
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 2003 – 2008

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, July 19, 2005

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 10.15 a.m. on Tuesday, July 19, 2005.

PRESENT

His Honour I. A. ROETT, G.C.M. 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 the Civil Service)

Mr. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B. (Hons.)

Hon. Dame BILLIE MILLER, D.A. (Senior Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)

Mr. G. W. PAYNE, LL.B.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND, B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C., J.P. (Minister of Labour and Social Security)

Hon. G. A. CLARKE, B.Sc., Dip. Ed., J.P. (Minister of Public Works and Transport)

Mr. R. D. MARSHALL (Chairman of Committees)

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

Mr. D. St. E. KELLMAN

Hon. Mrs. H. E. THOMPSON-McDOWALD, LL.B. (Minister of Housing, Lands and the Environment)

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY, Q.C., LL.B. (Deputy Prime Minister, Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs) (Leader of the House)

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

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

Hon. N. A. LYNCH, B.Sc., M.B.A. (Minister of Tourism and International Transport)

Hon. R. R. FARLEY, B.Sc., J.P. (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)

Hon. Miss C. Y. FORDE, J.P. (Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports)

Hon. J. X. WALCOTT, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S. (Edin.), J.P. (Minister of Health)

Mr. R. D. JONES, B.A. (Hons.), M.A. (Ed.), J.P.

Dr. D. C. ESTWICK, B.Sc., M.B., B.S.

Mr. C. A. MASCOLL, B.Sc. (Econ.) (Hons.), M.A. (Public Finance) (Leader of the Opposition)

Hon. D. D. MARSHALL, LL.B. (Hons.), L.E.C. (Minister of Industry and International Business)

Mr. M. A. LASHLEY, LL.B. (Hons.)

Hon. K. D. SYMMONDS, B.A., LL.B. (Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade)

Dr. W. F. DUGUID, B.D.S. (Comm.), F.D.S., FDRCS, J.P.

Mr. R. L. SEALY, B.Sc., M.B.A.

Prayers were taken by Reverend Canon Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is now in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, July 12, 2005.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes for the Honourable the House of Assembly for its meeting of Tuesday, July 12, 2005, which Minutes have been circulated, be taken as read.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

PAPERS

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

1. Annual Report of the Central Bank of Barbados for the year 2004.
2. Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (Caribbean Hotel Association) Order, 2004;
3. Value Added Tax (Refund) (St. Gabriel's School) Order, 2005.
4. Value Added Tax (Refund) (Calvary Moravian Church) Order, 2005.
5. Excise Tax (Rate of Tax) Order, 2005.

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

1. Reports of the Judicial Council for the years 2003 and 2004.
2. Passports and Travel Documents (Fees) Order, 2005.

Hon. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

Annual Report of the National Sports Council for the period April 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004.

GOVERNMENT NOTICE

Hon. R. C. EASTMOND: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition by the Crown of the parcel of land at Mount No. 1, Mount Stepney, St. Peter for the public purpose of constructing a Repeater Station for the Royal Barbados Police Force.
10.20 a.m.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative

without division.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 3 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE
THE CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT
(GENERAL) ORDER, 2005

Mr. SPEAKER: The Right Honourable Prime Minister.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I rise to invite the Honourable House to pass specifically, a Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (General) Order, 2005. Sir, as you would be aware, there are a number of other Resolutions which are:

1. The Civil Establishment (Teachers) (Amendment) Order, 2005;
2. Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries (Remuneration and Allowances) Order, 2005;
3. Senate and House of Assembly (Remuneration and Allowances of Members) Order, 2005;
4. Schedule to the Governor-General (Conditions of Service) Act, Cap. 6.

Mr. Speaker, these all fall within the context of Resolutions, which have to do with the question of wages and salaries in the Public Service. They all relate to the conclusion of an exercise to carry out a job evaluation in the Public Service.

As is customary in the circumstances, I propose to treat these various Resolutions as being related and with the leave of the Honourable House, to have one second reading speech, to cover the issues related to all, rather than to have to provide second reading speeches to each one separately. I believe that by the silence of the Honourable House and of the Opposition, that there is concurrence with the approach that is intended to be pursued.

Mr. Speaker, this debate has been anticipated with some eagerness. It has excited more than its usual share of public controversy and having been studiously silent on the matter over the entire course of the public debate, I am anxious to join the public discussion and to bring this matter to a resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I begin by making the point that over the entire course of my Parliamentary career, now stretching into 21 years, I have tried scrupulously to avoid the very low road, which is, unfortunately too often taken by persons treating to perpetuate the unfortunate image of politicians as pariahs, as grasping people who have no concern for the public good, and who are concerned only for personal gain.

Mr. Speaker, I have sought never to become engaged in a debate in this Parliament in which the image of politicians and what they are being paid, have been dragged down by me. I also want to say that this Parliament has been exemplified over the course of the last generation by a remarkable contribution of a former Prime Minister. I want to pay compliment to him, who has shown that in Government and out of Government, that it is possible to maintain a consistent position of principle on issues that can be very awkward, namely the amount that politicians are paid.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues that will be addressed today, some on which there will be no controversy. I believe that I am correct in saying that those in which there is no controversy, have to do with the job evaluation exercise that was begun in 1998 and concluded in 2003, by way of a Final Report, satisfactorily resolved to the point where we could bring it to this Honourable House, one which seeks to set new terms and conditions for certain categories of public officers. I believe I am correct in saying that is not an issue.

Mr. Speaker, apparently what seems to be an issue is a Resolution and its contents that will seek to maintain a relativity between what Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and other politicians are paid, and what is paid to the public service of Barbados. I will treat to those two issues as separate issues, deserving separate and distinct presentations to Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, this debate is to bring Parliamentary closure to the job evaluation exercise that was commissioned by the Government of Barbados in December 1998. I believe that the Honourable House would benefit by the presentation of the background that sets this matter in its appropriate context as to why there is need for a job evaluation exercise; in what material respect has the job evaluation exercise, which we are asking Parliament to bring to conclusion today, is different from those that have been completed in the past; how was that job evaluation exercise conducted; what were its major findings; what were the major outcomes of it; what are the essential changes that are now to be introduced, in relation to the classification of public officers and the payment thereof.

Mr. Speaker, I need to set that background fully in place, then I will deal with the payment to Ministers, politicians and other issues that have been in the public's domain.

Mr. Speaker, the matter of attempting to classify posts and jobs in the Public Service of Barbados has a long history. The first attempt at a comprehensive classification of services in the Public Service of Barbados took place in 1948-1949, by a Mr. G. H. Adams. I am not sure if it is the

same Mr. G. H. Adams of immortal legacy but it goes back to that date. Sir, that was followed in 1968-1969, by the **Pucinelli Classification**, followed in 1975, by a classification exercise undertaken by the Head of the Civil Service and the Chief Establishment Officer.

The most recent classification exercise was one undertaken by a combination of three persons and chaired by a former Senator, Mr. Branston Collymore, the then Head of the Civil Service and supported by leading members in the Public Service of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, each of these exercises sought to apply a qualitative approach to classifying positions within the Public Service of Barbados. It is, therefore, important that at the very outset, I state that the existing system of classifying or ranking posts within the Public Service of Barbados, used what was called a classification method, a subjective approach, that all it succeeded into doing was to divide the jobs in the Public Service into four classes, P, S, Z, C, and then those classes were further broken down into salary ranges where there are 66 of them, which were, in turn, broken down into 94 salary points. Sir, but it was all very subjective.

10.30 a.m.

This job evaluation exercise has simply sought to put jobs in four classes, then break them down in salary ranges and further break them down in salary points.

Sir, there has never been an attempt before to take each job in the public service and try to bring to bear to it a quantitative approach to take certain specific factors into account, namely, things like the extent of the responsibility attached to the job, the degree of skill that is required to perform the task and the complexity of the job and the working condition. There has never been before the attempt to take all of those measurable factors into account and to take each job in the public service and attach a value to each taking those factors into account.

Mr. Speaker, what we had before were laudable attempts to try to rank the post in the public service using qualitative subjective criteria. Sir, as you imagine, over the stretch of history from 1948 to 1958, fifty years, the multiplication of those subjective approaches to ranking jobs in the public service would have done more harm than good.

Mr. Speaker, jobs have been increasing, added to the public service over a period of time and their placement in the job hierarchy has often time been done upon the basis of the feel for the job rather than an objective measurement of what the job entails. It is also true that the nature of some jobs have changed over time and that a job that may have been designated in one capacity twenty years ago may be a job that attracts a certain type of content today.

Mr. Speaker, there is also no question that in the absence of a comprehensive approach to doing job evaluations, every time a partial evaluation has been done, the system has been made more inequitable especially so, the 1988 exercise which was not a comprehensive exercise, which attempted to attach a specific measurable value to every job because it was just a partial exercise. While I want to commend those who did it, the truth of the matter is that it has caused more problems than it solved.

Mr. Speaker, what pre-existed this new job evaluation exercise, which we are bringing to conclusion is a large amount of stakeholder dividend, lack of confidence in the existing classification system and the absence of written standards which also meant that additions to the establishment of the Government could not be undertaken in accordance with transparent criteria.

