to pay for rights to the West Indies Cricket Board. Airtime expenditure was \$201 690 and there was a small overtime figure of \$1 620.

It is easy to say that CBC should have found sponsorship. CBC did go out and seek sponsorship to carry the cricket. You know what they got, Sir? They got \$74 459.60 for the Australian tour. We forget that when CBC was going to look for sponsorship that the West Indies cricket team was, very nearly the worst in the world, if not the worst. They had just been trounced by South Africa in November and December and nobody wanted any part of them. No sponsors in Barbados were willing to pay the kind of money for sponsorship for us to see a team that had just been disastrously destroyed by South Africa. As a result, it managed to raise \$74 000 and that is how this comes to be here, Sir.

CBC has made a loss in carrying cricket to Barbadians. It incurred the debt and I think that it is a reasonable charge. If you ask CBC to render the public the service of carrying cricket so that all of us could watch it, and they lose advertising as a result of carrying it, then I think that the people - the taxpayers - should be willing to pay the \$316 000 to assist them in settling their account.

I want to say something about this, just in passing. It was drawn to my attention that during the Barbados leg of the tour that the Barbados Cricket Association was close to the point of writing CBC and denying them the right to carry cricket because CBC owed them a debt which had not been paid.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I said the Barbados Cricket Association, not the West Indies Board, was close to writing a letter to tell CBC, do not come there to carry cricket, we are not allowing it, because you owe us money. I said to the hierarchy that I was very glad that they did not follow through on their intent because it would have been the most mean-spirited decision made by the Barbados Cricket Association (BCA). That tells you some of the difficulties that CBC has been faced with in relation to cricket, Sir.

Sir, I therefore beg to move that Head 28 stand part.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER, the passing of one money Resolution in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly. 12.55 p.m.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 2.15 p.m. this afternoon.

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

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

RESUMPTION Mr.

SPEAKER: This Sitting is resumed.

ORDER NO. 1 - SECOND READING OF THE LAND TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1999

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have already hinted that one of the major issues that will be addressed in this year's Presentation and Budgetary Proposals which will be in August, Sir, is a reform of our taxes on property and I urge Members to begin to think on issues pertaining to it.

The matter before the House, Mr. Speaker, is to give effect to some budgetary proposals contained in the presentation to the House in 1998 and they are intended. Sir, to provide for the remittal of land taxes, interest and penalties that were due and payable on or before March 31, 1981 entirely and secondly, to provide an exemption in respect of payment of interest and penalties only on land tax due and payable after March 31, 1991 and before April 1, 1998.

The first matter, Sir, is intended to remove a hardship and a great irritant. As you are aware, Sir, in order to transfer interest in a property, a certificate of tax must be produced to the Registrar of Titles to ensure that all taxes have been paid from the first of April 1972 up to the end of the particular financial year in which the matter is being dealt with.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, Sir, on many occasions there is a lot of contention between the land tax department and the potential taxpayer regarding the availability of records

extending over a period of 25 years. In fact I think, Sir, that the House will agree that it is unreasonable to expect anyone to produce records after 25 years and for that reason, Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Finance has listened carefully to representation on both Sides of the House that it was asking too much to go back for 25 years to collect interest, penalties and principal and for that reason we are entirely remitting all principal, penalties and interest for the period 1972 to 1981.

The records of the Land Tax Department show that the amount to be remitted, Sir, is about \$5.3 million of which \$1.5 million is principal, just under \$ 100 000 is penalties and \$3.7 million is interest. In many instances, Sir, the most of the principal amount for that period represent amounts under \$300 000.

Now, Sir, as regards the period 1981 and 1998, it is anticipated that some \$94.9 million in arrears is due the Land Tax Department, made up of \$61.5 million in principal, \$30 million in interest and \$33 million in penalties. We are not proposing to waive the principal, but to waive the penalty and interest and if the House is interested in statistics, Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Land Tax Department calculates that some 28 000 persons as having outstanding taxes of less than \$3 000 will benefit, 2 600 owing between \$3 000 and \$5 000; and 3 600 owing more than \$5 000. So the large majority of the beneficiaries of this would be the small tax owners of Barbados.

I have already indicated, Sir, that we will have the opportunity for a full debate on land tax soon. But the House will be aware of the direction in which the Government wants to move: less land tax rather than more land tax, lower rates rather than higher rates, Sir, and it is against this background that I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On the motion of Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the SPEAKER, the passing of one Bill in Committee

and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
2.25 p.m.

ORDER NO. 2 - THE FINAL APPROPRIATION (1998-99) ACT, 1999

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, Section 109(5) of the Constitution provides that the Final Appropriation Bill should be introduced into Parliament including all of those amounts that would have been voted by way of supplementaries.

It is conventional that this is not debated since the supplementaries would have been debated when they came to the House in the first instance. Therefore, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

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

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

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1-4 inclusive, were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed. The

Preamble was called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, seconded by Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Financial Appropriation (1998-99) Act, 1999.

Mr. SPEAKER: We will now revert to Government Notices.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the Caribbean Investment Fund Bill, 1999.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, the following Bill was read a first time:

Caribbean Investment Fund Bill, 1999.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, that concludes Government's Business for the day. In moving that this House do now adjourn until Friday, June 26, 1999 at 12.00 noon I wish to indicate to the House that it is the desire of the Government to have a full debate on the Caribbean Community.

Honourable Members would be aware that Barbados has the responsibility for ensuring that the region develops as a single market and economy. In pursuance of that responsibility, the various organs of CARICOM have been meeting very frequently and the Treaty of Chaguaramas 1973 is being substantially amended by a number of protocols. Now these protocols are in various states of readiness. Some have been signed by the Heads and another three were recently approved about two weeks ago in Grenada at a meeting of the Legal Affairs Committee of CARICOM for signature by the Heads at the upcoming Summit in Port of Spain.

Government would like to take the opportunity to discuss with a view to public information and education the status of the Amendments to the CARICOM Treaty.

In the meantime, it is the considered opinion of the Government that the Treaty of Chaguaramas was not properly enacted in local law and in that regard Cabinet directed that the existing Chapter 15 of the Laws of Barbados should be amended in such a way as to ensure that the Treaty is domesticated. That is done, Sir, and we intend to bring the amending Bill on Friday.

In the meantime, we have had sixty copies of the Treaty run off by the Government Printery and Honourable Members should be getting them in their hands by tomorrow. I am going to try and make sure that they are circulated by tomorrow.

Now, the Amendment to the Bill will enable us to discuss the present and future of the Caribbean Community. Insofar as Honourable Members would not have been expecting a meeting of the House on Friday, I thought it appropriate to adjourn until 12.00 noon on Friday so that people who might have otherwise had business to discharge

would be in a position to deal with their business and then come to the House. We would therefore have lunch at 2.00 p.m. on Friday.

I beg to move, Sir, that this House do now adjourn until Friday, June 25, 1999 at 12.00 noon. 2.35 p.m.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, speaking very briefly on the adjournment, it is not for the Prime Minister to give directions to Parliament but I really do feel that it would be a good convention if before every Heads of Government Meeting, Parliament could have a debate on the matters which the Government is going to ratify at the Heads of Government Meeting.

It is really very true, Sir, that Parliament is brought into this matter after the fact rather than being put in a position of prior approval. What we are seeking to do is to correct that anomaly. That a Prime Minister goes and ratifies things on behalf of the country without parliamentary sanction can become a very dangerous precedent. It would, in my judgement, Sir, be a development that would greatly enhance public understanding and support for what we are seeking to achieve by way of the building of a stronger integration movement.

May I also say, Sir, that these are not matters that divide, I hope. Therefore, during the course of this week there will be wide consultations involving the private sector and Congress of Trade Unions and Staff Associations of Barbados (CTUSAB) as well as the Opposition so that everybody in Barbados can have access to the information and we can go to the Heads of Government Meeting in the knowledge that whatever the Government commits itself to would have been seen by all the estates of the society in Barbados and would have been seen by our Parliament and that we can therefore speak with a greater sense of, I would think, Sir, propriety on the commitments that Barbados is entering into.

Tomorrow I will be meeting with CTUSAB and the private sector to discuss the Protocol because there is too much of a lack of information in the public domain about these important things we are seeking to pinpoint. I am not going to be sanctimonious. I feel a great need for us to involve Parliament and to have everybody who ought to know what is going on in CARICOM.

The question that the House be adjourned until Friday, June 25, 1999 at 12.00 noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 2.40 p.m.

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

Hon. R. D. MARSHALL: I beg to second that.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 4 - SECOND READING OF THE PUBLIC ORDER (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1999

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, since the days of June 1970 Barbados has had a Public Order Act to provide for the maintenance of public order with reference to public meetings, marches, processions and for matters connected therein and incidental thereto.

The circumstances which gave rise to the Public Order Act of 1970 do not now concern us except to say that for the record, I ought to indicate to Honourable Members that that legislation was passed in response to disquiet, unrest and, indeed, to revolt in neighboring Caribbean islands, particularly Trinidad and Tobago, the famous revolt of 1960 in Trinidad and Tobago.

It was Barbados' response taken out of an abundance of caution as far as practicable to reduce the potentiality for similar behaviour in Barbados and disruption of the social order. At the time of its passing there was a hot debate but I think it is fair to say that in the last 29 years the legislation has settled down and it is now accepted as a necessary part of the law of Barbados to ensure good behaviour in public places and to impose also certain restraints on conduct that could be inflammatory.

The Bill before the House today is not brought from a similar perspective, that is to say there is no conduct in regional countries of such a kind and extent as would demand a response from the Government out of a fear that similar conduct might prevail here. Rather this is a simple amendment designed to establish discipline, good behaviour and lawful conduct in the street festivals and street parties, public festivals such as Crop Over, in particular Kadooment and the Congaline festivals to name two.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is part of the Barbadian personality that largely he is a person of restraint and rather conservative habits but at least twice a year at Congaline and on Kadooment Day, Barbadians, as it were, let their hair down and enjoy themselves on the streets in a kind of carnival atmosphere. I think it is fair to say that by and large over the history of Crop Over behaviour has been reasonably good and acceptable.

However, one cannot bury one's head in the sand and pretend that even though for the most part there have been few incidents of major concern at Crop Over that in recent years there has not been a kind of creeping, almost insidious disregard, for the integrity of the organised masquerading process.

There was a time when the Defence Force and the Police were used inside costumed bands on Kadooment Day. I believe that was 1980. More recently, the Police and the Defence Force, I think since 1992, have been employed on the streets, particularly where bands are proceeding, to try and control the revelry.

Within the last few years, however, it has become apparent that there is a minority of persons who with a degree of lawlessness and completely oblivious to the rights of the masqueraders^wantonly enter the parading bands and misbehave themselves within the bands to the annoyance of the masqueraders, the organisers of the festival and members of the public. This offensive behaviour by a minority of persons ranges from simple assault for which the law already exists, to theft of drinks and foods being carried for the support of bands. Earlier this year, the bandleaders called on the Government to assist them in better policing masquerading on Kadooment Day. They recognised that the Police Force and the Defence Force have been playing a role but they are lacunae in the system because those who want to disrupt the proceedings will wait until the Defence Force or Police are out of sight to enter bands and create mischief. The bandleaders wrote the Prime Minister and the matter was referred to me, Sir. 11.30a.m.

I had a meeting in May with the bandleaders, the National Cultural Foundation (NCF) - the organisers of the Festival, the senior officers of the Police Force and members of the Ministry. The bandleaders were adamant that they feel unprotected insofar as the prevention of trespass by unwelcomed elements in their bands, is concerned. It was explained at the meeting that bandleaders organise some security for the band. They have people who are invested with authority to secure the bands but that has not been enough because the powers of those authorised agents of the bandleaders have been limited. They called for a return to the presence of the Defence Force and the Police. Indeed, one of them wanted them armed in the bands but the

Government has not accepted that, Sir. We were able to agree with the bandleaders to strengthen the legislation, to strengthen their hands and those of the Police.

The way in which we have agreed to fill the void in the law relating to trespass on Kadooment Day is to import notions of the Law of Trespass into the Public Order Act and make it specifically relevant to the parade of bands at street festivals. Mr. Cranston Browne and Miss Gwyneth Squires were two of the bandleaders who met with us and were particularly strong in their representation for increased powers in this area of the law, Sir.

The Petty Trespass Act deals with trespass on to private property. We thought, as a matter of law reform that the tidiest way of dealing with this new legislation and satisfying the concerns of the bandleaders was to amend the Public Order Act and import into the Public Order Act the ideas which already exist in the Private Law of Trespass. I am able to report to the House that the bandleaders, the Police and the NCF are all satisfied with this legislation and support it.

