
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1986 – 91

THE SENATE

Wednesday, December 21, 1988

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Public Buildings, on Wednesday, December 21, 1988 at 11.20 a.m. today.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator M. deL. Jordan, (Deputy President)

Senator the Hon. Sir James Tudor, K.C.M.G., (Minister of Foreign Affairs) (Leader of the Senate)

Senator the Hon. L. V. H. Lewis, (Minister of State for the Civil Service)

Senator A. Morrison

Senator N. W. Boxill

Senator D. A. Comissiong

Senator Mrs. V. C. Fraser, B.S.S., J.P., M.C.F.A.

Senator Mrs. G. L. Eastmond

Senator A. J. N. Phillips

Senator T. A. Prescod

Senator Miss B. A. Miller

Senator L. R. Tull, Q.C.

Senator J. C. W. Wickham, M.B.E.

Senator the Rev. Canon I. McK. Jones

Senator L. A. Ward, G.C.M.

Senator C. A. Blackman, Q.C.

Senator Mrs. P. Y. Forde

Senator J. S. Goddard

Senator Dr. L. L. Shorey

Senator the Hon. Dr. C. D. Clarke, (Minister of State for Finance).

Prayers were led by Rev. Dr. Lionel Crawford.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Mr. Deputy President, I am commanded to lay the following:

The Annual Report of the Welfare Department for the period of 1986–1987.

The Development Plan for 1988–1993.

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Goddard.

SENATOR J. S. GODDARD: Mr. Deputy President, I beg to give notice of the following questions:

1. Is the Minister aware that the Barbados Development Bank:

(a) was technically insolvent at the end of its financial year ended March 31, 1988; and

(b) could not continue its operations without the guarantee by Government of the Bank's long term debt which was \$79 121 775 on that date?

2. Would the Minister please state:

(a) what plans, if any, Government has for restoring and restructuring the capital of the Barbados Development Bank; and

(b) what provision, if any, Government has made for honouring its guarantees if the Bank itself is unable to meet its commitments for loan repayments?

I thank you, Sir.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Mr. Deputy President, in respect of Items 5 and 6 on the Order Paper for today's proceedings, I believe Senators are

already familiar with the Bill to amend the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, notice of which is now being given. But the text of the Bill would have been circulated before.

In respect of Item 6, this was done in all of its stages in the Other Place yesterday and we would like to proceed with it today. I think that is all, Sir, that I can say in respect of today's Order Paper.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Leave is granted.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Sir, Senators will regret to hear that our President who returned from a visit abroad some days ago is not feeling quite well and has asked that his excuse be known. I believe that it is nothing serious but he needs a little rest. Sir, therefore, while I am announcing that with great regret about his absence, I would also like to say that we had understood when last we were here that permission was being sought of us to take a photograph of the Senate for literary and historical purposes. We are not in our own Chamber and I would like in this respect a little later to hear the views of Senators as to whether they feel it in any breach of propriety to be photographed as tenants rather than as freeholders. But we will discuss that a little later. I just want to alert Senators that we may be asked to make that decision rather later in the course of today's sitting. And lastly, Sir, I beg to move that Senator John Wickham be appointed to act as Chairman for today's sitting. I so move.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: There being no dissenting voices, Senator John Wickham will act as Chairman for the remainder of today's sitting.

The state of the President has been made known to me. In fact, he made an effort to go to his office and had to return home because he was not feeling well and had to seek medical attention.

11.30 a.m.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: I rise to move the suspension of Standing Order 45(1) and (2) for the remainder of today's sitting.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Leave is granted.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

Order No. 1 – Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Cave Hill and Lodge Hill, St. Michael for the construction of the Airport to West Coast Highway.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: I just want to identify the plans to pass them around so that Senators can make themselves familiar with the terrain which we are discussing.

In respect of this one, Sir, it appears that some three years ago Parliament approved the compulsory acquisition by the Crown of 70 parcels of land for the construction of the highway. I think that is well known, but included among those 70 parcels of land was 45 square metres, the property of a Mrs. Delcina Forde, at University Drive in Cave Hill. She owns a stone house but it was not then considered necessary to acquire it because of the fact that it was situated outside of the building line specified for such roads and it did not appear at that time that any problems would have arisen from its location.

It seems, however, that when construction of the road got underway marl fill, as is sometimes the case in these matters, was placed on the road next to her house and the road was almost level with the top of her house. It is one of these peculiar cases. She complained, however, through her attorney, that she was being affected by the dust associated with the construction, and the inconvenience of the load of marl fill almost next door, as well as by the vibration of the rollers and other equipment which were being used in the construction. It was noted at the time that the house itself was suffering damage because of the vibration.

As a result of complaints received the matter was thoroughly examined by the Ministry of Transport and Works and they verified the situation and decided that her complaints were in order and quite justified, and her attorney has confirmed that compensation in the sum of \$7 200 was awarded her in 1987 by the contractor.

In the interim the National Housing Corporation had provided her with a house at the Husbands Development. It is also considered that in all the circumstances Mrs. Forde's house and the remaining 225 square metres of land at University Drive should be acquired and that the house should be demolished. She, it appears, has enough other land which would permit the construction of a house farther away from the road and in more comfortable surroundings.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Deputy President, my concern with respect to the Resolution is not to be against it, but to make some observations with respect to the highway itself and the uses to which it is being put.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: If the Honourable Member will give way, I had not noticed that we have a similar problem with another owner on the same road, so if he does not mind I should like to continue with

that, because what he has to say may also be relevant to this one.

In much the same way and at the same time Government acquired a larger bit of land at Lodge Hill, St. Michael from Mr. Keith Thornton for the construction of the same road, and this land formed part of 2.4281 hectares owned by him. It is proposed to acquire the remaining 2.564 square metres of his land since it is considered uneconomical for him to retain it in these circumstances.

So the Resolution seeks parliamentary approval for acquiring both the stone house, which is Mrs. Forde's property, and the extra bit of land, the 2.564 square metres, at Lodge Hill belonging to Mr. Thornton.

I beg to move.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Deputy President, the highway is in use for the greater part of its route, some of it perhaps being used unauthorised by, but I have a concern that I should like to voice with respect to my observation that a practice is developing along the highway, that certain entrepreneurs use parts of the highway for certain activities, particularly the sale of roasted corn.

I do not want anyone to say that I am against people making an honest living, but the police have conceded what is going on by suggesting that motorists should go off the highway on to the curb. I am not too sure that is really the answer to the issue. I have a concern that if we wink at this occurrence we might be opening the door for other infelicities to develop.

Off the main highway in Port of Spain, leading from the airport to Port of Spain, I have noticed people not just selling corn, but they have lean-tos where they sell vegetables, they sell fish, and I think in the fullness of time if something necessary is not done to address the problem, that people will be having mini vans pulling up off the highway to sell and it is going to become a problem, because the minute you start making a move against the people who have established a business there, you say you are taking away people's rights. At this point they are really trespassing.

The other concern I want to voice is that we are developing a situation in this community where almost by, I would not say neglect, but certainly a shrug of the shoulders, we are conceding that there are two laws prevailing in the society, a law for the small man and a law for the others. Although I would like to suggest, Sir, that we are developing a society where we have three types of laws prevailing in the society. A law for the small man, a law for the big man who can get a way around the law, and then the poor man in the middle who no one worries about and who

has to bear the full brunt of the law. I should like to see, Sir, that we all observe the law and there are not different conditions applying to different people.

I should like to throw out to the Minister and to the Government that they look at this business of the use to which the highway is being put. If the vendors wish an outlet, perhaps some consideration should be given to designating where it can be down within the framework of the law.

11.40 a.m.

There are several stretches on the highway where this is occurring. There are roads outside the highway where it is also happening, and I think in those cases where people are trespassing on private property and no one does anything about it, eventually it is going to create a crisis where an accident occurs when you will say you have to step in. I would like to suggest that before we reach that stage where we have a crisis reaction that the matter be anticipated and something done to address the problem, because I see in the fullness of time that someone will then have a mini-van and pull off the highway and sell coconuts or sell bread, or sell dresses as I have seen happening in an area in Black Rock recently where a man goes through the development and sells from the back of his van much like the itinerant Swan Street vendors of yesterday used to go through the districts on Sundays on a motorbike. Now they have established themselves off the road and sell. I should like to throw this out for Government consideration.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Mr. Deputy President, I think that while on the one hand one wants to encourage economic activity at all levels and particularly at the level at which the subject of these complaints is being made, on the other hand, of course, one wants to guarantee the safety of the travelling public and one needs to strike a balance, and sometimes I fear that one has to be very firm, and it seems to me we shall have to be in respect of this building and this compound, and the appropriate Ministries of Government and Departments will have to address themselves to this whole problem of unauthorised encroachment on public property for the quite lawful purpose of buying and selling, but unlawfully doing it, and at the same time creating dangers and hazards to the travelling public and to the vendors themselves.

I do not pretend to know all of the solutions to this problem, but I know there will have to be early solutions in respect of what is appearing on the road and what is appearing in this city. This is the Parliament of the country and on any day you can find refuse being thrown on to its premises from people who have the right to ply their wares but not necessarily in this sort of milieu, and visitors to our country and citizens of the country cannot be entirely happy that around the Parliament buildings they see states of dirt

and refuse and whatever; so that it is a general and very genuine problem which urgently needs to be addressed, and I would like to say to those of us who are in politics, and I am not now saying this from the vantage point of someone who does not have to engage again in competitive politics, I think we probably need to say to people that the beauty and the good looks of the country and the safety of its citizens indeed are as important as any other aspect of the country's development, and that while we understand that proper preparations should be made for people to sell and to buy, these preparations and those facilities need not be in certain places where the public congregates or uses as a highway, and certainly not in places which have national historical significance.

I do not mean to embarrass any of my colleagues by saying that we have to be firm on these matters because we are being firm not only in the interest of the aesthetics of the country but in the interest of literal public safety, because if people get killed on highways where they have no business to be buying or selling, or in places where there is a steady flow of traffic around public buildings or public monuments, that is something to be regretted, but it is also something to be prevented, and addressed as quickly as possible. So I am grateful to the Honourable Member for mentioning this point, and I think that all of us who are politicians ought not to be afraid to speak out on this. But while we censure and regret what we see, I think we have an equally urgent task of providing extra facilities or appropriate facilities in commodious suitable circumstances and places where the economic life of the country is not impeded by reason of any disadvantage being placed at the disposal of those who buy and sell. I think we have to take a balanced view of it, and it is certainly important that we address it on all sides of politics because it really is getting out of hand.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, I rise to draw attention to another part of today's Order Paper, Private Members' Business. There is a Bill to amend the Land Acquisition Act and from time to time in this Place and the Other Place Members have to talk about compensation in respect of acquisition, and that is what I rise to question. When are the persons in respect of whose property acquisition is now.....

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: On a point of order, I was under the impression when the Leader of the Senate spoke that he was replying to the comments and speeches and that no other person would be permitted to speak after him. I was under that impression. I observe a departure, and I wonder.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: I think the point raised by my colleague is a valid one because I had not known that the Honourable Member was rising to

join this debate or I certainly would have given way to her. I had assumed because nobody else rose on either side that Senator Blackman's contribution to this land acquisition matter was the last. There is another one coming up, so if the Senator would like to join the debate on that one, I would be very grateful.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Tudor.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, I am not hearing very well this morning and I fail to understand where the difficulty lies. There was the introduction of the Resolution by the Leader of the Government Business in the Senate, Senator Blackman rose and now I rise.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: There is a point because Senator Tudor was speaking in reply assuming that there were no other speeches to be made.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: How could that assumption be made?

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I paused and I did not see anyone else rise.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I am not aware of it.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Would you like to make the same point on the next matter?

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: No, that is not the point. Something is going to have to be done about the sound in here then. The Clerk very properly came and asked if we were having difficulty. It seems that we are because I am not aware now that Senator Tudor is actually replying.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: He has replied.
11.50 a.m.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: I just want to draw to the Senator's attention that I have another one coming up and that I will certainly hold back my replying until her point is made.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I am aware of that. We have a long Order Paper and it is going to be a long difficult day in here. I know that there are other imperatives but if the noise is going to prevent the debate from moving with a certain smoothness then we are going to have to put a stop to it.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Miller.

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

Order No. 3 was called. — Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of parcels of land at River Road, Pine Road, Collymore Rock and Culloden Road, St. Michael for the purpose of road improvement.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Sir, it was decided by the Cabinet some time ago that 38 properties should be acquired for the purposes of improvement of the Pine/Culloden/Collymore Rock Road junction for the widening of that junction to the Jemmotts Lane/Collymore Rock/River Road end into a 4 lane highway and the widening of the approaches to these junctions to the west from John Beckles Drive.

They also decided that the offers of donations of the following two areas of land for the road improvement purposes should be accepted and these two donations of land included an area of 300 square metres at Melrose belonging to the Insurance Corporation of Barbados, and an area of about 880 square metres at the Shrubbery belonging to the Barbados Mutual Life Assurance Society.

