
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1976 – 81

THE SENATE

Wednesday, 17th December, 1980.

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Public Buildings, on Wednesday the 17th December, 1980, at 2.50 p.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator the Honourable Sir ARNOTT CATO, M.B., Ch.B., LL.D., (President); His Honour Senator the Rev. G. ANDREW HATCH, M.A., (Deputy President); Senator the Hon. N. A. BARROW, B.A., LL.B., (Minister of Information) (Leader of the Senate); Senator O'BRIEN TROTMAN, (Parliamentary Secretary, Prime Minister's Office); Senator Sir MENCEA COX; Senator H. F. G. ROCHEFORD, B.A.; Senator R. L. FIELD; Senator AARON TRUSS; Senator H. R. LINTON, LL.B.; Senator K. E. HINDS; Senator Miss O. A. LYNCH, B.A., Dip. Ed.; Senator K. R. HEWITT, B.Com., C.A.; Senator Mrs. E. M. LYNCH, B.A.; Senator J. D. S. MACKENZIE; Senator D. H. G. HUNTE; Senator J. A. CONNELL, LL.B.; Senator the Hon. D. G. BLACKMAN, (Minister of Labour and Community Services) and Senator R. E. BRATHWAITE.

Prayers were read by Dr. L. Crawford.

ABSENT

Senators C. DEANE, WICKHAM and Miss M. BLACKMAN.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. N. A. BARROW: Mr. President, I have the honour to lay the following papers:—

Statements showing Net Customs and Excise Receipts for seven months ended 31st October, 1980.

The Defence (Rate of Pay) Regulations, 1980.

Report on the Audit of the Accounts of the National Insurance Fund for the year ended 31st December, 1979.

Third Actuarial Review of the National Insurance and Social Security Scheme.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. N. A. BARROW: Mr. President, I beg leave to give notice of the following and ask that the two Bills involved be read a first time.

A Bill to amend the Barbados Development Bank Act, Cap. 323.

A Bill to amend the Representation of the People Act, Cap. 12.

Item No. 3 is a Resolution which has already been given notice of.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Let it be recorded in the Minutes that these Bills have been read a first time.

SENATOR THE HON. N. A. BARROW: Mr. President, it is our intention, and we have sought to get some response from other hon. members on the point, that we proceed this afternoon with these measures. The only one which caused any reluctance indeed in our getting agreement was the amendment to the Representation of the People Act. Fortunately, Sir, members seem to think that it would be better to deal with it this afternoon than to have to come back next week a day or two before Christmas, and then seek to find the time to have another meeting to deal with the matter. The urgency of it is that until legislation is passed the new register may not be published, and a register must be published in January.

Consequently it is a very urgent matter, and for the purpose of this afternoon's sitting, I beg to move that Standing Order No. 45(2) be suspended.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

THE DEVELOPMENT BANK (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1980

The First order of the day was called — to move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Development Bank Act, Cap. 323.

SENATOR THE HON. N. A. BARROW: Mr. President, I should, while I was on my feet last, have indicated that Senator the Hon. D. G. Blackman will be taking care of Items 1 and 3, that is both matters relating to the Barbados Development Bank, and that after these two have been dealt with then I shall take charge of the item relating to the amendment to the Representation of the People Act.

SENATOR THE HON. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. President, this measure before the Senate seeks to amend the Barbados Development Bank Act, Cap. 323 for a tripartite purpose. Firstly it attempts to include in the Act a provision for binding officers of the Bank to secrecy. The nature of the operations of the Barbados Development Bank is such that officers acquire a mass of information relating to the private affairs of individuals, companies and other businesses which, if divulged to unauthorised persons, could lead to embarrassment and even injury.

Mr. President, we are aware of the compulsion of a large segment of this community to talk, and it is claimed that it is only possible to keep secrets if you have the information locked up in your head. It would be a sad day if Barbados became a society of Monads because people fear to communicate with each other. This kind of Leibnitzian society of entities locked up in themselves unable to communicate to other objects is a most undesirable state of affairs, and this is where we would be heading for if people continue to use their tongues in an uncontrolled or uncontrollable fashion.

This amendment here is routine in so far as the work of financial institutions is concerned, and we would normally expect the officers of such an institution where people are requesting loans and of necessity have to lay bare the financial position of their businesses, that their business be not, to use a cliché, put on the streets. From the political platforms of this country some speakers have been laying claim to knowledge which could be privy to officers in certain banks of this country, and this type of unwelcome publicity has caused many a person

much distress. So one can see the importance of having a provision such as this.

Indeed, Mr. President, I have heard a member of the public boast that he can call up anyone at the Barbados Development Bank and find out whatever is going on, whoever is applying for loans and the state of their affairs, and you will agree, Mr. President, that this is a highly undesirable state of affairs. So inherent in this provision is also the more fundamental principle of a right to privacy.

The second objective that this provision seeks to achieve is to increase the authorised capital of the Bank from \$10 million to \$25 million. I am sorry, Mr. President, from \$10 million to \$30 million. I do not propose to go into any convoluted explanation of this. It is well known that lending institutions such as the Barbados Development Bank which gets its funds either from the Government or multi-lateral financial institutions need to expand its authorised capital base periodically in order to ensure that more money is made available to its clients.

Since it is the policy of this Government to ensure that as many small entrepreneurs as possible avail themselves of the services of the Bank, this provision seeks to ensure that that objective is accomplished. This provision also stems from a binding agreement entered into between the World Bank and the Government of Barbados for the Industrial Development Export Promotion Project Loan which will be made through the Barbados Development Bank, and one of the conditions written into that Agreement is that the authorised share capital of the Barbados Development Bank be expanded.

A third objective of this provision, Mr. President, is to increase the number of members serving as Directors of the Barbados Development Bank. I am sorry, the increase relates to the number of persons who would form a quorum of Boards of Directors. A short time ago we increased the number of Directors from five to ten and this is a consequential provision on that decision which was taken by the Legislature.

Those then are the three objectives that this amendment seeks to accomplish and, Mr. President, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

SENATOR J. D. S. MacKENZIE: Mr. President, I rise not because I object to what the Bill is trying to do. In the first instance, it says here the Bill will bind the officers of the Bank to secrecy under the Secrecy Act and I would like to ask of the person who introduced the Bill, for an explanation as to why this is necessary to be done.

The BDB operates in a very similar manner as all other commercial banks. The officers of all commercial

banks also acquire information concerning individuals and companies in the same manner that officers of the Barbados Development Bank would do, but they have been sworn to secrecy within their organisations only and they do not have any legislation covering them as this Bill is seeking to do by covering a similar group of people in the B.D.B. I was wondering why it was thought necessary that this should be done.

Now, one of the things that I understand, and again this is a point of concern for me; in a commercial bank if information is leaked and it is found out, the management of that bank deals with the offending person accordingly, even to dismiss if they have gone against whatever contract they have signed with the bank, but with regard to the B.D.B. I understand that the appointments to the staff as well as to disciplinary action that may have to be taken against individual staff, requires ministerial approval if the individual involved earns — at first it used to be \$12,000 a year — and in August of this year I think it has been increased to something like \$25,000 a year. What worries me, is why is it that the function of disciplining employees at any level should be removed from the people who have been appointed to the management of the Bank. In what is to all intents and purposes a Commercial Bank. Why is it that we need to have legislation to cover secrecy? It does not seem right to me, it seems that ministerial approval and all of the consequential political patronage angles are going to be tied into this for ever, and I do not like it from that point of view that I do not see why the Minister requires to give his approval for dismissal of someone in the Bank when you have got a Board of Directors and you have a management. That concerns me somewhat.

The other thing I would like to ask, and I ask because I am unfamiliar with the particular aspect of it, and that is, it says in the Bill that "every person who communicates or allows to be communicated to a person not legally entitled to any information," and so on. This statement would have to be tied in with the Government's Secrecy Act, as the people who would not be entitled to such information would have to be defined, as well as those who would be entitled to information would also have to be defined in the particular document that all officers would be asked to sign. Again for my information I was wondering whether or not the Minister could elaborate a little bit on who outside the Bank confidential information could be communicated to? I was wondering specifically, if members of both Houses of Parliament would have the right to confidential information concerning the operation of the Bank. In general who would or would not be able to have this type of information if anyone?

It is for my general knowledge that I ask these questions, Sir.

SENATOR J. A. CONNELL: Mr. President, although this is in size a relatively small bit of legislation, it raises an important issue or concept in so far as the secrecy or privacy of certain banking transactions is concerned. There are basically two ways of looking at the legislation. One can look at it as legislation which is swearing employees of the Bank to secrecy, one can also look at it as legislation which extends the right of privacy to certain persons in the community. In a sense the Act does both, and in coming to a judgment as to whether or not the Act constitutes a good piece of legislation, one probably has to balance the two interests.

Which interest is paramount, the interest of the staff being free to pass on information that they could only have come by in the course of their employment or the interest of members of the public having their private business kept private.

We who live in the tradition of the English Common Law are not accustomed to the rights of privacy as such. This is a comparative stranger to the various concepts involved by the common law. However, I am persuaded that in this part of the 20th Century with its newspapers and television sets in every home and a very atavistic tendency to gossip in these communities that a good case can be made out for protecting the privacy of persons who deal with Banks.

Senator MacKenzie made a point that the private banking institutions are not protected by any particular legislation. The question should be asked and indeed I ask it now, whether prior to this legislation the private banks were consulted to see whether they wanted to have similar provisions extended to them. The reality is that today it is possible to contact certain banks in Barbados and to obtain information about the banking transaction of other persons with comparative facility. Although it can be convenient to the person seeking this information not to have to go to the bank and identify themselves but to acquire it over the telephone, yet it is a practice that is productive of some embarrassment and inconvenience to persons about whose business transaction information is obtained without their knowledge or consent.

In a word then this piece of legislation on this point breaks new and interesting ground and it will be interesting to see how it will operate in practice. I am inclined to think that it fills a need in this community. I think also that on the question of Government Institutions that the point can be made that sociologically in this country persons tend to have a rather different attitude to Government enterprises that the ones they bring to some private institutions. There is a tendency sometimes to feel and to behave in a manner that just because it is Government it belongs to all of us and

therefore we can do as we please with it. It may well be that this tendency has resulted in a relaxation of standards in the banking circles of Government below that which still obtains in private banking circles.

The point raised by Senator MacKenzie on Information being given to members of Parliament is a very important one. I think that some distinction should be made between non-Parliamentarians and Parliamentarians in this respect. It is not going to be an easy distinction to make but it may be that in the pursuit of his or her Parliamentary obligations someone may need to have this information presumably for the debate. The answer may be given that the information can be obtained by way of a Parliamentary Question but although that may sound good in theory it may not in fact be so in practice.