Mr. Speaker, let me just take the House through the legislation. It is agreed that well in advance of a particular procession, be it Kadooment Day or Congaline Day, the bandleaders - this does not appear in the legislation and this is part of the administrative arrangement between the bandleader, the NCF and the Police - the bandleaders will give the Police and the NCF the names of the persons who are their authorised agents in the various bands. They have an identification mark - I suspect it is just going to be an arm band.

"Authorised person" has been given a special definition within the Act:

- "(a) Any member of the Police Force; or
- (b) any person authorised by the promoters or organizers of a public festival wearing an approved identification mark in a manner that is easily identifiable by the relevant person."

We have defined "band". The key word there is 'organised'. I was told this morning about a band that parades at the end of the other bands. It is a group of 'whosoever will may come'. I am not sure that that is organised. "Band" means:

"An organised group of persons assembled together in a band assembly area or proceeding together along a prescribed or designated route in furtherance of the group's participation in a public festival whether in costume or not."

There is also a definition of "band assembly area". It means:

"Any area designated by the promoter or organiser of a public festival, as an assembly area for bands taking part in the festival."

The NCF specially asked for this. They have difficulties when the bands gather to organise themselves before parading because they say, in the area of Combermere when the bands gather, there are people who jump off the embankments around there, come into the band and create confusion. They wanted the "band assembly area" defined and it is so done.

Mr. Speaker, the essence and the gravamen of this legislation is to be found in Section 27H. (1)

"A person who, in respect of a public festival,

- (a) is not a member of a band; or
- (b) is not an authorised person

shall not enter a band without the permission of an authorised person while that band is in a band assembly area or on a designated route."

'Shall not enter in a band without the permission', constitutes trespassing. That is the connotation. That is the trespass - 'an illegal and unlawful entry into the band'.

The only people who should be in a band are those who are in costume, who have paid their money and who are authorised by the bandleader to be in the band.

Members on this Side have told me of all kinds of situations. The bandleaders themselves have told us of all kinds of incidences where some people, those who are out to be lawless and to be indisciplined, get in the band, or run from one side of the road into the band and carry on as they like in the band and the bandleader is powerless to do something about it until he sees a policeman and he seeks his assistance. 11.40a.m.

It was represented to us by the bandleaders this year that they were anticipating a fall off in masqueraders, unless something was done to deal with this wanton conduct that is offensive. It is a form of harassment, but I say it also extends to people coming in the band and going to the drinks truck and taking up people's drink and food and £o on. So we have now provided in subsection 2 that any person who unlawfully enters a band is liable to a fine of up to \$5 000 or imprisonment for six months or for both. If you unlawfully enter a band and you use threatening or abusive words or behaviour or engage in disorderly behaviour likely to

constitute harassment, or cause alarm or distress to a band member for the purpose of securing entry into the band, that is an offence. If you fail to leave the band after you have been directed to do so by an authorised person that too, is an offence.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear, it is the intention of the Government in response to the pleading and the requests of the bandleaders, is not to seek in anyway to regulate morals. This legislation has nothing to do with the way people gyrate or comport themselves in a band in enjoying the events of the day, Sir. It has nothing to do with trying to tell you whether you should 'wine', 'wuk up', or not. I do not know if that language is Parliamentary, but it is certainly part of the vernacular.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All this legislation seeks to do is to ensure the integrity of the costume bands, so that the people who pay their money, who are there for the purpose of enjoying themselves, who are there for the purpose of being judged and Kadooment has money in it, let us face it. People spend a lot of money to go and enjoy themselves and it is really offensive to them that a mindless few from time to time come and spoil their fun. And the legislation therefore is seeking to regulate the way people who are not in a band behave themselves in relation to that band on Kadooment Day, Congaline Festival or any similar festivals.

At the meetings last month with the bandleaders and the Police, Sir, the maximum cooperation was promised on both sides. It was understood that the bandleader would cooperate fully with the Police and *vice versa*.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that this legislation which is, as I say just a simple amendment to the existing legislation will give confidence to bandleaders, will give confidence to masqueraders and will be a signal to those who may be minded to create mischief and confusion on these occasions, will send a signal to them that their behaviour, is unwanted conduct, is not appreciated and that the time has come when that behaviour must attract the attention of the criminal law.

It is my intention, Sir, as Attorney General to see to it that ample publicity is given to this legislation.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is my intention, Sir, to make sure that the media give this legislation as much publicity as possible so that our young people will know what is required of them, what is expected of them on these occasions and will behave themselves in such a way so that everybody can have a good time and enjoy himself or herself on these occasions.

I wish to say, however, that internationally the conduct of the young people is a matter of grave concern. The United Nation's report on human development should be out in another few days, but already excerpts from that report are in the public domain. The British newspaper, *The Observer* of Sunday, July 4, 1999 reports on page 3 of significant cause for concern in the United Nations (UN) of the growth of organised crime worldwide. I have spoken in here before about it, Sir. I have spoken to the Police about it. It is a worrying trend. There is clearly a world phenomenon at work where young people, be they in developed countries or developing countries, are conducting themselves in a way that those of us of different generations could never have anticipated. They are conducting themselves in a way that is threatening the social fabric of countries, be they developed or developing.

The UN Report is alleging that the genesis of what I call this new world phenomenon is in the proliferation and international spread of drugs and the growth of organised crime.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I will send you a copy.

They are saying that organised crime is producing revenues in excess of the British economy which gross national product is £800 billion and that international organised crime is in excess of that by as much as five times and you are seeing it.

We all know of what is happening in Russia and the growth of organised crime in Russia and eastern Europe. It is spreading even to the Caribbean. Russian Mafias are in the Caribbean, not in Barbados, but in the Caribbean. You have the Chinese Triads. You have the Jamaican Yardies big in the United States of America and in England. 11.50a.m.

Last year it was reported for the first time, that I could remember, that Britain was a less safe society than the United States of America particularly New York. In Germany and in France there is an increased in criminal conduct among adolescents and whereas in Sweden, 10 years ago the average age at which a young person got involved in crime was 18, that age is now 15. So more and more young people of the younger ages are getting involved in crime.

The criminologists have not found an answer to it. Professor Jock Young of Middlesex University is seeing the answer partly in an attitude of greed, he is one of what you called the new criminologists, and a desire by young people to get the good things of the world without working for them.

I believe there is something in that but the thesis has not been sufficiently tested and there is not yet a spread of criminological evidence that we can say that is probably true. We cannot say that it is a definite cause to connect it. The most we can do is speak at the level of probability in this area of human behaviour and criminal conduct.

So, that the behaviour of our young people though it must be a cause for deep concern among us all and especially among those of us who have responsibility in government cannot necessarily be isolated from what is happening regionally and internationally. Regionally, all countries are reporting an increase in violent crime and I suspect (I am not saying that it will happen) that one of the outcomes of the CARICOM Heads of Government Meeting in Trinidad will be that and those responsible for justice, security and crime in the area will probably get together in a regional conference later on this year.

There is an offer for Professor Bailey - I think he is, of course, he is a well-known American Criminal Justice Professor - to address persons in the region who have responsibility for crime later on in the year.

I think I should also say to the House that the Clinton Plan of Action which was developed in 1997 between the Caribbean and the United States of America on May 10, 1997 postulated as its first commitment on the justice and security side, a reduction in crime and violence in the region. That idea has been compromised by the attitude of the American Government. Indeed, the decision of the American Government to repatriate to the Caribbean large numbers of persons who commit criminal offences in the United States of America and these deportees had definitely had a destabilising affect in the region particularly in Jamaica, to a lesser extent in Trinidad and Tobago and we are keeping our eyes steady in Barbados and analysing a number of crimes to see to what extent deportees may be contributing to certain types of criminal activity in Barbados.

Now, there is no doubt also, that there is a movement in the region by criminals. There is an exchange as it were of criminal elements in the region. I have spoken several times and have been in conflict with a Commissioner of Police in St. Vincent and I do not retract anything I said because I was proven right by the *Nation* newspaper when they went to St. Vincent and the Grenadines - a photographer and Mr. Slinger - and did an Expose on Barbadians who were involved - without calling their names - and the relationship between criminal elements in Barbados and those in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. We saw photographs of boats bearing Barbados registration numbers in St. Vincent near the beach.

Last week there were two women from Barbados who were arrested in St. Lucia. I am not going into that but some

of us know who those women are connected to. The day before yesterday, on the radio, Honourable Members may have heard of six South Americans who were found in St. Lucia. We must say that the security forces of the Regional Security System played a very key role in helping to identify that activity in St. Lucia. But there were six South Americans with cocaine trying to land in St. Lucia. I believe one have been caught and the other five are at large.

When I talked about the exchange of criminals in the region and for the purposes of this discussion, I include Venezuela which is a matter of miles from Trinidad and Tobago and which is well-known as a drug producing and drugs transshipment country. I talked about the exchange of criminals. There is hard evidence to support that view.

Mr. Speaker, I just wish to reassure the public that the security forces of Barbados are doing all that they can to control law and order in Barbados and to keep this country as the stable and basically peaceful country that it has always been. There will be challenges to the role and function of the Police by those who have no respect for authority, by those who prefer to see themselves as an underclass operating outside the boundaries and norms of organised society. Those elements will be dealt with and met head-on by the security forces in the interest of the preservation of peace, law and order in Barbados. 12.00 noon

With those observations, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time. I am obliged to you.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: I beg to second that, Sir.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, we are not going to be opposing this piece of legislation. I thought from the outset that the Attorney General would indicate that beyond this amendment to the Public Order Act that he was going to be looking at the Act as a whole because I believe that, certainly since I have been in this Chamber, there have been a number of suggestions about reviewing the Public Order Act as a whole, or alternatively, seeking to bring comprehensive legislation to deal with activities which draw large crowds.

Now, that brings me to the point that this piece of legislation has two flaws that need to be looked at by the Attorney General.

The first is that 'public festival' is defined as including a street parade or a procession and I fear that definition would be entirely inadequate.

I believe that there is provision under existing laws, I think it is the Road Traffic Act, for the Commissioner of

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Police working with the Minister of Transport or even the Minister responsible for Home Affairs, to designate the rerouting of traffic and to close highways and that kind of thing for specific events. It would seem to me that the definition of "public festival" should be circumscribed to refer to those events for which there is some kind of designation by the Commissioner of Police or the Minister of Home Affairs both in pursuant of their powers under the Road Traffic Act and generally.

Under this particular definition, one is not clear what a public festival would mean. It could include a street fair. It could include a jamboree down on the Spring Garden Highway as was held in 1996. It could include a procession from opening the Assizes in October from the Cathedral to the Law Courts. It could mean any procession. Therefore, there are private processions that take place in Barbados which would be brought under the definition of "public festival". There are street parades which are held in Barbados for which these powers are obviously not relevant but which would be included under the very wide and loose definition of "public festival" which is proposed in this Bill.

The second point the Attorney General has to be extremely wary of is the designation of "authorised person". Now, this definition is so wide again that a bandleader could designate a child as an authorised person and give them a suitable identification badge.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: But there is nothing that can stop you because the law says:

" 'authorised person' means

- (a) any member of the Police Force; or
- (b) any person ..."

It does not say any person with the approval of the Minister of Home Affairs, or the Commissioner of Police. Any person means any person. A convicted criminal who the bandleader does not know is a convicted criminal could be given an identification badge and then you would have a situation where that person does not even have the moral authority to stop his brothers, sisters and partners in crime from entering into the band and then appearing before the court to give evidence and the Magistrate would be most surprised to see this non-paragon of virtue standing before him giving evidence against a few 16-year olds or whatever.

I think the Attorney General needs to tighten that because we accept the need to deal with this situation but once again one does not want to put wide powers in the

hands of bandleaders because there is nothing unique about them. Some of them are very good but some of them themselves do not have any management skills. Some of them themselves may not exercise the level of discretion that is desirable. Therefore, you need to tighten those two definitions, "public festival" and "authorised person". I believe that this would tighten up the provisions and in doing so nobody would be able to argue that you have pandered to either the bandleaders or that you have responded too harshly to allegations of bad behaviour by giving bandleaders a freer hand than is necessary and desirable or when the circumstances warrant it.

The next point the Opposition wants to make about this piece of legislation is the fact that it is necessary at all speaks very clearly about the state our society is in. I believe that the Attorney General owes an apology to the Democratic Labour Party for the way in which he trivialised and almost laughed out of court the very serious allegations and comments as well as suggestions which were made by the Democratic Labour Party during the last General Election campaign.

First of all, and I believe the Honourable Member for St. Lucy will deal more adequately with that, he has to go right back to the way he reacted to the very sensible statement made by that young lady in St. Lucy in relation to the gun amnesty because we have heard today that crime is a business and it is precisely that point that the young lady was trying to make. I am not the MP for St. Lucy and the Honourable Member for St. Lucy will deal with that aspect of it.