At the time when this decision was taken it was because of the widely perceived need for road improvement in the above mentioned areas.

The Pine Road/Culloden Road/Collymore Rock junction carries, in the estimate of those who are qualified to know, the heaviest volume of vehicular traffic in Barbados and is used by traffic going to the industrial areas of Wildey, Newton and, certainly, traffic to the airport and traffic to the east and south-west of the island and, of course, traffic to the City By-pass roads all coming along this area.

It is also used, as Honourable Members are well aware, by traffic going into the City from persons coming from all parts of that side of St. Michael having business with schools, commercial houses and professional offices in that area and close to it so when the plans for the road work were finalized, the Ministry discovered that only 22 parcels would be required for road improvement. However, this Resolution seeks approval for only 19 for two reasons.

Two of the parcels were dated and the survey information with respect to one other parcel is inaccurate and this acquisition cannot be proceeded with at this time so that the attached Resolution seeks parliamentary approval for the compulsory acquisition of only 19 parcels of land as shown in the plans and schedule at River Road, the

Collymore Rock and Culloden Road area for road improvement.

I beg to move.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Deputy President, my concern on this Resolution is slightly different from the one I voiced on the earlier Resolution.

The road in that area, as you know, Sir, has been completed and is in good use in that Government invoked the provisions of Section 5 of the Act and took possession and built the road and, I think, this Resolution is now to give effect, in fact, to the completion of the processes so that compensation can be paid.

I have a concern here though that it should take 2 to 3 years after you have acquired by possession and carried out the work to come back to this Chamber for the formalities to be completed, for the compulsory acquisition process to be completed and for compensation to be made because, as an attorney practising in Bridgetown, I have encountered difficulties with the Ministry of Housing and Lands and the Ministry of Legal Affairs in securing interest.

In fact, they do not offer it. You have to ask for it even though they have taken possession and used the land. Interest rate is at the ridiculous rate of 6% and I think when Government should ever look at the Land Acquisition Act, they should be looking at that rate of interest because 6% which might have been a good and proper rate certainly 30 or 40 years ago needs re-examination in 1988/89 terms.

But I would like some information, Sir, from the Minister when he replies as to what is the expectation as to the promptitude of settlement of the claims for compensation outstanding for these 19 parcels of land.
12.00 noon

One of the parcels that.....

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: I think, Sir, there is a power shortage or whatever. I do not know what. But I do not think Members can be heard.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Oh the light. Would you please then repeat.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: Sir, I should like to know with what promptitude these areas that are before us today, these 19 parcels, the claims for compensation would be settled. One of the parcels which appear on this Schedule is known to me. I am trying to get the matter resolved. But it has been dragging. And I think, my concern, Sir, is this, I

think that really whilst Government always has the right to use its authority by legislation to come in and do work under the Act, it is like a vendor being so rash as to ever put a purchaser in possession of a house before completion. When that happens, as any Attorney-at-Law will tell you, the purchaser is never in a hurry to complete. Because, what is there to worry about? He is already in the place and the rent is never as much as the balance of purchase price.

I think perhaps the rights of the subject are being challenged increasingly by the process of acquisition when Government takes possession and then takes an inordinate length of time to bring the measures before us. And I want to make this point crystal clear, Sir, it is not necessarily any venality on the part of an Administration as such. Because at the end of the day, the Ministers do not do the work. It is going to be done by the public officers. And again it may not be necessarily any quality or venality on their part. It might be just that there are too many acquisitions being done, there may not be enough surveyors to get the work done, but a Government department determines that this must be done and therefore the work is put in hand particularly, if you pardon my intrusion to a little bit of the secular partisan politics, when an election is nigh and you want to demonstrate that things are happening and have been done, you push these things through and then people are left waiting for their money.

And Senator Miller tried to allude to some of the matters under Private Business, matters I was referring to last week. And I really would like the whole issue of the matter of reporting to Parliament and the question of giving adequate information to Parliament to be something that is put in place and put in place soon. So that we will know and public officers will know that they cannot just acquire and do the work and leave people waiting for their funds.

SENATOR A. J. N. PHILLIPS: Mr. Deputy President, I have no difficulty, Sir, with the Bill before this Honourable Chamber.

But I feel, Sir, that I must express some concern as far as our road improvement programme is concerned as it relates to an interesting type of small business that has developed in this country. And I must make reference to it because in the first Resolution this morning, Senator Blackman did allude to it. And it relates to those persons who make a living by way of selling corn. And I believe in this category would also come newspaper vendors.

I have noted with interest, Sir, that these people have an initiative and a kind of understanding as to how their business should succeed. You would note, Sir, that they place themselves in strategic positions. In other words, they seem to make a market analysis as to the vehicular flow, the

pedestrian flow and all the things related to their type of business.

And I feel, Sir, if there is concern about their operations on the highway or anywhere else, I feel that Government in the future should look at providing lay-byes or some sort of situation like this where that type of small business should be encouraged. I, Sir, have noted those persons who trade on the highway now. Quite frankly at this point in time I do not see that they are interfering with the free flow of traffic or that they are operating in such a manner as to cause any problems to the driving public. In other words they themselves have sought positions that they are not into the traffic. In other words they are a few yards off from the traffic where vehicles can come in and park without interfering with the other traffic and so collect what items they want whether it is corn or whatever else they are selling.

So, Sir, in supporting this Resolution, although the one before the Chamber now may not have this same sort of situation because of that general area, as I said these persons are very keen businessmen and they set themselves a few hundred yards apart in order to effectively carry out their business. I feel, Sir, that Government has a right to encourage this sort of business and should therefore make some provision in our highway improvement when it comes to encouraging that sort of small business.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Tudor.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Well first, Sir, let me respond, if I may, to the very important point raised by Senator Blackman in respect of compensation when all the legal formalities have been done for persons whose lands and properties have been acquired. I think this is common ground between us and I would not even like to say that it is necessarily or entirely a bureaucratic hold up. I myself do not know all of the reasons for these things, but like everybody else I share the view that if a citizen's property has been acquired in good faith, it is the duty of those who have acquired it to pay for it promptly, as we have to do in private treaties for say purchase of property with each other.

The Senator would have found the late Prime Minister Barrow fully ranged on that side of the argument because he held the view that if citizens could put Governments in court more often, particularly on matters of these concerning that acquisition of property, Governments would pull their socks up.

So the point is a good one. I have taken note of it as I always do when the Senator and other Senators make this

point about prompt settlement of money owed to persons for their land. And I will pass it on to the Minister and the other authorities.

I am sorry I am not in a position to say, in the case of these acquisitions, what the delay could be. I do not know for instance if there is now a habit of waiting for some time to elapse after all the parliamentary things have been done about acquisition or whether – perhaps it is that, I do not know. But it seems to me to be a peculiar reason for waiting. Because if the acquisition is almost a fact from the time notice is given and certainly more so from the time it is known that the matters are going through Parliament, I think even part payment could start then. But this is only a layman's point of view. I do not know. And then give them the balance when the Parliamentary process is concluded.

But I will bring it to the attention of the Minister and other appropriate departments.
12.10 p.m.

I just like to assure Senator Phillips that his contribution is a very valid one and I am glad that he has emphasized the point that there is a genuine economic activity going on in this island among small people. But I also like to stress my own point that you do not want injured or dead sellers or dead buyers or injured buyers and, therefore, we have to find a formula which encourages and creates a better atmosphere for these vendors whether at or near highway junctions or whatever, but certainly in a safe environment, a formula which produces safety but which at the same time does not inhibit lawful economic activity. I think the search is for this balancing climate and we must all hope that good sense will prevail until we can bring a proper solution for these problems.

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

BILL TO REPEAL THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE BOARD ACT, CAP. 381A

Order No. 2 was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to repeal the National Health Service Board Act, Cap. 381A.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. Acting President, the National Health Service Board Act came into existence so as to establish a Board which would be responsible for providing general practice services, and ancillary health services for persons resident in Barbados.

The Ministry of Health is currently responsible for the administration of a drug service. The National Health Service Board was appointed in 1984 and spent a considerable amount of its time in preparatory works so as

to establish a general practice service. Since the change in Government in 1986, the original intent of the general practice service has been abandoned. The Government considers that primary health care service can be provided through expanded and improved polyclinic services and through an upgraded community nursing service. It is, therefore, proposed to continue to upgrade the general practice service which has been established in the polyclinics and at sub-clinics which will be brought up to more acceptable standards to insure that high quality medical care is accessible to all Barbadians.

These new approaches to the provision of primary health care are not compatible with the earlier proposal to employ general medical practitioners on a contractual basis. Hence, the Government abandoned that original idea. As a consequence the major functions of the National Health Service Board are no longer required because of the shift in emphasis. This legislation which was introduced and passed in the Other Place seeks to repeal the National Health Service Board and to make provisions for those areas which are effected by the Drug Service Act to be provided for in a Schedule to the Act.

Indeed, an opportunity is being taken to correct an error which was made during the last law revision exercise in which the Drug Service Act was amended. The Amendments which are set out in the Schedule to this Bill seek to correct that Amendment of Section 17 of the National Health Service Board Act. The Amendments which were done by way of the Law Commissioner were to come into effect by proclamation but they have never been proclaimed and the Schedule will correct the error which was made by the Law Revision Commissioner.

The whole concept of the National Health Service Board therefore is being abandoned and the provision for the primary health care services will continue to be made by way of the polyclinics.

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

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Miller.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, Sir, a great deal is being made in the Other Place, on that side in this place, by the Press and other persons who ought to know better about the death and destruction of the National Health Service of Barbados.

The National Health Service, Mr. Deputy President, Sir, is more than simply the Minister of Health or is more than what the Minister of Health can stand up and boast that he will bury. The National Health Service as conceptualised by the Barbados Labour Party was a large comprehensive and very humanitarian concept. But during the 10 years of

the Barbados Labour Party Government, between 1976 and 1986, a great deal of that concept became reality, although it would not be fair to say that the very earliest concept of the National Health Service started to be put on the ground in Barbados in 1976. We in fact in my view, Mr. Deputy President, need to go back to the first Administration of the Barbados Labour Party way back in the 1950's.

Asides.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, I am now starting. I am starting to look at the establishment of a network of health centres, of a public health service in the way that Barbados had never known before, a public health service of which Barbados can be very proud, a public health service which won us in 1961 the Kettering Shield, a public health service which is a model elsewhere in the Third World not to mention of elsewhere in this region as well. But I do not want to dwell in the 1950's and 1960's. The temptation would be great because the Barbados Labour Party has a lot to boast of from that time. The present Government's thinking is lodged very much in that era. In respect to sanitation they are going back to the sanitation roots of the 1950's and 1960's, but I want to come forward to the present or closer to the present.

The major components of the National Health Service during 1976 to 1986 – there were 3. One was the National Drug Service which no subsequent Government in its right mind would ever seek to dismantle. Yet I hear the Minister of Health say that he has buried and demolished and destroyed and murdered the National Health Service of Barbados.

12.20 p.m.

He is speaking an untruth and he is seeking to create an impression to mislead and misguide the public of this country. He is seeking to undo, he thinks, the contribution that the Barbados Labour Party has made to health care in this country.

The second component of the National Health Service as conceived by the Barbados Labour Party was a network of polyclinics, of which there are eight today. Even the present Minister of Health does not know how many polyclinics there are. These polyclinics are strategically placed, each with a clearly defined catchment area, to service the entire community of this country. They were to be the avenues through which primary health care, community based health care, would be dispensed.

The third component of the National Health Service was the general practitioner service, some of which would have emanated from the polyclinics and some from other approved premises.

The quarrel between the Barbados Labour Party Government and the general practitioners of this country foundered largely on the question of mode of payment for their services. There are two modes of payment generally for doctors who work in the Government Service as far as the dispensing of health service goes. They are either paid on a fee for service basis – and this is what we all grew up with in this country, you go to the doctor, he renders a service to you and you pay for it – or the capitation basis, which is what the Barbados Labour Party was proposing, that each doctor, each general practitioner who chose to come into the service would have a number of patients within the catchment area that he was servicing, and that he would be paid, or she would be paid, on a capitation basis. So it was either fee for service or capitation, and that is where the argument foundered.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: The doctors won. I will never deny that, and since the doctors won we see the fee for service in Barbados climbing year after year after year. If you look in the household survey, you will see this, it is not anything that can be hidden.

So when I hear that the National Health Service has been laid to rest, dead and buried, and that according to this Bill the National Health Service Board Act will be repealed, largely speaking the Board will be dismantled – but this Act also speaks about funds standing to the credit of the Board, which raises of course the question not only of funds standing to the credit of the Board, but the whole concept of the health levy. There is already a view abroad in this country that if there is no health service, then there ought to be no health levy. It is nothing new, it goes back to an old cry that was heard in North America many years ago, no taxation without representation, and people are saying no levy without service. But the Government has ignored that, and this Act which is going to be repealed is talking about the transference of funds standing to the credit of the Board and funds due and owing to the Board to be paid into the Consolidated Fund.