Mr. Speaker, especially there was tremendous agitation from groups like the Police Association and the Nurses Association, who felt that the subjective approach in the past had savaged their standing, that better could be done and that better should be done. In this context, the Government in 1998, decided that it wanted to do a service-wide job evaluation exercise to include everybody, take every job in the public service, predetermine specific factors, and measure the content of every job with reference to those factors so that for the first time we could begin to compare like with like and to compare jobs relative to each other based upon the content of each job using a common framework across jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I think the House would agree that in circumstances where you have a public service with 28 000 and 1 100 different type of jobs, a comprehensive job evaluation of the type contemplated in 1988 was a vast undertaking and more especially so the determination of the Government to move away from a subjective approach to a quantitative approach where a precise value by way of quantitative points could be attached to every post. Sir, this was an exercise that had to be gone into using the greatest skills available.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, it was the intention of the Government at the outset to seek funding from the Inter American Development Bank (IADB), to enable us to fully fund this because the cost would run into hundreds of millions of dollars. Sir, after 18 months of discussion with IADB, we concluded by August 2000 that we were not going to get IADB funding for it. Therefore, the Government decided it would use public resources to do this comprehensive job evaluation, using the very best technology available to us at home and abroad and splitting the exercise into two phases. First, a diagnostic phase in which we would study what was the problem that needed to be fixed and then the actual phase of settling upon the ranking, again using only the best technology available.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, before I go into that I want to make the point that a job evaluation exercise is a systematic method of appraising the value of each job in relation to other jobs in terms of their value to the organisation. Sir, in every case a job evaluation exercise must not be confused with a performance appraisal exercise which is a system designed to assess the performance in a job of a particular incumbent. The purpose of a job evaluation exercise is to create a ranking of jobs based on their value to the organisation where the value to the organisation is measured in terms of a score that is derived after taking into account things like the responsibility associated with the job, complexity and whatever else.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of a job evaluation exercise is to assist the organisation in its compensation policy and practice. Sir, you would find that in some organisations there are a number of anomalies and that jobs of a similar characteristic are often treated as being of different rank because the value of each job has not been scientifically measured. Sir, people are essentially doing the same things and often find themselves being paid different salaries. What a job evaluation exercise is intended to do is to try to find where people are doing essentially the same thing of a similar rank and therefore, attach a similar salary scale to people doing essentially the same things. This principle that is sought after is the principle of internal pay equity.

Mr. Speaker, as I said before, the Government of Barbados decided it was going to approach this matter as scientific as possible and the first exercise was to engage PriceWaterhouseCooper to conduct a diagnostic assessment of all aspects of the situation that obtained in the civil service because of the application of the pre-existing classification model.

Mr. Speaker, the results of that were ready and sent to the Cabinet in June 2001. After the diagnostic review was undertaken, we then moved to the second phase where the job evaluation planned to provide a structured framework for determining specific job values all across the public service based on predetermined factors and subfactors and the exercise was then engaged in.

Mr. Speaker, the final report of the second phase led to various proposals for changes in the ranking and pay of certain sections of the public service, which is before us today.
10.40 a.m.

Sir, may I say that the Government sought, as much as we could, to use the best expertise available at home and abroad. A company, MNX International, that has tremendous experience in quantitative exercises was engaged and a thirteen-member Committee drawn up. Five representatives nominated by Congress of Trade Unions

and Staff Associations of Barbados, including the National Union of Public Workers, four nominated by the Head of the Civil Service and four staff members of the civil service, were constituted as a special task force to be engaged in making the precise recommendations, to inform the job evaluation. Each Member of this Task Force was exposed to intensive training in the theory and practice of job evaluation. It cannot be presumed that the knowledge of ranking jobs is one that you can enter into lightly. All of the Members of this Task Force were required to undergo specific training.

Mr. Speaker, I said it was intended that each job in the Public Service of Barbados should be ranked in accordance with a number of factors; skill required to perform each job; the level of responsibility associated with each job; the effort involved in performing each job and the working conditions under which persons engaged in specific tasks had to function. Sir, within those broad categories, subcategories were also specified and specific values attached to each broad category, responsibilities, skill, *et cetera*, and specific values were also attached to subfactors.

Mr. Speaker, in relation to skill, in assessing and ranking each job under the category of skill, consideration was given for the formal education required, on the job experience in performing the job, communication skills required and dexterity.

In relation to effort, the factors taken into account were, the task complexity relating to the posts extended to problem solving, the physical demands, rather prolonged activity, repetitive motion and light or heavy manipulation. In relation to responsibilities, specific values were attached to matters, such as independence of action on the part of the officer involved; the consequences of the officer's errors; the confidentiality required of the officer; the health and safety of others that ensue from the officer's task; the responsibility for the use of resources; the extent to which the officer's work requires the ensuring of compliance with decisions made; the extent of supervision, training and coordination that the officer had to undertake; the advisory capacity in which the officer was supposed to engage; the number of employees under direction of the officer and the social responsibilities of the officer.

Sir, across the public service, if you use the responsibility pattern alone, you can take each post and determine how often each day the officer has to be involved in independent action, supervision or coordination and attach a value to that. Essentially, between 2001 and 2003, every post in the public service of Barbados, from the Permanent Secretary down, was subjected to a process of measurement using those four broad categories where the representatives of the Ministry of the Civil Service, the representatives of all the stakeholders, trade unions and the consultants to the Government were actively engaged.

Mr. Speaker, out of this exercise came the results which, I am sure, are available to the Honourable House; but if there are not, I would now like to make available to the Honourable House, this Government of Barbados job evaluation exercise Final Report and the Appendices thereto. They both must be read together because it is the Appendices thereto that is now affecting what will be before us.

Mr. Speaker, a job evaluation exercise is not intended to spur or to necessarily create the conditions for a wage increase. It attaches a value to each post on the understanding that once scientific value can be attached in the organisation, the value of some posts will go up, the value of some will remain constant and the value of others will be downgraded.

Sir, clearly, we live in a society where persons' terms and conditions cannot be altered to their disadvantage, because of the Constitution. If a Job Evaluation Exercise leads to a situation where a value is attached to a post deeming it worthy of downgrading, the practice applied is that the incumbent to that post is allowed to remain entitled to the existing salary with the understanding that any future incumbent to the post would have to accept the downgrade, lower status and lower salary that the job exercise leads to.

Similarly, if the job evaluation exercise says that there is no need for a change in the status of a post, then the salary of that post remains constant. Equally, if the job evaluation exercise says that there should be an upgrade in the post, then there would be consequential adjustments to the salary of the post for which upgrades have been recommended. Sir, I say to this Honourable House that after twenty months of intensive work, the Job Evaluation Exercise, following the precepts that I mentioned, was completed in September 2003 and the recommendations were that 3 000 posts should be upgraded and 200 should be downgraded.

Sir, the major beneficiaries from the upgrading are members of the Police Force, Prison Officers, Fire Service, posts associated with the social services, the higher ranks of the nursing profession, senior managers and professionals among others. Those posts are shown at Appendix I. If the Honourable House has not yet received this as a document of the House, I would like to formally make it a document of the House.

Mr. Speaker, 200 posts were recommended to be downgraded. Some are in my Ministry, the Prime Minister's Office. For example, in the HIV/AIDS Commission, it is recommended that a number of posts should be downgraded.

Sir, the point is, the incumbent continues to enjoy the existing salary but if those posts that are recommended to

be downgraded were filled by somebody else in the future, those persons would receive the downgraded salary that has been established from this exercise.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to spell out that while it is true politicians are to benefit from this exercise, there are certain categories of public officers who will benefit more than Members of Cabinet. It is generally known that, for example, primary school Headmasters and Headmistresses have historically not enjoyed the best ranking in the public service of Barbados. This job evaluation exercise has now measured the worth of primary school Principals relative to their responsibility and working conditions across the four categories to which I have referred. It is recommending for them, I think, a 19 per cent increase.

Mr. Speaker, I would really like to take this Honourable House through all of them but I believe that a Headmaster's salary has moved from S8 to S6 and the increase is in the order of 19 per cent.
10.50 a.m.

Sir, for the Chief Probation Officer, the increase is 16 per cent. The Deputy Chief Information Officer, and the Hospital Manager of the Geriatric Hospital, 16.8 per cent increase. The Chief Community Development Officer, his/her increase, because of the reclassification of their job and taking into account all of those factors, is 16.8 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, other increases are as follows:

The Coordinator of the Children's Development Centre, 18.5 per cent.

The Principal Nursing Officer at the District Hospital, 17.8 per cent.

The Assistant Director of the National Assistance Board, 17.8 per cent.

The Chief Physiotherapist in the Government, 17.8 per cent.

The Post Master General, 16.1 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on but I make that general point to come to the specific issue that there are categories of public officers, whose percentage increases are greater than those that are being allowed by this job exercise to Permanent Secretaries.