Sometimes one needs information to debate a particular issue but having said that I also see a problem in this that if the object of the legislation is to protect private transactions of persons from becoming public knowledge then as soon as they are divulged to a Parliamentarian for the purpose of a debate, they will automatically become public. I see some area of difficulty here and perhaps the legislation could have envisaged it and deal with it.

Parliament is an Institution which has responsibility for a general overview of the entire economy of society. It is implicit in its responsibility that Parliamentarians should have access to information. One Minister of one Government can give an undertaking that if Parliamentarians are seeking the information and if they gave an undertaking not to divulge the information unnecessarily that it would be given but another Minister under another Administration may not do that. It is therefore good to have these procedures well and clearly established so that all can understand.

Subject therefore, Sir, to what I have said about the rights of Parliamentarians to get information on areas of the Government Administration in which they are interested I think that I support this piece of legislation. I think that it fills a social gap in the community and I shall watch with interest how it would work in practice in the community and indeed whether the time might not come when private institutions would not ask to have the legislation extended to him.

SENATOR J. MACKENZIE: Mr. President, if I may make an explanation to avoid confusion with ensuring discussions. I did not intend that Parliamentarians would obtain confidential information on individual people or Companies. That is not what my intention was. My intention was whether or not they could obtain information on the framework of the Bank itself, information

concerning the overall operation of the Bank or whether such information would be outside of the scope of what Parliamentarian could reasonably have, not what Mr. Jones or Mr. Smith's transactions were or anything like that.

SENATOR K. HEWITT: Sir, just a few brief points really in following on from comments made by the two previous Senators. With regard to whether the section dealing with secrecy is breaking new ground or not, I am not too sure.

My memory seems to tell me that there is similar provision in the Barbados National Bank Act and perhaps the Central Bank Act and also the Offshore Banking Act where officers are required by the legislation to maintain things they happen upon in the course of their work, to maintain such things in confidence and should they breach that confidence then there are penalties so I am not really sure that we are breaking new ground here *per se*.

I myself do not find too much trouble with it. The idea of people who are privy to the private details of individuals or companies maintaining such things in confidence is part and parcel of the every day business framework that many of us work, whether they may be attorneys, accountants, whether they be banks and so on, so the stipulation or the expectation that members of a bank like the Barbados Development Bank should maintain these things in confidence seems to me to be a pretty natural expectation.

With regard to divulging information, I think Senator MacKenzie's explanations seem to have made the point that one obviously must distinguish between information of a general nature and information of a personal nature, and whereas parliamentarians certainly would be interested in perhaps the total portfolio or the allocations or the loans made to industry as opposed to tourism and that type of information, certainly giving information of a specific nature pertaining to a specific individual's or company's affairs could not be condoned, and what really I am saying is that I think the Bank from time to time would be in its place in giving out information whether to parliamentarians or others of a general nature, information which would help to indicate the emphasis or relative emphasis that would help to indicate employment generation, foreign exchange earnings and that type of thing, rather than whether Mr. X borrowed \$20,000 or whether Mr. Y is in arrears six months or what not. So in summary I really do not find much difficulty in accepting the principle that officers in an institution such as this should be bound somewhat to secrecy. Whether that secrecy which is binding them happens to be through an Act or through the policy or some internal policy of the Bank itself is neither here nor there to me.

Secondly, the idea that the Bank or officers of the Bank should be free to give out information of a general character again seems to be something that one would expect of an institution of this type.

Lastly and more or less to repeat myself, I am not so sure that the section is new in nature in that I think there are three or four other Acts perhaps with similar type sections.

SENATOR THE HON. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. President, I entirely agree with the last Senator who sat down which is something rare, but I believe he has answered in a masterful and calm way some of the questions which have been raised. I do not believe that the proposals contained herein are nothing new at all. There is and has been on the Statute Books of Barbados ever since there was a lawfully constituted Governmental authority in this Island an Official Secrets Act, and the Official Secrets Act binds all civil servants to a measure of confidentiality. It would therefore be inconsistent and inappropriate if statutory bodies which operated from public monies and for which there was ministerial accountability could operate in a loose and arbitrary manner in this area as certain other commercial institutions do. The policy of the Government of Barbados is in the direction of easing the rigidities imposed upon the public service with respect to secrecy through the Official Secrets Act, and shortly coming before the Legislature will be a Freedom of Information Bill which seeks to organise the way in which information which at the present time cannot be divulged to the members of the public can be made available to all persons who are interested. So the philosophy of the Government in so far as access to public information is concerned is towards easing the present situation that the current legislation imposes.

What we are attempting to do is to bring the Barbados Development Bank in line with the Barbados National Bank and other financial institutions that Senator Hewitt referred to in order to create a situation where people's rights are not trampled upon. It is necessary in passing to say that employees of statutory bodies in so far as it is possible are treated like members of the established civil service. There is every effort made to eliminate all of the existing anomalies relating to personnel practices in statutory boards and to bring them on par with the established civil service wherever this is relevant, and therefore when officers are going to be disciplined, one would not expect that the Manager of the Barbados Development Bank could exercise a freedom and abandon in dismissing an errant officer as the Manager of a commercial bank. Wherever organisations exist that are financed by public money, it is expected that written rules and regulations will be made in order that the rights of employees can be unequivocally and unambiguously known.

I do not think that it would be possible for the Manager of any statutory corporation to dismiss an officer for breach of secrecy unless it were enshrined in legislation. Therefore this from that stand point imposes an additional responsibility on an officer within the Barbados Development Bank, but simultaneously it is a mechanism for protection because it is a rule which is unambiguously plain to him.

On the question of who is an authorised person, we would have to a large extent to be guided in this matter by practice and commonsense. Obviously a person who has no connection whatsoever with the bank and who has no responsibility as a member of the Cabinet can be deemed to be an unauthorised person. I believe that the public at the present time does have access to information of a specific nature relating to the bank.....

Barbados Development Bank reports are published. The information contained therein is not esoteric, it is not only for the eyes of members of Parliament, any interested member of the public can get a copy of the Barbados Development Bank Annual Report.

I think that Senator Connell answered the question as to how matters relating to divulging of information is normally made to parliamentarians, through the time honoured practice of a Parliamentary Question. I also take his point that sometimes the response comes in a long and tortuous way and may by that time blunt the utility of the information to the questioner, but in the absence of a comprehensive bit of law relating to how access is to be granted to information that is contained in any part of the public bureaucracy, this seems to be the best way, although it has its flaws.

Senator MacKenzie made another point relating to ministerial approval of positions where the category of work carries with it a salary in excess of \$25,000. Mr. President, I am not altogether sure of the relevance of this point to the legislation before us, but in as much as it has been broached at all, I would like to point out that that limit does not apply to every Statutory Body and that the law as it stands empowers a Minister to determine what salary level he will insist on giving prior approval to before someone can be appointed to such a job. That is the general situation. Under the National Training Board it is \$12,000. That is the limit, and given the kind of obstruction that is taking place there I am likely to remove the limit altogether. If people cannot exercise their responsibilities in a way without importing irresponsible politics in it, and even attempting political blackmail, it will be removed altogether.

The fact of the matter is this, and I do not make any apologies for it, and I will not be put on the defensive in this matter when people talk about political inter-

ference, because there can be no interference with any body for which you have ultimate responsibility and for which you have to answer to the Cabinet and to Parliament. No Minister can interfere in anything for which he has to carry the can in the final analysis, and in so far as appointments are concerned, the proviso that Ministers gave their prior approval to certain jobs is one that was carefully thought out, because it is recognised that there is no easy demarcation between purely personnel matters and policy matters.

There are many cases where the recruitment of persons is inextricably interwoven with matters relating to policy, and a wrong person in a particular position, a person who is not sensitive to the philosophy and policy of the Government can nullify the best conceived policies. I believe it is a practical law and I categorically reject any suggestions about impropriety or ministerial interference. Ministerial interference, as far as I am concerned, is perceived as a nonsense term which is used in order to obscure the realities of the indissoluble link between personnel questions at a certain level. The Minister, acting as the representative of the Cabinet, is the prime mover of the policy with respect to a Statutory Board which is its chosen instrument, and if the Board through its personnel policies thwart the execution of that policy, then the Minister has a right, if he is worth his salt and if he is serious about seeing his policies executed, to intervene, and that is what that proviso "subject to the approval of the Minister" means, and it was within this context that legislators in their wisdom inserted this proviso in the law.

Mr. President, I believe that that is irrelevant, but it is a point that was made by Senator MacKenzie, and in case there are listeners who believe that it has any validity, it was necessary for me to respond to it in this way. Thank you, Sir.

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put to the Senate and agreed to.

On the motion of Senator the Hon. D. G. BLACKMAN, the Senate resolved itself into a Committee on the Bill, Senator A. HATCH in the Chair.

SENATOR K. E. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Bill be taken as read.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 4 inclusive were called and passed.

On motion of SENATOR THE HON. D. BLACKMAN, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of the Bill in Committee and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

SENATOR THE HON. D. BLACKMAN: I beg to report the Bill as having passed before the Committee without amendment, and I move that the Bill be read a third time forthwith.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SENATOR THE HON. D. BLACKMAN: I beg to move that the Bill do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GUARANTEE
OF A LOAN OF US \$7,750,000 FROM THE
INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT
BANK TO THE BARBADOS
DEVELOPMENT BANK**

The Third Order of the Day was called — To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the guarantee by the Minister of the repayment by the Barbados Development Bank of a principal sum equivalent to \$7,750,000 in the currency of the United States of America to the Inter-American Development Bank.

SENATOR THE HON. D. BLACKMAN: Mr. President, this Resolution seeks to confer authority on the Government to guarantee a loan of US\$7.7 million which will be made by the Inter-American Development Bank to the Barbados Development Bank. This sum of money includes three loans, one of which is for the sum of US\$750,000 and the purpose of this loan which is called the Emergency Credit Loan, will be for on lending to low income fishermen and farmers affected by Hurricane Allen.

The funds are to be used for the repair or replacement of fishing boats, fishing or farm equipment, fences, permanent crops, irrigation infrastructure, facilities and structures for agriculture, animal or fish production. They may also be used for working capital which is either imported or of domestic origin.

The total cost of the Emergency Credit Programme is estimated at US\$1.15 million. The \$750,000 which is the first part of the overall figure of US\$7.7 million will be a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank and the remaining US\$400,000 will be local counterpart funds provided here in Barbados.

The loan is to be repaid by the year 2015 when many of us would have passed into the great beyond and there is a 5-year grace period, the first payment not falling due until 1985. The interest rate is 2% and credit fee of undisbursed funds is half of one percent per annum. The Executive Agency, the Barbados National Bank, has to commit the funds to sub-borrowers within one year of signature of the loan contract and

actual disbursement of funds must be effected within two years of the signatory of the loan contract.