There are many questions to be asked. I want to start with the first component of the National Health Service, and that is the National Drug Service. This was a service, the introduction of which was much criticised by the now Government. The move to bulk purchasing, the move to generic purchasing, the very concept that the three or four major killer diseases in this Barbados required drugs for people who could ill afford to pay for them, and that the Government of necessity in its delivery of health care had to give foremost priority to the whole business of the servicing of the communities in Barbados, the population of Barbados, with drugs, and so the National Drug Service was born.

Systems were well researched and set up. There was a consultant down here whose services we procured through CESO, where retired pharmacists of very large reputation came here and helped us to put it in place. It was not an easy job to persuade the pharmacists of Barbados that this was not only in the interest of all Barbadians but in their interest as well, but generally once they were made to understand they had become a part of the whole consultative process, they came around.

The drug service in Barbados is a good service. It is a model and has been put in place in other places in the Third World, in other places in the Caribbean. The Guyanese were very keen to import the concept of our drug service, and many other countries, as I say, in the Third World. In fact, in the United Kingdom where the British National Health Service had come under considerable fire from almost all sectors in that country, on a visit there it was once said to me that if they had the possibility to start their National Health service over again, they would have started in the way that we did it in Barbados. They would have done it on a phased basis, they would have started with a drug service first and then move phase by phase as we were going. It does not mean they would not have incurred the opposition of members of the health service professions, the caring professions as they are ironically called, who felt that they had interests to protect.

But there are questions which have to be asked about the drug service. In my time a national drug formulary was published on a regular basis. I have not seen it in recent years. Maybe I have not seen it because it has not come my way, or I have not sufficiently gone out of my way to find it, but I would want to ask the date of the most recent publication of the national drug formulary of Barbados. This is the booklet which ought to be published on a yearly basis setting out all of the drugs, generic and otherwise, used in the national drug service – an annual account and audit, and we see reference to it in the Schedule, which in my view ought to be laid in both Houses of Parliament, even if it is not required ought to be laid for our general information.

12.30 p.m.

I do not have any recollection of the last time that I have seen any published report of any kind in respect of that drug service. The National Drug Service has a specialised service within it where drugs are provided free of cost to people who are over the age of 65, in other words, our pensioners, children under the age of 16 which include children in the school system for the most part, and people who have the misfortune to suffer from what I describe as these great killer diseases in Barbados, people who are hypertensive, people who are diabetic, people who have cancers, and we had hoped as time went on to add to this category the number of people both young, middle aged and

old who suffer with asthma and other respiratory diseases. It was thought that these might one day be added to this special category where people, once their prescriptions were written by doctors serving in the National Health Service could get their drugs free of cost.

I hope that no attempt will ever be made to remove that special service from people who are beneficiaries of it today and people who though they least suspect may find themselves beneficiaries of it tomorrow, next month, next year and whenever. There was talk in recent times about the cost of the National Health Service escalating beyond control. If that in fact has occurred, then in my view those costs can be brought under control, and any effort to do so I hope will be done in close consultation with the pharmaceutical profession in this country. We have to face the fact, Mr. Deputy President, that the way in which health care is delivered nowadays is evolving, it is changing. The pharmacist does not play the role today that he did when we were children. In fact the modern pharmacy, the smallest of its commodities across the counter would be drugs. The modern pharmacy is now into cosmetics. It is like a mini supermarket; it is into stationery; it's into toiletries. It's into almost anything that you would find in what we call the mini market or the little First Aid at the side of the street today, because the whole business of the dispensing of drugs has undergone dramatic change in recent years. It has to do with the scientific advancement and it has to do with the whole structure of health care as well, and the national drug service was designed with all of this in mind; but as pharmacy it still practised in Barbados today, in my view it is important that the advice of dispensing pharmacists, the few who remain in our community, ought to be seriously canvassed.

There are other concerns that I have about the National Drug Service, but suffice to say at this stage that that phase, that aspect, that component, that sector of the National Health Service is alive and well in Barbados today, and I want to reassure Barbadians who are still today beneficiaries of it that it will continue to be alive and well. It cannot be buried, it cannot be destroyed or murdered by this or any other legislation.

The other component that I want to address has to do with the polyclinics. There is a network of eight polyclinics, some of them upgraded health centres. I heard the Prime Minister in another Place yesterday speaking of a Development Plan 1988-93. I am willing to make this document a document of the House and I wish to quote from it. "The party has put many aspects of the national health service

Asides.

SENATOR Miss. B. A. MILLER: I will tell them what it is afterwards because they are not going to believe that this is what I am reading from. "It implemented its plan to decentralise and upgrade primary health delivery services by completing a number of polyclinics placed at strategic points easily accessible to all Barbadians. In 1982 polyclinics were completed at Wildey, Warrens, and Oistins. These were followed by Ladymeade in 1985. The completion of the Glebe polyclinic early in the life of the new Barbados Labour Party administration will bring the number to eight. The re-elected BLP will extend existing facilities at Black Rock, Belleplaine and Gall Hill, St. John, and a fab-like clinic will be established in the Scotland district. The Party believes that the integration of services through this network of polyclinics is essential to primary care."

I was reading, Sir, from the Barbados Labour Party manifesto 1986. I wish to read from today's Daily Nation dated Wednesday, December 21, 1988, and I am prepared to make this, too, a document of the House. This is what the Prime Minister said yesterday. I just want Members to be aware of some familiarity between the two narratives.

"In the area of Health the plan spells out the provision of improved care at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital." Perhaps I should have made reference to that here too. At page 25 of the Barbados Labour Party manifesto, I had better read all, it is a lot

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Miller, are you quoting from the newspaper or from the

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: No, I am with the manifesto again.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: All right.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: "The construction of a new five storey annex and five storey in-fill block and reconstruction and refurbishing of parts of the main building of the Queen Elizabeth hospital" Work on this project has already commenced and I am happy to say, Mr. Deputy President, has been completed. Unfortunately this new wing at the Queen Elizabeth hospital cannot after many months past the completion date, be made available for use of the public of Barbados because equipment and other matters which have to do with the appointment of staff have not been completed by the Ministry of Health, after two and a half years. And at page 25 I continue to read:

"Completing the feasibility study which is at present being undertaken to determine the need for a new psychiatric hospital....." and I go on "restructuring the services being delivered to the elderly in the geriatric

institutions and in the community in general, a feasibility study is at present being undertaken on this with assistance of the Pan American Health Organisation. External assistance will be sought to implement such of the studied proposals as are accepted."

Now I turn to the newspaper, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: You may not quote from the newspaper.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I may not quote from the newspaper?

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: No. Is it a document of the House?

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I am willing to make it a document of the House. The Prime Minister said last night and I quote:

"In the area of health, the plan spells out the provision of improved care at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the St. Michael Geriatric Hospital, the Psychiatric Hospital and the polyclinics. These (meaning the polyclinics, I imagine)" will all play key roles in Government's efforts to decentralise health care."

For the first time we are hearing that word out of the mouth of the Democratic Labour Party. You would have heard it when I read from the manifesto a few minutes ago.

"New polyclinics will be built at" (and they didn't even have, what shall I say, they did not even have the deviousness to at least switch around the words so that you may feel that they did not copy directly from this document in the same order.) "New polyclinics will be built at Black Rock, Belleplaine, Gall Hill, St. John and in St. Joseph." And then it goes on. St. Joseph is not new; we spoke about the Scotland district, part of which is in St. Joseph, so don't be fooled by that, Senator Blackman. Don't be fooled by any of it, because in truth and in fact this Development Plan is a straight copy of the Barbados Labour Party manifesto. I stayed up in my bed until one o'clock this morning underlining page by page.
12.40 p.m.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: No. We are dealing with Health and you are not in the Chair and I addressed the Chair. I am dealing with the Development Plan for 1988-1993 which talked about the area of Health. We are talking about the abolition of a National Health Service Board, a major piece of legislation which the Government thinks that by abolishing the National Health Service Board

they will fool the people of Barbados that the National Health Service has been abolished but it has not been abolished. I will come back to that later.

The network of polyclinics has not been abolished. The National Drug Service cannot be abolished but there are questions to be asked about the polyclinics as well.

I am deeply concerned, Sir, with the reduction and cut-back in services which were being offered by the polyclinics in 1985 and 1986. Polyclinics were opened until 8:00 and 9:00 at night. You could go there and see you G.P. and I am speaking whereof I know having attended myself and having taken people there to various polyclinics for attention, and I am very deeply concerned that in the last two and a half years many of the services and a comprehensive array of services which were available at the polyclinics had been cut back and many new services which were due to come on at the polyclinics failed to come on and now we have the Minister of Health boasting about expansion of services in the polyclinics.

He never fooled anybody. People who attend know what was taken away and what is now being alleged to be given back and they are not going to believe it until it is actually given back.

The St. Joseph Hospital had been purchased by the Government, many millions of dollars, more than reasonable valuation recommended that the property was worth. That is neither here nor there. That is water under the bridge. I hope that the people from whom it was purchased will get their money and I suspect that they are going to get theirs before all these people who are waiting for monies in respect to property and land acquired by the Government.

The Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, I believe, are going to get their millions long before the little old lady whose little piece of land at the corner was acquired for road widening, or road repair, or road construction purposes.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: The St. Joseph Hospital for many months now has 5 employees. There are 5 watchmen watching an empty building. There is nothing in the building worth taking away. Whatever was left is now derelict, obsolete and unfit for use in a health care institution.

No money has been voted by this Parliament of Barbados, that I know of, for the refurbishment, or the equipment, or the staffing of the St. Joseph Hospital and we are told by the Prime Minister that the St. Joseph Hospital

will be reintegrated into the health system and will be part and parcel of the health institutions providing health care services to the northern part of this island.

I do not like that northern talk. Barbados is too small. I would not like to feel that people from the City of Bridgetown if they were somewhere down Speightstown visiting, or spending time, could not have an easy access to the St. Joseph Hospital if and when it ever becomes a health care institution of whatever kind because we are not yet told what kind of institution it is going to end up being. I would not like to think that those people would not be able to have access or as easy and direct access as people who live in the northern parishes. I do not like that kind of divisiveness.

In Barbados there is no north and south and east and west. All the health care institutions are to service all the people of Barbados and I take some exception to that but the Prime Minister belongs to a northern cabal. You will notice in all of this none of these people over there hold seats, of course, none of us over here do either but if you look carefully at the distribution between constituencies in this Development Plan a northern profile will emerge, but more of that later.

I am very concerned that in the face of the continued collection of the health levy, in the face of millions spent on the purchase of the St. Joseph Hospital that it continues to sit derelict in St. Peter guarded by 5 watchmen paid out of the purse of the taxpayers and that we cannot yet hear a single word about refurbishing and equipping that hospital furthermore staffing that hospital. Of course, we hear that there is a shortage of nurses and the former Government is blamed for that.

When I was approached, as Minister of Health, by the superintendents and the managers of certain health facilities in North America about coming here to recruit nurses and other health care personnel for the health care services in North America I made it clear at the time, it did not make me popular, that the national health care of Barbados meaning the entire health service of Barbados had need of its own health professionals.

I was criticized at the time. I was reminded that in the 1950s that we had trained nurses for export which was not strictly true. A post-war shortage arose and a whole bunch of Barbadian young women, who had not been trained here at the School of Nursing, went to England to be trained as nurses to fulfil the depopulated stacks of the post war hospital system in United Kingdom and Wales and elsewhere.

But, people hold on to these bits of mythology but I was criticized at the time because it was not only nurses. There were lab technicians, pharmacists, therapists of

several different kinds, radio therapists, doctors with very highly specialized skills which the taxpayers helped to train and they became part of the brain drain. This is long after post war. I am talking about the brain drain of the 1960s and the 1970s, but knowing what the Barbados Labour Party was planning by way of a National Health Service, I resisted as far as I could the blandishments of these institutions.

A new Government comes into place and they are all about here staying in posh hotels, recruiting them hand over fist. Not only here, they are doing it in other Third World countries as well but we fell into that trap and if that Government had had a plan, or a policy, or a programme in respect of health, national health or any otherwise, they would not have encouraged it.

I am not suggesting that you could prevent it but you can discourage it. There are ways and means and all the encouragement was given. All the publicity in the world was given. They were given as easy access as they could to all that they needed to have and so we have seen, can you imagine in the late 1980s, an exodus of expensively highly trained health care personnel to North America so now the taxpayers of Barbados – we know what we had in the pipeline – We know what the Barbados Labour Party had in the pipeline but the taxpayers now will start afresh and the process goes on and on and on.

12.50 p.m.

Ways and means have to be found to hold the training that cost us so dearly here where it was intended for.