In relation to Permanent Secretaries, Mr. Speaker, because I really must bring the debate to that, the job evaluation exercise having taken into account, the skills that are required to perform the role of Permanent Secretaries, the responsibilities that go with the job, the

effort that is entailed and the working conditions that are involved, Sir, Permanent Secretaries have been granted points leading to their being also assigned an increase in their salary of 15 per cent.

If I may capture some of it for the House, Sir, the post of Permanent Secretary has now been measured quantitatively and job points of \$53 400 assigned as the value of the post of Permanent Secretary. Sir, the understanding is that posts with job points of over \$51 000 are going to be classed at the very top. The post of Permanent Secretary is classed as having job points of \$53 400 as I said.

Mr. Speaker, after we have taken into account and attached the value to the skills required, the effort, the responsibilities and working conditions, further increases are as follows:

The Director of Finance and Planning, \$53 400.

The Chief Personnel Officer, \$52 950.

The Registrar, \$52 600.

The Solicitor General, \$52 450.

The Chief Parliamentary Counsel, \$52 300.

The Director of Public Prosecution, \$52 200.

The Chief Agricultural Officer, \$52 200.

The Chief Agricultural Officer, \$52 100.

The Chief Medical Officer, \$51 750.

The Commissioner of Titles, \$51 000.

All posts with a job value taking into account the skills required, responsibilities, *et cetera*, of over \$51 000 are classified as S-1. Those posts were deemed as posts that were required a regrading upwards by 15 per cent and that, Mr. Speaker, brings us to the crunch of this debate.

Mr. Speaker, there have been comprehensive involvement by every stakeholder organisation in all aspects of this exercise, such that at the end of the day, there is no outstanding controversy regarding the value attached to any post that has been the subject of this evaluation. There is no outstanding difference of opinion about the value of the job points attached to all of the posts in the public service of Barbados.

I want to repeat that point, Mr. Speaker, because it is something that needs to be stressed. Sir, never before in this

country's history, and seldom in the history of any country of a similar nature to Barbados has every posts in the public service been attached a quantitative value, taking into the account, the responsibilities to perform, the skills required, the working conditions of the post, and there has been no controversy about the value of each post.

There is also no controversy, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the posts that have been upgraded, no controversy about the posts that should remain constant, and no controversy among all of the 13 stakeholders that were part of this exercise about the posts that should be downgraded and I want to stress that, Sir. Therefore, when Permanent Secretaries are to be given an upgrade and to get the benefit of a 15 per cent increase in their salary, it is not because politicians have said that this should be the case but the Committee, Mr. Speaker, drawn from all of the unions, using an expert who has tremendous experience in measuring things, these increases, Sir, are the result of this 13-man committee being unanimous in its recommendations, in relation to the extent to which the posts, from the top to the bottom should be changed.

I need to make that point, if only to establish, Mr. Speaker, that the proposed changes, especially to those at the top have not been as a result of the interference of the political class seeking to set new terms for the senior civil servants, with a view to benefit themselves. They are the direct result, Mr. Speaker, of the work of this committee, which has said that the people at the top in Barbados have jobs that are worth X because of the complexity and the degree of responsibility that they must exercise. Based upon this rating, we feel that they should be upgraded by a factor of Y.

Sir, there is a broader issue. At the time of Independence in the 1960s, the difference between the salary of jobs at the top of the civil service in Barbados, and jobs at the bottom was a ratio of 15:1. Forty years ago, people at the top in the public service in Barbados used to be paid 15 times more than people at the bottom but because of the nature of the salary adjustments, especially in the 1980s where people at the bottom used to get a higher percentage increase than people at the top, the gap has been narrowed.

Sir, that is a wonderful process of egalitarianism and we are not fighting that but the fact is that it has been narrowed to the stage where it is now about 5.5:1, from 15:1 to 5:1. I am not reflecting negatively on any other Caribbean country but in Jamaica, the ratio between a Permanent Secretary's salary and the person at the bottom is 14:1 and in all other Caribbean countries, the gap is 10:1 and in the case of Barbados, it is 5:1.

Sir, this means that we have a situation and we must face it in the public service of Barbados that those at the

bottom or near the bottom are paid relatively better than their counterparts in the private sector, whereas those at the top find themselves not being paid on a comparable basis to those in the private sector. It has already begun to be a factor that has affected the functioning of the Public Service of Barbados.

For example, we put out advertisements to get lawyers to come and practice in the Public Service of Barbados but nobody is applying, specially anything relating to land issues, such as land surveyors. The Government of Barbados cannot get high quality professionals to come and work precisely because the gap between the top and the bottom has been compressed and compressed over time. Effectively, Mr. Speaker, and in realistic terms, there has to be a means by which the professional class in the Public Service of Barbados can begin to be appraised with reference to what they are worth. We need to put in place systems to be able to pay them to keep them working in the Public Service of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, if no adjustment had been made to the salaries at the top, then the already compressed ratio between the salaries at the top would have gone down even further to about 5.1:1. This further flattening of the salary scale could have been a consideration that would have worked against the public service of this country, being over time to be able to attract quality professional people to do quality professional work. What the change in the proposed salaries for the people at the top is going to do is to transform a 5.5:1 ratio to about a 6:1 ratio, which will still make Barbados' situation the most equitable in any Caribbean society. Sir, arising from this exercise, it was recommended that the post of persons in that category, Permanent Secretaries, the Solicitor-General *et cetera*, should be increased by 15 per cent.

11.00 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, we come now to the political issues. Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that there is a unanimous recommendation to increase the salaries of those at the top of the Civil Service by 15 per cent, a judgement has to be made as to what you do with the salaries of ministers, parliamentarians, the Speaker of the House, the Leader of the Opposition and the other members of the political class.

Mr. Speaker, the judgement that had to be formed and made and the judgement that has been formed has nothing whatsoever to do with the fact that Members of Cabinet are not entitled to holiday with pay. That was not a material consideration in this particular matter, although it is relevant to the way in which Members of Parliament function.

Mr. Speaker, the judgement that had to be formed could not be influenced by questions as to whether or not Members of Parliament in Barbados have to work harder

than Members of Parliament in other Caribbean jurisdictions. Mr. Speaker, we do not have a system of local government and Members of Parliament have to function as Members of Cabinet and do the things that Members of Parliament at the national level have to do in other countries as well as things that local government people have to do in other countries. Therefore, the judgement has nothing whatsoever to do with that particular issue, although that is valid.

Mr. Speaker, the judgement that has to be made has nothing to do with the social hardship that Members of Parliament have to endure. Sir, every Member of Parliament in this country has to function as part of a social welfare net. Every person who has had to serve in this Parliament, as a Minister or as a Member of Parliament, knows what it is when the system fails because his or her constituents come to them to stop them from falling between the cracks. Every Member of Parliament has to perform this function in Barbados and it imposes tremendous social hardship on them. Sir, in many instances families suffer because of the extent to which Members of Parliament have to assist in making sure that people do not fall through the cracks.

Mr. Speaker, what is at issue here has nothing to do with that. It has nothing to do with the fact as well that serving in public life allegedly has put pressure on people's family life. I have heard Honourable Members of this Parliament alleged that they have not been able to enjoy the benefit of growing up with their children because of the stress of politics, but it has nothing to do with that.

Sir, the judgement has to do with one simple fact and one issue alone, that is, that Members of Parliament and Members of Cabinet in Barbados as elsewhere are paid, and a system has to be found for determining the level at which Members of Cabinet and Members of Parliament are paid. Mr. Speaker, there is no wishing away the issue, it is a pragmatic matter that has to be faced.

Mr. Speaker, what has been the convention, has been a formula that was agreed to in 1978, that the salary of Members of Cabinet should be linked to the salaries paid to the top members of the Public Service who advises them, namely Permanent Secretaries. That formula is that every time the salaries of Permanent Secretaries are changed, the salaries of Ministers should also be changed and that the linkage between the salaries of Members of Cabinet and the top members of the Civil Service should be such that a Minister is paid three per cent more than a Permanent Secretary. Mr. Speaker, that three per cent has not been drawn out of a hat, it is based upon the principle that a minister, because he enjoys or has to exercise a higher level of responsibility than a Permanent Secretary, should be paid the equivalent of one increment higher than a Permanent Secretary, that is all there is to it.

Mr. Speaker, since 1978, every Minister in Barbados has been the beneficiary of a formula for setting his basic pay, that the pay of a Minister should be only three per cent higher than that of a Permanent Secretary and that every time the pay of a Permanent Secretary changes a Minister's salary should change correspondingly to maintain that relativity.

Mr. Speaker, what is at issue here is whether we will retain that linkage between the pay of Ministers and Permanent Secretaries that has been in existence since 1978. Will we also agree that every time a Permanent Secretary pay changes, a Minister's pay should change by an equivalent amount to allow a Minister to earn only three per cent more than a Permanent Secretary? Are we going to continue that, Mr. Speaker? If we are not going to continue that formula then we have to replace it by something else.