The second point is that we are now hearing that one of the greatest threats to our society as recognised by the United Nations and international agencies, as recognised by President Clinton, and now in the last couple of hours by the Attorney General of Barbados is the problem of crime and violence and that it represents a very significant threat to the tourism sector. More than that, it represents a threat to the lives of Barbadians, our communities, our families and in our homes. Piecemeal legislation like this is not going to deal with the problem nor will grand pronouncements from Washington, the UN, the Commissioner of Police's office or even New York. Those grand pronouncements do not solve the problem. The only grand pronouncement that I will make to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas ... 12.10p.m.

Aside.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I have not been treated as badly as you are treated because I have never questioned his competence. In fact, I said he had big shoes but the Prime Minister said your shoes are very small. So I think you had better leave me out today.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think the Attorney General needs to acknowledge that we need a comprehensive plan to deal with the problem of crime and violence in our society and has to call on all sections of the community, and we are quite willing to assist in whatever way possible, to come together not under the aegis of the Police because the Police have now come to recognise that sometimes they are their own worst enemy. The public does not form impressions of people in authority just for the sake of forming them. Those impressions are formed as a result of a course of conduct, as a result of the standing which that entity has in the society. The fact that a senior member of the Police could allege, and I assume very seriously, that everybody in Barbados is basically disrespecting the Police Force and taking the mitty out of policemen and throwing rocks at them and stoning them, that kind of thing is symptomatic of precisely the point that the Honourable Member for St. George South who is not now in his seat has been warning the Honourable Member for St. Thomas about from 1994, and Members on this Side who are not now Members of this House were warning the Honourable Member for St. Thomas about this since 1994.

That is why the moral authority for bringing Barbadians together to deal with the problem of crime cannot come from the Police Force. It has to come higher than that. It has to be a political action which will gain our support and will involve the highest level of decision making in the society.

The Attorney General right now probably holds more authority in Barbados than any one man has ever held in the history of Cabinet Government because he holds all the major portfolios all in one and all of the constitutional positions barring one. I know of nobody else who has had all of that power, not even the Prime Minister. Not even the Prime Minister has ever had that power.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Let the record reflect that I am not presently until Friday the Attorney General of Barbados. I am acting Prime Minister and I cannot do both together.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: That is what I said. The only thing that bars you from holding that post is the Constitution. The point I am saying is that you have the moral authority. You now have the political authority. The question is whether you really have the will to look at yourself in the mirror tomorrow morning and say the Leader of the Opposition was correct, let me take up the telephone and call him and let us gather all of the heads in Barbados. Not to grandstand because I do not have to say anything. I would just be there if you want me to be there to let you know that I am supporting the effort. Gather all together and let us work assiduously on dealing with the problem.

You have to bring the people from Social Transformation, from the Ministry of Education, and educational planners, people who work in security services in Barbados, the people who are in the tourism sector such as it is now, the several people, the divided voices in tourism sector, all of them should be brought together on this occasion. Every area of national life should be involved in this exercise.

I really believe, Sir, that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has the moral authority to do it. If he wishes to ignore it, then successive generations down the road will be looking at him as the person who had it within his hands, buttressed by the strong spiritual connection between himself and his parliamentary secretary to design an effective programme to deal with the problems of crime and violence and the things that flow from that - breakdown in communities, the problems in families. I heard the Honourable Member speak of some of those things at a recent graduation. So he is getting his finger near to the pulse. It is a pity he did not have it there before January 20. If not, he would have joined me in putting the issue and then moved on.

Now, I believe that we are receiving warning signals from all areas and in a sense this is an admission that the Police alone, the members of the Defence Force with guns alone, cannot control, even by their presence, a situation where large numbers of the public congregate and gather whether it is for Crop Over or for other events. That is a very worrying sign.

What the Attorney General is doing by this legislation - and I have no problem with it. I do not mean it as a criticism - is empowering other people in the society to get involved in the process and to take some of the responsibility into their own hands; but to do that somebody at the end of the day in this society has to have the moral authority to back up the action of those individuals. I am saying right now that it cannot come from the Police and that is where part of the problem in our society resides.

The fact that this legislation is necessary speaks more to the state of our society to the extent that values have been eroded in a way that the Honourable Attorney General said, as a member of a different generation, that he had not contemplated, the extent to which all of the symbols of authority which are there on the day when people gather on Spring Garden have that authority eroded. It is a statement of the extent to which the State is thrashing about seeking to try to empower others to assist them in this task. We have to watch to see if it works.

I hope that it will work. I hope that a strong signal will be sent. Sometimes, as people say, you have to shoot a General. That is a favourite saying of the Right Honourable

Member for St. Peter. Right now he has his gun, his sights, pointed on the Honourable Member for St. Andrew. He says that every now and again you have to shoot a General to do something. I am no army man. I said his gun but I meant his sights in whatever he shoots it with. He has them pointed on the Honourable Member for St. Andrew with some justification, Sir. Not a lot but some justification.

In this scenario, the Attorney General needs to remember that we have brought a whole set of new legislation empowering both the Police and, in some cases, private citizens as in this scenario and at the end of the day the court still seems to be powerless for some reason whether it has to do with the way the case is conducted in court, whether it has to do with the fact that no evidence is presented at the end of the day or some other problem and the matters cannot be brought to a head.

You have had the Vagrancy Act. I do not know that they have ever charged anybody under the new provisions. And even when you go to try to charge them people do not give evidence. The matters stay so long that everybody gets frustrated and they get thrown out. You need to act swiftly with this and I want to make it very clear that I hope that the courts will be very vigilant in ensuring that those authorised persons who lay complaints against individuals for that conduct will follow up those complaints and will not just lay the complaints before the courts and then two years later nothing is done with the matter.

I do not believe that the society can be regulated by locking up everybody who behaves badly or by fining them but I believe that people who are vested with the authority to keep and maintain discipline themselves have to ensure that these matters are dealt with swiftly and that they have an element of accountability at the end of the day. I believe, also, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that the Attorney General, since we are dealing with the Public Order Act, should like to clear the air on the fact that a large number of writers to the newspapers - they may represent a minority, I do not know - including editorial writers, who would be good friends of the Honourable Member for St. Thomas - have recently been expressing concern that an arm of the state has been advocating social unrest. That is what they say ... 12.20p.m.

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: I do not wish to quote any because of.... do not place too much store in their interpretation of events but what I am saying, is that the Government has a responsibility to clarify to the public that it has not created any institution whose leader or any member of it, by acts or omissions, statements or impressions, has left any doubt in the minds of any segment of the community that

the object of our development is to have a society in which people are able to carry out their functions without fear of social unrest on the base of race, creed or any other factor - religious persuasion, gender or whatever.

I believe the Attorney General, although he may not wish to mash any corns, and as I have said, he now has more authority than anybody has ever had in modern Government, should very clearly indicate that the Government is not condoning, nor is it, as a matter of policy, pursuing an approach in which warning signals are being sent to any section of the community simply to get them to comply with an agenda, which, though it might be the Government's agenda, citizens are entirely, at their discretion, to opt not to follow. I believe that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas might be the best person on this occasion to deal with whether that is official Government policy to indicate how public officials need to be careful and responsible in their statements outside of election time. We accept that during election time inflammatory statements and nonsensical statements are made. We heard them in the last Elections too so that is not unusual. Outside of that, the object of Government, when elected, is to pursue the common good and to ensure that all citizens have an opportunity to participate to the fullest, without fear of threats emanating from any source or intimations that those threats may be realised if they do not comply with aspects of Government's political agenda.

I think, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that sums up the concerns of the Opposition in relation to this matter. I hope that during the course of this debate, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas will be able to indicate whether he would be minded to make some amendments to the definitions - not to the legislation because the intent of the legislation we have no problem with - but to make amendments to the definitions because I believe that you might have a situation where an authorised person would have more power even than some of the Government officials who would be on the streets on Kadooment Day. That some of them may not even conform or have the ability or discretion which Government officials or security guards, who are well trained or other persons who understand how to deal with these situations possess. You would not want that. In other words, you would not want a situation where a bandleader arrives on Kadooment Day with 20 authorised persons, badges and hands out one to his son who is 16 years and one to somebody who is 14 years old without checking their backgrounds, without making sure that they themselves do not have criminal offences or have been involved in ...

Asides.

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON: Yes, 20 thugs, that is exactly the expression. You do not end up handing out these authorised badges to 20 thugs without checking their

background. It may create the condition for further unrest when a fellow goes into a band and sees a guy who last week was involved in some criminal activity with him or that he knows has no moral authority to tell him something but he is stopping him from being involved.

You need to pay attention to that and to the definition of public festival. More than anything else, to use your overriding power to pay attention to the need to tackle this problem of crime and violence without propaganda, without public relations but with a genuine commitment, buttressed by the highest levels of authority in our country.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Speaker, while I support the Member on the other Side who just spoke in relation to the type of persons who will be vested authority, I would still like to, at least, clarify a position in the Member's mind in relation to crime and violence. I do not want him to believe that what is transpiring here today is a form of redemption for him and the Democratic Labour Party.

Asides.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: The truth is, when I spoke on that occasion, and I am fully aware of what this Bill is all about but this is a preamble, Sir. When we spoke on that occasion about crime and violence, we were trying to give him some guidelines on what type of ideological package he ought to put to the general public to follow guidelines that were more universal than the ones that he was enunciating at that particular time in history. If he had drawn on the lessons of political history, he would have recognised that in the early 1950's when the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party offered a programme to the people of Barbados, they packaged it within a wide perspective by advocating things like the Adult Franchise. The whole evolutionary growth of our political history, the leadership of all Parties, they have always looked for a national item to put on the agenda. We saw it again in 1960 and 1966 when the concept of sovereignty and nationalism came on the national agenda. Unfortunately, the package in last Elections was narrowed down to crime and violence. Unfortunately, that was the mistake that he was talking about at particular time. I just give him that friendly advice as a neophyte to this body.

My major concern is that this festival emerged out of conditions after the completion of the crop during the period of slavery. I am a little concerned when restrains or restrictions are placed on this festival. Especially when the festival is seen as a moment of enthusiasm for the broad masses of persons who participated in the crop. Legislation sometimes encroach on those liberties with good intentions but fail to understand that at a moment of enthusiasm, when

people are expressing glee, it is a bit difficult to restrain them without having the appropriate individuals to do that job.

Like other persons who spoke, I am a little concerned with vesting authority in the hands of the unworthy. There are people sometimes that we can give authority to ...
12.30p.m.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, Sir. I indicated as my opening that an authorised person, by administrative arrangement, will be so designated and given the mark of identification after submission of the names of the persons to the Police well in advance of the festival. That is a requirement that was agreed in my minute that the organisers, the NCF and the bandleaders have to give the names and addresses of the persons who will be their authorised persons well in advance to the Police. That is to allow the Police to carry out the necessary checks to see that a person under age or with criminal convictions is not represented as an authorised person. The law does not have to spell it out. It is an internal administrative arrangement.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: I am glad for the explanation, but I recognise that when the point was made before, he let it pass before without making any comment.

Asides.

Mr. T. A. PRESCOD: These amendments to the Public-Order Act - and this is not the first time that the Public Order Act has been targeted by a specific group within the society - with all the good intentions, we must always take into consideration what are the likely ramifications of those intentions. And, when the previous amendments were made in 1971, there were many persons who would not normally have access to going to Frank Collymore Hall or going to the University and giving lectures or expressing their feelings, those persons were denied the opportunity to give vent to nonconformist views in the society because as indicated in the preamble to this amendment, external acts influence the thinking of Barbadian people. And we bring legislation at a parochial level, as a precautionary measure not to allow those acts of social disorder to come into Barbados. But, other things occurred as a consequence of that. People were not allowed to gather together in large groups and express their feelings. They were not allowed to conduct or speak in large groups to each other. The legislation has provisions for that after 11:00 at night, without seeking the authority of the Police.

Up to this day there are people who are expressing dissatisfaction with the amendment to the Act of 1971 and they perceive that Act as unconstitutional. The matter has not been tested in a court up to this day. So although we have good intentions about these pieces of legislation, sometimes

we have to be prepared to listen to the views of other persons who come from a different perspective and make the necessary amendment, so that we would have to address or redress a situation at a later date. So that is one of the things that I am concerned about.

Now, this is a very sensitive issue. In a forum like this, we might never gauge the dangers of a person who attempts to use coercion at a time when people are spreading merriment, when they are in a state of glee especially on Kadooment Day. So we have to send the signal, not only in relation to this legislation, but we have to signal to people in the public domain who might be vested with the authority so that they can understand the responsibility which they have. Regardless to what we say here and we misjudge, or the person who has the authority, usurp or abuse that authority, then the very situation that you are trying to avoid might be created in the atmosphere at the particular time. So, that must be understood clearly. We are talking about the potential for social disorder and we might be lighting a fire or we might be creating a volcanic condition that might cause a kind of explosion that we might not be able to control if the wrong persons are vested with authority.