Health care, the health portfolio, I should say, Mr. Deputy President, Sir, encompasses sanitation and certain matters to do with the environment. Of course it is to be deeply regretted that there is no longer any Ministry of the Environment in Barbados. But there is deep concern abroad in this country about the obviously deteriorating standards of public sanitation, not only the collection service, Sir, but other aspects of the role and function of the Sanitation Authority.

And there are other matters which touch upon the national health, Mr. Deputy President, Sir, that I want to advert to. And one of those matters has to do with illicit drugs. It is a great threat to the national health service of this country and both of the major Parties in Barbados in their Manifestoes of 1986 made reference to it, serious references.

In recent weeks, we have seen a very untoward development. Last night the Prime Minister himself made a reference to a very ugly, disgraceful and dangerous blot upon the national reputation, the national image, the national integrity and not to mention the potential for the

national health. He spoke of a battle which it is clear to me, and to other Barbadians I am sure, has been very badly bungled from the beginning. And I must tell you that other Barbadians along with myself and particularly after the Prime Minister's Statement last night have come to the conclusion that a cover up of some kind is or was in process.

I am hoping that the Prime Minister will yet, before the end of 1988 behave with a certain immediacy and a certain firmness. Because I do not know how Barbados can be a leading country in the Caribbean against the trafficking of illegal drugs, and yet at the same time appear to be covering up trafficking at the level of the diplomatic service.

I have seen over the past two years the police harassing and sweeping through Chapman Lane in the City of Bridgetown, young men who are unemployed and who continue to be unemployed having been promised jobs by this Government. And yet the people who are employed by this Government and in no less a service than the diplomatic service appear to be untouched in the face of what is clearly now overwhelming evidence.

Now, Mr. Deputy President, Sir, I want to ask the question and this touches on the national health, I do not think anybody can dare to gainsay that, how can the Government of Barbados be working, as we know it is, with the United Nations Division of Narcotics and Drugs which is designed, we are told, among other things to formulate guidelines for responding to drug trafficking problems which threaten the security, the stability and health of Barbados, if the Barbados diplomatic pouch is a vehicle for drug trafficking.

I gather that the Minister of Foreign Affairs has put his portfolio at the discretion of the Prime Minister. He nods that he has not.

But I must tell you, Mr. Deputy President, Sir, Ministers of the Crown in systems, Westminster Model, parliamentary systems, democratic parliamentary I should say, such as ours, have resigned for less.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: In my view, Mr. Deputy President – You would not say that outside because I would sue you

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Please address the Chair.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: down to your toenails.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Miller.....

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: You would not say that outside.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: please address the Chair.

Aside.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Miller, please address the Chair.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I address the Chair.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: And Senator Boxill, please refrain from the asides.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I address the Chair.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: You must have the courage to say outside what you would say in here.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Miller, please address the Chair.

Aside.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Boxill, refrain from the asides.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, Sir, in my view, the Mission at Caracas in Venezuela should be closed and immediately! It should have been closed many days ago. It is a small Mission. You are not talking about no more than how many? Three, four, six people at the most if so many. There is no large balance of trade between us and Venezuela. We do not have anything to lose. We have everything to gain by the Prime Minister standing up like a man, like a Prime Minister and appearing clearly to stamp his foot on it and break the connection. Because in my view, everyone is now tainted.

I noticed in the Statement last night a very snide aside about one Mr. Trotman, not of diplomatic rank or status having been awarded a Barbados Service Star in 1984, meaning in the time of the Barbados Labour Party. The question you must ask is, who recommended him for that award?

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Who recommended him for that award?

Normally in these matters, as the Leader of Government Business in here knows, the Head of Mission does that. And this is a man as one newspaper very, very properly pointed out today was appointed in the time of the Democratic Labour Party. But that is a lot of cheap political horse trading and I do not want to get into that!

What the Prime Minister failed to say and what I know is within his knowledge is that the Trotman son here who is not employed by the Barbados Mission or by the Barbados Government Service holds a Venezuelan Diplomatic Passport. Now his father who works with the Mission in Venezuela is not a diplomatic person, he does not hold diplomatic status. But the Trotman here in Barbados, as the Prime Minister well knows, holds a Venezuelan Diplomatic Passport. There are a lot of questions. There are a lot of people who said a lot of what the Prime Minister said last night when Watergate broke.

And I am suggesting that there is a dirty diplomatic cake that needs to be investigated by this Government. Our reputation has been sullied. Our diplomatic bags will never be trusted for a long time to come. And the Prime Minister needs to take decisive action. He needs to put his foot down and to show that he is prepared to cut this connection, because there is clearly a connection. And firing some low level type person does not fool anybody, does not impress anybody in Barbados. It has held us up to terrible ridicule in the international world and international affairs.

In my view, all of them should be recalled. They should have been recalled a long time ago and they should never again be deployed in the diplomatic service because they are now tainted forever.

You do not know to what vulnerabilities drug traffickers appeal. And since the diplomatic bag is so sensitive and since we do not know within the Mission in Caracas or even here in Barbados who has or had access to the diplomatic bag, it is very important that none of those persons should continue to work in the diplomatic service. The risks are too great.

They are buying whole Governments, drug traffickers! They are buying whole Governments! You are hearing that in some countries in Central and South America that whole Governments now are being dictated to by drug barons. We claim that we do not want to see that happen in Barbados. I do not want to see that happen in Barbados. I want to continue to live in a country the like of which I grew up in. 1.00 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Miller, let us keep it relevant.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, we are relevant because all of this has to do with the national health. People like that are found floating in the carenage and washing up on beaches.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Let us keep it to the debate.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: But the very drastic action in my view, Mr. Deputy President, Sir, has to be taken. It has not yet been taken by this Government for the restoration of international confidence in the integrity of Barbados Foreign Service. It absolutely has to be done and it still has not yet been done. So that feeble kind of police statement last night has not fooled anybody, and it has not satisfied anybody. The Government must not try to trade on the fact that the average person on the streets of Barbados may not have a sufficiently keen idea of just how serious, and this is not any one incident. The Prime Minister had to know as he spoke last night that there have been prior incidents involving the same personnel before this one at the end of November. I am very unhappy about it because it would appear that the Government is speaking with a forked tongue. This has not happened in any private sector organisation. This has happened at the heart of the Government Diplomatic Service. How can we sit down then in the U.N. and other councils, not to mention Caribbean Councils, and say that we are helping to put together a plan to contain and to control this terrible scourge as was the Prime Minister's word? How can you lay claim to that and expect people to treat you with respect and to have confidence in your veracity when you appear to be glossing over and I go as far to say covering up what is clearly a very serious, dangerous, and nasty drug connection directly linked to the Civil and Government Service in this country?

Mr. Deputy President, Sir, at this stage there is not a great deal more that I propose to say in respect of this National Health Service Board Act. At another stage there are points which will be raised and I take my seat.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Tull.....Senator Tudor.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Sir, I think that Senators would now find it convenient to have their luncheon break, I, therefore, beg to move the suspension of this sitting until 2 o'clock.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to, and Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT suspended the sitting accordingly.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The sitting is now resumed.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy President, Senator Miller during the session before lunch has given a lot of information in the relationship of the National Drug Service and the state of public health in Barbados. In the second part of her address, she spoke about the impact of illegal drugs on the health system in Barbados and particularly zeroed in on the recent report of the transferring of cocaine in the diplomatic bag coming out of Venezuela. All those, Mr. Deputy President, who have any idea of what is happening in the psychiatric hospital in Barbados and who are aware of the large number of young people who are now patients in that institution because of the use or over-use and addiction to the illegal drugs would consider the recent disclosure of the transfer of drugs in our diplomatic bag as of extreme and significant importance.

The Prime Minister last evening made what I consider a sanitized and self-serving statement on this matter. It is common knowledge that the Cabinet of Barbados spent 2 Cabinet meetings over a period of 2 weeks trying to beat out a statement to be made by the Prime Minister and it was only after a lot of reviewing and editing and revising that the statement that was given out by the Prime Minister was finally agreed on.

I want, Mr. Deputy President, without being very lurid, to give my own personal view of this whole matter since for someone who has worked both as Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, and as Minister of Foreign Affairs of this country, I have more than a passing acquaintance with what transpires in both of those departments.

We had, Mr. Deputy President, before the elections of 1986 statements made up and down this country by Members of this Government today, then Opposition, wickedly in my view, seeking to connect Members of the former Administration with the drug trade in this country. I did not then and I do not now know of any evidence on which those charges were based. I was the Minister of Legal Affairs with responsibility for the Police and on several occasions both privately with the Commissioner and my Permanent Secretary discussed the question of drugs and the reasonable probability that so-called people in high places were involved. I, at the time on the floor of the House of Assembly with the Commissioner of Police sitting in the gallery, invited Members of the then Opposition to

produce whatever evidence they could to the Commissioner in relation to a number of the more alarming statements that were being made. One charge was made that there was a cocaine factory in a well known West Coast hotel. Another Member of the then Opposition charged that cocaine was being imported into Barbados in window frames by a certain importer into this country.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Tull, would you like to be as relevant as you can to the National Health Service?

SENATOR L. R. TULL: I am dealing with the devastating effect that drugs have on the health of young people in Barbados and I really cannot deal with it divorced from sources. I know that Your Honour has seen the connection. There is an obvious connection between that and what I am talking about. That is why in my preamble I pointed out the very sorry situation that is existing in the mental hospital in Barbados. To cut off debate on something that is relevant to the health situation in Barbados as the importation and use and abuse of illegal drugs would be in my view a very unfortunate decision. But I will try to keep it within the parameters that you have set. I was making the point that charges were made at one time, not supported by any evidence, and things changed. I remember well the present Attorney General in a television and radio interview setting out the position of the new administration in relation to drugs. It was only not forward looking, if there was a policy at all, but it sought to continue the recrimination of the past by touching on things that the Attorney General knew were not factual.
2.10 p.m.

The situation today, Your Honour – and I am not going to be very long on this, because Senator Miller has dealt with it in a way that has done me proud – is that the diplomatic bag in Venezuela, according to reports, has seen cocaine pass through on more than one occasion, that this one we are hearing about now is not the first time.

The second thing I want to say, and as I say, I am not making any alarming statements, the second thing about it is that the reason why there was suspicion of a certain package was because of previous knowledge of illegal material passing through the diplomatic bag.

The third point I want to make – I might as well get this off, Sir, then we can deal with the other things – is that the gentleman who was dismissed from his job in Caracas was dismissed from his job after the statement was made by the Leader of the Opposition. In other words, the Government found no reason to dismiss him for the eight or nine or ten days between the discovery of this parcel and the statement of the Leader of the Opposition, and one can

reasonably assume that it is because of the statement of the Leader that some action was taken.

I also want to say, Mr. Deputy President, that it is more than passing coincidence, as Senator Miller has said, that the young man whose name is bandied about and charged in Barbados not in relation to this four pounds and a few ounces, but in relation to other things, is the holder of a Venezuelan diplomatic passport. I read in the newspaper that Mr. Trotman in Venezuela is not the holder of a Barbados diplomatic passport, which is strange, because it is normal for the employees in our offices overseas, if they are Barbadians, to carry Barbados diplomatic passports.

I do not know what is the relevance of that point in the Prime Minister's statement. As I said, it was a self-serving statement, and it was really sanitised to the extent that it excluded a number of important details that would have helped the country to understand better the flow of illegal drugs from that source to Barbados, and, please Your Honour, to understand about its distribution in Barbados and the effect it is having on a number of people in this country.

I want also to raise the question of the fact that there was no officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when this gentleman turned up to receive a package. It was a working day, it was not a Saturday or a Sunday, as far as I gather, and it is a very weak statement to say that nobody was present at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to hand over the package when the man came there.

I cannot think, from one who has had experience in that Ministry, of any time during a working day when there is not an officer of the Ministry present. I do not understand the import of that statement, but what comes through to me very clearly is that the whole matter was either bungled or deliberately handled in such a way as to allow those who were guilty to escape.

I also want to mention, Mr. Deputy President, that the word is – and I am raising it only as a question now to the Minister, I am sure he will answer me when he has a chance to reply – that an officer of the Venezuelan Embassy in Barbados hurriedly terminated his employment with the Embassy in Barbados and left at the time that this disclosure was made. I want to know from the Minister, is there a connection between these two things?

There is only one other question I want to raise in relation to that.

SENATOR T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Deputy President, on more than one occasion....

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT : Is this on a point of order?

SENATOR T. A. PRESCOD: On a point of order. On more than one occasion I spoke in here for a short while and just shifted a little way from the relevance of the subject matter and I have been cautioned. I am wondering if on this occasion Senator Tull is not extending this freedom a bit too far. I believe that he is too extensive.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: An appeal by the members of the Government for light on this matter is understandable in the circumstances, but there are certain things that must be said, and we will say them.