It may be of interest to state to the Senate Mr. President, what a low income farmer or a low income fisherman is. The income criteria used is US\$4,500, approximately Bds. \$9,000 which, given the medium income of wage earners in Barbados, would seem to suggest that fishermen and farmers are a relatively prosperous group of people. Co-operatives, enterprises and other organisations of more than one fisherman or agricultural producer may also be eligible if its members earn no more than US\$4,500 per year.

Loans will be of the order of US\$45,000 maximum with interest rates varying between 6% to 8% depending on the project.

The repayment period will be fifteen years following a three year grace period. The other two loans constitute what they call a third global loan received from IADB to the Barbados Development Bank for on-lending to the industrial and tourism sectors. Such loans will be used to finance the following: the establishment and/or expansion of new or existing industrial enterprises; the construction of new and expansion of existing tourist facilities including ancillaries; purchase of tourist ground and sea transportation equipment; purchase and installation of solar heating equipment to either complete units presently fuelled by conventional sources or for new equipment for industry.

Mr. President, this should satisfy the energy conscious Senators in this Chamber that when matters like these come before the conscience of Government, the question of energy is always present in the minds of decision makers as well as the eloquent pleas made in this Chamber and elsewhere for such considerations by responsible legislators.

Also these funds will be used partially to satisfy working capital needs of industrial enterprises. The total cost of the third global credit programme is estimated at the equivalent of US\$10.5 million. Of this amount US\$5 million will be advanced from the ordinary capital resources of IADB and US\$2 million will be advanced from the Venezuelan Investment Fund, and the remaining US\$3.3 million must come from local resources, that is, the resources of BDB. Both loans must be repaid by the year 2000 with repayments commencing six months after the date of final disbursement by the IADB. The interest rate is 8.25% and the credit fee on disbursement funds is 1¼% per annum which begins to accrue from the date of the signature of the contract. The BDB must commit the loan funds to sub-borrowers within three years and disburse them within four years from the date of signature of the contract with IADB.

This, Mr. President, is about as much detail as I in my judgment think it necessary to give to Honourable Senators in asking their support of this measure. I think that the programmes for which this money is earmarked to be used are laudable ones. No one would want to see a situation where persons who have had their boats or crops destroyed by an act of God — really I see Senator Hatch shaking his head at the use of this term "act of God" which is really a legal term and not a metaphysical expression.

Mr. President, it is said that the law is an ass; it was said in highly exalted circumstances, and I apologise if any words used may be considered unparliamentary by you, and that is why we have such curious expressions. The doctrine of the act of God flows from an era where superstitious people incapable of explaining natural phenomena by virtue of the paucity of their knowledge explained everything in terms of God. Indeed in other societies where the Omnipotent was described by other terms, whether Allah, Jehovah or Shango, we find the same attribution of unexplained natural phenomena to the Omnipotent. So I want to assure Senator Hatch that it is not a metaphysical expression on my part; it is just a legal term that I am using, and I had no intention whatsoever of indulging in acts of blasphemy in this Chamber.

But no one would want those persons whose businesses were hurt by hurricane Allen, this great natural force, not to be indemnified in some way for the losses which they sustained, and this emergency credit loan scheme I believe is a laudable one.

The other two loans go towards assistance with industrial expansion. For a long time I have believed that the impetus for industrial expansion ought to be generated from within. For a long time I have believed that while I would not exclude foreign capital from coming into Barbados for purposes of industrial and other development that in the last analysis the enrichment of our country and the increase of our wealth rested with more indigenous enterprise, and I believe that this aspect of the loan goes a long way towards moving in that direction and satisfying the demand for a balanced approach to industrial development which would enable Barbadian people to have a greater share of the industrial cake.

Mr. President, I commend therefore this measure to the Senate and beg to move that the Senate do now concur in this Resolution.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1980

SENATOR THE HON. N. A. BARROW: Mr. President, the legislation before us is comparably straightforward, and therefore my focus in introducing and moving the second reading of this Bill is going to be to dwell on the principal points raised in the legislation and to leave the implications of the report for discussion by those who find such matters more interesting.

In this legislation, Sir, let me start by making the point that section 41 of the Constitution of Barbados states quite unambiguously: "The House of Assembly shall consist of twenty-four members or such greater number of members as Parliament may prescribe." In other words, the Constitution makers on both sides at the time of the drawing of this document recognised the need to have a formula which would accommodate an increase in the number of seats in the elected Chamber when Parliament considered it was wise to have such an increase. No doubt, Sir, this reflected not only the hard-headed realities of the times and the recognition of course that the House of 22 had had at one point to be increased to 24, but also reflected the proposal voiced in or around 1955 by the present Leader of the Opposition that representation in the House of Assembly should be on the basis of one member per 3,000 voters.

What the Constitution does not reflect, but what was an argument keenly contested in the Independence Talks that finally gave rise to this Constitution, was the position held by the then Opposition, which is now the Government, that there should be an Electoral Boundaries Commission established within the four walls of the Constitution, and I think, Sir, it is a matter of common knowledge that the work on that legislation has now reached the stage where early in the new year it can be competently expected that there will be such legislation before Parliament.

The position, however, with the Constitution is of two points. It relates specifically to two points where this Bill is concerned. One is that, as I said before, the Constitution clearly envisages an increase in the number of seats, and the stated number of seats is therefore controlled by legislation, the specific legislation being the Representation of the People Act, and in there in its present form a limitation of 24 exists. That is where the limitation of 24 members of the House of Assembly exists, not in the Constitution. I just want to make that very clear.

The second point relating to the Constitution is that in the original design of the Constitution, section 43 permitted not only citizens of Barbados to become members of Parliament, but it also permitted Commonwealth citizens who had such connection with Barbados by

residence therein as may be prescribed by Parliament. And again it is in Cap. 12, the Representation of the People Act, that one finds the qualification set out. As I recall, Sir, it is section 4, which reads:

"The period of residence in Barbados which, for the purposes of section 43 of the Constitution, qualifies such a Commonwealth citizen (other than a citizen of Barbados) as is referred to in that section of the Constitution for election as a member of the House of Assembly is a period of residence of not less than seven years immediately preceding the date of his nomination for election."

Sir, in 1974 in the famous amendments to the Constitution the qualification for membership was restricted to citizens of Barbados of the age of 21 years or upwards. However, it then went on to keep the "and has such connection with Barbados by residence therein" which was something peculiar to the Commonwealth citizen, and you will find that nowhere in the legislation in this country is there any residence requirements, nowhere is there any such requirement for the citizen of Barbados. In other words, in 1966 the Constitution said two people would be eligible, two people would qualify to be members; the citizen of Barbados and the Commonwealth citizen who qualified by virtue of residence. When the Commonwealth citizen was taken out in the amendments of 1974, the cleaning up was not done, so there is that provision which remains there and puzzles everybody and sends people searching all over the place to find out what it means, and eventually you see that section 4 of the Representation of the People Act relates only to Commonwealth citizens, and therefore that what happened was that it was a very untidy bit of legal work.

Section 43(b) of the Constitution, I would wish to submit, Sir, really has no meaning, because the thing on which it hinges has been taken out. The Commonwealth citizen has been disqualified and one has to be a citizen of Barbados. Therefore the removal of section 4 by this Bill before us is really a tidying up operation to make the thing totally unambiguous.

Section 4, Sir, of Chapter 12 is the one I refer to which is a period of residence of 7 years required for commonwealth citizens who seek to be elected, a period of residence which can be of no meaning to Commonwealth citizens as Commonwealth citizens no longer qualify.

Sir, Section 48 of the principal Act is the Section which deals with the financial limitation of candidates seeking to be elected to the House of Assembly. As of now, Sir, no candidate is permitted legally to spend more than 50 cent per elector. The proposal in this legislation is to carry that limit to \$1.00 as a recognition of rising cost. As a matter of fact, when one considers where oil

prices have got to, it is quite clear and the employment of it that you will not be able to rent transport on election day for anything like what it used to cost in olden times and that, I believe, is going to increase the single most important factor justifying the increase in cost.

I believe it is true to say, Sir, that there are many people who face the starters and who when the limit was 50 cents per voter after all the shirts and what not, certainly even if they had a limit of \$1.00 or \$1.50 might not have found it possible actually to return their expenses. That is something which we want to save people from. I believe that the \$1.00 would represent a more reasonable amount and at the same time since the shirts would no longer be an expense people should be able to live a little more comfortable around, if not within, the \$1.00 limit.

I believe, Sir, that if I am listening carefully I might be able to hear somebody say the big spenders would burst it anyhow but the big spenders, in fact, should really watch it because the present law, I believe, makes it possible for the Chief Electoral Officer a little better to investigate returns and therefore to act with a little more resolution than was possible in the past.

The other aspect, Sir, of this legislation concerns the transitional arrangements. Let me explain, Sir, what the position is. You would normally expect to find the number of the seats stated in the Legislation and you would normally expect to find reference to the Register which has to be published for the purpose of an Election and listed in the legislation but in addition there is to be found a transitional provision.

What this means is this, Sir, when this Law is brought into force, the Chief Electoral Officer will be able to publish his Register in relation to 27 seats and publish it in the month of January as the Law requires. However, while the life of Parliament might not exceed five years, there is nothing to prevent the Prime Minister from calling an election at anytime within that 5-year period and if he were to call an election once this law is in force the election would be fought on the basis of 27 but there is another harsh and indeed practical reality and it is this. Until Parliament is dissolved, the provisions of the law must relate even if by way of a transitional provision to the 24 seat Assembly.

If, for example, there was for any good reason a vacancy in the Other Place and the Prime Minister in his wisdom sought to follow the example of his predecessor and in an election year have one or two by-elections, Sir, the law must make the provision that these by-elections may still be held within the context of the 24 seat

Assembly. That is why that transitional provision is in here.

It may be that some Hon. Senators do not believe that Section 7 is of great importance as they do not perhaps believe that it shows the best possible political judgment to have by-elections in an election year but at the same time we are not to know what decisions will be taken anymore than my colleagues across from me are in any position to know what decisions would have been taken in 1976; not once but twice.

That, Sir, is the effect of Section 7. In other words spelt out simply the things that this Act does are as follows:—

- seeks to provide for a House of Assembly of 27 persons;
- seeks to give a limit which is higher than that on which the last General Elections were fought, that is, instead of .50 cents a limit of \$1.00;
- it removes, Sir, from the Statute Book Section 4 of the Representation of the People Act which had long since ceased to have any meaning;
- it provides transitional arrangements, Sir, so that while the Register for the number of seats, assuming the legislation is passed, and therefore it is 27 seats, will be published in January. There is authority in the law for a Register on the basis of 24 seats to be published to facilitate any eventuality before the dissolution of Parliament.