Mr. Speaker, this matter of the linkage of the ministers' pay to those of Permanent Secretaries was as a result of a White Paper that was referred to a select committee of this Parliament in 1977. Arising from the report of that subcommittee of this Parliament in 1977, that linkage between Permanent Secretaries pay and Ministers pay was set such that a Minister would get three per cent more than a Permanent Secretary and every time a Permanent Secretary's Minister's pay changed a Minister pay would also be changed. That has been followed since 1978.

Sir, in 1991, the Democratic Labour Party Cabinet had to make a judgement as to whether it was going to maintain the linkage between Permanent Secretaries pay and the pay of Ministers and whether it was going to continue their practice of having Ministers salaries change whenever Permanent Secretaries salaries change. The matter went to the Democratic Labour Party's Cabinet in 1991, and this is what the Cabinet decided. I will read it slowly for the benefit of those who were not there then.

"It is considered that there is merit in determining a relationship between the pay of a Minister and the pay of a Permanent Secretary and it is recommended that appropriate action be taken to introduce such a relationship at this time. In the Public Service a normal increment is three per cent and it is recommended that a Minister's salary should be fixed at a point which is three per cent above the salary of a Permanent Secretary."

Sir, in 1991, the Democratic Labour Party Cabinet enshrined that as a decision of the Government of Barbados. A normal increment is approximately three per cent and it is recommended that a Minister's salary should be fixed at a point which is three per cent above the salary of a Permanent Secretary. It is further recommended that the relationships between the various offices should be as

follows: A Prime Minister, 100 per cent; the salary of a Deputy Prime Minister, 85 per cent of the Prime Minister's salary; a Minister, 75 per cent of the Prime Minister's salary; a Parliamentary Secretary, 70 per cent of a Minister's salary; the Speaker should be fixed at 80 per cent of the salary of a Minister; the Leader of the Opposition should be 85 per cent of the salary of a Minister and the Chairman of Committees should be 75 per cent of the salary of the Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic Labour Party said that formula that was existing from 1978 should be retained, and every wage increase in this country in the Public Service and affecting public servants and politicians since 1978, has been based on this formula, which is that a Minister gets 3 per cent more than a Permanent Secretary and that a Minister's salary be 75 per cent of the value of the Prime Minister's salary. Therefore, once you have fixed the Permanent Secretary's salary, you fix the Minister's salary, and you fix the Prime Minister's salary, in accordance with this formula. Therefore, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition's, your Honour's and Honourable Members' of Parliament salaries are all fixed in accordance with this formula.

11.10 a.m.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the proposals relative to the wages of Ministers and Prime Ministers, Speaker of the House and Leader of the Opposition, is exactly in accordance with that formula that has been in existence since 1978 and has been agreed to at the level of Cabinet by a Democratic Labour Party Government, as recently as 1991. We are, therefore, not seeking to introduce any new formula nor rules by which Ministers are paid. We are seeking only to apply a convention that has been followed since 1978.

Mr. Speaker, in politics there is something called "the path of ignoble ease". It is a terrible road but it is constantly followed by people who are lacking in political principle, who like to replace principles with expedience. This path of ignoble ease is being followed when some politicians go through the motions in public of appearing to be opposed to something which, secretly behind the scenes, they are in support of.

Sir, the path of ignoble ease is the path that is being taken when, for the purpose of cheap popularity, some politicians appear to want to be in opposition to the benefits that politicians derived, based upon formula, while opposing it in public but yet they line up at the Treasury at month-end, to collect their benefits in secret.

Sir, the path of ignoble ease is the path that is being followed when some politicians, while being in Government, support policies but as soon as they come

into Opposition, are quick to oppose the very policies that they had supported when they were in Government.

Mr. Speaker, if I may illustrate, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, followed the path of ignoble ease when he drew money from the Treasury of Barbados, to advise on the introduction of VAT into this country and as soon as he went into Opposition, he opposed the very VAT that he had recommended that should have been introduced.

Mr. Speaker, there is a Trinidadian politician who says that politics has its own morality, and politicians seem to believe that the public is unwise and that they are taken in, then for the purposes of cheap popularity, politicians do one thing in public but in private they do something else. Therefore, politicians would do well not to feel that the public are not sensitive to the fact, that sometimes politicians will depart from principle for the purpose of seeking to gain a temporary burst of political popularity. Sir, so it was with the Democratic Labour Party in 1990-1991.

Mr. Speaker, this is the crux of what this debate has to be about. In 1989-1990, a job evaluation exercise was undertaken. It also proposed changes for civil servants at the top. Those changes had to be introduced shortly before an election, in order to go into an election, appearing to profess that a Democratic Labour Party Cabinet was prepared to indulge in a sacrifice that it did not expect that the rest of the public was to carry.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic Labour Party Cabinet brought the classification of the job evaluation exercise but deferred dealing with politicians' salaries, so that they could go into the election campaign, having taken the path of ignoble ease. Sir, they knew that if they were going to win the election, that their first order of business was to maintain the link between the salaries paid to top civil servants and politicians, in accordance with the formula that had been in existence since 1978, that linked a Minister's salary to that of a Permanent Secretary's, in such a fashion that a Minister got 3 per cent more. Therefore, what would have happened in Barbados is that the Democratic Labour Party would have said to the people of Barbados that they have brought this job evaluation exercise and have helped everybody but that they, the poor politicians, who are labouring in the vineyards, sacrificing for the people, are not taken any increase. But, Sir, in less than 90 days after winning the election, they brought the adjustment to restore the link between Ministers salaries and that of public servants and sought to cause the impression to appear that it was not within their contemplation, far less within their imagination.

Mr. Speaker, it is a good thing that we have Hansard. The then Minister, Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, spoke about

the need to maintain the link and the then Honourable Leader of the Opposition, Sir Henry Forde – God bless him – spoke. Sir, I would like to repeat to the Honourable House what Sir Henry said and what informed the Barbados Labour Party position then and explains the Barbados Labour Party position now.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Henry said:

“I am glad to see the principle is now accepted by the Democratic Labour Party and we must, therefore, continue to emphasise that that principle is one for which we were castigated, and I am saying I am surprised that the Government had to play politics on this measure at the end of this last Session and because of it, it will not get the support of the Opposition.”

Mr. Speaker, Sir Henry goes on to say:

“I want to make the position absolutely clear. So far as the principle is concerned, of linking Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries salaries, as well as Parliamentarians pay, to that of the Civil Service, the Government has now accepted the Barbados Labour Party’s position.”

Mr. Speaker, it has been our position since 1978. It has been the position that has informed every wage increase in this country since 1978.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Henry goes on to say:

“Mr. Speaker, it has taken them many years to reach that stage but the manner in which they have implemented that principle, clearly satisfies us on this side that they did not face the principle squarely but they had to play a little bit of politics still in the last resort.”

Mr. Speaker, the point I am making is that before going into election in 1990, the Democratic Labour Party knew that they wanted to maintain the link between Ministers and public servants salaries. Therefore, to avoid the unpopularity that might have caused, they deferred it until after the election campaign and as the first order of business, came and established the link.
11.20 a.m.

Sir, the position of the Barbados Labour Party was outlined clearly by our leader that it has always stood firmly on the principle.

Mr. Speaker, he was very kind to the then Leader of the Opposition but was pathetic in the way in which he anticipated that this Leader of the Opposition would take the path of ignoble ease because that is what it is. He said that he did not know how much longer he would remain

in public life whether another 20 years or not but that he would hazard a guess that you would see more twisting and turning on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party on this matter. Sir, he called them twisting and turning but I call them taking the path of ignoble ease.

Mr. Speaker, he said that when the Right Honourable, Erskine Sandiford, a man of principle, is no longer at the helm, you will see a lot of that because you have never been able until now to separate matters that should be generally non-partisan in many respects from those, which should be matters of genuine political differences. Sir, that was said in 1990 predicting then the present behaviour of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, the point the country has to be told is that all we are seeking to do by way of these adjustments to the salaries of Ministers, the Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, Parliamentary Secretaries and parliamentarians is to establish and continue to maintain a formula that has been in existence since 1978, a formula which as recent as 1991 was endorsed by a Cabinet of the Democratic Labour Party that the pay of Ministers should be linked to that of Permanent Secretaries and that every time one increases that the next should increase to maintain that link.

Mr. Speaker, if we were bringing proposals here to address that relativity, the Government would be culpable. If we were saying by these actions that we were now going to require a situation where Ministers, Members of Parliament and the Opposition should now get not 3 per cent but that it should be 10 per cent of that of Permanent Secretaries, we would have been breaking the essential relativity between the two and I would have a case to answer. I ask this House, what is the case that Government has to answer in applying a policy that has been in existence for 25 years but more especially applying a policy that has worked in such a way as to take all of the unilateralness, subjectivity and randomness out of the process by which parliamentarians are rewarded for their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, there has to be some formula applied. I say to the House that those who do not want the present arrangements to be put in place should say what they want to replace it by. In every other Caribbean country Ministers are paid more than Permanent Secretaries. This is so and should be so because Ministers have a higher responsibility than Permanent Secretaries. Mr. Speaker, the only Caribbean country in which I do not think it is so, is Dominica but in every other Caribbean country, Ministers are paid more than Permanent Secretaries. Sir, in every other country in the world, Ministers are paid more than Permanent Secretaries and in Barbados our Ministers are paid 3 per cent more.