For example, Mr. Deputy President, when the Prime Minister is asking the members of this side to understand that things are sensitive and not to put them out into the open, but to deal with them – to use his words – with discretion, his memory must have been very short indeed, because the Attorney General went, I believe it was on the 18th August, 1986, and made disclosures about matters that were still pending on public radio and television. For instance, one of the things he said then was that on 14th July, 1986 a parcel of drugs addressed to the Minister of Health had come into Grantley Adams Airport and was there intercepted. This was only between July and August, and therefore the matter was a hot issue.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I must ask you, Senator Tull, to restrict your debate to the matter.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Okay, let us deal with the Psychiatric Hospital and the National Health Service. Senator Miller has extremely competently lectured the members on the other side about the National Health Service and the development of health strategy and health care in Barbados over the past few years, and she had made the point that the Development Plan that was laid in Parliament here today, and was outlined by the Prime Minister last evening, copied, almost verbatim, sections of the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party 1986.

I will tell Senator Miller she must not be disturbed by that, because they say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and I know that Senator Miller's hand was the heaviest, if not the only one, in developing that particular part of the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party and therefore she can see it as an endorsement of her own ideas and she should feel proud about it.

In dealing with the whole question of the development of the health services in Barbados, and indeed the money that is being levied for health services, a significant part of that money, as we see it on this side, has to be allocated towards rehabilitation of drug addicts and must be used for

the purpose of education in relation to the abuse of illegal drugs.

2.20 p.m.

A significant part of it must be used also for providing the investigative tools for the detection of criminal activity in relation to the importation, use and distribution of illegal drugs in this country. If one considers, and I believe all decent thinking people in this society and all sane ones will agree that that is perhaps the most important aspect of our health problems in Barbados today, if one accepts that, then we cannot, Mr. Deputy President, lightly gloss over the very dramatic disclosures that have been made in the past week or so in respect of this matter.

Now I understand that the Ambassador of Barbados to Venezuela actually came to Barbados and argued a case for the same man who has been dismissed. That is passing strange. The Head of Mission comes to Barbados and he argues vociferously on behalf of a man who was dismissed thereafter and it raises the question that Senator Miller raised earlier: what kind of action must Barbados take to redeem its good name. I have travelled over the world over a number of years in the business of Barbados, and one of the things that constantly came up like a bad penny were the comments from people in Government and the diplomatic field from many countries in the world, all five continents, about the incident about the diplomat and the dog. People would always say: what's become of the fellow who used to represent Barbados at the UN? What's his name again? After a while I would understand what they meant.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: This is really not relevant to the matter in hand.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Well, Sir, you can't circumscribe the debate to such an extent that you cannot give an example. I am giving an example of what I consider to be the long term effects of something that has happened recently. It is not the major thrust of my contribution to this debate.

The point is made anyway, Sir, about the dog and the diplomat, and we are going to find ourselves in the same position a long time to come in respect of the cocaine in the diplomatic bag. We are going to hear it next year and five years, and ten years and fifteen years from now, and we are going to hear it in every corner of the globe, and that is why I am asking Your Honour not to press me in too closely because this is a matter of fundamental importance to the integrity of the national and international life and posture of this community.

Now, Mr. Deputy President, I do not want to cover a lot of the ground that has already been covered by my

colleague Senator Miller, but I do want as a lawyer and as a former Minister of Legal Affairs and Attorney General of this country to say that anyone who sends, exports, imports, or is responsible for bringing drugs into this country in my submission is subject to the law of this country, the Narcotics Act, and the fact that the Government has obviously fooled itself into believing that a dismissal of a junior officer is the end of the matter in my mind is a whole lot of foolishness. The amount of cocaine we are talking about is a lot, and if the legal authorities, the police and the DPP's office feel that prosecution should be brought in respect of it, then the statement made by the Government which amounts to an exemption from prosecution, an excuse from prosecution is wrongful interference in the legal system in this country. So while, on the one hand, we hear we are to be discreet on this side and do not say anything, we see a high-handed approach by the Government interfering at a vital stage, before investigations are concluded into what is one of the most important things that has happened in criminal activity in this country.

I want that addressed because who said that the Director of Public Prosecutions is not going to bring charges, and when they say that the man in Venezuela does not have a diplomatic passport, so much the better - Venezuelan or Barbadian, because the laws of extradition allow the Government of Barbados to have the man, if he is the man, brought to Barbados to be subject to the jurisdiction of the courts of this country. But I am not putting any weight on him, Sir, because I believe that they just throw in a small fish to divert attention from the far more important aspects of this case. You think you can throw a sop to the people and say "ah, they catch a little fellow now, that's the end of the matter;" but more questions are being asked in this country and they have to be answered. The Government can understand that the Opposition will not let the matter rest until a full and satisfactory explanation is given to the people of this country. I say no more at this time.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Deputy President, I promise you not to explore the wider ramifications and stick to the national health service. The Estimates we considered this year, Sir, made provision for some thing like \$8 million for expenditure on the national health drug service. I have a concern, Sir, that in the provision of this service a number of things are happening. One is that I note that a number of business houses in Bridgetown who supply the drugs are frequently out of pocket too long in receipt of their funds from the appropriate governmental agency by way of refund, but the other concern I have, Sir, is this: can this country continue to afford the provision of drugs at a subsidised price without having a long term deleterious effect on the financial resources of the country?

We pride ourselves, Sir, on having a social infrastructure second to none for a third world country. It flies in the face of what the first world countries who pioneered this health care social service development, such countries as Scandinavia, having to almost step back from it because of the rising costs and the impact on their total economy, and I wonder whether we can continue to afford it. I have no problem, Sir, with our health clinics and the fact that people sixty-five years or over or under sixteen should be assisted, but, Sir, we have been giving this assistance without regard to means. Almost by way of an aside, it is like making a uniform grant available to every one who is going to school at 11+ whether they can afford to give the uniform or not, and I would like to say, Sir, that perhaps we need to ask ourselves the question, can we afford the system as is, where people get the drugs at that age without requiring them to make any financial contribution whatsoever? And it need not be a large one.

They have had to move in the United Kingdom where they say that she is a hard woman, Mrs. Thatcher, to make people make some contributions towards the prescription grant for the service for eyes and other things, but in the process the British economy, the British financial strength has reached the point where they are no longer one of the sick economies of Europe. We cannot, in my submission, in this country, keep on the spread of freenesses.
2.30 p.m.

Now, I know that I am not going to get much support on this but this is the way I feel about it.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Sir.

I hope that Senator Blackman is not misleading himself. It is not everyone in Barbados who is entitled to free drugs. People like he and I have to pay. It is only those over 65 and those under 16. I do not think that Senator Blackman can be saying that those over 65 and those with the chronic diseases that I listed earlier and children under 16 should be made to pay.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Your point is well taken.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Thank you, Sir.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Deputy President, I said I recognize that it only applies to those over 65 and under 16. I did say that but, with great respect, Senator Tudor says it only applies to people like himself and I say, with respect, that Senator Tudor can afford to pay for his drugs without having them for free.

I know that it is a matter dear to Senator Miller's heart and I am not trying to steal her thunder for her part in

putting the system in place but I do not think that from a point of view of what the country can afford there is a kind of freeness that I am putting that if you ask them to pay \$5, \$10 on account of the cost of drugs costing \$1 500, no problem, but it is the business of totality of freeness regardless of means I want to register a voice against.

There are people – Senator Tudor says it does not apply to him. There are others whoever, I can think of retired business executives in Bridgetown, who retire on a pension in excess of \$4 500 a month who can pay for their drugs but they get them for free and I think that we need to look, perhaps, at whether it should be across the board, merely on account of the ascent of age, either up or down, according to the qualifying point or whether there should not be some other criteria put in place before you just go and get your drugs free if you are over 65 or under the age of 16.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Mr. Deputy President, I did not particularly wish to make much of an input into the debate which is the substantive matter before us because I think my colleague will deal with all those points which arise out of that, the points from the three speeches which have come from the Other Side.

I have raised it and I must crave your indulgence not to speak about the National Health Service but there are other matters which were raised in the course of the debate and I hope you will be inclined to believe that the width and the depth accorded to other Members may be part of the indulgence you showed to me.

Let me say this from the beginning in respect of myself and, also, in respect of the members of the Cabinet in which I sit and I wish to emphasize this and to repeat it. Every word spoken by the Prime Minister of Barbados last evening in respect to the matter which has been the subject and part of this debate represents the facts of the case as thoroughly gone into by ourselves and in no way did Prime Minister Sandiford palliate or cover up, or side step any of the facts as we knew them.

I also wish to say this. When I say "as we knew them", I do not mean it in the sense that if tomorrow something else should come out I could then shelter under that. I literally mean as we knew and I would add, as we now know them.

I would also like to say this that in respect of this whole matter I personally am happy and comfortable in saying that no member of the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and no member of the diplomatic staff of the Embassy in Caracas has had any part to play in this melancholy and disgraceful affair.

I can say this, not only because I believe it, but because I have found it upon evidence to be so and if I did not wish to say it, I would not say it, and more important than this, if I had any scruple about it, I would keep off the subject all together so far as I could.

The second thing I want to say is that in our system, and I have to divert just for a minute or so, which we very lawlessly call the Westminster system, in the system we work in Barbados, there is not a mechanism for proper two-party examination of sensitive national security matters as these.

In the United Kingdom, all the members of the front benches on both sides would be members of the Queen's Privy Council. This would entitle them to share, and share freely, information on all matters and to provide for easy and frequent contact between the senior persons on the government front bench in both Houses and those who, for the time being, are in Opposition and at the level of their membership of the Privy Council; all disclosures would be made known but more important than that, the Government Privy Councillors would be able to say to the Opposition Privy Councillors, look, there is, perhaps, another parameter to this matter which needs examination. As soon as this examination is complete, or whenever it is, we will return to you with this matter and we will be able to see then the wider implications of what does not now at the moment appear to be more than what we have described to you. This is how it would be.

I say this to emphasize again that what we have spoken in public is no more than we know. We do not rule out other possibilities. I am unable to answer Senator Tull's query about the diplomatic officer of another country who may or, according to him, have left the country and has not returned. I am unable to respond to that and I do not know even so the implications between that situation and anything we are now discussing.

I first knew of this matter 2 or 3 days after I returned to office from convalescence and it is nearly a month now that it has been occupying our attention as not only a more sensitive matter, but a matter of the utmost importance to the national security of this country and to its reputation.
2.40 p.m.

And no Minister of the Crown in Barbados, no matter which Party makes up the Government, would act on less than the highest sense of duty in examining a matter like this. And it is upon that basis I am saying this, because I wish it to be made perfectly clear that in no part of this matter is the Cabinet of Barbados equivocating or concealing anything. All that we have said through the mouth of the Prime Minister is all that we know at this moment. If anybody knows anything more than we do,

well, then it must certainly be their public duty to make the proper authorities aware of what they know which would perhaps add or shed some light to what is already disclosed.

I wish therefore to absolve the Cabinet of Barbados unequivocally from any taint or slur of cover-up in this matter, as has been suggested.

I also want to say this, and I could say this, I do not know who would agree with me, I do not need any confirmation of my view on this, I am personally very sorry for Mr. Rufus Trotman. My contact with him has not been very great. I have seen him and spoken with him two or three times, mostly during my visit to Venezuela last year when I accompanied the Prime Minister to the official visit to President Lusinchi. I had only heard his name before. But all the Ambassadors under whom he has served, including the present one and all the other people who have known him have expressed to me shock and surprise that he should be part of this particular matter.

And all I can say in addition to that is we would not have dismissed Mr. Rufus Trotman, had Mr. Rufus Trotman himself not admitted that it was he who unlawfully and without permission sent off the package to his son.

My understanding from Ambassador Connell is that when he interviewed Mr. Trotman on his matter, he said, that is the senior Trotman said that his son had left this parcel in his apartment, that is in the father's apartment after a visit to Venezuela recently and had called him back from here to ask him to send it for him. That is what Mr. Trotman senior has said. And that he accommodated his son in that respect and that he did not ask for permission to put this parcel in the bag. And I may pause here to say that.....

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Well you see, this is the difficulty between us. If somebody admits that he did something which he knew he should not have done and if together with that what he has done commits an offence of the most serious character.....

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Well then we are talking law. If you want to talk law, that has to be talked in another arena. But I am telling this Senate that Mr. Trotman admitted to the Ambassador that he himself, and nobody else, obeying the request of his son had pushed this thing in the bag without authority.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Well if you know it happens with every bag, except for the particular case of narcotics, you cannot make out therefore that Barbados is in a different position from any other country.

I personally know the Senator has been a Minister of Foreign Affairs and he too knows as I know that the things which go into diplomatic pouches would stagger you. In the case of one country, two hams were sent. And there was a mix-up from one country to another, to their own country.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Yes, yes, yes. Yes, yes, yes. Yes, yes, yes. Two hams were sent.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Not hands, hams. Yes. I am not claiming that they were large. I do not know the size. But I know this to be a fact. Two hams were sent from one country to another and because a plane broke down after it had been loaded and could not be unloaded, by the time the pouch reached the country of its destination, people thought that a corpse had come. This happened. But you may say that this is a flippant case.