Those, Sir, are the provisions.

Like many members I have not had the time to study the report of the Select Committee, and therefore my remarks in relation to the justification for 27 seats are remarks which will not draw very heavily on the report.

I wish to start by referring to the exercise which was done in 1964 when the effect of the Commission's determination was to reduce the level of representation in some areas and to increase it in others where the population shift had suggested it should be increase. There was at the time the argument put forward in a minority report by the then Speaker of the House to the effect that there should have been 30 seats, each parish and the City of Bridgetown should continue to keep two seats and then an additional six should be added in order to reflect population shifts. The majority view of the Commission was to reduce the representation to have the number of representatives in the northern parishes includ-

ing St. John, that is to say, St. Lucy, St. Peter, St. Andrew, St. James and St. Joseph, and as I said, St. John, and to take the seats which were yielded by these and distribute them between Christ Church and St. Michael. The City of Bridgetown also yielded one of its seats for this exercise. That was the basic format we have right up to now.

What happened in 1971 on the eve of the general election was a different matter. The Minister published his Order which had implications for certain seats. That Order, Sir, it has been maintained and I believe quite accurately, had the effect of prolonging the political career of Mr. Joy Edwards as indeed it had the effect of interrupting the career of the present Deputy Prime Minister. That Order may therefore be said to have been very effective in the annals of boundary adjustment, and it was done without notice to anybody, but it is not good to use terms like a thief in the night and things like that, but on the eve of election this thing was just slipped in there very nicely and you were out there voting and campaigning before you had the opportunity to recognise what the implications of it would be. It is therefore with some interest, Sir, that we listen to the comments coming from one particular individual, because it is an individual that I don't think can speak as though he had nothing to hide, because I believe that when a man who advocated one seat for 3,000 comes now and talks about unalterably opposed, one has now to stop and think of what he is saying, because the new proposal, when the 164 978 voters are divided by 27, you get something like 6 110 voters per constituency, and therefore it seems to me that in a sense it is logical for anybody who advocated one seat per 3 000 voters to be unalterably opposed to a 27 seat House in that this means it is one seat per 6 000 voters, and if the Leader of the Opposition is still staying with his own reasoning, it would mean that he is therefore advocating not a 27 seat legislature but a 54 seat legislature if he is being logical.

The fact of the matter is that we do not have to go to any flights of fancy, we do not have to seek to put reason into statements that on the face of them have no reason. We can ourselves look at a situation in which in 1976 no matter what the situation was in 1964 when a simple device was able to produce constituencies well above the 4 324 which was the national average that was being strived for. We can look at the situation and say, are we in 1980 looking at a distribution that says that constituencies are relatively equal, that the people involved in this kind of exercise whether in the United States or where have that as their prime concern, if they are looking at rural constituencies as opposed to urban constituencies, they will even find themselves coming up with a general kind of size for urban constituencies and a general kind of size for rural constituencies where geographical factors will make a difference.

In the 166 square miles of Barbados with excellent roads, any rural-urban argument is really to beg the question. There are no inaccessible parts of Barbados at least that I know of, and if we were able to find any such places, I do not know that you will find any more of them in the country, as we like to call it, than in the town. Sir, it is a fantastic situation where we deal with these rural-urban distinctions and withdraw to the country at the end of a work day to get up next morning and drive 20 to 25 minutes from the country to the heart of town. We must really stop fooling ourselves with all this country talk. There is an important difference between the aristocratic parishes of St. George and St. Thomas and the other parishes in that we do not need to have the sea touch us, but that is a completely different matter. I do not know if that justified calling us rural and calling the rest urban. That is another point at least where we can see the sea. Many of those who live in the parishes that are washed by the ocean cannot see it. We do not need to have the windows from up there.

Sir, in 1980 on the latest figures with a roll of approximately 165,000 voters, the constituency of St. Michael North West was found to have approximately 10.5 thousand voters. The constituency of St. Michael North East was found to have approximately 9.5 thousand voters. The constituency of St. Michael South East was found to have approximately 9.5 thousand voters. The constituency of St. James was found to have approximately 9.5 thousand voters. The constituency of St. Michael West was found to have approximately 8.5 thousand voters. The constituency of Christ Church North Central was found to have approximately 8,000 voters. We can take the next two on the list as being St. Peter with 7,037 and St. Thomas with 7,027, and go to Christ Church East and find almost 7,000, and St. John and find almost 7,000. It means, Sir, that if we go to the bottom and look at the voting population — I mean the smallest when I say the bottom — St. Joseph, less than 5,000 voters, and then it works its way up.

It seems, Sir, that there is very little argument one has to adduce to show that the people of St. Joseph were enjoying like two votes to every one exercised by people in St. Michael South East, St. Michael North East, St. James and St. Michael North West. In the nine seats for the St. Michael area some 62, I think it is, thousand voters — St. Michael North West, St. Michael North East, St. Michael South East, and St. Michael West — had some 38,000 of these voters. All around, Sir, there was this lack of equality, which meant that in any truly representative system the weight of the vote was simply not the same in too many cases. There are practical reasons, Sir, and I think even at a glance through the report you will see that the adviser to the Committee, the Chief Electoral Officer, took the view

that there should be some increase. The Constitution Review Commission took the view that there should be some increase; they used the figure 30, an increase of six. The proposals put forward by the Chief Electoral Officer for the benefit of the Select Committee were proposals for 24, 26, 27 and 28. The Select Committee comes up with a proposal for 27.

I believe that it is important that where we use formulae like a two-thirds majority that we have a number where possible divisible by three, and I think that once there was going to be an increase that there was some justification for having an increase whether of three, of six, of nine, that is a matter of detail but I believe, Sir, that the unit should be an increase in a number divisible by three. It reflects the weighting of our voting for purposes of entrenchment and de-entrenchment within the Constitution.

The proposals further take into consideration not only population shifts, but that communities, settled communities, should as far as possible exist within the same constituency. It is obvious, Sir, that there are cases where a community may be too large and it may not be possible for that entire community to be in one constituency, but as far as possible at the core of a constituency there is the sense of a community, so what the proposals reflect for example is that if you look at the old constituencies of St. Michael South Central and St. Michael North Central, what was the North Central is in the main the new constituency of St. Michael East. In each of those constituencies part of the Ivy and part of Carrington Village were to be found, and the way in which the constituency boundaries have been redrawn would locate all of the Ivy in one constituency, as indeed all of Carrington Village will be located in the other constituency. Settled, well established areas like the Fairfield – Belfield area of St. Michael would form the core of St. Michael West Central constituency. Cave Hill, when you talk about St. Michael North, though you will find one part of Green Hill, a part of Jackson – which has always been in – and Eden Lodge, essentially it is the Cave Hill constituency, so that what the new boundaries reflect really is that people who have common problems to which they would normally wish to go to the same legislator about will in fact be able to do this in a far more reasonable way and not to have all sorts of arrangements like three or four different constituencies being carved in such a way that they each include a piece of a particular district.

That is to be found, Sir, if one goes to the old Clapham Village, that the boundary again although it tends to make Christ Church West a little bit over the average, you will find that that boundary has been drawn to include the old Clapham Village rather than have that split up with part of it going into St. Michael South East or Christ Church North Central, and the other part going

into Christ Church West. All of Forde's Road, so that the whole approach of the Committee has been to try to keep these areas as one. Just like the area of Free Hill in Black Rock which is the core of the St. Michael North West constituency; Bush Hall is the core of the St. Michael North East Constituency, Bank Hall Cross Road is the core of the new North Central constituency which would have in both sides of Station Hill instead of one side of Station Hill being in the old days in the North East and the other piece being in the South East.

In other words, Sir, you can see a clear pattern wherever you look at the proposals for the new boundaries.

The constituency of St. James has been treated in a particular way and you will notice, Sir, that if you look at the figures the St. James constituencies are below the average. If I remember the figure down here for St. James South, it is something like 4,839 but the statistics of the National Housing Corporation would suggest that there are about 500 voters in the Haynesville area so that it is not in effect as small as it looks but there is something more, Sir.

This is not the only area that has been developing the fastest but in St. James South is where we will have the big West Terrace Development so that the population growth in that area still has to be considered and it would be my bet, Sir, that when West Terrace is developed, instead of Hoyte's Village being the dividing line between St. James North and South that Hall's Village could then become the dividing line and in that way something like between 500 and 600 voters would go from the South to the North and the couple of thousand voters that are coming into St. James South with the development of West Terrace would then bring both constituencies fully up to size so that although those two appear to be a little smaller there are in fact constituencies in which a great deal of the population growth is taking place and even as it is now there are people who would shortly be transferred who could not at the time be transferred when these figures were compiled.

The other thing, Sir, which it has sought to do is to stop using as far as possible these imaginary lines. In many cases, Sir, you will find that the parish boundary is a line which can be used quite reasonably but there are cases where it really is not so and in the constituency of Christ Church West, with boundaries both in St. Michael South East and St. Michael South, we have two classic cases. I believe, Sir, that the boundary line runs somewhere down Reservoir Road and then it is anybody's guess as to which house is in Christ Church and which is in St. Michael and until you were pretty sure that when they got down Gunsite and they went through Lady Challenor's house that that is where the line went and depending on which part of the house she was in one

hour of the day she was in Christ Church or she was in St. Michael and on Mount Clapham, I think, the property which the line went through was Lady Collymore's house. It sounds very prestigious but it does not help to make things very clear so the proposal which uses the Britton Hill Road as the boundary line, I believe, has a great deal to recommend it.

In many cases you will find that parish boundaries will be used in many instances but that is because those lines are clear but where the boundaries are not at all clear it is preferred to use roads, water courses and other boundaries of that sort.

On the point of the Villages you will find that part of Fisherman, the little piece which is in St. George, perhaps it is not a matter so much of importance but at the same time one would hope that the opportunity will be taken to tidy that up. The part of Fisherman in St. Thomas, a part in St. Joseph and a little piece in St. George, I think it was overlooked. I am fairly sure that that was not brought into this exercise, but that would again have to be looked at at sometime, that the opportunity will be taken to bring all of Fisherman into St. Joseph. That was a small one that needed building up and it is a whole village, therefore, moved over rather than having the parish boundary dividing people so that I am in this constituency and right next to me is a person who is in the next constituency.

In short, Sir, I believe that one might argue as to whether there should be an increase and how much the increase should be. I have absolutely no doubt in my mind that the fairest way at re-distribution was to have a small increase and I firmly hold the view that an increase of 27 is an increase of a desirable number.