Mr. Speaker, if the Opposition does not want it to be 3 per cent more, it should tell us what it wants to be.

Is it the wish of the Opposition, having agreed to the formula in 1991, applied it in 1991, to subsequently, replace the 3 per cent link with something else? If the Opposition has something in mind, it should tell us what it is and also tell us on what it is based.

Mr. Speaker, we are moving through this exercise to a phase in public affairs where the relations between things have to be measured and salaries of Ministers have to be 3 per cent higher than that of Permanent Secretaries because it is the equivalent of an increment. Sir, if the Opposition wants to change that relation, it should tell us what it wants to change it to and also tell us the factors it has taken into account in wanting to make the adjustment. This is all we ask in this debate.

Mr. Speaker, Government must never be so sure of itself that it feels its policies should be above criticism. This House, this Cabinet, this Government is not above criticism. I only ask one thing, not whether our policies are popular but whether they are right, based on principle and whether they can stand the test of reasonableness.

Sir, in this particular matter, I have no doubt that once politicians seem to be involved in things that could be of benefit to politicians, that they would be the subject of criticism. Sir, is it not a right thing for us to maintain in practice, a formula for setting wages that it is based upon a formula that has worked for 25 years and which has taken all the arbitrariness out of what politicians pay themselves?

Mr. Speaker, is it not right that we should maintain something that is transparent? Is it meeting the test of reasonableness that a Minister should be paid only one increment more than the person who reports to him/her?

Mr. Speaker, all through the public service people with higher levels of responsibility are paid one increment more than persons who report to them. Sir, I say to the House and this country that this matter may be the subject of controversy and that when there is controversy there is the possibility of unpopularity, so I say to the House that this Government is doing what is right and that is, whether they can stand the test of reasonableness.

Mr. Speaker, you would recall sometime in the second term of this administration there was a debate engaged in on the Floor of this Parliament, that some of my Frontbench colleagues urged a case and that it was expressed on the Floor of this Parliament that salaries of Ministers should be delinked from the salaries of top civil servants. Sir, a case was being argued from the Floor of this Parliament that Ministers should be paid for the functions they perform as Members of Parliament separate and distinct from the function they perform as Ministers and, Sir, it was a merry debate. You would recall, Mr. Speaker, that I left this chair and sat in the last chair on

the Backbench and gave a speech to this House, indicating that the principle of linking the salaries of Ministers to that of top civil servants was a fundamental principle of trust between the Government and the governed and that I was never going to agree that Ministers should delink their salaries from that of top civil servants to benefit themselves. Sir, I said, "Over my dead body." I said that I was not going to be part of any arrangements in this House where this Government brought any arrangements that delinked the salary of Ministers from the formula that has been applied since 1978.

Mr. Speaker, I took that position in this House before this debate against my colleagues who were then arguing that Ministers should be paid both as Ministers, Members of Parliament and for hardship. Sir, I told them that there was a formula in place which they may not like but that it has worked for us and must continue to work for us.

Sir, I come to this debate with my conscience clear that when the judgement had to be made to break the link, I did not sit silent on the matter. I spoke from a Backbench in here as a child of this Parliament. I said that I would never support any Cabinet that sought to reward itself by breaking the link between itself and Public Officers. The link must be maintained. I said that then and I say it now.

11.30 a.m.

Sir, therefore, when I bring this matter to this Honourable House, I can come with the honour of consistency. I want to make that point that it might have been easy to yield to the pressures and say, yes, Ministers are under pressure and they should get more than 3 per cent of Permanent Secretaries' salaries but I said that it cannot happen. I took a clear position then, it stays at 3 per cent of Permanent Secretaries' salaries and I repeat that Ministers will receive only 3 per more of the Permanent Secretaries salaries.

Mr. Speaker, people may ask sometimes what is a Minister's worth. I can tell you what my job as a Minister and Prime Minister entails. Sir, eight persons at the level of a Permanent Secretary report to me every day. On every given day my job involves eight persons at the level of Permanent Secretary reporting to me. The Cabinet Secretary, the Chief Personnel Officer, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of the Civil Service, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Defence and Security, the Permanent Secretary in the Office of Prime Minister, the Permanent Secretary in the Office of Finance, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Director of Economic Affairs. Sir, the work of seven persons at the level of Permanent Secretary come to my desk every day.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to those Permanent Secretaries, the work of the Governor of the Central Bank,

the Ombudsman, the Chief Justice and the work of the Judiciary, the Chief Electoral Officer and all matters pertaining to boundaries and electoral matters, in addition to that, the work of the Head of the Civil Service. Sir, that does not take into account matters that come to my desk as the Prime Minister of CARICOM, with lead responsibility for a single market and single economy issues. Sir, the work of eight persons at the level of Permanent Secretary comes to my desk. That work requires me to make decisions, some of them are formidable, one has to pause at the gravity of what one is about to do.

Sir, I would never want the salary to reflect the extent of the Permanent Secretaries that report to me, it must always be such that there must be a fundamental link between the salary of a Permanent Secretary and the salary of the Prime Minister.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues that have been raised in the public domain from the Opposition Leader. One is, how do we justify this supposing increase at a time when there is a call for wage restraint. First of all let me make the point to this Honourable House that an adjustment to income that arises from a job evaluation exercise, is an adjustment to attach a pay to a post based upon what that post is worth, that has to be fundamentally understood. An adjustment to income arising from a job evaluation exercise has always been treated, even in the most dire circumstances facing this country, as merely an adjustment of pay attached to a post to accord that post what it is worth.

Sir, as a result, everyone of the Protocols for Incomes Policy agreed to in this country, has recognised that changes of income arising from a job evaluation are entirely compatible with, and consistent with a policy of wage restraint.

Sir, let me cite the specific provisions of the Protocol, this is the Prices and Incomes Protocol from 1995. It says: "The restraint on increases in basic wages and salaries will apply to all remuneration under contract of employment for any kind of work to be performed wholly or substantially within Barbados." So, there should be wage restraint.

Sir, Page 9, Section E says: "Where increases are the results of job evaluation exercises or negotiated job enhancement exercises, wage restraint shall not be used artificially to suppress valid claims for increases in employees' compensation." Sir, do you want me to repeat it?

Mr. Speaker, the Incomes Policy embodied in the Protocol brought by the Democratic Labour Party in 1993/1994 said exactly the same thing. That where increases are the result of job evaluation exercises or

negotiated job enhancement exercises, wage restraint must not be used artificially to suppress valid claims for increases in employees' compensation.

Sir, in every Protocol governing the Social Partnership of Barbados, that has been entered into since 1993, that principle has been enshrined and carried from Protocol to Protocol. A change in income arising from a job evaluation exercise is not inconsistent with the principle of wage restraint and that wage restraint should not be used artificially to suppress any valid claim for employees' compensation, arising from a job evaluation exercise. Sir, this is enshrined in the Protocol.

Mr. Speaker, when the Government of Barbados says that you have to give effect to the proposed adjustments arising from a job evaluation exercise, we are, in fact, complying with the exact letter and spirit of the social contract that has been agreed on five separate occasions by the labour movement, the Government, the private sector and the Democratic Labour Party. The 1993 Protocol says exactly the same thing. Sir, let me repeat it again. That where increases are the result of job evaluation exercises, wage restraint shall not be used artificially to suppress valid claims in employees' compensation.

Sir, let us get away from the argument that our actions in this particular instance where, accounting for an adjustment arising from a job evaluation exercise adjustment, is a job evaluation exercise adjustment for what it is worth. Let us pay for what it is worth, that is all it does. Sir, that is not in conflict with any call for a wage restraint because the Incomes Policies in Barbados as enshrined in these Protocols recognise that one is compatible with the other. You should not say that you did not grant the adjustment necessitated by a job evaluation exercise or artificially suppress it because of the practice of wage restraint. So, let us put that argument to rest.

Sir, I wish that the media, in reference to this matter, would read these documents. The Government would not, when dealing with wage issues, do anything that is contrary to the Protocols we have signed. Sir, you must believe that the trade unions would not allow the Government to breach the Protocols and breach them to the disadvantage of the country. Mr. Speaker, what we are doing is entirely consistent with what is enshrined in all the Protocols which we have signed.

11.40 a.m.

Sir, I stress this point again that the Democratic Labour Party also signed a protocol saying exactly the same thing in 1993, that a change in income arising from a job evaluation should not be artificially suppressed because of wage restraint. We are recognising that an income change from a job evaluation exercise is just trying to attribute to a job, the pay that it deserves and that is why we do it because it is merited by the circumstances; end of story.

The argument, Mr. Speaker, is how do you reconcile our doing this with the call for wage restraint that from 1993 and in every protocol since then, the principle has been enshrined that the two can coexist.

Sir, the other argument issued by the Leader of the Opposition is that politicians do not deserve any salaries. This is the closest to a confession that we have ever heard in Barbados' public life. He has a history in our political affairs that is unique. He is the only politician that has ever come to this House and told the House that he has drawn money under false pretenses because he went by promotion from the Central Bank to advisor to the Minister of Finance. He was to advise the Minister of Finance but he said he was not allowed to advise the Minister of Finance for a day but continued to draw the money.