But there has been the smuggling of jewelry, of all sorts of precious stones, of ammunition. I believe there are Senators who will recall that terrible incident which took place in the United Kingdom – was it last year? – two years ago, from the Libyan Embassy when diplomats of that Embassy shot an English policeman, and it was part of the evidence in investigating that case that ammunition had come into the country in the diplomatic pouch. This is something that all countries have to face. I do not in saying that minimize the seriousness of this.

But I should like the public of Barbados to know that with 160 sovereign countries enjoying diplomatic relations with each other and in probably half of those countries there are embassies equal to the number of sovereign states there are, there are quite frequent incidents involving the diplomatic pouch.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Well I am flattered to believe that you think Barbados immuned from these things. I cannot agree with you. I am sorry as you are that this has happened. But I must say that sorry as I am, I cannot exempt my country from some of the things, however unfortunate, that sometimes go on in respect of other countries.

So Mr. Trotman admitted his action. So we have not pounced on him to make him a scapegoat. And perhaps if he had not been honourable enough to do so, the matter would be hanging fire in a more serious way than it has now. And I say on the floor of this Senate that I am personally sorry it is he because from what little contact I have had with him, he is a person who in my judgment would earn the respect of anybody who has come into contact with him. So I should like this to be known.

I do not think therefore I could agree with the Senator when he says that the Mission at Caracas should be closed. And I should also like to say too that I cannot agree with Senator Tull when he says that it obviously is passing strange, I am paraphrasing him, that Mr. Rufus Trotman should not have had a diplomatic passport. It is not within my knowledge that all levels of employees in diplomatic missions are entitled to diplomatic passports. I do not know that to be a fact. This is something I will investigate. But I do not think that a clerical officer on the non-diplomatic staff, as there must be in most embassies of all countries enjoy the privilege of having diplomatic passports. In fact if that were so, it would be most unwise. So I personally could not recommend it. And I think therefore that not everybody that works in a Mission or for a Mission is entitled to a diplomatic passport.

Now the Senator also said that there is some question about why an officer was not present, that is to say, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here when young Trotman called. My information is and I can only speak upon information received in this particular instance, because I do not know the facts of that particular slot of the matter myself of my own knowledge, was that he called when people in the cypher office were at lunch, persons who would themselves have been responsible for delivering it. And it could well be that young Mr. Trotman well knowing the ways of the world or of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs establishment would have reckoned that perhaps at a certain period of time, there would not be a lot of people about and if he could go up the stairs at that time and speak to somebody whom he would have hoped would be present might have been able to accommodate him. I do not know and I cannot speak with any certainty about that. All I can say is the facts are when he came the cypher officers whose business it is to handle these important matters were not present and he departed without it.
2.50 p.m.

Now I think that one has to make clear that the offense for which young Mr. Trotman is charged is not this one, because he has committed no offense in respect of this one, except had he received it in his hand that would have been a different matter and would have given substance to any charge which could have been brought against him on that count.

It is pure coincidence as I see it that on that particular day or around that time the police should have had a warrant to search his home and to find whatever the substance they found. I just do not know. But this is actually what happened and I wish to make it clear that the two things are not to be confused, and I would like Senators to understand that.

So that what I want to emphasize is that suppose this parcel had not arrived and come into Barbados in the diplomatic pouch. Suppose that had not happened. The police had separate and distinct evidence in respect of Mr. Trotman's doings which led them to suspect that he had these substances dynamite and whatever in his house and that they had taken out a warrant to search that. So that even if we were not dealing with this he would still be out on bail, or wherever he is, or pardoned in respect of that charge and this is a separate and distinct one and one has to understand that.

I, therefore, want to end by saying that no Member of the Government either the political or the Civil Service, Administrative or at the Diplomatic level has had any part in this thing. I wish, therefore – well, if you want to call Mr. Trotman a civil servant in a sense in which I am speaking, you may be entitled to do that. An employee of the Government of Barbados – yes, but not a Diplomat, not an Administrative Officer, not an Executive Officer or any of that level. I want to make this clear. I do not think that it needs so much emphasizing. But I want to make it clear so that everybody gets it in his or her head that Mr. Trotman himself has admitted committing this particular act. I am personally very sorry for him. From what I know of him, I cannot understand how, except perhaps a parent's love or indulgence for a child or for whatever purpose he would have got himself into this problem. Despite the fact that he has gotten himself into this, I still have a residual respect for him not only for his services he has performed for the Government of Barbados at that level but for the kind of person he has shown himself to be until this happened. I think I could say this and this is part of my regret.

So I am emphasizing there has been no Government interference. I am giving as much emphasis as I can to the fact that the Prime Minister's remarks were based on all the facts known to us at the time at which he spoke and that we have no reason to believe that there is anything so far as the account is concerned which is different from what we have gathered and investigated, and I would like to say this. For those who would think that had it not been for Mr. Forde's disclosure last week we would not have spoken about it, I wish to tell them they are very much mistaken.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Well, okay. If you do not believe it, you are saying something about yourselves as well because if the boot were on the other foot I would not believe that you would conceal it. I certainly would not believe that you would conceal it and I, therefore.....

Aside.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order please.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: No, no. I am sorry, Sir, and I wish to emphasize this. The more important a subject is and the greater its implications for national security and for the safety of the country, the more time has to be taken and should be taken by a responsible Government in investigating it. This is what I would be prepared to believe of you and I ask you to believe it of us in fairness and in decency. That is the only way we could operate.

Lastly Sir,.....

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Miller.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Well, of course, the Leader of the Opposition has his own battle to fight and I wish that whoever succeeds him will do much better.

Sir, I thought that I would take the indulgence of the Senate because of the obvious importance of this matter to make these points clear and I am sorry, Sir, to have detained you or imposed this matter once again upon the House. But I thought it would do the country good for me to have made this statement. Thank you.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Lewis.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. Deputy President, I believe that the matters raised in connection with the National Health Service have been completely over-shadowed by the bag and the drug in the bag. But to answer a few of the queries, the Barbados Drug Service has entered into agreement with pharmacies and distributors in the private sector in relation to the supply of drugs on items which are included in a drug formulary to which reference was made. A drug formulary therefore exists, and even if one was not recently published, I am certain that it will be updated from time to time and published.

A question was asked about the last report of the Drug Service. Well, the law provides that each year that a report is prepared and after submission to Cabinet is made

available and according to the Act it should be laid in the House. The last report that I am aware of is the report for the year ended March 1986, copies of which I believe are available. If it has not been laid in the House then it will shortly be laid, but I believe it has been laid, and included in that report is the comment of the Auditor General relating the accounts of the Drug Service for the year ending March 1986 to the effect that the accounts were in order and would be laid in Parliament as part of the Auditor General's Report for the year 1985-1986. There seems to have been some confusion as to whether the Auditor General should make a separate report and my recollection is that the Auditor General insisted that it was not necessary for him to make a separate report on the Drug Service expenditure because it was provided in the Estimates of Current Expenditure, and now that the levies are paid into the Consolidated Fund the answer also is the same: that the Auditor General will make a report of the monies paid into the Consolidated Fund and certify them. In passing, since a levy is a form of tax, that is the place it should go. That is where it should have gone from the outset.

The Drug Service has certain contractual agreements, as I said, with distributors which require them to make payment within 45 days of invoices being submitted to the Drug Service.
3.00 p.m.

I am aware that some time in 1986 there was a delay in making payments, but these have since been speeded up, and unless there is new information, the information I have is that the payments are now going on stream, and the Accountant General has given assurances that he will not at any time delay releases under normal circumstances, so that payments are made under normal circumstances.

There were other comments about the health service of Barbados and I believe that both of the political parties have the interest of the country at heart in terms of the quality of service which they all aspire to, so despite the comments made about the truncation of the National Health Service Board, I am certain that the absence of a Board will not in any way cause the health services which are provided to deteriorate, and there is every belief that the Government will continue its efforts to improve the health care for citizens of this country, including the services provided at the Psychiatric Hospital.

With those brief comments, Sir, I wish to move that ...

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: The St. Joseph Hospital's acquisition was delayed, as the Senator on the other side would know, and only recently has the transaction come nearer conclusion. Certainly if you are

buying something you have to try and safeguard its further deterioration, and in good season before the.....

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Not in the fullness of time, in a much shorter time than you believe. You will be able to speak again on the St. Joseph Hospital, because by the time the transaction is completed - and it is not yet completed - Government will be in a position to make appropriate arrangements for manning of the St. Joseph Hospital. There may well be something of it in the Development Plan, so that there is no running away from the St. Joseph Hospital. Other persons were afraid to touch it, ran far from it. The present Government took the bull by the horns.

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

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS, Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT left the Chair and the Senate went into Committee on the Bill, SENATOR J.C.W. WICKHAM in the Chair.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Clause 2 stand part.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, in respect of clause 2, I listened very carefully to what Senator Lewis had to say about the auditing of health service funds and so on and so forth, but there has been a lot of waffling there. The Senator assures us that the Auditor General will be doing the auditing as long as health service funds, or health levy funds - let us be straight - are paid into the Consolidated Fund. I want to know when then would the Auditor General's audit of these particular funds have begun, and if there was an interim between when the Auditor General started to audit those funds and when they were audited elsewhere. What happened in the interim? What account of the interim will we ever see?

I am very concerned that the auditing, the formulary and all these matters that I have raised are falling behind hand. It means that the management of the Drug Service is at fault. I do not like it. We will hear ten years from now that there had not been an audit for six or seven years and all that carry on. All of this business of transference to the Consolidated Fund is clearly, as far as I can see, causing confusion, and to the very important business of audit, and the audit is very important.

There is a lot of public money involved, there is a lot of wastage in the prescribing habits of doctors involved, there is a lot of wastage on the part of the pharmacist involved. We have been trying, successive Governments, to control these things, and if proper auditing is not done, it will get out of control and then we will hear who is carrying away what and who is not carrying away what. This is an area of very high and crucial expenditure, this is not an area where you can cut off and say you are going to do an enquiry. This is an area that is a matter of life and death to a lot of people, and I really need more assurances than what I have been given. I really want to be clear, arising out of this clause, as to exactly when does the Auditor General, or when did he, start the auditing of these matters and if there was an interim, who would have audited in the interim, if anyone.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Senator Lewis, are you able to give these assurances or to reply to these questions?

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, I can answer from the information that I have to the effect that for the year 1985-86 the Auditor General indicated that his report will be laid with the rest of his report. I am not aware of the Auditor General's completion of the accounts for 1986-87. I will certainly enquire into that and those accounts will come to this Honourable Chamber as part and parcel of the Auditor General's total report. The question for the year 1987-88 will similarly be examined. The one that I can speak of with assurance is the one for 1985-86, and it is that I referred to, but the Senator has made a valuable comment and an enquiry - and I will certainly pursue that; but the information I have relates to the year 1985-86.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

The question that Clause 2 stand part of the Bill was put to the Senate and agreed to.

Clause 3 was called and passed.

3.10 p.m.

The Schedule was called.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Schedule stand part.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman in respect of the Schedule at Clause 2(3) of the Schedule, "The Director may, with the approval of the Minister enter into arrangements or contracts with persons in Barbados and persons abroad for the providing of drugs and related items and services required for the purposes of the Drug Service." I am very concerned about the tendering process. The Drug

Service was established on a clear understanding that its tendering process was to be separate and distinct from the Central Purchasing. In fact I remember making it very clear to the Ministry of Finance that the Drug Service could not survive if the tendering for its drugs and other commodities had to be done through the services of the Central Purchasing Department, the Central Purchasing being a department self-confessed in not being able to distinguish priority between chairs for the library and drugs for the hospital. In fact, in my view all hospital supplies should be taken out of Central Purchasing, and particularly supplies which have to do with treatment. But I am very concerned about what tendering processes may or may not be in place. I am concerned about contracts both with persons in Barbados and persons abroad for the providing of drugs. They should be properly advertised, tendered for, and that is why the formulary is important, and it is very disturbing that the formulary is now falling behind hand. There should be an annual publication of the drug formulary. It is that that informs the tendering process apart from everything else. It informs the pharmacists; it really is a very important document. It informs those prescribing, but it also informs those who may tender. I am very concerned that the proper tendering processes are being undertaken and that they are not being undertaken by the Central Purchasing Department which has no sensitivity in this matter, no sense of urgency in this matter, and I am very concerned that, not only persons abroad, but persons in Barbados and firms in Barbados should have good access to this tendering process as well and that they are in fact some of the beneficiaries of it, because, do not forget we have wheels within wheels in the distributive trade in this country. A lot of pharmacies and the pharmacists, the doctors and other allied health personnel who practise on a daily basis have interest in the pharmaceutical business. It is a big industry. It is one of the biggest industries after the advertising industry, and we have to be very careful with these matters, and I would like some reassurances from the Minister that these contracts are properly carried. I really hope that Central Purchasing has not now got into the act, because everything has fallen into the Consolidated Fund and it falls into their hands. You will find what I once found in the Ministry of Health. When the Central Purchasing was called up and asked or it was pointed out to them that we were waiting for drugs which were in the port, which were landed in the port and needed in the operating theatres in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, we were told that the next item on the list was chairs for the library and we would have to wait.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I wish to speak to Clause 4 of the Schedule at page 6. Clause 6B. (2) provides that "the Minister shall as soon as practicable after receiving a copy of the report referred to in subsection (1), lay a copy thereof before the House of Assembly."