I have already expressed in this Chamber that if we practice Parliamentary democracy, a Chamber that is too small that everybody or nearly everybody is an office holder, is a Chamber which cannot adequately and accurately have us recognise the full potential for the system of Government so that at any rate, Sir, I would have gone for an increase.

Secondly, Sir, every time that we discuss these matters somebody is bound to point out that it is costing money. Everything cost money. I believe that if you are not prepared to spend money on the education of the young people, the country can have no future and that same kind of reasoning leads me to the view that you must be prepared to spend money on Government if we want to talk about an effective system of Government and a Government that allows a country to realise its potential.

The figures can be easily got. I believe within the last 24 hours there was reference to the fact that you are

talking about \$1 million out of some \$500 million. We must not allow ourselves to be trapped into that frame of mind that says that if something costs money, you are not to do it. I believe, Sir, that we must follow the only sound course that I know and that is to recognise that where something is deemed to be important and what can be more important to us than to ensure that we get a system of Government which we consider to be in our best interest, that money has got to be spent. As long as it is important to us, we have to spend it. That is why I am not even hiding behind the easy reply that we are talking about 5 cents anyway and that we are hardly talking about any money.

It seems to me, Sir, that we are going to have, and I have voiced this view before, to address ourselves seriously to the question as to whether the system is workable even where we now add three members and go to 27. We must address our minds to the question whether as the demands of office become heavier and more elected members have to be involved in the actual Governmental process, that, in itself, does not mean we must examine carefully within that context what size Chamber we have and what size Chamber we need.

That seems to me to be a very serious question, but for the moment we are only inching our way there, and for the moment therefore we are talking about 27 seats. I do not know the rational ground on which the proposal for 27 seats is to be dismissed. I will go further and say that nothing I have read which has come forth from the mouths of those who oppose any increase at all has persuaded me that the advocates of that point of view are speaking with a sufficient sincerity, sincerity of the kind that usually makes an argument compelling. I find that indeed no argument is being advanced.

My quick glance through the report failed also to unearth either argument or any specific attempts to refute any of the proposals within this report. If I remember, Sir, one argument was, okay there is need to do something about it, but not now. That is an argument I understand very well, and let me say what I understand of this exercise would suggest that if the person who advanced that argument had any early fears, that he need have very little to fear in the final outcome. I think a lot of people would argue that he has benefited by the strengthening of his position according to those who know the areas, but that of course is neither here nor there. What possible argument can there be against an attempt to make the vote of a man in St. Michael equal to the vote of the man in St. James, equal to the vote of the man in St. Joseph? If on the professional advice of the Chief Electoral Officer the best approach would have involved some increase in the number of seats, then, Sir, it seems to me that it is going to take very strong argument indeed to remove me, to get me to budge from my view which is that an increase is entirely justifiable,

an increase of 27 is reasonable. For those who are guided solely by considerations of cost, it is an increase where the cost implications are modest, and because of the way in which the boundaries are redrawn, it means that there should be a better opportunity for adequate representation of the interests of the electorate.

If there are other points which I have not remembered to advert to, I should be able to pick them up a little later, but I believe, Sir, that what I have said is a reasonably accurate description of the situation before us now.

I move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. PRESIDENT: There seems to be some reluctance to proceed. Perhaps members would prefer a short suspension and then come back fresh.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. PRESIDENT: This sitting will be suspended for twenty minutes.

On Resumption:—

Mr. PRESIDENT: The sitting is resumed.

SENATOR J. A. CONNELL: May it please you, Sir, from time to time in any developed community certain issues will arise on which right thinking citizens should have a definite and decided point of view. I think that this issue is one such in the community in which we live.

There has for some time now in the life of the present administration been much conjecture about the increase of seats and of the expenditure that it would entail. Various views have been expressed pro and con on the issue, at some times when these views were expressed there was a paucity of information on the subject. At this point in time, Sir, I have had the benefit of studying the report of the Select Committee on Boundaries and Designation of Constituencies, and I believe that I should fulfil my function as a citizen in the community, but before going on to express my opinion on it, I wish to say this.

Earlier in this year I sounded a warning about certain ominous signs that were looming on the horizon of this nation. I believe I said in a debate that it is unfortunate that at a time when Barbados is moving into a general election that the international economic and political climate is such that irresponsible persons could do serious harm to the institutions of this country, taking advantage of the cover, so to speak, of the approaching elections. I think that we must all be very careful about this. It is the duty of the Government

to govern. In the famous words of that veteran politician, Norman Manley, it is the duty of the Opposition to oppose, to oppose, and to oppose again, but somewhere between these two traditional positions we should find time and place to consult the short term and long term interests of the people. We need to establish procedures in this country to avoid the possibility of partisan feeling running excessively high on matters of Government. This issue, Sir, is one such. Perhaps in this Chamber we are more able to give detached attention to issues that come before us than in another place, because perhaps we stand one removed from the hustings and the voting experience.

I would like to take this opportunity to repeat my caution that as we move into an election year that we will have to be very careful that entrenched partisan and emotional positions are not taken up which could result in serious damage being done not only to the country but to democratic institutions in Barbados. I must confess, Sir, that having had an opportunity to study this report, and to weigh all the facts, including the arguments about the expenditure, that I really cannot say that I am scandalised about a proposal to increase the membership of the House of Assembly by three seats. I really cannot say that, Sir. What I can and will say, that I regret that the Government was not able to implement the proposal on the Electoral and Boundaries Commission, and I call upon the Government expeditiously to establish this Commission, because subjects like parliamentary elections and salaries for parliamentarians are matters which will produce a great degree of heated argument, and in my submission some hypocrisy. There will be persons who will take a public stance on these issues, but then when it comes to the deed as distinct from the word, what is done is in direct contradiction at least to the spirit of what is said.

An Electoral and Boundaries Commission would take this important issue and related issues high above the dust and din of political controversy and place it where it ought to be, on an objective, detached but very important level. I say this, Sir, because I am well aware of the fact that in 1971 the Democratic Labour Party realigned boundaries, and I think that it would be very difficult for them to prove that they did that to their own political disadvantage. I have had the opportunity to campaign in the constituency of St. Michael South East, and I can attest to the fact that it was a sprawling constituency stretching from Clapham in St. Michael, across St. Michael up to Hothersal Turning, then going eastwards towards Charles Rowe Bridge to incorporate a tenantry up there, and it was a difficult constituency to campaign, and if recent history is any indication, it was also a very difficult constituency to represent. So that I think in relation to St. Michael South East as I knew it the case for realigning those boundaries was clear.

I have heard complaints among members of the Democratic Labour Party about the unwieldiness of the constituency of St. Michael North West, another large constituency which I think exacted more from the representative to cater to than constituencies of fewer numbers. In 1971 there were what may be called infelicities of realignment as well.

The Orange Hill exercise does not conform easily to electoral logic so that what I am saying is that once this question of the realignment of boundaries is left to political parties there are going to be shouts of foul coming from the other side and the case is made out for the establishment of a Boundaries Commission as soon as possible. Only then will it be raised above political controversy.

I have pondered the Report of the Commission appointed to review the Constitution and to consider a system of National Honours and a national table of precedence in regard to the observation on the composition of the House of Assembly. In paragraph 67 of that Report, Sir, it states:—

“Having regard to the growth in population on any form of local government which places more work and responsibility on Members of Parliament and the possibility of more nearly equalising the number of voters in each constituency; and, further, having regard to the fact that the number of seats in the House of Assembly was fixed at 24 in 1843 when the population of Barbados was approximately 122,000 and today the population stands at over 250,000, THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS that the membership should be increased, under section 41, from 24 to 30.”

On the whole, Sir, I regret the passing of Local Government. As an environmentalist and a person who has given some thought to what it means for people to determine and to order their man made environment, I think that it was unbalanced and a retrograde step to abolish Local Government entirely.

I also feel, however, that the abolition of local government has placed additional responsibility on the shoulders of those who are now Parliamentary representatives. Anybody, Sir, who has been exposed to this experience of representation of the people knows how onerous a task it is. Sir, there is no way in which I can leave my office at 8.45 a.m., at High Street and hope to reach the Supreme Court by 9 o'clock unless you drive. There is an aside saying unless he walks. What I am saying, Sir, is that one is bound to be stopped on the street by several persons, persons with problems, “Excuse me, Sir, I want to talk with you about this and you dare not tell them that you are in a hurry.

Sir, there is no way I can leave my office and come to the Senate without being stopped by several persons. Some of the requests they have to make are not of a national nature. There are local problems that they experience that they want to have solved and anybody who has been in politics and who is honest must admit that with the passing of local government the burden of representation has become more onerous and acute. There are certain issues in the final analysis when we must speak as Barbadians. There are issues on which we must play down the partisan impulse to score a short term point and look at what is in the longer interest of this country.

I am prepared to face any man or woman and argue these issues before the people of Barbados so that when it is said in this Report, paragraph 67, that the abolition of any form of local government places more work and responsibility on members of Parliament, that is clearly true. That is undeniable so that we get into the argument then, having admitted that there is more work for the Parliamentarian of how to reduce that volume of responsibility and work that now descends on the shoulder of the Parliamentarian as a result of the abolition of local government and both sides of the House, both sides of the Senate or representatives of both sides have spoken in favour of an increase of Parliamentary seats.

Mr. Cameron Tudor is on record in saying that he thinks that the number of Parliamentary seats should be increased. There is a point at which we have to begin to look at these issues objectively and consider what is in the long term interest of Barbadians. I think that that point has been reached on this matter of the increase of Parliamentary seats.

I also think that if it is admitted that an increase in the number of Parliamentary seats would conduce to more efficient representation of the people then the fact that it is going to cost \$1 million more cannot be an over-riding consideration leading us not to embrace the solution if it is otherwise a desirable one.

There is nothing to indicate that the people of Barbados have not been prepared to pay for proper and efficient Government. There is an undeniable duty on us to seek to reduce the public expenditure but one can be a penny wise and pound foolish as we say in the local vernacular. If it is indicated that an increase in the number of Parliamentary seats is desirable, and that it would conduce to better Parliamentary representation, then I think that in any case argued before the people logically and backed up by facts they will accept that it must result in a further increase in public expenditure.

If the number of seats were increased proportionately, if the expenditure that would be involved were

excessive, Sir, I would be the first to attack it but I find it difficult to say the truth that an increase of three seats can make that great deal of difference and some of the rhetoric that one is hearing in the country I must confess seems to give an entirely different impression.

In today's newspaper, the *Nation*, Mr. Cameron Tudor predicts that this realignment of boundaries will redound to the benefit of the Democratic Labour Party. I think so for reasons other than those assigned by Mr. Tudor.