I felt that that is a point I had to make. I do not want to prolong the debate. I believe other persons would inject some worthwhile contributions to the debate, but I figure there are certain things that must be said and it is not a position that one can hold as a partisan position. If you are committed to your national interest there are times when you must criticise positions that are held on the side that you represent, but there is a side that is more important and that is the national side. I have expressed my concerns on this one, because I am concerned about having that social equilibrium in our society and not creating an atmosphere that can be explosive.

That is my short contribution, Sir.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, some seven months ago, one bright young lady from the beautiful constituency of St. Lucy recognised that there was a serious problem in Barbados and beseeched Barbados to look at the crime and violence in a different light.

Today, I am privileged to sit in this Parliament and to hear that because some international body or bodies have been privileged to present certain facts to the Parliament of Barbados, that we can now acknowledge that what was said by that young lady is now gospel throughout the world. But I am not surprised because that young lady was well grounded in Christian morals and she would have recognised at the time that persons like herself had to direct life in a country like Barbados. I take my hat off to the young lady and I would say to her that she must continue to fight against crime and violence and at the same time that she must not only fight against crime and violence, but she must also

acknowledge that in fighting crime and violence you must also look at the particular problem and come up with solutions which she did.

I want to say also, Sir, that in Barbados we are faced with certain problems and we in Barbados seem to be people who can only act when we are in a crisis. I am not surprised, Sir, that we have a situation today where Crop Over, being the last major event in our revenue earning cycle that all of a sudden we have acknowledged we have a particular problem in this country.

That is, we allowed crime and violence all through the year to interfere with our tourism sector and now that the statistics are showing that it has interfered with the economy of Barbados, we are doing everything in our power to make sure that the last major event is not affected, so that the treasury of Barbados is protected. I congratulate the Acting Prime Minister in looking after the interest of the country by making sure that he is protecting the economy of Barbados by making this amendment to the Public Order Act.

I would like thousands of Barbadians and other people to come to Barbados because Barbados belongs to all of us. But what is disgraceful now, Sir, is that in December, January and February our major tourism months when we had the problem even more seriously, we could not admit we had that problem. We allowed that particular problem to go right through those months because we could not admit to the electorate of Barbados that we had a problem at that point in time.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: So, I congratulate the Attorney General and the Acting Prime Minister ...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: You did not tell me that you are the Acting Attorney General. I thought that after what the Prime Minister said you would not be able to act in anything.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Oh, oh, oh. I must admit, I must congratulate the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in acknowledging that there is some good quality in the Honourable Member for St. Andrew in that his capabilities are so good that he will come to the highest level when the time is right.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us hear the Honourable Member, please? 12.40p.m.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I can now understand the particular problems that young people have in Barbados today because I am hearing that the most productive Minister in the eyes of the public of Barbados was switched and it took the acting Prime Minister to acknowledge that the most productive Minister was switched and he made sure he put him in the Ministry, Sir.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order. The Honourable Member must not enter into the debate a distortion or something he heard *sotto voce*. I would like the record to reflect that what I did say from my seat was that there has been no Minister of Public Works and Transport or MTW as it was called before or even MCW in the sixties who has been as productive as the Honourable Member for St. Andrew when he held the portfolio.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Honourable Member for St. Andrew can deliver. The only problem, Sir, is that he did not deliver in St. Lucy.

The point that I want to get to, Sir, is that the admission by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is a very serious admission and I can now understand why the Honourable Member for St. Andrew is now the acting Attorney General. We expect, Sir, that within one short week that crime and violence in Barbados will be solved because the Honourable Member for St. Thomas has said that he is the most productive Minister and in one short week, Sir, he has been able to bring this Amendment to the House to solve the crime and violence problem in Barbados. I take my hat off to the Honourable Member for St. Andrew and this is well complimented by the Honourable Member for St. Thomas which tells me that the Honourable Member for St. Thomas is also giving another message that we must get more Heads of Government Conferences and they must remain for years.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, we have a situation now where we have used Crop Over to admit to Barbadians that we have a crime problem within this country. Crop Over must not only be seen as the avenue to solve the crime problems. It must be seen as that event that can save Barbados from a decline in revenue and foreign exchange because if we in Barbados think that the only problem we have in Barbados is crime and violence, we are wrong. We have a more serious problem today, Sir, where our economy is heading for the rocks and we must have a successful Crop Over season to save this country from its economics problem.

I want to know, Sir, when are we going to stop blaming crime and violence for the economic problems in this country and when we are going to confront the particular problems we have in this country that is causing crime and violence? I was told by the Barbados Labour Party in the 1990's that when people are working and when they have money, you do not get crime and violence.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Going by the Barbados Labour Party theory, we should not have any crime and violence then.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I will make an appointment with the Attorney General to make sure that the crime and the hostility in Barbados will be solved because I know he plans to appoint someone to be Ambassador to Africa and they will be no problems in Barbados anymore.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I can assure this House, Sir, that there will be no need for anymore editorials as long as they keep the Honourable Member for St. Thomas in his position right now. I can assure this House that the necessary appointment making someone an Ambassador to Africa will be made and no more wild statements will be made in Barbados to create confusion in this country. That task I gave to the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. He has always promised this House that whenever he makes a promise he delivers on his promise and that is the promise I would like him to make to this House. I know that the type of editorials that I am seeing coming in the newspapers is one I expect to see written of the Democratic Labour Party and not written of the Barbados Labour Party.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am hoping that the present Prime Minister, the Honourable Member for St. Thomas, will do something to stop the divide and rule tactic that is being created in Barbados to create confusion and to take people's mind off the economy and put Barbadians mind back to ease and there would not be any tug-o-war anymore in Barbados. Mr. Speaker, while people are making reckless statements in Barbados, the people they are making the reckless statements against are getting richer, they are getting all the large contracts and the people who are joining with the reckless statements are becoming poorer and creating crime and violence through no fault of their own.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip North would like to speak and I hope when he gets up that he would speak

about crime and violence too because it is in St. Philip now, Sir, in a constituency just like mine where we are never accustom hearing about crime and violence at that particular level and where they are people now living in fear. I expect the Honourable Member for St. Philip North ...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I would hate to believe, Sir, that the newspaper of this country - and I will not quote from the newspaper, Sir, and you know you cannot do that in here, - will tell me every day that there is crime and violence in St. Philip and that the MP will not know about that.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: You mean in St. Philip South? I apologize to you. But St. Philip is St. Philip. Whether it is North or South, it is still St. Philip and I expect you to speak on that particular matter.

Mr. Speaker, whether we have two radio announcers pretending to be someone else dealing with crime and violence I will expect those radio announcers seeing that...

Mr. Speaker, a thought just came to me.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Another brilliant one, at last.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, a thought just came to me, Sir. 12.50p.m.

Suppose I am on Spring Garden, Sir, and I saw a badge marked "authorised person" and when I look two radio announcers, one saying "crime" and one saying "violence" and they ask me not to get involved in crime and violence do you expect me to take dictates from them when they were laughing at it?

Asides.

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

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: One thing about the Attorney General, he is a very smart man. He wants me to tell Parliament again that the Honourable Member should make the necessary appointment to make sure that he makes the gentleman the Ambassador to Africa. He wants me to make the announcement for him. I have made it so why should I be

ashamed of that? If you are going to make him the Ambassador to Africa what is wrong? What you should do is to make him the Ambassador to Africa and stop making the Barbados Labour Party's friends in the newspaper write articles about him. Is that what you wanted me to say?

Sir, we are at a stage now that we have the last straw and Crop Over is the last straw to generate that foreign exchange for the country. The Attorney General has used his office to make sure that no one interferes with Crop Over. I am saying that we cannot take this society and treat it as if it is a piecemeal realisation system where you act when you want to act, Sir, and when you should act you do not act.

I am calling on the Barbados Labour Party Government to recognise that Barbados is a place for all and stop the piecemeal realisation. They have been doing it for too long. What is regrettable is that this piecemeal realisation is hurting poor people more so than anyone.

I expect that the champions of poor people will find their voices again whether it be the one on the backbench, and I recognise that he still has his tongue because the Honourable Member got up here today and defended those poor people who will march in the bands but I would like the champions of poor people to let their voices be heard in Barbados again because if there was any time that their voices were needed, the time is now, Mr. Speaker. I thank you very much.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the amendment before this House in relation to the activities of Crop Over. I believe that the last speaker, the representative of the constituency of St. Lucy seemed to want to trivialise the seriousness of crime and violence in this country to the extent that nowhere in the history of this country within the last five years was a travel advisory issued to this present Government or to this island.

I would like to advise the Honourable Member for St. Lucy in relation to crime and violence in this country and trying to trivialise and to see it from a point of view that this Side has been accusing them of crime and violence is a fact. This is not anything we are going to run from. In truth and in fact there is crime and there is violence in this country and we must accept it. No one should be accused of calling anyone or dealing with the issues that affect this country so let us stop trivialising the issue and get serious with what is happening to this country of ours, Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, being someone who is involved with Crop Over, I would probably say from its inception, and being someone who has been involved from the point of coordinating the very Kadooment aspect that we are discussing today, I believe that the amendment before this Parliament in relation to what is happening or what has

happened on the roads of Barbados during Kadooment Day is very important to us.

This is not 1974 when Crop Over was introduced and you had a situation of a lot of onlookers. The music of 1974 is not the same music of 1998/1999. The revellers on the street in 1974 were not as active as they were in 1998 so some sort of control over the last five years would have to be taken and put into place.

Lots of things happen on the roads on Kadooment Day. The media cannot carry all. The media does not carry all because when you talk about trivialising the whole idea if the media had carried some of the things that happened to young ladies on Kadooment Day then we would ask ourselves, are we going to allow Crop Over to continue. Because you have a situation where there are some very lawless people, a minority of lawless people who come out on Kadooment Day to exercise a pattern of behaviour that is not really Barbadian.

I want the Honourable Member for St. Lucy to understand this clearly that you cannot allow a minority of people to cause harm and problems to this beautiful country of ours, Barbados, and it must be subject to some sort of correction.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I do not know if the Honourable Member was in the House when I was speaking but nowhere in my debate I gave the impression that I was supporting the behaviour of anybody interfering with the activities of Crop Over. I do not know, Sir, if my speech went over his head but I did not at any time say that.

Mr. M. Z. WILLIAMS: Mr. Speaker, as I continue, I will not waste time replying to the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. It does not make sense. The seconds are too important in this debate for me.

As I continue, Mr. Speaker, I can openly say that if you are going to deal with the control on Kadooment Day, what I must say here at this point in this debate in relation to the promoters, in relation to those who are the organisers of Crop Over, I would want to be able to clarify for the benefit of the bandleaders the distinction between the promoters and the organisers as the Act states here, and that is to say, who gives the permission for the security personnel or the people who would be in a position of authority to challenge those people who are not members of a band? I see a conflict here clearly.

It is a known fact that in order for you to have part of Crop Over, Kadooment Day, you must register with the NCF. As you register with the NCF, the NCF must seek permission from the Royal Barbados Police Force for your

band to parade on the streets of Barbados so you have what we consider to be three entities there, the NCF, the bandleader and you also have what you consider to be the promoters.

My question at this point where I can see there is likely to be a little bit of problems in policing this piece of legislation is fact No. 1. If the NCF gives the permission to the bandleaders to provide their bands with authorisation, now it means that the responsibility of the particular bandleader must come into play. Now, if the responsibility of the particular bandleader must come into play, then it means, similar to the Act which I remember well, being a promoter, that it is only the promoter who can authorise anyone to be ejected from any licensed place of entertainment. The promoter must be responsible to have that person ejected from a licensed place of entertainment if that person is misbehaving or if by right he is doing something that he should not be doing similar to the event at the National Stadium. 1.00p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I am wondering at this point if as far as the policing of this Act goes if the authority of policing this situation falls on the bandleader. Let us assume that there is a music or food truck in the band. We know for a fact that this truck could come from any area of Barbados but the parties involved on the truck are not members of that particular band. The situation will lead to the fact that one of those persons who might be travelling with the truck could misbehave in the band but the truck driver stands out to say, "This person is with me." Who is responsible for ejecting that person from the band? This is what I would like clarified for the benefit of policing that Act today.

You have island constables travelling with bands. You have members of the Royal Barbados Police Force lining the streets and members of the Defence Force as well but then you also have the bandleaders with a responsibility that even though the bandleaders are asking that this piece of legislation be put in place that they themselves have a responsibility or the duty to see that this piece of legislation is carried out.

Bandleaders must understand that to encourage people inside of a band because they may be connected with the band creates a problem and this is what has been happening over the years. There is a part in this Bill which says clearly that "band":

"means an organised group of persons assembled together in a band assembly area or proceeding together along a prescribed or designated route in furtherance of the group's participation in a public festival whether in costume or not."