The question, Mr. Speaker, is whether his performance as the Leader of the Opposition is such as to warrant the massive increase that he is now to be paid from the Consolidated Fund; and I say, no. Sir, I cannot do anything about it but the fact is that if natural justice and performance were to be used in his case, he would not get a yen, but he would have to pay back the money to the Treasury and let me explain why.

Sir, he came to this House and has been in here for almost half of a term and he has not yet brought one Parliamentary Question to this House to enquire into any aspect of the performance of the Government.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West brought questions to this House and they have been answered. In the whole history of Barbados' politics, you have never yet seen a situation where a Leader of the Opposition has sat in this House, getting fatter and fatter, drawing heavier and heavier and has not sought to put the Government under an iota of pressure by asking the Government one question. This is a shameful condition and I go further.

Sir, the House will recall that immediately after the last election, he said that the first order of business as the Leader of the Opposition was to carry out an inquiry into the GEMS of Barbados. He told the public that there was a company called JAWS. We changed the rules of this Parliament to allow the Leader of the Opposition to be able to have the benefit of a wider access to the accounts of every private company owned by the Government, and to be able to have a functioning Public Accounts Committee functioning.

Mr. Speaker, we are about to go to half time. Where is the inquiry into JAWS and into the GEMS of Barbados on which he stated his political career? There are thousands of Barbadians, Sir, who believed him when he said that there is a company called JAWS which profited from the GEMS and

he was going to come to Parliament to carry out an inquiry. Where is the work being done by this non-existent, idle Leader of the Opposition?

Mr. Speaker, recently, he spoke in terms of carrying out an inquiry into the Urban Development Commission. He went around Barbados speaking about the infelicities at the Urban Development Commission. We told him that if there are infelicities to carry out an inquiry through the Public Accounts Committee and we are still waiting for it, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, the highlight of his political career was to bring a no-confidence motion to this House, the basis of which was that there were certain residents in Queens Street who were being evicted by the politician MP, and that the no-confidence motion had to be brought to express no confidence in the actions of the Government, which was evicting people from Queen Street. It turned out, Mr. Speaker, that the persons were being evicted by an order of the court as a result of a motion brought by the landowner, Sir, and that he could not even get the terms of a no-confidence motion right.

Mr. Speaker, when a Leader of the Opposition sits in this House and does not ask the Government a Parliamentary Question for almost two and one half years, I say that he should be arrested for loitering.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, when the Leader of the Opposition, before an election can cause the public to believe that there is corruption in a public company and a Government changed the rules of Parliament and the laws of this country to give him every authority to enquire into the functioning of that company, and two years has elapsed and he has not lifted a finger, he should be arrested again, and sentenced to hard labour.

Mr. Speaker, when a Leader of the Opposition could make public disturbances of this country, pertaining to the functioning of the Urban Development Commission and then be called upon to have an inquiry into its affairs and refused to do so, Sir, he should not only be subject to imprisonment but be subject to a flogging because this is delinquency at a high level.

Therefore, I say to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, that if there is any evidence that politicians are not deserving of the increase, then I submit to the House on the basis of the evidence I have adduced that it could only be as a result of his own measurement of his lack of performance, and that his conclusion that his performance has been so sadly lacking and paltry that he does not deserve that which he is being paid now, far less the substantial increase that he is now about to enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, job evaluation exercises are not based upon personality issues but the truth is that by any performance appraisal system, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West has been an extraordinary failure. Sir, I agree with him that he does not deserve an increase but it is to take the path of ignoble ease to tell the public that although he does not deserve the increase, because he said that politicians do not deserve it, he can take it still and pay it to a sports group in his constituency.

Sir, as I said, politicians have this habit of wanting to appear to be doing something in public, but behind the scenes, they do something else. Mr. Speaker, you can be assured that if there are any sports groups in his constituency waiting for the benefit of the increase, they could sing; not a yen from that man.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, whether he pays the increase to a sports group or not, the fact is that he still benefits from it by drawing it and that is what sometimes makes politics to the ordinary man appear to be such a tawdry thing because everybody in Barbados knows that they will say one thing in public but do something else.

The difference between the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West, the present Leader of the Opposition and the former Leader of the Opposition is that he does not like to say these things in his own name. At least the former Leader of the Opposition used to tell us what it is that he felt. I remember on the occasion, Sir, when we brought to this Parliament, a subvention for political organisations, the then Leader of the Opposition took a position in Parliament on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party. I still remember the headlines. It was a similar headline to that which obtained recently. He said, "Not one red cent."

The Democratic Labour Party's position when we brought subventions to political parties, was that the Democratic Labour Party was not going to take it unless there were certain rules applied and they were setting up a commission, made up of a former Governor of the Central Bank and whoever else, and the Democratic Labour Party was not going to take one penny of the subvention to political parties, until the rules were drawn.
11.49 a.m.

Sir, as I said, it is the path of ignoble ease. They appear to be saying one thing in public but they are doing something else because the Democratic Labour Party said not one cent for them but they have been drawing the subvention every time it has become available. Sir, let us understand what is happening here. This present Leader of the Opposition wants to appear as though he is so self-righteous in his willingness to sacrifice for the public good, that he will take the money and give it to a cricket team, but I do not believe him, Sir. Sir, he does not deserve it.

Sir, the question as to whether the time is right has also been raised. Mr. Speaker, the Opposition cannot have it both ways. They are saying that now is not the right time to implement the job evaluation exercise. Sir, this job evaluation exercise which was started in 1998, should have been concluded within two years. We have extended it to get it right. It could not have been implemented before because all the kinks have not been worked out. The question is, do we implement it now or do we implement it some time in the future.

Sir, the Government has been under pressure from the unions. The unions want a job evaluation done. At the very time that the Opposition is saying not to do it the unions that have been party to it are saying that they want it done now, that it is long overdue. Sir, the National Union of Public Workers is accusing the Government of dragging its feet after completing its job evaluation exercise for more than a year and is saying to implement it now. Of course, this is the same union that comes back some time afterwards and said that the report surprises them, but that is a different issue.

Mr. Speaker, the Opposition would have us believe that it should not be implemented now, that it should be implemented some time in the future. They are saying that, while at the same time saying that the economy of Barbados is on a downward slippery slope. Sir, how do you reconcile it, if your argument is that you should not do anything to hurt the fortunes of the Barbados economy? They are saying that the economy is going to collapse some time in the future but that you implement it some time in the future when the economy is collapsing.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give this House an appraisal of the economic context within which this job evaluation exercise is being implemented because I have been very measured in what I say about this Barbados economy and where it is going. The economic challenges that face this Barbados economy in the first years of the 21st Century are stiffer than those that faced the economy in the early 1990s, but the performance of the Barbados economy is wonderful both in absolute and relative terms as compared to those of 15 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, let me set this in context. Fifteen years ago when the Democratic Labour Party got this economy into stress, the agricultural sector and the manufacturing sector were still able to enjoy the benefits of the application in our domestic economy of tariff and non-tariff barriers, which gave them protection at home. In 1991/1992, when the Democratic Labour Party got the Barbados economy into stress, manufacturing and agriculture in Barbados, were still the beneficiaries of the use of licences and other non-tariff barriers that shielded them from international competition in Barbados.

In April 1994, the Democratic Labour Party agreed to new rules of international trade that had to be applied between 1994 and 2004. Mr. Speaker, beginning 1998, we started to apply the rules agreed to with the World Trade Organisation that was negotiated by the Democratic Labour Party that stripped manufacturing and agriculture of the protection that they have historically enjoyed since Independence. Mr. Speaker, beginning 1998, the circumstances of agriculture and manufacturing had become more challenging in Barbados because these two sectors have had to face international competition in their domestic market, something that was not the case in the early 1990s.

Mr. Speaker, in the early 1990s, there was the prospect of almost unlimited growth in the international business and financial industries. Outsourcing in those pre Lou Dobbs days, was something that was seen as a strategy on which one could rest a whole development effort. Mr. Speaker, the House should be aware that the circumstances within which our international business sector and our financial sector function, have now changed not only because of the challenge by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in 1998, but almost every month there is a new challenge from some source, New York or elsewhere, to Barbados being able to support international financial companies functioning in our jurisdiction. The circumstances have become more challenging, Mr. Speaker.

In relation to tourism, we now have to manage a tourism industry in a world where international travel has been made more difficult by international terrorism. Therefore, we have to use more of the taxpayers' funds in empathetic marketing to be able to distinguish ourselves from other destinations in this era because people are afraid of travelling.

Sir, our traditional industries are operating in a more challenging environment. Our newest sector, international business and financial services, is subject to extraordinary challenges to its existence. The tourism industry is functioning in a new era where everything has to be done to project a new image for a sector that is facing competition all over the world. Sir, what are the results? They had it easier.