But even if I accepted Mr. Tudor's argument, I find it difficult to see, perhaps I should have said difficult to hear, and certainly difficult to understand some of the heated rhetoric that one is hearing on this question, because on my analysis of the realignment they are predominantly favourable to the members of the Democratic Labour Party who are in the field; that is my analysis of it, and that being the case I find it difficult to follow some of the rhetoric that is being generated and presented recently.

Sir, you know there are times, when I look at this reorganisation, that I am sorely tempted. I must confess I cannot see the difficulty that persons are seeming to create over this question of realignment of boundaries. You are in the political game. The boundaries are redrawn for everybody, for both sides, and why do you presuppose that it is going to be more difficult for you to convince those people in the new boundaries to vote for you than to vote for the next man? I do not see any basis for pessimism in this respect. I certainly don't.

I think, Sir, that having regard to the recently published report that a strong case is made out for the increase of the three seats. There was a time, Sir, when there was talk that there were going to be thirty and even more than thirty, and if the increase were a disproportionate increase, one would see a reason to be apprehensive and to oppose it, but what difference can three seats make? And in terms of public expenditure, the reality of Government today is that it is an expensive but necessary enterprise in a civilised society, and the actual expenditure that three seats more will entail is really not going to be that significant as to be tantamount to a national issue.

In summary then, Sir, I say that it is necessary for us in the coming year to be constantly on the look out and to guard against partisan positions assuming a degree of heat which is likely to create deep and lasting divisions in this community. In the final analysis Barbados is for all Barbadians and all Barbadians are totally more important than any one political party or any one individual. It would have been a good thing if the Boundaries Commission had already been established. I am encouraged by the fact that the Leader of the Senate has said that

early in the new year it is expected to be established. While he is at it, while his Cabinet is at it they may well look at some mechanism to take parliamentary salaries and conditions of members of Parliament also beyond the realm of narrow partisan political controversy. These sorts of controversies tend to belittle the institutions of Parliament, tend to reduce them, to miniaturise those organisations in the eyes of people outside. You know, as an independent Nation, though still youthful, we need to raise certain issues above the level of partisan controversy because when elections come, there is a danger sometimes that we can become overheated and create serious rifts and perhaps even damage institutions to the lasting disadvantage of the people of this country.

I will not, Sir, seek to go into the particular lines that have been drawn this time. Suffice it to say that all is not sweetness and light, and there are certain areas that some may regard as infelicities of drawing of boundary lines. But I can be philosophical about it and say that I defy any Opposition Party to show me when it was in power that it drew political boundaries to its own disadvantage. This is why it is so important to have the Boundaries Commission. It is also important when the Boundaries Commission comes to ensure that it is comprised of men and women of integrity who are independent of any political influence, and whose judgment on the drawing of boundaries will be accepted by a majority in the community without question. That is vital. It is a matter as important as the independence of the judiciary, and it is something that we had better make haste in getting implemented. In a sense it is regrettable that it will be coming in an election year because part of the game is to oppose and oppose and oppose again, it would be unfortunate if this Boundaries Commission is launched in an atmosphere of partisan bitterness and contention.

In conclusion, I would only like to say that I think that it is unlikely that a future Democratic Labour Party Government would dispense with twenty-seven seats and revert to twenty-four, and in my view that is the acid test. Are the 27 seats so fundamentally unacceptable that when the Opposition became the Government it would feel called upon to repudiate the 27 seats and return to 24? I see my friend next to me writing furiously at the time I am making this statement. There are certain matters, Sir, on which one has to speak from one's conscience, and this is one. It is good legislative tradition to recognise the right of a legislator on pulsating issues in the community to speak on a matter of conscience, and whether that right is recognised in this particular case, I hereby arrogate it to myself.

That, may it please you, Sir, is my contribution on this subject.

SENATOR D. H. G. HUNTE: Mr. President, we are at a time of the year when we forget our

differences, but the applause which greeted my colleague during the course of his address and when he sat down, coming from the other side, I do not think has anything to do with the particular season of the year. It is strange, Sir, that one who has been very much criticised by the other side on this occasion has had such a reception from them.

During the course of my colleague's address he indicated that principle and conscience dictate to people at times what is best to support, particularly in the interest of this country. I have on occasions in here expressed my views also on matters before us in which I have had reason to support legislation which I believed was in the interest of the people. I recall on one occasion too that when in 1978 we had the debate on the salary proposals for parliamentarians that I got up in this Chamber and supported them, because I believe that if parliamentarians are to be looked upon other than people who put their hands into the public purse and carry away money and become rich, that it is necessary for us to upgrade them in order that these kinds of things should disappear.

We find ourselves today, Mr. President, being asked to vote for legislation which would increase the membership in the House of Assembly from 24 members as presently to 27. The history behind this is that a Constitution Commission was set up, which Commission recommended an increase by six seats to 30 seats, then the House of Assembly itself set up a Select Committee comprising representatives of Government and the Opposition, and they had the Chief Electoral Officer to advise them.

The report which we received yesterday about 2.30 contains in my opinion, however, some glaring omissions, and I think it would have been more useful for us in arriving at our conclusions if the different tabulations that were done by the Chief Electoral Officer — I refer to his proposals to retain the existing 24 constituencies, 26, 27 and 28 — I would have liked to have seen them submitted in this report in order that one could analyse it carefully and see what would have caused the Committee to come to the conclusion that 27 was the most acceptable number.

I have no objection, Mr. President, to an increase in the membership of the House of Assembly, indeed I believe it is desirable that the membership of the House of Assembly should be increased. The cost of representation, I do not think that three seats will create any great problems, I really cannot see that kind of argument.

The Leader of the Senate, however, in his introduction referred to the 1966 Constitution Conference and said that the present Government

which was in Opposition then sought to have provisions for an Electoral and Boundaries Commission written in, and I have one objection to this, and that is that they formed the Government since 1976 and I fail to see why it has taken so long, since they were convinced about it since 1966, why the Boundaries Commission should not have been set up, and that this exercise which we are being asked to do should have been best done by the Electoral and Boundaries Commission rather than by a select number of people from the House of Assembly, from the Other Place.

The position is, Mr. President, that in 1964 the decision was taken to divide the island into single member constituencies, the Constitution Conference was held in 1966, elections were held, I think on the 2nd or 3rd November, and we had Independence on the 30th November, 1966. In 1971 the country voted for the first time under single member constituencies. It is a known fact that some time before the 1971 election an amendment was passed to the Representation of the People Act which saw, I think there were two boundaries, if I remember correctly, changed. I think one was the St. Andrew—St. James boundary which I note that in the wisdom of the present exercise, according to the map which is provided, on page 14, that same boundary has been retained.

Now, the Leader of the Senate in his introduction this evening said that the reason in 1971 this was done was to save Mr. Joy Edwards. It saved Mr. Joy Edwards in 1971 and it defeated him in 1976, because there was no change of boundaries in 1976 and he went through the eddies. Similarly, the next one was somewhere in Christ Church. This interested me a bit, because the Christ Church one that was changed was the boundary relating somewhere along the line to Christ Church East and its connections with St. Patricks. I will say a bit more about St. Patricks a little later on. The Leader of the Senate indicated that that one had the effect of defeating the present Deputy Prime Minister. It may be true that he was defeated in 1971, but he came back in 1976 without any change in the boundaries, and he won his seat handsomely.

I say this, Mr. President, to indicate that despite the fact that boundaries are changed, once they are changed by political people, by politicians, the question of gerrymandering, the question of changing the boundaries to suit yourself because you are in power will always arise, and I would say this. If I had anything to do with it in 1976 I would have certainly proposed a change in the Christ Church East constituency, and the change which I would have proposed in the Christ Church East constituency would get rid of St. Patricks easily. I will tell you that. The same way that the present Christ Church East representative has said to his members on the

Commission "get the rid of Charnocks" I would have said "get the rid of St. Patricks" because when you consider the effect of the vote in St. Patricks it is a heavily constituted BLP area, and nobody would like to have those milestones around their necks. I had them in 1976, and certainly I would not have liked to have had them again, and if I had my way I would not have had them in 1976.

There are certain changes which have been made, and if you look at it one could argue that the changes could have been made otherwise, and I want to look at one or two of them.

Let us take the constituency of St. John and St. Philip — St. George. You find that a certain section of St. Philip, the Brereton and Ebenezer section of St. Philip, which if the numbers are correct, something like 421 persons voted in that constituency in 1976, the Democratic Labour Party's candidate received 341 votes and the Barbados Labour Party's candidate received 80 votes. Now, you find in this exercise that that section is taken out, I think PA 1 and PA 2, and put on to the constituency of St. John. So let us ask ourselves two questions. Does St. John need more DLP support? Why is the Government so generous to give the Leader of the Opposition more support than he actually needs? I do not think there is that amount of love.....

I think the love is more for Mr. David Simmons in St. Philip North than it is for Mr. Errol Barrow, but be that as it may, one can argue that you could have taken the same PA 1 and PA 2 and instead of putting them on to St. John you could have put them on to St. George but if you had put them on to St. George, Sir, it would have created problems. You move JC 1 from St. John and tack it on to St. George and then you move JB 1 and JB 2 from St. John again and you push them on to St. Joseph.

The point, Mr. President is that as long as politicians have to deal with these things we will have these arguments that the constituencies can be aligned in a different manner all the time. The time has come when the Electoral and Boundaries Commission must come about. Now, I would like to see the present Government bringing this about as soon as possible and certainly before they go out of office. I would certainly like to see this because the possibility exist that if they do not do it now and they lose the election, what will happen? A new Government comes in and will they consider that we must get back even by shifting the boundaries again if they are not to their liking or something of the sort and you will get this problem all the time.

I do not think that in this country we can afford to spend a lot of time quarrelling about salaries for

Parliamentarians and boundaries. I think the time has come when we must take these things away from the people who are actively involved in them and put them on another level in order that this kind of contention does not arise.

I do not believe that the Democratic Labour Party should be worried about a change in the Electoral Boundaries. I believe that they should be more concerned about the problems that exist in the country, problems which we could claim may have been caused by the present Government rather than worrying themselves about boundaries because it is not the boundaries that vote and if you find that the people in the country are dissatisfied with the policies and programmes of the present administration then irrespective of what boundaries you get the results in the next Election could well be a change in the Government.

The Leader also talked about communities coming together and he mentioned the Ivy, Sir. They are bringing the Ivy together as one community. I think it is called St. Michael East, Sir, and my good friend, the Minister of Labour when he said St. Michael East this evening when he was coming in, I do not know if it was planned but he walked in like Cassius Clay with his right hand in the air but — Mohammed Ali — Sir, I do not know if he is inclined to think that he is Mohammed Ali, but in the last fight that Mohammed Ali had, at the end of that we were all very sorry for him, Sir, but this is the Minister's first fight.