I wish to move, Mr. Chairman, that the words "the House of Assembly" appearing at the end of the Clause be deleted, and the words "both Houses" be substituted. There is no assurance that it will be laid in Parliament and be brought before this Honourable Chamber. I have looked at other legislation of this kind, Mr. Chairman, and it specifies that it comes before both Houses or it says in which House. The Bill says "before the House of Assembly." We are not the House of Assembly, and I move that the words "House of Assembly" be deleted and "both Houses" be substituted therefor.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. Chairman, I take the last point first. I really think that we must become more mature than to play on words. It is known that every one of these documents laid in the House of Assembly are also laid in the Senate, and I really think that we are straining at a gnat to pursue that.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It really is not as simple as that. It would have to go back to the House.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: On the other question, the Formulary Committee still functions as far as I am informed, and the arrangements for advertising tenders for drugs are still pursued in the same way that they were pursued at the beginning of 1986. In fact, this is one of the special services which the Director of Finance and Planning authorised to bypass the normal financial rules so that the Central Purchasing Department would not be able to respond in the manner in which the Senator suggested, and as far as I am aware there has been no change in those arrangements. But is it also a fact that a study has been carried out on the operations of the Central Purchasing Department, and it is hoped that their functions, the functioning of the people in that department improve to the point where if they had to be of assistance in purchasing of all supplies, it would become a credit to the country. So I see no problem in giving an assurance that the question of paying special attention to the purchase of drugs. I believe it is something that the present Minister of Health is as excited about as persons on the other side.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Mr. Chairman, I should just like to ask the Senator opposite whether his problem is that he believes we would not bring it here or that it would not come even if we wanted it brought here. What is his difficulty? I personally believe that except for money Resolutions, everything that they get we get, unless I am proved to be wrong. I think so. Do you believe then that in this particular instance this Senate would not receive it?

3.20 p.m.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, that is not the issue. If we are going to pass this thing into law and there is an oversight in terms of the language which might have been used inadvertently by the draughtsmen, let us get it right.

I accept the assurance that may be given but if the draughtsman picking up an amending Act specifically out of whatever carelessness or otherwise, uses the words "before the House of Assembly" when all other enactments passed in recent times used the words "in Parliament", then it sticks out and unless there is an urgency of which I am not fully aware, I really must stand on the amendment which I have moved.

I would like to substitute that instead of saying "before the House of Assembly" strike the words "lay copy thereof in Parliament" and strike all the other words.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will you, therefore, in the interest of tidiness, shall we say, move an amendment to the Schedule in the terms which you have designed and when seconded it I will put the question.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: It was seconded by Canon Jones, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that the Schedule be the Schedule to the Bill with.....

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: It is clear – well, certainly, on this side we have not fully consulted and I wonder whether I might not beg to report progress and ask for leave of the committee to sit again, probably 5 or 6 minutes.

Aside.

The Clerk has a much tidier idea which I accept, that; perhaps, we move that further consideration be postponed and then come back to it later. This would afford the same time for the customary processes of consultation, according to Mr. Harold MacMillan.

Sir, I beg to move that further consideration be postponed.

The question that further consideration of the matter in Committee be postponed until later in the day's sitting was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On motion of SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS, Mr. Chairman reported progress to His Honour, the DEPUTY PRESIDENT and asked for leave to sit again and

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Item No. 4.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE GUARANTEE BY
THE GOVERNMENT OF A LOAN OF
\$13 000 000 MADE BY THE
BARBADOS NATIONAL
BANK TO THE
TRANSPORT BOARD

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy President, on August 6, 1987, the Transport Board entered into a loan agreement with the Barbados National Bank for \$13 million to liquidate outstanding debt to the National Insurance Board and other major creditors.

Under the Transport Board Act, Cap. 297, Section 17(1), the Transport Board may, from time to time and with the approval of the Minister responsible for the Transport Board borrow by way of loan, overdraft, or otherwise such sums as the Board may require for meeting their obligations and discharging their functions under the said Act or any other Act from conferring duties, powers, or functions on them.

Under Section 17(2) of the said Act it provides that the Government may, subject to the approval of Parliament, guarantee in such manner and on such terms and conditions as it may think fit any such sum which the board may borrow under subsection (1) of the said Act.

The guarantee here is also designed to repay the outstanding balance from Head 22 – Charges of Debt which provides for the payment of interest and amortisation on all loans contracted with commercial banking institutions domiciled in Barbados as authorized by Cap. 105.

Mr. Deputy President, I move that this Resolution do now pass.

SENATOR J. S. GODDARD: Mr. Deputy President, I had not really planned to speak on this but I was hoping that we would have had a little more information from the Government side on the purpose. I did not quite get it from the Minister as to what the \$13 million will be used for. Is it towards the purchase of equipment, the purchase of buses?

I have seen where the Minister on several times recently has spoken of the need for improving the transportation service and for the need of more buses and I am not questioning that.
3.30 p.m.

What concerns me though – Sir, I am assuming it is for payment of buses and I am not questioning the need for buses and improving the service. But a guarantee can appear to be fairly innocuous when what you are guaranteeing, the organization you are guaranteeing, is going to be profitable. So the guarantee only comes into effect as a matter of last resort.

However the operating experience of the Transport Board in recent years does not lead me to believe that it will be turned into a profitable position or I think in that type of operation you like to see where the revenue would exceed the expenditure. It means exactly the same thing. Therefore in due course, this guarantee will become a charge on the Consolidated Fund. It is for that reason that these guarantees have to be taken very, very seriously. And I think it becomes more incumbent upon statutory corporations and of public authorities to make sure that the revenue matches the expenditure and that there is some sort of surplus to take care of servicing debt and repayment of debt which is undertaken for capital purposes.

What I am really saying, Mr. Deputy President, is unless that is done, so that the Transport Board can be returned to some semblance of profitability, in due course this guarantee will become a charge on the Consolidated Fund. And I should just like to bring this to the attention of all Senators.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Tull.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy President, I take it that we are dealing with a Resolution dealing with the guarantee by BNB to the Transport Board.

I am not going to get into the debate about the guarantee in itself. I just have a few observations, Sir, I want to make about the Transport Board. This country is under a deluge of big words by the Minister, and while we are being swamped by these big words, the transport system in Barbados, the public transport system, is deteriorating at a level that is absolutely alarming.

Those of us who live in the country and have to drive to Bridgetown to work will know that we are seeing increasing throngs of people at bus stops all the way into town because of a shortage of buses on the road.

This present Administration has not been buying buses. Over the period of the Barbados Labour Party's Administration, large numbers of buses were bought on a constant basis because we appreciated the rate at which the rolling stock was deteriorating and declining and we also

knew that since the Barbados Labour Party had more people working that more people were travelling.

Aside.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Alright. Well you can say it is not true. People were working. So the more people work, the more buses you want. So we knew that we had a lot of people working and therefore we required a larger amount of rolling stock and we were providing them. Now we sought during our period to do a certain amount of standardizing of stock. We did not leave it to Ministers to determine who are their favourite people to buy buses from. We had the stock rationalized.

I heard from the time I was a boy that the Mercedes buses were not so constructed, the engines, to suit the Barbadian roads and so on and that you need a different kind of rolling stock, not the Mercedes. They told me that the Seddon bus was, as the Minister says, a lemon. Every time they opened their mouths, they were lemons. So they are no use. I am not technically qualified, Sir, to say whether they were or not.

But we started to use the Leyland buses and we were getting good service and we were getting the appropriate parts, the appropriate consultancies and so on to keep that going.

Now I hear in recent times, the Minister is going to do all sorts of things. He is going to chase the minibuses off the road and he is going to buy buses from Brazil, and all the information reaching me is that that is a bad buy. I had expected the Minister to get up in here today to tell me something about these things. Why are you buying buses from Brazil? Are they cheaper? Are they better packaged? Are they better suited for the roads of Barbados? Are you getting special concessionary financing to buy them? Why Brazil? I want some explanations. These are not charges, Mr. Deputy President. I am asking for information. We are talking about a lot of money, a \$13 million guarantee here, a \$7 million loan that passed the House of Assembly yesterday, or some time, for the Transport Board. We are talking about a lot of money. And therefore we want some rationalization of the expenditure of this Government when it comes to the Transport Board. We get a lot of words all the time. The Minister is great on that.

What I also want to know, Mr. Deputy President, let the Ministers when they come to Parliament bring the information to give us – How much rolling stock have you got at the moment? I hear there are about 239 units and that on any given day 60 or 70 of them are non-functioning up at Weymouth or up at Mangrove. So even though in numerical terms you may have buses, the fact that so many of them are broken down at any given time means that you

are having on the road on a daily basis far below what is necessary. Can I get some explanations for these things? What is happening in the garages with the mechanics? What is happening with the spare parts? I understand that they are disappearing at an alarming rate. These are questions which we have.

Aside.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: I hear the tyres, the parts, disappearing like anything and the Government has to take responsibility for that. You cannot bob and weave all the time. Give us some answers. We want to hear about that.

Now contracts, tenders – I am unhappy as Senator Miller has said in relation to drugs – I am personally unhappy at the way in which buses and bus parts are bought. I do not like the tendering process, because I understand there is no proper tendering process. Will somebody enquire in the Cabinet and tell this Parliament and the country about the purchase of bus tyres for instance. I want to hear who is supplying the tyres for the Transport Board? How long they have been supplying them? When were the tenders put out? How many people tendered? And what was the cost, the price.....

Aside.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: put up by the various tenders? I want to understand that.

Aside.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Because it is alright to have an inept Government. Perhaps we can live with that. But when you combine ineptness with corruption, we cannot handle that one. We can live with a little ineptitude. They have demonstrated that they can get through with the ineptness in people and say, we will await our time, but I do not like it when it is coming around smelling like rotten fish. And therefore we must have some answers.

Now I get back to where I started. The people cannot get to work because the bus stops are crowded with people every morning and this has social consequences. It also has economic consequences.

3.40 p.m.

The economic consequences obviously are the loss of man-hours and the fall-off of productivity and that kind of thing. But the social consequences, Mr. Deputy President, are that people are constantly being dismissed from their jobs for being late too often. If you take a look at what is happening in the courts, you will see the number of wrongful dismissal suits both in the Magistrates Courts and

the High Courts have increased at an alarming rate over time.

Asides.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Now I am listening to the Asides of the uninformed. There is a mixture of lack of information and pure ignorance. I work for people in the law courts who have been dismissed for coming too late too often. When you give evidence in the court that the people cannot get buses or when they tell their employers that they cannot get buses, the employers say whether you get buses or not has nothing to do with my job. You have to be here at a certain time. Then you give them a letter complaining, or well, bringing to their attention that they have been late first time or warning them. You bring a letter the second time some months later, and when you hit a third one on them it is very difficult for them to avoid facing the courts. It is very difficult for them to avoid dismissal. But these things are happening and I do not want Members to sit on the other side and just make – like Senator Phillips. He is an employer. He may be a good one and I go no further than "may be" at this time. He may be a good one. Senator Phillips may not send home anybody from his company because they cannot catch a bus. But there are employers in Barbados who are doing it. So it is not only, as I said, the economic consequences. There are social consequences. I go down to town early in the morning, Sir. I am on the road at 20 minutes to 6 in the morning. Sometimes it is dark and I see school children on the road at 20 minutes to 6 either at bus stops or walking to bus stops. On occasion when I inquire what are these kids doing on the road at this hour, what kind of school are they going to at this time, I have heard that they have to leave home at that hour if they are to get to school on time because of the temperamental nature of the bus service operating in Barbados. But when you hear the other Members of the House, I must say that, because when the Minister of Transport and Works talks they all sit back and shake their heads as if God himself is speaking. I mean the people on that side. So all this talk about this fantastic bus service, and how he is going to turn water into wine as far as the public transportation is concerned, people are to swallow that.

Now I hear that the deficit has been cut by some figure of half or something like that. But I have not seen the figures laid. What I know is that it is easy to talk about the deficit cut in half when most of the bills, well a substantial amount of the bills, have not been submitted or paid. So that will come in later. That will come out in the wash and we will hear about the deficit. We will hear later what the true figure is.