Sir, the Honourable Member for St. Philip West is a threat as a spokesman of economic affairs.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Only if I attend your medical practice.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: You almost slaughter your brother.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please, let us do it orderly, Sir.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Sir, I have already urged that whenever he speaks that the House has a parental control function to shield it...

Mr. SPEAKER: Sir, could you continue please.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the argument of the Democratic Labour Party is that the situation we are facing in the country now is worse than that which existed in 1991, and that, therefore, to grant the public officers as well as parliamentarians the benefit of a job evaluation would worsen the economy as compared to then. The facts are: Is this true? What were the circumstances facing this country in 1991 when the Democratic Labour Party brought the job evaluation exercise to the House?

Sir, I am using the economic and financial statistics of the Central Bank of Barbados of December 1991. In September of 1991, the net foreign assets of the Central Bank of Barbados were \$11.9 million. In October they fell to minus \$16.5 million. This means that the short-term liabilities due to be paid by the Central Bank foreign exchange, were greater than the assets of the Central Bank. The country had negative foreign exchange reserves of \$16.5 million. When they brought the job evaluation exercise to this House, the Central Bank foreign exchange reserves fell to minus \$38 million in November of 1993. Mr. Speaker, the country was technically bankrupt. Sir, the banking system had \$52 million in September, \$42 million in November, and minus \$4 million.

12.00 noon

Sir, in 1991, when the Democratic Labour Party brought the job evaluation exercise for Ministers of the Honourable House, the net foreign assets of the country were negative. I ask you to look in the Central Bank's documents to the International Reserves of Barbados as reported June 2005, at page 74. Sir, under the Democratic Labour Party they had minus \$16 million, \$1 224 000 000 in the Central Bank's Reserves; the banking system they had \$515 million; the second tier reserves, \$175 000 000, totalling \$1 950 000 000 in foreign exchange reserves.

Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat that there was a time in this country when Barbados was prostrate, that the International Monetary Fund could have come through here and dictated to us because our foreign reserves were negative. The short-term liabilities that we had to meet were greater than our assets, both in till of the Central Bank's till and in the till of the banking system of Barbados. At that time it was minus \$4 million and minus \$16 million but today it is \$1.9 billion.

Mr. Speaker, in 1991, our foreign exchange situation was in that perilous state, despite the Democratic Labour

Party borrowing just shortly before then, they largest and most expensive loan in the whole history of Barbados. Therefore, there can be no rational comparison between our circumstances now and our circumstances then.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have to bear with me, and I thank them because sometimes when one has to run a disciplined Government ... and there is a lot more that this Government could be doing out in the community by way of services, except that we are prepared to follow a disciplined course.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to say these things today because this Government does not get the credit that it deserves. We have made the decision that we are not going to leave the people of this country with a foreign debt that would cripple Barbados. Sir, across the developing world, there are countries that have vast resources. There are African countries that have minerals beyond all measurement, they have mineral and gold, and day by day somebody has to be negotiating with them for a debt relief, as they cannot pay their foreign debt. Sir, that foreign debt is overwhelming them, while the money that should be used to build schools and hospitals have to be used to service debt.

Mr. Speaker, two years ago, in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, we raised a loan because at that time nobody could have told us how long the effects of September 11 were going to last on tourism. I said that after that, there must be discipline and that Government was not going to become involved in anymore foreign debt.

Mr. Speaker, the United States of America, reports how much its foreign debt is increasing every second and it runs into millions and billions of dollars. Sir, Barbados must be the only country anywhere, where every month the country's foreign debt is being reduced, so that we do not leave tomorrow's generation with an unsustainable situation relative to the payment of their foreign debt.

Sir, let me give you the facts because we do not speak enough to these things. Sir the foreign debt statistics are at page 73. Our foreign debt reached a high in 2001, of \$1 359 000 000; in 2001, it was \$1 345 000 000; 2003, it was \$1 320 000 000; in 2004, it dropped to \$1 274 000 000, almost \$100 000 000 less.

Sir, for every month, for four years, this country's foreign debt has been systematically reduced. This Government has said that we are not raising any new commercial debt, to pay our way in the world. Sir, we will earn it or have it invested in us by people who want to make investments in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I say to this Honourable House that it takes discipline to run a country without borrowing from

abroad and we all must know of circumstances in this country where every year, they had to borrow abroad to keep things going. Sir, for four years we said that we were going to 'bite the bullet', that we were going to maintain discipline. Sir, we did not have to borrow but we did because of precautionary purposes. Sir, we were going to be a disciplined Government. Sir, I said that a lot more could be done if we were to borrow more money to spend on roads and houses. We can do that too but we said that we are going to be a disciplined people.

Mr. Speaker, I say that whatever else happens in this Parliament or whatever else is the future of this country, I will not be a party to leaving this country with a foreign debt that is unsustainable because it is what has broken the backs of almost every developing country and therefore, I am saying to my Cabinet Colleagues and the Back Bench that as an aspect of the management of our affairs, sometimes we are going to have to do with more than we want... I have cut the fiscal deficit in half. Government Capital Budget now sometimes is \$100 000 000 less than it was years ago, and if we were to go back to that, I know that Honourable Members of Parliament would be happier but we would be leaving this country in a prostrate position, and I am not going to be a party to that.

Mr. Speaker, I have lived in Jamaica and I saw what happened to a society where people were not disciplined in their affairs. Sir, it is a hallmark of the management of this Government that we are running this country without new commercial foreign debt, neither are we writing any new loans with the Inter-American Development Bank or Caribbean Development Bank, for the first time in our history.

Sir, I was told that the situation now, with our having \$1.9 billion in reserves, is worse than it was when the country had \$11 million and with only \$11 million, the then Government increased Ministers salaries by \$2.1 million. We are increasing Ministers salaries by \$260 000. And those are the relativities. Sir, could anybody compare today with the 1990s, when unemployment was at 27 per cent? Could anybody judiciously raise that as a serious issue?

Mr. Speaker, in the early 1990s, the Democratic Labour Party was cutting taxes, while we are now cutting taxes. Every year for the last two years and until 2007, every year the amount paid as income tax by the ordinary Barbadian will decrease. Sir, 7 000 people were taken off the tax roll this year.
12.10 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, we are following through on the commitment built into the law that by 2006, the first \$25 000 of income of all Barbadians would be free of tax. We have already in this term, when the Government is

supposed to be wreaking such hardship on poor people, removed the first \$125 000 in property value from the payment of land tax as well.

Mr. Speaker, if you do an economic analysis of the history of the economy of Barbados, there has been no period in the history of the country where there has been such consolidated tax relief, both on the income tax side and the property tax side, yet we hear these spurious arguments from the Leader of the Opposition that the situation today is worse than the situation in 1991.

Mr. Speaker, I say this for the benefit of all the Members of the House, the economic circumstances that face this country now, the challenges and the context within which our development is taking place now is remarkably different from that which obtained ten years ago. The world in which we live will not allow countries like Barbados to have easy options for their development. Sir, despite the more challenging circumstances the economy is growing. We have cut employment down to double digits level, built reserves to more than three times what we need for the purposes of safety and despite the circumstances we are carrying through and will sustain the changes in our tax system to make life and conditions better for the working man and woman.

Mr. Speaker, in all that we are also improving the conditions for social development in this country. Even as things are supposed to be tight, we have introduced new proposals to bring the boys from 'the block' into the mainstream of social and economic life through Project OASIS. We are starting, what for me, is the most impactful social programme giving our children at preschool age the opportunity to have access to education to get an early start in life. Sir, this Government is not losing confidence in its ability to find its way forward.

Mr. Speaker, I deprecate the argument that the conditions under which we are making this adjust through a job evaluation exercise are worse than those which obtained in 1991. I also make the point that Minister's component of the wage adjustment is \$260 000 and that in the context of this economy, it is not unreasonable as an amount in itself nor unreasonable in the context of the relativity which we are seeking to maintenance.

Mr. Speaker, I go further and say that we are making a tremendous investment as well in the stability of the country. It has to count for something that the level of crime in Barbados has fallen to its lowest level in 16 years and that it is 15 per cent lower than it has been last year. Sir, these things must count for something. There are other Caribbean countries where the spectre of crime and violence is so real that it could be a legitimate political issue in the way in which it was never in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, all across the economic and social landscape of this country, despite the trials we have to face, there is a national development programme in place based upon discipline, clear focus and a clear perspective as to how we develop this country to carry Barbados forward in every economic, social, cultural and political context. Therefore, the question as to whether the time is right is not even a rhetorical question. It is not even an exercise in sophistry but an exercise in nonsense. If we keep pushing back this or that, you not only risk the ire of the unions but when it has to be done, the magnitude of the change would be enormous.

Mr. Speaker, there have been a few issues raised relative to the position of the judiciary which I need to speak to without going into too much detail. Sir, in 1998, on the eve of the job evaluation exercise itself, members of the judiciary were granted a substantial adjustment in their terms and conditions. One of the adjustments in their terms and conditions was the provision for the first time of a judicial allowance to members of the Bench. This judicial allowance was non-taxable and pensionable. It was in the nature of what I would call privilege income because for every \$10 000 you got, it was as if your gross income was \$14 000 because if that income were taxable, it would be subject to tax at 40 per cent. Sir, in addition to the non-taxable pensionable judicial allowance, there were substantial changes to the terms and conditions made to the judiciary such as to substantially improve the conditions under which they functioned.