This is the point that I am concerned about because if that person is supposed to be responsible for peace and tranquillity in that band, on Kadooment Day you have tee-shirt bands and you also have costumed bands but if some person is in a band at the will of the bandleader who does not have on a costume then this Act says "whether in costume or not." So this raises a problem. The Police may go up to a person and say to him you are not in a costume, come out of the band and the person will look around and say this person neither. So you have a situation where a bandleader may want to get one out of a band who does not have on a costume but is inside of the band because the bandleader is in charge he encourages someone to be in the band in a similar context. So this is the part that I am worried about. I am worried about the conflict that is likely to happen on Kadooment Day in relation to the policing of this Act.

Mr. Speaker, you must also take into consideration when we are talking about the policing of this Act the route that has been provided for these costumed bands to parade towards their destination of the Spring Garden. When you consider certain areas along the route which are conducive for what we consider to be the lawless minority performing what you could consider to be acts that should not be allowed, I think that that must also be taken into consideration that within certain boundaries, let us take for example when the bands come out of the Stadium - I want to be practical - and they have to travel by way of Station Hill the cut rock before you get to Her Majesty's Prisons is conducive to problems.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the area between Brighton and the Highway it is conducive again. Some system would have to be put in place in order that this Act can be policed because as long as people are outside of a band travelling outside along the boundaries of Station Hill then there must be some contact with the revellers and with those people who are not in the band.

If you travel along the same route between the Brighton Hill and the Highway and you have people who are supposed to travel outside a band then you will have a problem. There should be a cut-off point between the cut rock of Station Hill and at Brighton so as to prevent any other person than band members from travelling with the band between those areas. Otherwise, you are going to have a problem in the sense that the first thing that will happen is that there will be a set back before they manage to get to Spring Garden and there is likely to be a fall down of law and order as far as this Act is concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I am talking from a practical point of view where I have been involved in coordinating the same Kadooment and yet I would like to see an improvement as far as the parade of bands are concerned. There needs to be an improvement.

It is all right to say you are going to introduce the Act, and I support the Act, but I am also concerned with the big 40-wheelers that carry these bands and manoeuvre these bands along the highway on Kadooment Day. It is dangerous in the sense that you see young children swinging from these music trucks. You see people hanging on from these music trucks and I am yet worried. I hope the day will never happen when one of these people are likely to miss their grip and fall under one of the wheels of those big trucks.

I think this Act should and will cover those lengths if it is policed properly. Today you have lawless people in this society who have no respect for the Police and no respect for law and order. When you reach a situation where people have started to disrespect law and order then you have to enforce the law the way it has to be enforced.

I compliment the Government and the Attorney General and also the representative for this piece of legislation based on the fact that when you look at a situation dealing with the identification mark for those particular persons on the roads in Barbados for Kadooment Day you see island constables represented with an arm band. Inside the bands there are plainclothes police and I am wondering since over the last couple of years that some people did not have respect for island constables in the bands and also some of the plainclothes policemen.

What form of identification is going to be provided for these people who will be given authorisation to eject people from the bands? One of the highlights of Crop Over is Kadooment Day but you can say what you like and be critical of whatever you think of Crop Over, Crop Over brings together thousands and thousands of people of all walks of life either on the streets watching the bands parade or at the final point on Spring Garden. Are we also going to police Spring Garden? This is a point that I am concerned with. Yes, you are policing the roads that the bands travel but with the bands coming to Spring Garden people start to move in different directions. I hope that this Act gives all coverage in relation to the policing of young people who are Members of a Kadooment band when the band has fallen apart and they have to travel to other places. This is the point when a lot of the problems start. This is when a lot of the problems start Kadooment Day. I want to draw this to the House's attention. A lot of the problems do not necessarily take place along the route. There are a few of them that the Police checked, put in place and stopped but when those bands fall apart on Spring Garden and the young ladies have to travel from one point to another, either to go their motor cars or probably go to some place to get something to eat. This is when the problem starts. Where will be the people who have to authorise having these people ejected from the band? The Act says: "ejected from the band". I am concerned that this amendment needs to be widen a little bit. 1.10p.m.

Mr. Speaker, if you have to bring order in our Festival in order that it will last, I am suggesting to this Government to bring order. Until you can make people understand that the law is there to be respected and not to be laughed at, then you are not doing anything.

In closing, I believe and support this piece of legislation but I also say that it needs to be widened. It needs to be widened to protect revellers outside of bands and not only inside of bands.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I will not wind up at this point. I am to inform the House that I have been advised that the island is now on Flood Watch with a possibility of a Flood Warning issued at 2 o'clock. I will take the Lunch Adjournment now until 2.15 p.m. which will allow me at 2 o'clock to check with Caribbean Emergency Relief Organisation (CERO) and the Met. Office as to the state of things. If we are put on Flood Warning, I will finish this Bill and call it a day for today.

Asides.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I do not want to precipitate in any decision I take. I prefer to get the latest position at 2 o'clock and we can come back at 2.15 p.m.

SUSPENSION

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House be suspended until 2.15 p.m.

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that the House be suspended until 2.15 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly. 1.15p.m.

RESUMPTION Mr. SPEAKER:

This House is now resumed.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, there is still a mass of clouds but the mass of clouds have not produced as much rainfall as they expected. The Met. Office expects the rains to continue for the next two to three hours but after 4.30 p.m, they anticipate drier conditions.

Mr. SPEAKER: With the House's permission, we will now revert to Government Notices.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I give notice of the following:

1. National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 1999.
2. Resolution to approve the grant of \$5,625,000 from the Consolidated Fund to supplement the 1999-2000 Estimates as shown in Supplementary Estimates 1999-2000, (No. 3), which forms the Schedule to the Resolution.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Bill, 1999 be read a first time.

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

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

ORDER NO. 4 - (RESUMED)

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, in winding up this debate, let me thank all Honourable Members who have spoken and begin first by replying to the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition has suggested that the Public Order Act itself be reviewed. I wish to give him the assurance that Cabinet on Thursday, took the same view and that the Act will be referred, in due course, to the Law Reform Committee with a view to its modernisation and reform where necessary.

The Honourable Member also spoke of the need to see this legislation in the context of comprehensive crowd control legislation. It is interesting hearing these comments from the Leader of the Opposition because in 1992 when he was a Minister, the Democratic Labour Party brought a Bill, No. 12 of 1992 to amend the Public Order Act. I am not aware that they had any ongoing process for reform of the Parent Act. The legislation in 1992 dealt with "affray" and "violent and disorderly offences". They create the offence of affray for example in Section 27(b):

"A person is guilty of affray if he uses or threatens unlawful violence towards another person and his conduct is such as would cause another person of reasonable firmness present at the scene to fear for the other person's personal safety."

They created offences where two or more persons used or threatened unlawful violence. It created an offence of violent disorder and I quote Section 27C. (1):

"Where three or more persons who are present together use or threaten unlawful violence and their conduct taken together is such as would cause a person of reasonable firmness present at the scene to fear for his personal safety, each of the persons using or threatening unlawful violence is guilty of violent disorder".

It was a substantial Amendment - an offence of harassment, alarm or distress - Section E. (1)

"A person is guilty of an offence if he

(a) uses threatening or abusive words or behaviour, disorderly behaviour, or

(b) displays any writing, sign or other visible representation that is threatening or abusive,

within the hearing or sight of another person who is likely to be caused harassment, alarm or distress thereby."

All that dated in 1992 under the name of an Amendment to the Public Order Act, Sir. I think the Honourable Member for St. John forgot about that legislation. 2.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to dwell too much on the Honourable Member for St. John in his absence, but since the Opposition supports the Bill in principle, he had one or two comments about the Bill. One I have dealt with already on a point of order, to emphasise that an authorised person is the agent of the bandleader, but will only be an authorised person identified as such by the relevant mark. He will only become authorised where the Commissioner of Police agrees that is by administrative process, and I wish to repeat what I said on the point of order. It has been agreed between the NCF, the bandleaders and the Commissioner of Police, who was present at the meeting when we went through the discussion draft that well in advance of a particular festival, bandleaders will submit the names of their authorised agents to the Commissioner of Police who will then vet those names to ensure that they are people of good character and thereafter, they will be given the marks of identification.

You do not have to spell out all of that in legislation. When you are being appointed as Justice of the Peace, you send in the person's name and that name is sent to the

Commissioner of Police for checking as to the character of the person. It is a necessary part of the process. So I wish to give the House and the public the assurance that authorised persons under the legislation, acting as agents of the bandleaders, will be persons whose characters have been cleared by the Commissioner of Police.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Lucy made an allegation that crime and violence should be blamed for the country's economic problems. I am not aware that the country has any economic problems. If there were economic problems I, as a Member of Cabinet ought to know, Sir. I have not heard any allegations, apart from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy that crime and violence are seen as the cause of any, for example, shortage in the tonnage of sugar except you want to stretch the argument to say that more acres of canes were burnt this year than last. But then you have to carry the argument to another logical conclusion and show that the burden was the result of malicious or criminal act. There is plenty of evidence. I think it was in 1995 when we had a very hot summer, the Chief Fire Officer drew to my attention that a lot of the fires that were started were spontaneous combustion. He told me of an incident where he was standing one day somewhere in Christ Church near an open field of grass. There was nobody around and all of a sudden a fire started and he concluded it started either from silver paper or a piece of glass.

So, I am not aware that crime and violence is to blame for anything in manufacturing, so that I discount the observation of the Honourable Member. Sir, I wish to say that Government is monitoring carefully what is happening in the tourist industry and monitoring very carefully outbreaks of violence or attacks against visitors. We have always paid special attention to watching the trends in crime against visitors. As recently as the general election, I gave the figures and more recently in here a few weeks ago, I spoke about that matter, crime and violence as against visitors.

We have taken a number of steps, most of which are working. I indicated that in St. Lawrence Gap since May 20, we have put special patrols in place. We have supplemented the regular police with certain fearless island constables and the returns have been very heartening to the point where the spokespersons for the tourist industry have had to conceive - and I mean Miss Springer and indeed the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, that the measures taken would appear to be working.

One always has to be careful, however, that when one closes off an area of criminal activity, it shifts and we have noticed a slight shift in crime against visitors in the north. But, this is a matter that attracts the attention of the Commissioner of Police every Monday morning. The matter is constantly under assessment, evaluation and review.

Finally, Sir, just to reiterate that from time to time countries have to introduce legislation as one aspect of crime prevention only as an aspect of crime prevention and to the extent that legislation can deal with a problem, Government has to use legislation from time to time to deal with potentially dangerous situations.

Two years ago, because of the problems of young people in Britain, they published a Crime and Disorder Bill. I am sure that in 1992 when crime was at its highest in Barbados the Democratic Labour Party amended the Public Order Act. I am not going to wait for there to be some unfortunate incident at Kadooment when over the past few years you have been noticing a pattern of conduct by a minority of persons who would wish to make themselves nuisances or create mischief on Kadooment day. I am not going to wait until something like that happens. We prefer to legislate now to let the public know what is an offence and what is not an offence when bands are parading. Respect the right of the masqueraders to enjoy themselves and that is all this legislation about. As I said, it is not a question of legislating morals. No attempt is being made to use the criminal law for that purpose and with those remarks, Sir, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, without division. 2.40 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 - 2 inclusive were called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the Public Order (Amendment) Act, 1999.

ORDER NO. 5 - NATIONAL INSURANCE AND SOCIAL SECURITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1999

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the 2nd of September 1998, the Right Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance in his Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposal drew attention to the matter of pensions and in particular the National Insurance Scheme.

I begin at page 51 of the Budgetary Presentation last year. The Prime Minister said these words:

"The stark predicament facing us regarding pensions is borne out by the 9th Actuarial Review of the Operations of the National Insurance Scheme which covered the three-year period ended December 31, 1996. It concludes that the current weighted average contribution rate of 12.6% of insurable earnings for the National Insurance Fund is inadequate to continue funding the Scheme in the future. Consequently, if no changes are made to the rate of contribution or to the structure of the Scheme, its reserves will be depleted by the year 2022."

"The facts are that in each of the last three years the expenditure of the Scheme has exceeded contributions, and the difference has to be met from income from investments. The problems of the Scheme are therefore very much with us today."

He continued and expressed the desire for us to act now and in each succeeding year to ensure the integrity of the Scheme.

Barbados, among Caribbean countries, has 6 per cent of its population over age 65. In 1990, it was 12 per cent and it is expected to reach 23 per cent by the year 2050,

Mr. Speaker, a number of recommendations were made by the National Insurance Board for changes to the National Insurance and Social Security arrangements. One of the recommended changes has been to explore alternative financing of non-contributory old age pensions. The National Insurance Board has consistently argued that these should be funded out of the Consolidated Fund and Government has accepted that recommendation. The current cost of non-contributory pensions is in excess of \$50 million a year. The Prime Minister in his speech last September proposed that the cost of pensions be transferred to the Treasury on a phase basis.