Anyhow, Sir, we mentioned the Ivy, Carrington's Village, Cave Hill and Free Hill that communities have been combined. My view is that when you are talking about communities, the area of St. Patricks is a community and I cannot really understand how the Government could come down without looking at it.

Now you get Silver Sands. Silver Sands is a community in itself. In the last Election it had something like 2,190 votes in Silver Sands proper. There were five boxes and 2,190 votes. In the present set up, Mr. President, Silver Sands has gone to something like 2,644 voters out of a total of 6,672 in the Christ Church East constituency.

Now we all know that St. Patricks is a community and I believe that a better distribution could have been to put St. Patricks together. I heard quite unofficially that there was a proposal to put St. Patricks together and when it was discussed in certain quarters, not in the Opposition quarters, I heard it was discussed in certain quarters but certain people said "You are mad. Not St. Patricks. You do not cut St. Patricks. You are joking. You do not cut St. Patricks, St. Patricks is solid. Let me have piece and let the other man have piece."

These problems will exist because I would not have supported any cut in Silver Sands. Silver Sands is a community and we will keep Silver Sands as a community by itself.

You see what is going to happen eventually is that something will have to be done about St. Patricks because in the Christ Church East constituency what you are getting now is the new Chancery Lane Development which is building up. Then you get the Lowland area over the hill and the five sections of Ealing Park and when these are built up and what you will find is that down the hill, as you would call it, if you include the Pilgrim Road area and that section of Fairy Valley and come down below you will find that the electors in that section will soon be numbering something like 5,000 among themselves and you will find that St. Patricks will have to be looked at.

Now I say this because these are factual problems and we have got to look at them. A part of Charnocks has been removed. Again, it is a community. This is what I am getting at. Charnocks has been a small community by itself and what did we find? The Leader suggested that we should keep communities together and one of the smallest communities in Barbados, 303 voters in the last Election has been cut and you say take off one piece and put it on to St. Philip. I have no objection to it, Mr. President. I have no basic objection to it because it is the will of the people that will prevail. I do not know. My good friend is sitting over here and looking at me when I speak about Charnocks and I really wonder when his members on that Committee were looking at it whether they remembered they were running a candidate in St. Philip South and that they would be putting Charnocks into St. Philip South, because if they were taking it according to the voting patterns, then I believe that what you would find is that the Charnocks vote would go against my friend, but, I wish him luck. He will get that sorted out, Sir.

Twenty-seven members in the House of Assembly, Mr. President, to my mind of thinking is not unreasonable in 1981. I believe that it is necessary to share or to have a more equitable distribution of the voters than we had in the last elections. Naturally it is going to cause problems because you will find that people have been accustomed to voting one place and now they are going to be voting some place else.

The exercise started in 1971 and that is about 10 years and we have another change. The big question remains and this is a question which will be exercising the minds of the people. How often will this thing happen?

I am sorry that the Select Committee of Parliament did not look at the proposal of the Cox Commission and

ask the Chief Electoral Officer to put up a proposal to divide the island into 30 constituencies. I believe they should have done this also because I believe that eventually, what we are going to find is that these constituencies will have to be redivided again and then at that stage you would probably have a 30 member House and probably that could have been avoided rather than having a situation where you come with 27 seats and then probably in another 10 years you come back with a Boundaries Commission by then and you have to change the boundaries again.

All in all, Mr. President, the big contention is that politicians have done this. That is the big contention, and as my colleague said, there is no party in power that would divide up the constituencies to what it believes would be its disadvantage. When they were divided in 1964 there was the Branker Commission, and the then Speaker submitted a minority report in which he believed there should have been thirty members in the Assembly, and that that should have taken care of the needs of the country. His was based on different thinking however, but with the twenty-seven we can't go too far wrong.

I gather it is alleged it would cost about \$75 000 a year to pay the additional three representatives, and in a country spending the amount of money that we are spending and providing the services to the people that are being provided, I do not think that we can go too far wrong on that. As I said, if the Democratic Labour Party was in power and had divided these constituencies, there is no doubt that the Barbados Labour Party in Opposition would be opening its mouth and crying foul, look what you have done, you have drawn them to yourself. My colleague asked if it was necessary. He did not think that the Democratic Labour Party would revert to the twenty-four members, and he said I was writing seriously, but all I made a note of was when the amendments to the Constitution came about in 1974 and they were opposed by the then Opposition which is now the Government, they did not either indicate that if they won the Government that they were going to re-amend the Constitution and bring it back down to what it was when we left London in 1966; so I don't think there is going to be any attempt from the Democratic Labour Party.

I believe that the twenty-seven seats, Mr. President, are going to redound to the credit and to the advantage of the Democratic Labour Party. I firmly believe that way. I have not read Mr. Cameron Tudor today, but I believe that just as the Government may think that they will have the majority, I think that the Democratic Labour Party could enter the campaign in a positive manner and if they are convincing enough, they can convince the people.

There is only one constituency or two that have not been touched, and I see one of my good friends on the

other side sitting and watching me, but I would not say anything about St. Lucy, Mr. President. I have a couple of bets out on St. Lucy already and I would not say anything about St. Lucy. He is the one who will have the least headaches because he has the same area to canvass. I do not think he has any new ground to break, so Senator Brathwaite would be sitting in a pretty happy position, probably happier than anybody else, because he has no new ground to break, and it is strange too that Mr. Greaves was on the Committee and they did not think in terms of changing the St. Lucy boundaries.

Now you see, Mr. President, this country has a Prime Minister. And we will continue to have Prime Ministers in this country as long as we continue to have elections in this country.

The Boundaries Commission Report, Mr. President, does not in my opinion create any great disparities. If you read the report, — and I scanned through it some time in the early hours of this morning — and the Minutes of the meetings, it does not appear to me as if there was any great divergence of opinion, because in reading it I saw where certain members of the Opposition agreed with certain things that were put forward and considered that our time had now come. Those are the words which I think can be found on page 67 of the Report, and if our time has now come where we in the Democratic Labour Party find ourselves in Opposition, I do not see that we should really and truly be harping about that. Our time will come again when we will probably have the members on that side saying "our time has now come". And I do not think we should worry about the increase of these seats. I think what we should worry about seriously is to get out in the country and talk to people about where the Government has fallen down, the promises they have made to the electorate and have not kept and things of that sort, so that we can drive home these things. But when the people go to vote, the electorate of Barbados is a very phoney electorate, a very very peculiar electorate, because you cannot predict what will happen and the same way that against all predictions in 1976 we got up on the morning of 3rd September and found that we had a new Prime Minister, I believe that come April or May when the results are declared that we could well have a different Prime Minister in this country belonging to another party, not the same party.

So I commend the Report. I think the three seats do not make any great difference. I regret we did not have the Elections and Boundaries Commission, but I hope that will soon come, and I hope that as we go forward in this country a lot of these little petty things that tend to divide us will disappear, and if it is necessary to put an Elections and Boundaries Commission and a Salaries Commission for the review of parliamentarians' salaries, that we should work towards these things so that we will not waste time discussing these things, but rather

get on to more serious and fundamental matters. Thank you.

SENATOR H. R. LINTON: Mr. President, I rise to say just a few words on this matter, honestly just a few because the point that concerns me is one of the criticisms that has been levelled at the rationale behind the increase in the number of seats, that is, that it will be a strain on the Treasury to the tune of approximately \$1 million. I rise to speak on that aspect of the matter primarily because I find that argument pathetic, particularly so because of the source from which it comes. That argument, I am not saying, Mr. President, was raised in here. It was raised I believe in the Other Place and outside, but regardless of where it was raised, I am firmly of the opinion, Mr. President, that if we as Barbadians continue to make believe and to try to persuade other persons who have no experience of what we ourselves as representatives or potential representatives or would-be representatives have experienced, then forever and ever the public will continue to regard us as frauds drawing the public money for little or no return.

I am what may be called, Mr. President, a potential or a would-be representative; I could fall into either of those categories, and even now I know the difficulties that are associated with being a proper representative, what Senator Blackman would perhaps refer to as a qualitative representation, and I think that if we are going to give that sort of representation to the people of this country, then we should not squirm if we have to pay even a million dollars for it. I think that that argument totally defeats the idea, the concept of proper representation, especially when it is viewed in the context of the economy of the country on a whole.

For anyone to get up and state that you should not increase the number of seats by even as modest a number as three because it will cost a million dollars extra, I think that such an attitude is totally against the Barbadians having a proper standard of representation. That question of the cost of representation, Mr. President, is closely tied up with the quality of representation, because by and large the people that Senator Connell referred to, the people who stop you on the street, by and large in the main they are the very humble, ordinary folk, and they are the ones you have to devote a lot of time and attention to, they are the ones who need individual attention, they are the ones who may not come to you with a problem of a national character, it may not even be a problem of a parochial character. More often than not, Mr. President, it will be a very personal problem. They require individual attention, and therefore this argument that in Britain one man represents 48,000 people and in Barbados you only have about 5,000 does not hold water at all, because in Britain the M.P. does not deal with that sort of problem, and this must be got over to

the people, that it is very important in Barbados that you deal with those individual problems which you meet every possible day. I think that is the part of the argument against the increase that is bothering me. In fact, I do not even think that there is any other justifiable argument against the increase in the number of seats.

The only other small point I want to make on this matter, and deliberately so, Mr. President, is the question of the alterations of the boundaries as they touch and concern me. A most unfortunate report relating to Charnocks appeared in one edition of the Nation just after the report was made public, that someone in the Nation referred to the people in Charnocks as Dems. I heard my colleague, Senator Hunte, also here refer to them as Dems. I have found no evidence, Mr. President, that the people in Charnocks are Dems at all, and they have asked me to say so. Senator Hunte may have got a majority of votes down there, but that was Senator Hunte, and if people are going to lament the fact that what they call a strong DLP area has been attached to St. Philip South, I do not think it is a fact that needs any lamentation at all. I have gone through there, I have spoken to several of the people and they have told me in no uncertain terms that they are delighted to become a part of St. Philip South. It is one of the more logical realignments of the whole Committee. It attaches itself naturally to Gemswick, Rock Hall, St. Patricks and Woodbourne, and therefore it is very logical, Mr. President, and I want to seize this opportunity this afternoon to state publicly that I am delighted now to have the chance to be the nominated candidate for St. Philip South, a constituency in which Charnocks now falls.