Mr. Speaker, issues have been raised in the media relative to the status of the judiciary in relation to the job evaluation exercise. May I refer to page 21 of the job evaluation exercise itself? Sir, it says that during the job evaluation exercise, MNX International Consultants and Staff and the Ministry of Civil Service were invited to a meeting with the judicial personnel. Concerns were raised by the Chief Justice and his colleagues that jobs within the judiciary be administered separately from the other jobs in the civil service.

Sir, the judiciary asked when they met that their jobs should be assessed and administered separately from those within the rest of the civil service because as only magistrate posts were included in the study, consideration should be given to commissioning a separate study to review the current circumstances and to research best practices from other jurisdictions for compensation, management and salary administration for the judiciary.

Sir, the Report said that the judges asked for their circumstances to be separated from the rest of the public service. They are recommending that a study be done to review their current circumstances and to research the best practices from other jurisdiction for compensation, management and salary administration of the Bench.

Mr. Speaker, you cannot have it both ways. You cannot want to say that your salary should be linked to external circumstances but also at the same time want them to be linked to the rest of the civil service. If you want to have a study to evaluate the best international practices to which to link the judiciary, at the same time you cannot ask for the salaries of the judges to be linked to those in the rest of the civil service.

Mr. Speaker, there is an additional point that the change in the condition of judges have largely been in the nature of improved perquisites. Sir, they got a judicial allowance, they got access to cars, written down after three years and so on. Sir, in my judgement, you cannot both ask to take an improved package in the terms of improved perquisites and also want to get an improved package based upon and increase in salary as well.

Mr. Speaker, there has to be a specific study to deal with the matter and to make a judgement as to whether you are going to link the basic salaries of judges to the basic salaries with the public service of Barbados. Sir, the advice to the consultants was that it should be delinked so they made no effort to delink it. Sir, the other issue is, should the benefits for the Bench in future continue to take the form of increased perquisites or should take the form of increase in the basic salary?

12.20 p.m.

Sir, this is to be the subject of a study. Even as I speak, proposals have been put on behalf of the Chief Justice for improved conditions for the judiciary. There are not linked to this job evaluation exercise, not of any malice, but because of the specific recommendations from the consultants who conducted a study to determine best practices on procedure.

Mr. Speaker, the Government will have that study done to settle this matter but in the interval, I think that it would be unfortunate to cast insinuations continuously that the Government is out to do some injustice to hurt the judges of Barbados. May I also make the point that the judges were the beneficiaries of a regrading, immediately before the job evaluation exercise that must surely count for something and has to be taken into account in determining future increments.

Sir, I would want, if the anxiety is on the part of the judiciary, to indicate that this Government is not out to savage any section of the Barbadian society. It is doing good for the people of Barbados and it wants to find the best way of establishing relativities but the judiciary cannot have it both ways. Sir, you cannot say that your relativities should be external and then ask to be linked to the internal rates within the public service of Barbados. You cannot have it both ways. Therefore, you have to decide on which basis to engage the Government and we will be engaged.

Sir, as I said, the essential political issue in this matter is the reasonableness of what the Government is doing. We have accepted a job evaluation exercise that is more comprehensive than that ever carried out by any other Government of this country. It is a job evaluation exercise that has solicited the support of every union and stakeholder. It is a job evaluation exercise that will substantially improve the conditions particularly of teachers, nurses, other providers of social services and professional groups who have been the victims of misplaced job evaluation exercises of the past.

Sir, the exercise that we are asking this Honourable House to embrace is fair and reasonable for the public service. The adjustment that we would like the House to approve, for the political class, is based upon an application of a principle and rule that has been in place for twenty-five years and has been the principle and rule followed in granting every wage increase since 1978. The Government is not presenting a new way of trying to pay Members of Cabinet and members of the political class in general. We are maintaining the same link between our salaries and those of the Public Officers of Barbados.

I say to this Honourable House that when it was suggested the link should have been broken, I opposed the breaking of the link. I come to this House today mainly to ask that the link be continued and an objective basis for paying Ministers and Parliamentarians be maintained. I say to this House that the conditions facing the country, under which this job evaluation exercise is going to be implemented, will do no harm to the Barbados economy. I also say that the specific provisions of the social contract of Barbados recognise that a job evaluation exercise leading to changes in salaries for some can be implemented even within a policy of wage restraint, that is enshrined in the Protocols that the Government, private sector and the unions have signed. Therefore, the argument that it is inconsistent with a call for wage restraint is contrary to the facts.

Sir, I also say that the Government is going to be unpopular. It is unavoidable when decisions are to be made. I feel that we are doing the right thing, but we too can follow the path of ignoble ease by saying, look, we do not want to be unpopular, do not do it. All you would succeed in doing is compressing the relationship between the top and the bottom but at some stage the matter will have to be reopened.

Mr. Speaker, in 1994, when Henry Forde, now Sir Henry Forde, spoke, he said that the position of the Barbados Labour Party, has always been to link the two. We know from a Democratic Labour Party Cabinet Paper of 1991, that the position of the Democratic Labour Party is that the two should also be linked. What now can be different other than those who want to engage in opportunistic politics?

Sir, I want to close this way. The records will show that in 1991, I did not join the debate. I do not like these issues and nobody can like them. I feel awkward as part of an exercise, which appears to benefit to me. I have to feel awkward because nobody wants to be in a position where you appear to be the beneficiary of a policy that you have to supervise.

Mr. Speaker, I think I can speak on behalf of everyone who has ever held this Office. A Prime Minister of Barbados knows what it is to work as a Minister and a Prime Minister together. Sir, every day there are eight persons who work at the level of Permanent Secretary reporting to me. During the period January to March, as Minister of Finance, I review every budget of every Government department both financial and programme budgets. There are some days, when I am Minister of Economic Affairs, as Minister of Economic Affairs, I have to be Minister responsible for Town and Country Planning. There are some days when I have to do forty site visits and like a judge read forty judgements.

Mr. Speaker, I really do not know what a Prime Minister is really worth, but I do know that a Prime Minister's task, in Barbados, cannot be compared easily to most Caribbean jurisdictions, where Prime Ministers only retain the portfolio of the Prime Minister. We have a practice in the Cabinet Government of this country where, unlike other jurisdictions, most Cabinet Members do not have Parliamentary Secretaries or Ministers of State; only in instances where there is an overwhelming portfolio, The Minister of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, have a Minister of State. Sir, in many other Caribbean jurisdictions you have Minister, Ministers of State, Junior Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries.

Mr. Speaker, this country is unique among countries where there is no form of Local Government. I really cannot tell you what Ministers who have to perform these functions are worth. I really cannot. However, I can say one thing. This country has an unforgiving history. The first Cabinet of Barbados had persons in it who had to live out their years in conditions of genteel poverty. You would see photographs of those persons who helped to establish civilised Government in this country, then they went home. People have a way of laughing at people's poverty. They would like to know that politicians suffer and when a former Minister is caught shoplifting because he cannot help himself, we feel that should be his lot.

Sir, we have had good Government in Barbados since Independence. There are few people in Barbados politics who have gotten rich from politics, they have not. I do not believe that people in politics have been corrupt either. I do not believe that there is anybody in this Honourable House that is living on corrupt means. I do not believe that anybody

on the Other Side is corrupt. Sir, we have given this country a Government such that Barbados today is the world's leading developing country and it must count for something, it must.

Sir, I do not believe that anybody in this Honourable House would get rich from politics either. I say that for Both Sides of the House; he will not. There are people in here who know what it is to have their personal circumstances reduced.

Asides.
12.30 p.m.

Rt. Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, the point I am making is that I do not expect the Government is going to be popular because of what we are doing but what we are doing is reasonable and it is based upon the application of rules that have been in place for 25 years. We are setting no new rules.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make this simple point that for all of us in here on This Side – and I speak for all Honourable Members on My Side – there are people in here who could be doing better elsewhere but they have come to serve. They understand that part of the service they are expected to perform is that what they earn must be linked to what those next to them are earning and that is essentially what this debate is about, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, I am therefore in that mood, pleased to be associated with this Resolution before the House. I am asking that the House unreservedly support it because we are doing the reasonable thing at the right time and that, Sir, in the final analysis must be the principle by which a Government's acts are judged and I beg that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: I beg to second that, Sir.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House be now suspended until 1.35 p.m. today, when the lead spokesman on behalf of the Opposition will reply, whoever that person may be, Sir.

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

The question that the House be now suspended until 1.35 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the House accordingly.
12.32 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Miss M. A. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, at this stage I beg to move that further consideration of this Bill be postponed. I therefore beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, July 26, 2005 at 10.00 a.m. in the

morning at which point we expect to hear the lead spokesman on behalf of the Opposition.

Hon. Dame Billie MILLER: I beg to second that.

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, July 26, 2005 was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
1.43 p.m.