He said, and I quote at page 55, Sir:

"Effective January 1, in the year 2000, all new non-contributory pensions will be from the Consolidated

Fund. Also, any increase in the non-contributory pension granted before then will have to be met from the Treasury."

The Bill before us gives effect to that statement in the Budget last year and provides therefore for the payment of non-contributory old age pensions to be a charge on the Consolidated Fund. In addition to that, this amending Bill has a second objective and it is to do with the way we treat arrears of national insurance contributions.

The Bill provides, as Honourable Members will have seen, in Clause 2 where there are arrears of national insurance contributions payable by an employer or a self-employed person as at July 31, 1998. If the arrears are paid in full between August 1, 1998 and at the end of December 31, 1999, the Minister of Finance by this legislation will now have power to waive three quarters of the interest owed on those arrears at that date. In order to benefit from the provisions in the amendment the arrears of contributions outstanding as at July 31, 1998 must be paid.

In addition, at the time of payment of the arrears all current contributions must be paid as well as accrued interest on the contributions. We are also making provision for persons who pays all arrears and contributions outstanding at December 31, 1999 to be given 30 days grace to settle any additional amount owed and to be able to benefit from the waiver. 2.50 p.m.

The underlying philosophy of the legislation is to recognise that an accumulation of national insurance contributions can work hardship on employers and, indeed, self-employed persons. In a spirit of compassion, Government also recognises that these accumulated arrears can be a burden, albeit self contrived, and that there is scope for relief of the burden in the manner proposed in the legislation by giving an opportunity to settle within a specific time frame. In that event, the Minister of Finance will have the authority by this legislation to waive three-quarters of the interest that is outstanding. That essentially covers this legislation.

There are two points, Sir, one dealing with the Non-Contributory Old Age Pensions becoming a charge on the Consolidated Fund from January 1 next year and the second part to bring some debt relief to persons who owe the National Insurance Scheme principal, interest and penalties.

With those remarks, Sir, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time. It only implements a budgetary proposal of last year.

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

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

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable House is in Committee.

Clauses 1-4, inclusive, were called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS, seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE, the Bill was read a third time, passed and cited as the National Insurance and Social Security (Amendment) Act, 1999.

ORDER NO. 6 - TO MOVE THAT THE HOUSE RESOLVES ITSELF INTO COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY TO CONSIDER THE GRANT OF SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE SERVICE OF BARBADOS

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This Honourable House is in Committee.

ORDER NO. 6(a) - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GRANT OF \$5 625 000 FROM THE CONSOLIDATED FUND TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESTIMATES 1999- 2000 AS SET OUT IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1999-2000

ORDER NO. 3 - HEAD 37 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORT

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, this sum of \$5 625 000 is required to continue work on the Second Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Project. This is a project with which the Honourable Member for St. Lucy would not be familiar if only because it originated with a previous administration in 1992 when the project cost was

\$21 million. As you would recall, Mr. Chairman, because of the structural adjustment problems during that period, the project was postponed for a considerable length of time. We only started to move ahead with this project in full force after 1994.

Already, Mr. Chairman, we have completed work at Rendezvous, Codrington and Cave Hill. As a result of the delay, we have had to cancel a substantial portion of this project, namely, work on the reconstruction of Highway 6 at Collymore Rock, Pine East/West, Pine North/West, South Road, improvement to Thornbury/Highway 7, improvement to Rendezvous/Golf Club Road together with the road overlay with hot mix on wide stretches of land throughout the island.

We have, however, managed to award a contract to C.O. Williams in the sum of \$11 879 442 for the rehabilitation of a number of roads included in the package. You would have noticed, Mr. Chairman, that all over Barbados a substantial amount of work is presently underway, Benn Hill, Mile and a Quarter, Highway 2A and this road as the Honourable Member for St. Lucy can attest is very important in order to ensure that the people of St. Lucy get in and out on well paved roads to the same standard as the rest of Barbados.

Trents/Highway 1 to Greenwich Village, Orange Hill, that is about 30 per cent completed. I daresay that in case the Honourable Member for St. Lucy is not aware of it, this Trents/Highway 1 road was one of the roads which was included in the package at the time when that administration that I referred to was then conducting the affairs of this country.

Highway W, Walkers/Dash Valley, that is about 15 per cent completed. Highway N, Rock Hall to the Crane is about 20 per cent completed. 3.00p.m.

There are a number of reasons why there has been an increase in the scope of these loans. At the time when the project was first conceptualised it was not realised that the existing road infrastructure in some of these areas was very poor. While it was envisaged at the time that the Division of Public Works would only have undertaken extension works they had actually to do a complete reconstruction in many areas. This increased the cost of these works and in addition to that because of certain safety considerations for both pedestrians and motorists we had to put in a lot of sidewalks. You would have noticed that in many areas we have had to put in a number of sidewalks and people in the country areas have benefitted significantly because of the fact that in the past sidewalks generally were something which favoured those people in the St. Michael area.

We have also had to put in a number of traffic lights. Places like Redmans Village come to mind. At the time those projects were completed in terms of the design, and the question of traffic lights were not then considered. Because of the demand of pedestrians in particular we have had to put in additional traffic lights.

Mr. Chairman, drainage facilities. We have experienced some unseasonable weather in many areas which has caused us to realise the need for improving the drainage in a number of areas.

Utility services. There has been increased demands on the Ministry of Public Works for additional facilities in the various areas in addition to the fact that the existing realignment did not allow us to utilise the utility services as they then were. What we have had to do is to put in a completely new utility service.

Also, Mr. Chairman, we have had to relocate a number of houses in the path of the roads, as I said. It is almost impossible to do a complete realignment of roads in any part of Barbados without having to remove and relocate a number of houses in the path of that realignment. It has a lot to do with the way how the roads fall over time and this has increased significantly the cost to the Ministry.

In addition to that, we have had to extend the work in many areas. Codrington, Cave Hill is a classic example. When we completed the design at Codrington, Cave Hill we realised it would have made more sense in terms of safety and because of the tilt of the roads to the west in the Spooners Hill section to do an extension in the way that we thought would have blended in well with the new design. As a result, the cost increased significantly. Six Roads to Searles. This contract was awarded to Rayside Concrete Works in the sum of \$9 161 515. This project started about two years ago and is due to be completed in September 1999. The projected cost is now \$10 240 517. The project is about eighty percent completed.

Mr. Chairman, we have had some additional excavations. We have had a number of delays in relocating the various houses and also in the relocation of a number of utility poles.

In addition to this, Mr. Chairman, due to the fact that the Government between 1991 to 1994 encountered a number of problems at the time of Structural Adjustment and the delay in starting the project it means that with the World Bank Project coming to an end December 31, 1998 that this project must now be funded out of the Consolidated Fund. The total amount of funds required to complete the project is \$13 230 045. In addition there is a further \$2 746 674 which will be required to complete the Bridgetown Road and safety improvement project which is a separate project and a US\$18 million project.

This project involves the reconstruction of 7.5 kilometres of road. Phase 1 is Paradise, University Drive to the Eagle Hall junction. Phase 2 is Welches, Pine Road, Culloden Road, Dalkeith Road, Garrison, Highway 7 junction, Bay Street, Roebuck Street, Country Road, Passage Road, Westbury Road, President Kennedy Drive.

In order to make the corridor clear for the contractor when the final contract has been awarded you would have noted, Mr. Chairman, that there has been some accommodation works taking place by both C. O. Williams Construction in the sum of \$1 132 228 and Rayside Construction in the sum of \$1 448 729 mainly in the Black Rock area. We are presently awaiting the approval of the Inter-American Development Bank for the pre-qualification of contractors.

In that corridor as well we have already had or rather we will be relocating the market. Work has already started on that Eagle Hall market. A contract of money in the sum of \$2 610 702 has been awarded to H and J Construction Limited. The amount of money which will be needed for accommodation for the Bridgetown Road Project is \$2 746 674. When that is added to what we require for the second road maintenance project which I referred to earlier, the World Bank Project which has come to an end in terms of the funding from the World Bank it means that we need to find \$15 749 719 for this project. We have allocated \$7 750 000 in this year's Estimates which would mean that we still need an additional \$7 999 719.

Mr. Chairman, we estimate that in order to carry the work through towards the end of the financial year we would need an additional \$5 625 000 which would mean that there would still be a further balance which will be left for the next financial year. However, barring the weather not being what it is expected to be or other unforeseen circumstances it is likely that we would be in a position to complete all of the outstanding works before the end of the financial year. In which case, it would be necessary for us to come back to Parliament for another supplementary if the work has progressed to that level.

With those brief remarks I beg to move that Head 37 stand part.

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL: I beg to second that.
3.10p.m.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, I am extremely happy to hear that the Ministry of Public Works is doing something because a lot of Barbadians would not know that the Ministry of Public Works and Transport have no plans of constructing roads in Barbados anymore. I would like to put this on public record. I would like to find out from

the Government why is it that they have given up every commitment to the masses of this country. Everything that is in the interest of the small man in this country has now been passed over to five per cent of the people in Barbados so that they can look after the interest of Barbados.

I would like to know, Sir, how is it that we are accustomed seeing the workers of MTW repairing roads and all of a sudden they cannot repair roads anymore. For the simple reason that the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, through no fault of theirs, chased Mobil out of Barbados before its time and now we have a situation in this country, Mr. Chairman, where every single piece of equipment...

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I cannot tell the Honourable Member what choice of words to use but certainly, he is using unparliamentary language in the context of which he stated that the Ministry chased Mobil out of the island. Certainly, when I was in the Ministry I had no dealings in that context. I would ask that those words be withdrawn.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Seeing that you have a good command of the English language, you can use another phrase other than that.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I can understand why the Honourable Member for St. Andrew would get up and challenge me on this. What the Honourable Member for St. Andrew would like me to say is that it was not the Ministry of Public Works and Transport but it was the Ministry of Finance. I know that that is what you would like me to say and I would say it for you. Although you do not need me to put anybody in their place. You are man enough and I saw you did it in here already ...

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I am asking that the Honourable Member withdraw those remarks.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please withdraw the remarks about chasing Mobil out of the country.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Yes, I will withdraw them. I will say that Mobil was asked to leave before their time and because Mobil was asked to leave before their time, Mr. Chairman, we have a ridiculous situation in this country where every single tenantry road that needs to be repaired, cannot be repaired, because every single piece of equipment in Barbados today functions off water-based equipment and they are using oil based material. I challenge any of them to tell me that I am lying.

I am also saying, Sir, that because Mobil had to leave before its time, that they are buying material at five times the cost than they were getting from Mobil. That is why I have

roads in my constituency that have started now for two years and if you look at them now you would not believe that work was being done on it. We have not had one single road built in the constituency of St. Lucy since 1994. I am talking about tenantry roads. Every single road that has started cannot be completed because - you cannot blame the workmen now - the problem is not the workmen because they are willing to work.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: They are out there every day willing to do their work but we have water-based equipment in Barbados and it cannot function.

Sir, you know what is the most regrettable thing? In this year's Estimates, a piece of machinery was bought by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport and would you believe that it is a water-based piece of equipment again? Even though the officials at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport would have known that Mobil was not in the island anymore, they still went and bought equipment for water-based material when they are using oil-based material. Large sums of money, Sir, spent on that piece of equipment.

Sir, we had rain today and I am not sure that when I leave here that I can get into St. Lucy because I am not sure if the demarcation line has been drawn but I can assure you, Sir, that I will get across.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I can assure you that I will get to St. Lucy even if I have to swim across. I can assure you that if I have to swim across that those who have no reason to be in St. Lucy have no right to be in there because they would not have treated the people of St. Lucy right.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am not going down that road, I will never go down that road. Leave me alone. You want me to say something but I will not say it because I am not on that road. I travel the straight road and my debates will always be straight.

I am saying, Sir, that the Government must tell the people of Barbados whether they are prepared to make decisions on their behalf, that is in the interest of Barbados or whether they are going to continue to make decisions based on spite and at the end of the day the taxpayers of Barbados have to pay for it. This is exactly what is happening in this country. Because decisions were made on Mobil, the people in St. Lucy have to suffer and the people in St. George South also have to suffer.

You know what is regrettable, Sir? That right next door to St. Lucy, the Ministry of Public Works and Transport have been able to build nearly 20 roads. They have been able to build nearly 20 roads and not one single road in the constituency of St. Lucy. Two days before the Elections, they rushed into St. Lucy, put down two roads and as soon as the Elections were over, they were out. They have a situation where they went to Colleton and forgot that Colleton was part of St. Peter also and they left that too because they figured it was St. Lucy.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am saying, Sir, that once the rain falls, as it has been falling today, I can guarantee that you will not be able to pass Colleton corner. I am saying that this Government must understand that because the people of St. Lucy pride themselves to be poor, that they cannot always be treated badly. The time will come, Sir, when the Honourable Members on the Other Side will recognise the significance of St. Lucy. The time will come when we will have to use concrete roads in Barbados. When we have to use concrete roads in Barbados, it is obvious, Sir, that the best example would have to be started in St. Lucy.