I want to state further, Mr. President, that I shall be even more delighted next year to be able to say on behalf of the people of Charnocks, I will represent you with all the will at my command. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR THE HON. N. A. BARROW: Mr. President, just a few words to tie this debate up. First, let me say that on this side we are particularly pleased with the way the debate has gone, because in a manner which had it taken place outside of the election fever time I believe it would have really drawn very little attention. I believe, Sir, that this Chamber owes a very sincere thank you to Senator Connell and Senator Hunte for the way in which they have dealt with this particular matter, and I think they have put it very clearly in context. Indeed, in a way, I am rather attracted to Senator Hunte's speech, because the things which came out in that speech were precisely the things which politicians indeed at a personal and private level talk about, and that is, if I had it to do I would have moved that and not this. As Senator Connell said, just show me the party that will set out, or the Government, that will set out to design boundaries to its own disadvantage. I think, Sir, that these statements reflect the reality.

I want to go one step further on that, Sir, because while we are talking at that level we also have to recognise that there is no way that you can take the area of St. Michael and St. James, have three seats added and expect that any one side can win all three. Anybody who believes that that is possible, that it can be done on paper that way, is in my view a political infant. The fact is that you can get a sufficiently big swing that can bring all three seats into your corner, but in terms of looking at the areas and in terms of the fact that you are seeking not to do an injustice by picking up, let us say, a piece of Cave Hill and attaching it to a piece of Belfield, or some similar unsupportable act, it is not possible, not where you are following districts and taking parts of districts or a whole district and attaching it to an adjoining district. It is simply not possible, and that really I take to be the point made particularly by Senator Hunte when he looked at 1971, 1976, the St. Andrew and Christ Church South Central and the different results, in that on the statistical information of the time they could produce one result in 1971, but when the swing came in 1976 the gerrymandering could not stop it. I think, Sir, that is what we all have to recognise.

Now, Senator Linton alluded to the comment about the \$75,000 and the million dollars. It is important to note that the figure of a million dollars is the figure which is used in relation to the total cost of Parliament. The figure of \$75,000 is the figure which is the estimate of what three additional members of Parliament will cost the Treasury, and as Senator Connell says, that is not an unreasonable cost at all. As a matter of fact, that means appointing three Administrative Assistants within the Government.

There is one point just before I sit down, and my attention was really drawn to it by Senator Hunte's reference to page 67. This is a point which I intended to emphasise in analysing this matter, and it is this, that Mr. Taitt in the Other Place put the matter very sharply in perspective when he said — and this is on page 65 and then on page 67 — he said that if the parish boundaries are going to haunt us for ever hereafter, then always there is going to be difficulty with the realignment of boundaries. Mr. Taitt added that this is a matter which has been gone into in great detail and that a number of countries have had to deal with it, and all that has happened is that our time has come. This is the context of the statement, that our time has come.....

In other words, if you look at the contributions of that sort within the context of the Committee one sees examples of politicians regardless of the side he represents taking a very hard and direct look at the difficulties involved in realigning boundaries. This is why, Sir, I say that if these things had taken place outside of the election fever period then we would have heard very little about it.

Sir, both Senator Connell and Senator Hunte referred to the Electoral and Boundaries Commission Legislation and I think I must just therefore set the record straight. The point is this, Sir. This party to which this Government belongs has a very firm resolve unshaken but clearly we were not going to bring in legislation on the Boundaries Commission while the Commission was sitting under Senator Sir Mencea Cox. We just could not do this because they were reviewing the Constitution and therefore only when their work was finished could we take the matter up and there are a whole number of things, Sir.

There is certainly going to be in the new year a Bill quite early taking up a number of the points raised in so far as they relate to the amendment of the Constitution. The Electoral and Boundaries Commission Bill which we have already looked at, Sir, has in it a formula for entrenching which is a part of the Constitution, perhaps to be done by an amendment to the Constitution and we are taking all of the points raised by the Commission, one by one and hopefully depending on when elections are called we will be able to get through all of the necessary legislation so there is not a matter of any disagreement that the best way to handle this thing would be by the Boundaries Commission but the fact is that (i), if the boundaries needed to be re-aligned we could not await the setting up of the Commission and secondly when the Commission is set up, the Commission is going to have to review all of those boundaries and when the Commission puts all the starters out in 1984 or 1985, whenever election comes, is of course another matter which brings us back to the same point.

You set the boundaries now and then they may go out of control and the Commission will then keep those boundaries under constant review but it does seem to us that the boundaries exercise could not await the establishment of the Commission because we considered that we could not go into the next election with these great disparities and thirdly, it did not seem to us that we could do the legislation on the Boundaries Commission before the Cox Commission had reported but now the legislation is in draft and early in the New Year it will come down.

Let me see if there is any other point I need to deal with. Senator Hunte referred a little bit to a part of St. John that I know very well. I must tell him, Sir, that I cannot talk about Charnock's because I do not know up there very well but when you talk about Cherry Grove, Cherry Grove is in St. George. Knight's Village is more St. George.

Where I grew up in the Village of St. Jude's, the school population of the Cherry Grove Junior School and the Church congregation were all made up not only of people physically from within the parish boundaries of St.

George but of all the people of Cherry Grove and of Knight's Village going right up into Four Roads, St. John. That part of St. John has very strong links with St. George. The people of Clayberry, Ashbury and Knight's Village all form one community really and Cherry Grove and Macaroni Town are again the same thing and the back of Greens to that territory, Sir. That I know very well. Just like the people in Venture whether they come from Venture, St. Joseph, or Venture, St. John go to school in St. Joseph and so on. (ASIDES). Brereton I do not know so well, Sir.

Those points, Sir, are the points which I noted to raise. Those of us who are from my part of St. George we know St. John well but we do not know St. Philip too well, Sir.

I think those, Sir, are the points. I cannot really recall anything else that needed any specific reply but just once more, Sir, let me say that at both a personal and party level, Sir, I am extremely pleased that in this Chamber where the direct electoral heat is not on and where members are able to speak without the kinds of pressure that perhaps in the Other Place some people might imagine themselves under, that this matter has been approached in a way Sir, that I cannot say that I am surprised in that across here we are accustomed to recognising the quality of one another's contributions but I must at the same time say that I did not expect statements of the clarity, strength and power that came from my opponents if indeed, Sir, opponents is the appropriate term.

The question that the Bill be now read a second time was put to the Senate and agreed to.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. N. A. BARROW, the Senate resolved itself into Committee to study the Bill, SENATOR THE REV. HATCH in the Chair.

On the motion of SENATOR K. HINDS the Bill was taken as read.

Clauses 1 to 8 inclusive were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Senator the Hon. N. A. BARROW the Senate was resumed and the Bill was reported as having passed the Committee without amendment, Mr. President in the Chair.

On the separate motions of Senator the Hon. N. A. Barrow, the Bill was read a third time forthwith and passed.

SENATOR THE HON. N. A. BARROW: Mr. President, we have now come to the end of this evening's business and in the ordinary course of things that means we have come to the end of business for the calendar year.

On behalf of the members of this Chamber, I would wish to extend the season's greetings to you and to restate what we have said on more than one occasion — and we have now been going for three or four years — that the calendar year just passed or about to pass has been once more a year in which we have been most honoured to have been able to serve with you as our President. Apparently the Prime Minister of the back bench is giving us some hint as to when he is calling his election.

I wish just to say, Sir, that once again on this side it has been a year in which we have really enjoyed all the exchanges that have taken place, all the exchanges not only in the sense of debate and the sharpness of the debate and the back and forth and the cut and thrust, but also exchanges of information, and I think we have all benefited under your wise leadership by being able to exchange thoughts and to make our contribution in the parliamentary process.

Once again may I wish you on behalf of the other members of the Senate the season's greetings.

I beg to move that this Senate do now adjourn *sine die*.

SENATOR D. H. G. HUNTE: Mr. President, this is certainly the last Christmas that constituted as we are we will be extending season's greetings to each other, and I would not certainly allow this opportunity to pass without saying a few words to those which the Leader of the Senate has said. We have enjoyed your presidency over the past years and we certainly have had our exchanges, heated exchanges at times, and at other times we have had some pleasant occasions.

As the new year dawns, and that dawns is spelt d-a-w-n-s, it is obvious that the exchanges because of the year which it is going to be may be even a bit more harsh than they have been. I am certain that with your wise leadership or your deputy's who deputises for you when you are not here, that we will all be kept under control.

I think that a case has been made out for the usefulness of this Chamber to the parliamentary system over the years, because in here we have had some very interesting debates and very often we have had to refer matters to the Other Place, therefore I am glad that the Constitution Commission agreed that the Senate should be retained in the process of government in this country.

On behalf of my colleague I should certainly like to join with the Leader of the Senate in sending season's greetings to you and other Senators and also to extend very best wishes for the new year. In extending this year's best wishes from the Opposition to the Government however, one must be cautious lest the Government members would think that I mean good wishes in the ballot box. I certainly would not venture so far as to include the ballot box in those good wishes, but good wishes of health, yes, Sir. Next year, who knows, we may be differently constituted. We may not have you as President. I do not know, Sir, I cannot say at this stage what will happen. You have served very well in this country and we never know, you may be elevated to higher office. But the good wishes of the Opposition at this time of the year go with them.

My colleague reminds me that in my first address at this time I referred to the fact that I thought we should have come to Arindale and Arindale seem as though it will be no more. I believe that earlier this year while you were acting as Governor-General my colleague and I sought to get the Government side to postpone a decision on Arindale, and since Arindale still exists, it may not be too much for all of us to meet there at some time during the festive season in order to have our final celebration. Thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Hon. members will permit me to reciprocate the greetings which are usually given at this time of the year. I would like to say thanks very much for the sentiments you have expressed, and I would also like to say what I have had occasion to say before, but as we come to the end of another year we can look back with a great sense of pride and satisfaction on the work that the Senate has done, and I personally in the warm spirit of courtesy and cooperation which all members have given me from time to time. I am glad to be able to say that this last debate for the year has exhibited on a national issue a level of statesmanship which this Senate should be proud of.

The only unfortunate thing, I think, is that as so often happens, the members of the Press have not been here to report this high standard of debate, and that larger numbers of the public have not taken the opportunity now as at other times in the year of being present and hearing the level of debate in this Chamber.

I thank hon. members again for what they have said, and I wish them all the best for the season, and I hope that when we do adjourn we will be able to meet in the usual place and exchange the compliments in the accepted manner. I regret that events at "Arindale" will perhaps not allow us to meet up there, but I assure you that the welcome is just as warm as it will be wherever I find myself when the Government has ejected me from that place.

On one little sad note, I know that members will be sorry to hear that Senator Deane has been taken suddenly ill and I know that they will join me in wishing him a speedy recovery.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. N. A. BARROW: Mr. President, as I rise to move the adjournment, I must say that it came as something of a surprise to me to discover that we have an Opposition in this Chamber. I

thought I was speaking for everybody when I spoke initially, and I still insist that that is exactly what I was doing.

I move, Sir, that this Senate do now adjourn *sine die*.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to, and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly.
7.15 p.m.