Sir, I am sending a warning to the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, that they must understand that St. Lucy is part of Barbados and that they deserve their share of the cake also. Someday, Sir, if they continue to treat the people of St. Lucy the way they have been treating them, that something of significance will happen, and Barbadians on the whole will understand that for things to change, that the parish of St. Lucy will have to send that signal.

I will not continue to sit by in this Parliament and watch and see that every single thing that happens in this country, happens to the south of the Judge Gap better known now as Kellman's Road. I will not allow it, Sir. I think it is unfair and the people of St. Lucy are taxpayers too. Why is it that Six Men's, Port St. Charles and any project that belong to C. O. Williams, Altmans or anybody like that gets priority in this country and because the people of St. Lucy have no big names, there is no activity. The only time that anything of significance was done by the Barbados Labour Party in St. Lucy is when they were building the Arawak Cement Plant. Do you mean that you can only get major projects in constituencies when they are associated with large companies? You do not think that poor people are people too? I would like to know why. But I can assure you, Sir, that because certain people have recognised the significance of St. Lucy and that they have been buying land in St. Lucy, I can assure you that within one year's time we are going to see a lot of activity in St. Lucy. 3.20 p.m.

Do you know why? The right people have started to buy land in St. Lucy, now. They went to Cluffs. They are looking at Broomefield. They went up to Cove Bay. So I can assure you, Sir, that roads will be built in St. Lucy soon, because of the right people, Sir. But why is it, Sir, that we can only find money in these Estimates for people like them and the people who have built this country cannot get one cent being spent on them.

Am I to believe, Mr. Chairman, that that is something you support, Sir? Because if I am to believe that and we all in here are supposed to be the ones who represent the masses of people in this country, and if we can only look after the interest of the five per cent in this country, who is it that will represent the interest of the 95% of the people in the country?

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Of course, I have always been fighting for it. But I would expect the Honourable Member for St. Joseph to join me and the Honourable Member for St. George South and the Honourable Member for St. Michael East and of course, my Christian friend, he will have to join me because it is grounded in the right spirit when Jesus first went to the poor and he knows it well.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I do not expect you to know anything of these matters. We went to the fishermen and I know you have no interest in fishermen. But I am saying, Sir, that the Government will have to make a decision whether they are going to continue with something called the Ministry of Public Works and Transport anymore, or whether we are going to find a situation in this country that this Ministry is only a Ministry by name. And do not talk about who they tell me now will be looking after the roads, something called the Rural Development Commission? I have not seen one single project in the constituency of St. Lucy that I could point at and say that this Commission is capable of doing anything when it comes to roads - not one single road the Rural Development Commission has been able to build in St. Lucy. And a Minister is going to write me and tell me that the Ministry of Public Works will not be building any more roads that he referred my letter to the Rural Development Commission? What is that?

I have no evidence in my constituency, Sir, that there is anything called Rural Development Commission when it comes to building roads. It is true when I pass through the other constituencies, I can see a lot of signs marked roads built by Urban Development Commission, but I am yet to see the evidence about Rural Development Commission. I think that those Parliamentarians who represent rural constituencies should ask for that name to be changed, because it is a disgrace to the word called 'rural' to have a development

commission with a name like that attached to it. It gives the impression that what was said about rural constituencies in the early 1970's and 1980's was correct.

I remember the Honourable Member for St. Peter coming to this Assembly and telling this Assembly that the Rural Development Commission will be set up - and I hope that the Honourable Member for St. George South is listening - because Rural Development Commission was set up in this Parliament because it was supposed to balance off the inequalities that were created previously between the urban and rural constituencies. I see no evidence that the Rural Development Commission has done anything to solve that particular problem.

I cannot speak for the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. Maybe Rural Development Commission has built 20 roads for him, but what I am saying is that if the Rural Development Commission is supposed to build roads in Barbados, I have not seen the evidence. I am calling on the Acting Prime Minister, at his Cabinet meeting on Thursday to call the Director of the Rural Development Commission to find out from him when he will build one single road in the constituency of St. Lucy.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have written Rural Development Commission with more than 40 roads since 1994 and I have seen no evidence, Sir, of anything being done to correct that particular problem. I have done the same thing to Public Works, but I must admit, Sir, it was not Rural Development Commission that gave me the heartache, Sir, it is the Ministry of Public Works that gave me the heartache, because I thought I had a friend there.

I am saying, Sir, that Rural Development Commission must understand that the same way that Urban Development Commission appears to be performing that they must produce the evidence. Because, I cannot come in here every year and vote for large sums of money for a development commission and I cannot see anything done to substantiate those funds. I cannot and every time money is voted for that Commission, Sir, I will have to oppose it until I can see the evidence that the money is being used rightly.

I am also saying, I have a problem with this Supplementary for the Ministry of Public Works and I will tell you why I have a problem. We have voted large sums for the Ministry of Public Works, Sir, to repair roads and to build roads. They have not been doing that in St. Lucy because, as I said already, it is not the fault of the workmen and I want to make this point over and over. It is not the fault of the workmen. The fault is on the back of the Government because,

1. They got rid of Mobil too quickly.

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2. They have the wrong equipment for the men to work with.

I am saying, Sir, if that is so, it means that there should still be money in the Budget and they should not have to come and ask for a supplementary. But, what they should be asking for today is a reclassification of the funds, moving it from one Head to the other. I am saying that the Ministry of Public Works should have some money in there and there is no need for them to come to the Consolidated Fund. They just need to shift the money from one Head to the other, because they have not produced the goods and I would like to know where the money has gone. I expect somebody from the Government side to tell me where the money has gone, because if they are not repairing roads, they are not building roads, the money has to be somewhere.

They cannot tell me they have spent all the money on wages, because as all of us will know, they still have to be money for material, equipment, *etcetera*. So if you are not using that money, I would like to know where it is.

I would also like to know from them who will finish the road from the Judge Gap straight up to the Police Station. I would like to know who will finish it, when it will be restarted and the period of time it will take to be completed. 3.30 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: So, I am saying Mr. Chairman, that the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Public Works and the whole Cabinet in Barbados they have to come and tell...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Yes, including the floating Minister, the Honourable Member for St. Michael West Central and I must admit, Mr. Chairman, he is floating well because soon from now he will be up to the top. He started from the bottom, he only have four more chairs to go. He has floated well.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: But there is only one problem, he has to bypass the Honourable Member for St. Andrew and do not talk about Brian Lara. Those are the two nuts he has to crack.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Although how things are going I will have to rename the Honourable Member for

St. Andrew, Brian Lara because remember when Brian Lara was failing the Honourable Member for St. Peter had some very harsh comments to make about him.

Anyhow as we were saying on public works, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am glad that you are getting back to the subject.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: As we were saying, Sir, that Barbados has to be for Barbadians and it has to be for all Barbadians. I have no problem with the five per cent of Barbadians getting what they want but we must understand that those 95 per cent of people who worked so hard should not today have to worry about going through muddy roads while the rich and famous drive in their Mercedes on well-paved barber-green road.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: And BMW's. Yes that is the Cabinet class now.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: You think it is fair, Mr. Chairman, that a person in Harmony, Bishops, Connell Town, Checker Hall, Alleynedale and Hope Road in St. Lucy, that every single person this afternoon because of this rain, Sir, have to walk through muddy roads and the Cabinet Ministers of Barbados do not have to worry about that because they would not even know if the road is muddy because all of them driving BMW's. Not the Honourable Member for St. Thomas. He is still in his car that he brought from St. Philip.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I am saying that the Cabinet of Barbados must understand that the same way they expect to live luxurious lives that the masses in this country expect better conditions. When you go around, all they are asking you for is lighting, better housing, roads and jobs. They are not asking too much. I have never seen a poor man ask a government yet for a \$10 million contract. But you know what happens, the five per cent ask for the \$10 million contract and they get it every day and when you check they do not really need it. But a man from St. Lucy who is asking for the Public Works Ministry or Rural to build a road to his house, that sounds like a crime but somebody could come down and tell Government look, I want a \$10 million contract, no problem.

I want to know, Sir, if when Rural is given the right to build roads in St. Lucy and they do not deliver, if the Acting Prime Minister will call them to his Cabinet Office and tell them they have not repaired the house for the man in Broomefield which they should have repaired over six months ago.

You know with this bad weather, Sir, I do not like talking about bad weather because every time I talked about bad weather something significant happened. But I remember writing the Honourable Member for St. Thomas about a lady in Checker Hall who, because we had high wind, was affected. Her roof was interfered with by the high wind and he did his job. He wrote Rural and he asked them to do the necessary. Would you believe it has not been done yet and you are asking me to count my blessings on Public Works giving up what I know they could do to pass over to Rural. You are asking me to have confidence in that department. They have good men and women working down there and I need to find out why we have some of the best men working in rural but yet still that department cannot deliver and we need to carry out a serious investigation into that department.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, the last time I wrote the Honourable Member from St. Thomas about the fishermen I can assure you that in three months time they had everything they needed.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: So I am saying, Sir, that Government must have a Cabinet meeting on Thursday to reconsider the decision to allow Rural to build roads throughout Barbados. Even if the decision is made that Rural can do roads from St. Peter back I would like the decision to be made that the Ministry of Public Work will build the roads in St. Lucy because then I will know that there will be no political spite and the goods will be delivered.

I thank you, Sir.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I think the record will show that over the last four or so years the Ministry of Public Works have built more roads in this country than any previous administrations at any time.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is misleading the House. The Honourable Member is giving the impression that St. Lucy is not part of Barbados.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order.

Asides.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I am speaking for Barbados as a whole and I am sure St. Lucy is not left out. But I am making a point that over the last four years the Ministry of Public Works have built more roads in this country than ever before. More tenantry roads were built, more highways, more roads were paved, drainage, all these things were done and Barbadians when called upon on January 20, 1999 responded because they recognised that more were done over that period of time.

Mr. Chairman, it is important to note that the highways that the Honourable Minister mentioned before, Searles to Six Roads - there were a number of highways that were started that are now being completed. Walkers to Dash Valley, they are also roads from Welches to Salters, St. George, all of these roads were completed, a number of highways were completed with sidewalks, lighting and proper drainage. All these things were done in the past four years and they are ongoing and therefore the Ministry of Public Works today are now concentrating heavily on the highways.

In Barbados, Mr. Chairman, We have a situation where a lot of the highways are needed to be resurfaced. We have a number of them in the City areas, in St. Michael, suburban areas that needs to be repaired. For example, if you look at the junction from the Globe, Hindsbury Road, right up to Bank Hall, all these roads are in need of repairs and they are in really bad shape. The Ministry is now concentrating on these roads, on the highways. We talked about the Bridgetown Bypass Road, again that has started, we find that a number of roads and pavements in the Black Rock area have started. A number of walls has been set back and these are the things that the Ministry is currently concentrating on. 3.40 p.m.

At the same time, Mr. Chairman, a number of contractors have been taken on at the Ministry to provide better roads but most of these contractors have a number of roads and some of them do not have the material, labour or the capital to put these roads in good shape and it is taking long.

What the Government is doing is it has allowed the Rural Development Commission to concentrate heavily on tenantry roads in the rural area while the Ministry of Public Works would undertake the highways, pavements and drainage. This is important because we must, as we go into the new century, see roads in Barbados with new pavements. It is important.

The Honourable Minister spoke about the Highway leading from Orange Hill to Greenwich Village through to Highway 1A. This is an important Highway where a large number of traffic passes daily with heavy equipment and heavy vehicles but it has to be widened. The Ministry, certainly, is concentrating on these highways so that they

could be improved. When this is done then the Ministry certainly will get back to the tenantry roads that the Honourable Member is speaking of.

At this time the Rural Development Commission has funds earmarked to repair and upgrade the roads in the tenantry areas. Of course, as you are aware, a number of tenantry roads were repaired over the last 20 years. There are still a number of roads left to be repaired but this will be done in the course of time.

If the Honourable Member is asking for more roads to be done in St. Lucy then you have to identify these roads. In my constituency, for example, the Rural Development Commission has done a few roads. There are still more roads left to be done but all the roads cannot be done overnight because the contractors that are hired by the Rural Development Commission have a number of roads to be done. For example, we have roads that are still to be completed but because there are so many roads to be completed and so many tenantry roads to be done and because of the lack of equipment they cannot do all in the course of two or three years.

We share the concern of the Honourable Member that there are still a number of roads to be done. We would like them to be done but, as I said before, the contractors that are hired by the Rural Development Commission do not have the capacity, capital or equipment even though the money might have been passed from the Government to the various contractors. They certainly do not have the capital and many of them have started the roads, and we do not want to call the names of some of the contractors, but we have a number of contractors who are still to complete the roads they have started a long time ago.

Basically, Mr. Chairman, the Ministry of Public Works has a function to perform. The highways must be attended to at this time. Throughout Barbados we have a problem of drainage that must be undertaken at this time so we are concentrating on drainage. We are concentrating on the highways, providing bigger highways. We are extending highways to provide sidewalks for people. This must be attended to at this time.

Once before, as the Honourable Member knows, the majority of highways in Barbados were built mainly for donkey carts and small trucks. With so much heavy equipment today we must upgrade these highways so the Ministry of Public Works is concentrating on widening the highways. I am sure the Honourable Member knows because between the St. Lucy's Secondary School and Archers Bay there is a whole set of pavement that was done in the last two or three years and he is aware of this.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member is misleading the House because between St. Lucy's Secondary School and Archers Bay you would not even be able to see anything looking like tar or asphalt because that road to Archers Bay is the road I spoke about that the workmen were on for a long time and they could not get the equipment to work because they had equipment that was water-based equipment that the material is now oil-based so I would ask the Honourable Member to find another example but he is very wrong on that, Sir.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Chairman, I am sure the Honourable Member is aware of his constituency. I have travelled between the St. Lucy's Secondary School and Archers Bay. This is not the first time I have spoken to this in this House. Repavement has been done in St. Lucy.

The point we are making, Mr. Chairman, is that the Rural Development Commission is concentrating on upgrading the tenantry roads at this time. A number of contracts have been awarded to small contractors and they are doing the job but, of course, it will take some time whereas the Ministry is concentrating on the highways providing pavements and upgrading the various highways in the country. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, before winding up on this matter I just want to comment on a few points which were made by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy. Before doing so, I would want to say that with respect to the road in the Trents/Orange Hill area that it is necessary to have this stretch of road completed.

This stretch which was first conceptualised by the then Democratic Labour Party Government even though they did not think far ahead to the importance of that road to the people of the North, I think they still deserve credit for conceptualising the road. I say this because of the fact that that road is now important to a major development which has been conceptualised by the present Government in terms of the Deane's Town Project.

The Deane's Town Project will involve the construction of approximately 2 000 houses. A number of those houses within the Project have already been completed. We have completed about 50 houses at Apes Hill and at the moment, as I speak, construction is in progress on the Deane's Town terrace units. It is very important that when the overall project which involves certain recreational facilities, provision for certain aspects of business development, it is anticipated that when that project is completed that the main road infrastructure should be in place. This road alignment is all part of that complete Deane's Town Project.

The Honourable Member for St. Lucy did mention the fact that there are very few roads in St. Lucy which have

been constructed. Certainly the neglect of St. Lucy did not start with this administration because the Honourable Member for that constituency who was there before him made a similar complaint.

The difference between this Administration and that Administration is that we set up the Rural Development Commission. Say what you like, or the Honourable Member could disagree with the performance of that statutory board but, certainly, prior to 1994 you had no institution to turn to in order to get anything meaningful done in the North.

I was in this Chamber before the Honourable Member for St. Lucy and between 1991 to 1994 and even before then with a representative from the Democratic Labour Party we had very little done in the North of the island so I do not think it is really fair to blame the Rural Development Commission. It is part of a pattern which started with the Democratic Labour Party and certainly we went a step further because we wrote all of the Members of Parliament. It was not a partisan programme by this Administration. We wrote all of the members of the Democratic Labour Party.

One of the reasons why you are seeing that side out there so empty now, Mr. Chairman, is because they were too proud to write the Chairman of the Rural Development Commission. 3.50p.m.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member is giving the impression that I did not reply to that letter and that is not correct. If you go to the depot - and he mentioned the Ministry of Transport and Works in St. Lucy - you would see a letter from me, Sir, with an attached list of 47 roads and if I had the time and you would permit me, Sir, I could name all of them in order from Date Tree Hill to Checker Hall but that letter was also sent on. So early was that letter that it went to the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment with the responsibility for rural areas.

It was done even before the request was made because one of the first things I did when I was elected was to go through the constituency to find out what lights were needed and what roads were needed and I sent a letter even before I was asked. So I think that I deserve better.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: As I was saying, Mr. Chairman, it is one of the reasons why out there is so bare. They were too proud to write the Ministry, to write the Chairman of the Rural Development Commission and let us know the number of house spots they wanted, the number of houses they wanted, the roads that needed to be repaired, street lights as

well. They were too proud to do that. So what happened is that a number of residents in the constituencies that they represented had to do what they should have been doing.

The Honourable Member spoke about submitting a letter. I cannot say that he did not submit letters but for one, seeing that he has mentioned it, just to put the record straight where the Ministry is concerned, we received a letter from the Honourable Member for St. Lucy's constituency office the day after the election was announced naming 46 roads that needed repair.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Honourable Member for St. Andrew is misleading the House because when he toured the constituency the couple of days before the election and he requested at the depot the letter that was written by the Honourable Member for St. Lucy years ago, he was presented with that letter. He was given that letter and he used it throughout his tour and used the name of somebody else who did not know the constituency as the person writing the letter. I hope the honourable reverend would do the honourable thing to change the character of the speaker.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I will not waste time with that.

Just like most of the Members on that Side we received a lot of letters only after they realised that an election was on the way. If a number of roads in St. Lucy have not been repaired I did not say that the Honourable Member did not submit the letters but all I can tell him is that I only saw those letters after the election was announced and this explains the reason why he is speaking of the neglect in that particular constituency.

The Honourable Member mentioned a number of projects to the south of Kellman Road but I just want the House to record the fact that most of the development he has been speaking about are really private developments. There are a number of developments which were on stream during the period of that administration.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: On a point of order. The roads that I spoke about earlier were all roads built by Ministry of Communication and Works (MCW), and the supervisor responsible for that particular area is a gentleman from St. George South whom the Honourable Member for St. George South is always requesting the Public Works Ministry to bring back home. For some reason, Sir, the Right Honourable Member for St. Peter keeps him in St. Peter to build roads and deprives the Honourable Member for St. George South from getting that gentleman.

Hon. G. W. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, just speaking specifically to the Resolution on that point, I thought he

would refer to the actual roads which have been constructed or are in the process of construction under this World Bank Programme - The Benn Hill, Mile and a Quarter Highway 2A road. That is one which was conceptualised by the Democratic Labour Party Government in 1992 and all we did was to follow the programme that they had laid down.

With those brief remarks, Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that this Head stand part.

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

The question that Head 37 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS seconded by Hon. G. W. PAYNE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one 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. G. W. PAYNE, the Resolution was read a third time and passed. 4.00 p.m.

ORDER NO. 1 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT GREENWICH VILLAGE, ST. JAMES FOR THE RELOCATION OF HOUSES

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution that is before the House is to seek permission to compulsorily acquire 1257.2 square metres and 1946.6 square metres of land at Greenwich Village, St. James, for housing relocation arising from the Rural Development Project now under way at Trents Road, Orange Hill, St. James.

Mr. Speaker, we, only a while ago, spent a lot of time on the development of the road between Orange Hill and Trents, St. James. This Resolution is only seeking permission to acquire two parcels so that the persons living in Greenwich Village, about six houses, need to be relocated and therefore we are asking Parliament to approve the acquisition of these two parcels so that we can re-site those six houses that are in the road way at this time.

I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I must admit that with this particular Resolution that I am not too prepared for the simple reason that I came here today to do a land acquisition on the complex at Six Roads. I really thought, Sir, that Government would have given that some priority

and that they would have brought the land acquisition at Six Roads so that the Opposition would have been able to lend their support to get that important piece at Six Roads. When I read my paper, Sir ...

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable Member, are you speaking about Six Roads?

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: No, Sir, I am speaking about the one at Greenwich but I am just telling you, Sir, that I came here with the intention to deal with the one at Six Roads but since we have to deal with the one at Greenwich, Sir, I would hope that the same haste that the one at Greenwich was brought to the House that the one at Six Roads would be brought to the House before Eastern Development or any large developer decides to purchase that piece of land. As you know, Sir, we were told in here how important that land was to the Government of Barbados and I would have expected that by now that land acquisition would have been before this Parliament and this matter would have been kept on the back burner.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, we want to be as liberal as possible with the Opposition and give them as much latitude as possible but there are Standing Orders about relevance that have to be observed. The Honourable Member is not relevant. He is speculating about something that is not before the House and he is failing to deal with the matter that is before the House. He needs to be limited to a certain geographical area, Sir.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I accept that advise and I will go straight to Greenwich Village now, Sir,

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, thank you.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, in Greenwich, I would hope that the families who have been affected in that particular area, that there would have been negotiations between the families and that the families would have been offered alternative land. As you are aware, Sir, any land running from the West Coast as far as up to Apes Hill is important land. If you interfere with the ownership of that land, the land that you are acquiring, Sir, you are going to interfere with a particular group of people who will not be able to buy land on the open market. I hope, Sir, that the Government of Barbados would do everything in their power to make sure that those people who have been affected at Greenwich Village, that they will get some alternative land for themselves.

In other words, it is not a case anymore of compulsory acquiring land and putting money aside for people in the Treasury. It is a case now that when you take land from people that you must be prepared to offer them an alternative piece of land. Or, Sir, if that cannot be done, I would make bold to say in this Parliament that the Land Acquisition Act is the worst Act I have ever seen being passed in Parliament.

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I will tell you why, Sir, the Land Acquisition Act will be that Act that would compulsorily acquire the poor people's land and then put them on the open market to try to purchase land where the competing forces are out there prepared to pay any price for a piece of land.

I am going to tell you why, Sir. If we do not put provisions in place when we compulsorily acquire poor people's land, there will be people in Barbados who have land who will never be able to see the ownership of land again. I think that any progressive Government will do everything in its power to make sure that that class of people must be treated in a special way and that is, whenever they compulsorily acquire the land of those people, they offer them money or land. Let the choice be the choice of the people. You cannot tell me that because the Land Acquisition Act says that you can take the land and offer money that that is the one that we must continue to practise. Because, Mr. Speaker,...

Asides.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: I know the people of St. Lucy are not blind because I am in St. Lucy every day from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that if we do not do something to correct this particular problem, you are going to find a situation in this country where 95 per cent of the people who had land previously will someday not have any land and 5 per cent of the people will have all the land because market forces will dictate that people with money will continue to buy up all the land. Once upon a time, it was Christ Church and then it was St. James ...

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: There is a family in Bryans Road, St. Thomas, the location of whose property was threatening the Cave. Those persons were found alternative accommodation in St. Lucy. I am not sure of the point the Honourable Member is making because it is entirely possible for Government either to compensate monetary or by an exchange of land. In fact, there is another one that has been recommended for similar treatment.

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Mr. Speaker, I can always depend on the Honourable Member for St. Thomas for reinforcing a point. The point that the Honourable Member is reinforcing is that whenever there is somebody affected in his constituency, he makes sure that he gets the best deal for them. I would like this to be the policy of the whole 26 Members on that Side. I should not be making the point for the whole Parliament. But I have to make the point...

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN: Yes, it is 26 to 2. I can account on the Speaker to make that same decision too because I know that whenever the Honourable Member for

St. Andrew compulsorily acquires land in the constituency of St. Michael Central, the Speaker will be looking for alternative land for his constituents. I can say that for the Honourable Member for St. John and some others on the Other Side. Seeing that they have right to speak in this debate and the Honourable Member for St. John cannot speak now, I will speak for them. All the others will have to speak for themselves because if they feel happy for the Government to compulsorily acquire the land of their constituents and put the money in the bank, that is a matter for them. I think they have a right to get up in here and tell this Parliament that they support the policy where there should be open negotiation and where Government must offer alternative land first and money afterwards.

Let the decision be the decision of the people or not we are going to find a situation where people will be citizens of Barbados and they cannot own any land in Barbados.

I thank you.

Hon. G. A. CLARKE: I just want to say before I move that this Resolution be passed that in the Land Acquisition Act, in most cases, persons are consulted and we use private treaty so that persons are not affected as the Honourable Member would want us to believe. The money is not put in the bank either. Persons are adequately compensated for the true value. Every individual has the right to send his valuation to the Ministry of Housing. The valuations are taken into consideration and persons are adequately awarded. In this case, Mr. Speaker, the six houses will be relocated within the Greenwich Village so that persons will not move away from their community. They will still reside within the community and they will get back the same type of land that they had.

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

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

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that concludes Government's business for today. I beg to move that this Honourable House be adjourned to Tuesday, July 20, 1999, at 11.00 o'clock in the morning.

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

The question that the House be adjourned to Tuesday, July 20, 1999 at 11.00 o'clock in the morning was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 4.10p.m.