Now I want to make one final point, Sir, in relation to this public transportation. I have heard the President of the Barbados Chamber of Commerce, Mr. John Bellamy, say

here in Barbados two weeks ago and a week later in Miami speaking to, I suspect, an international group – I do not know if it was the Miami Conference going on. That would have finished by then. Anyhow, a statement coming out of Miami, that the Chamber of Commerce in Barbados is concerned about the high level of the deficit by the Transport Board. He also mentions it in relation to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. He says that his members are concerned about it and that it will have adverse effects on business and economy in Barbados, and he points to the fact that the privately owned public transport, the minibus operators, are making a profit. That stands to reason. If they were not making money, they would go off the road. Minibus people are not going to run buses out of altruism. I know it is Christmas time, but they are not spreading good cheer. They are running a business. But if the minibus operators were not making money they would pull their buses off the road and get into something else.

So one can accept that the minibus operators are making a profit, but the Transport Board is not. Mr. Bellamy in speaking for his Chamber raised the question as to whether the Government should not privatise the bus service in this country. Now I want to see that in a particular context. Now this present Administration came into Government howling at every street corner the virtues of privatisation and they were going to do all of that because that was the economic salvation of Barbados to sell off a number of Government agencies to the private sector and all things will be added unto us. That is what seek ye first the kingdom of privatisation means and all things will be added unto you.

Asides.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: But what has happened, Sir, is they have gradually edged away from this principle mainly because of the altercation between them and their spokesman who articulated that position better than any of them. Now they are moving away from that, but I do not know what kind of residual effect from all the talk they gave us 2 years ago whether the Government is minded to go back to privatisation of the bus service, a denationalisation of the bus service. Now why I raised it, Sir, is not to raise any specious, philosophical or ideological point, although I strongly believe that Government has to own a number of the services of this country that are necessary for the vast majority of the people to enjoy. Some they can get rid of and I shed no tear, Sir. Public transportation, where you are carrying the tens of thousands of people to their daily jobs, is something too important for you to talk glibly about privatisation unless you have done certain very serious studies and have built in certain safeguards. Because if you privatise the transport system in Barbados, it means that you are telling the private operators

– well, you are agreeing with the private operators not telling them that obviously they are running their business at a profit. How are we to insure that bus fares do not go up to \$2.50 for instance rather than \$1.00? Anybody can make a profit especially when they have a captive market. There are no alternatives. People have to catch a bus to go to work. There is no alternative. So when you have a captive market people have to pay what you say they have to pay. That is one of the problems with monopolies. Anytime you got a monopoly that is likely to happen. I certainly see it as a danger lurking on the horizon when we get around to talking about privatisation of the bus service in Barbados without some built-in security by Government. There are people who are working in industrial estates for instance for \$118.00 a week or a shop attendant that I see working for \$124.00 a week and who has to pay 10 bus fares a week would not find that they have to pay 20% of their meagre earnings towards getting to and from work.....

Asides.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Well, I want the Government to carefully consider this. I also want finally, Sir, because I had promised really not to talk on transport because Senator Prescod pretends to know more about my business than I do. He always tells me I own minibuses.

Asides.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Anyhow, I also, Mr. Deputy President, want to rap up on this because I do not like it. The Government has to make up its mind once and for all in whose interest they intend to operate. They have got to make up their minds about that.

I remember the Leader of the Senate on 2 occasions in this Session when I have made certain submissions said to me, in all honesty he said – "Tell me what you would do if you have the Government again. Is your side going to take back the money that they gave to the people?" I would sit down in my chair, since I did not have a right of reply since he was winding up and I could not speak, and I would sit in my chair and say "yes." I used to say "yes." Little did I know that the Government was not waiting until my side took over to take it back, but they want to take it back first and that is what has happened. You took it back. Now if you can reverse yourself in one thing, you can reverse yourself in anything. But the point I am making here in relation to whose interest that they are serving, and I do not mean that you should not serve the interest of all Barbadians, but there are certain areas where you have got to make a choice and deal with priorities. When they found that it was not unreasonable to make major concessions to people who perhaps did not need them – people who wanted them naturally but who did not need them – in return for an expected gain which never materialized – they

were all for the private sector as the engine of growth in this country and they realized that unemployment was high and therefore they will have to allow private entrepreneurs to try something new and get themselves self-employed to help the problems of employment in this country: I never believed two years ago that the Government could be so, I almost said spiteful, but it is worse than that but I would not use the words for it, Sir.

3.50 p.m.

They realised that unemployment was high and therefore they would have to allow private entrepreneurs to try something new and get themselves self-employed to help the problems of employment in this country.

I never believed two years ago that the Government could be so – I almost said spiteful, but it is worse than that, but I will not use the worse word, Sir, I will stay there – that they could pick on a couple of hundred minibuses owners, all black and all not well off, and all people of reasonably humble means, who have gone and bought a minibus at great expense, \$100 000 in some cases, and trying to eke out a living for their families; that a Government could be so spiteful that they could put those people as a target of destruction. But this is what we are hearing, not only by action but by words coming straight out of the mouth of the Minister of Transport and Works. He said it with a certain amount of relish, Sir. I could imagine the glee that was in his eyes, that he is going to run them off the road, he is going to grind them into the ground for doing nothing other than trying to make an honest living in the only means available in Barbados today, because you cannot get any jobs, jobs are hard to get. Times are hard and these people owe the Barbados Development Bank 40 and 50 and 60 thousand dollars on their units, and this Government is going to destroy them for doing nothing more than providing a supplementary service for transportation for the people in this country.

Aside.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Senator Boxill says Amen. I am glad that he agrees with me.

Aside.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Amen means so be it. That is what they taught me, so he is agreeing with me.

Now you cannot make light of these things, and these are days when men of integrity and character are standing up to be counted. That is what is happening nowadays. That is why there is so much turmoil on the other side, because people with a conscience are getting up and saying enough is enough. You cannot have nine honourable members stand on that side and do not get up and say a word.

I know Senator Comissiong is interested, for instance, in the vendors, because as he said to me, and I am sorry I could not quote some of what he said verbatim, because the arguments adduced, for instance, by Senator Comissiong in relation to the vendors around Bridgetown can be applied in equal measure to the minibus operators in this country.

I said that was the final point, Sir, but that was the penultimate one. Just one last one in respect of the Transport Board again. The Transport Board has turned out to be a place of massive victimisation of people who are thought to be supporters of the Barbados Labour Party. There are constant complaints every day. I will not call names, it is invidious for me to get in here and call people's names, the people who are the main instruments of this policy of victimisation.

Aside.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: I know Senator Comissiong is on the Board. You do not know what happens in there. You do not deal with the day to day problems in there, and before you say it is not true, you had better try and investigate. There is massive victimisation in Transport Board of people who are perceived to be, not necessarily are, supporters of the Barbados Labour Party.

Let the Government understand that we are prepared on this side to fight fire with fire. If that is the way they are going to work it, they can understand what we will do in return, not to the workers, that is not our line, but we have other arms in our arsenal that we will use to make sure that the Democratic Labour Party cannot continue to ride roughshod over the rights of workers only because they have opinions, or perceived opinions, that are protected by the entrenched clauses of the Constitution of Barbados.

SENATOR A. J. N. PHILLIPS: Mr. Deputy President, from time to time there have been calls for the privatisation of the Transport Board, whether it be by Mr. Bellamy or other persons. I recall some time recently the President of the Minibus Association said very clearly that if the Government thought about that, he thought the best persons to operate the transport service would be the minibus operators. I could not agree with him more. The reason for it, Sir, if you are in a business, you obviously study the pros and cons as to what makes your business a success or otherwise, and I believe that a lot of people in the community are not aware of the facts that make the minibus operation a success, and I know that the President of that Association understands the movement of people and the transport system.

Sir, one has to examine the competition that the Transport Board has to undergo from the minibus operators. I do not blame them, because if you are in business, you are

in business to make money, and the minibus operators understand how to make money. The Transport Board has certain conditions of service that almost negates the possibility of the Transport Board making a profit.

One of the main reasons why the minibus operators can make a profit as opposed to the Transport Board is because of the unscheduled service which they offer. I live in the country and I come to work by way of Speightstown, and I know as a matter of fact that the minibus operators who operate on that route leave between six and two minutes ahead, or approximately thereof, of the transport service, so it means that the passengers along that route would have been almost fully taken care of by the time the Transport Board bus which leaves at 6.00 or 6.30 comes along, so the passengers are already gone. Obviously it is the same thing if all the people are going into one supermarket, Goddards or whatever, as opposed to another one, obviously that supermarket will have the profit.

I do not care what anybody tells me, I do not care how they reorganise the transport service, if the Transport Board has to operate on schedules as they do now, there is no way that they can handle the minibus operators. It is for that reason, Sir, that it would be my feeling that if the question of privatisation was ever thought of by the Government, that the first offer should be made to the minibus operators, because then they would not be competing, they themselves would be providing the service as they see fit and would be most beneficial to their total operation.

As it now stands, Sir, the greatest problem as far as the Transport Board goes lies in the question of the operating of non scheduled services which the minibus services are allowed to carry out. As I said, they do it with accuracy, they have their thing well planned. As a matter of fact, if a Transport Board bus is behind a minibus and they are picking up passengers, they make it possible to stop in such a manner that the Transport Board bus cannot pass them. Stiff competition is offered the Transport Board and in all truth I almost find it impossible for the Transport Board, with the sort of competition that they are now faced with, to operate profitably.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy President.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: Mr. Deputy President, I did not intend getting into this debate, but I have to after hearing Senator Tull make some statements that were not exactly germane to the discussion here. Let me say this from the start, and this goes both to Senator Tull and Senator Miller, maybe they are too young, or were too young to understand.
4.00 p.m.

You heard the old people saying years ago about being a penny wise and a pound foolish. This is exactly what is happening with us today because of the Barbados Labour Party under the regime of Sir Grantley Adams. One Penny, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the cause of us now having to spend \$13 million. They can't remember, but I can, because I know about the times. The bus concessionaires at the time were asking for one penny more in bus fares, and I remember the famous statement "over my dead body" from Grantley Adams, and he would prefer to nationalise the buses, he said, before he would give them that penny more, and when they nationalised the buses at that time, they did not even have anywhere to put them. They had to carry them over here where the bus stand is now, where Highways and Transport used to be – at that time it was the Central Road Board – and put up the buses there. No preparations were made, but in order that they should not pay the concessionaires one penny more, today we are asked to subsidise something like \$13 million, and the honourable Member can come in here with the temerity and look across at me and talk some nonsense as usual.

I will go further. The honourable Member must understand that we on this side of the floor and on that side too are not all little children, nor are we all lawyers; but I always tell the lawyers that they must remember that lawyers don't make law; they interpret law. It is we the laymen who make the law.

Now the honourable Member said that every morning when he is coming down, six o'clock in the morning, he sees so many people on the road who can't get buses. Where could the people be going; to shoplift? How did all these people get on the road if they were not working? What are they doing on the road then? He said there were so many people on the road that it hurt his heart. Don't tell me that these people are coming into town to shoplift, because if they are not working, where are they going? So you see, you have to be careful what you are saying, especially when you are saying it with somebody like me, because I will always catch you in these traps. You trap yourself when you say that enough people are on the roads. What would enough people be doing on the road when the mornings come? Do you mean the big old people are going to school? You said so yourself. So they must be going to work. Then you said that they were not working; but we have evidence that more people are working today than have ever worked in the history of Barbados.

Asides.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: Anyhow you are not going to take me off my stride. You don't know what you are talking, poor soul; I am sorry for you!

The next thing the honourable Member said, and I say the word "honourable" with reservation because whenever I go to say these kinds of big words, my jaw sometimes get dislocated. The Member on the other side talked about the poor minibus operators. What Senator Phillips was just saying is so correct. Now the Transport Board bus drivers must stop at the bus stop otherwise he is reported for not stopping at the bus stop. The minibus operators stop anywhere, anytime and anyhow, and as Senator Phillips has said, when they stop, they mean nobody is passing even with a bicycle. They are not only stopping in the road although we have lay-bys for them, but they put out their right indicator giving an indication that they are about to move, so you park behind because they are indicating that they are going to move, so you are behind them all the time and they are not moving, in order to stop the other buses including the minibuses themselves and the Transport Board buses.

Now the competition must be great and fierce. Not only that. Senator Tull was not honest enough to tell this Chamber that the minibus operators are enjoying a privilege that the Transport Board does not enjoy. The minibus operators should be made to carry old people as well as school children at half price. They don't pick up old people, at least if they pick up old people they have to pay the full price. They are enjoying a benefit here, and I am not saying that they are not making a contribution to the society, because it is true they are helping people to get to work, but the point we must not overlook is, why should they be getting the same fare as the Transport Board and yet they are not giving the same facilities as the Transport Board. Why should they be allowed to stop here, there and everywhere when the Transport Board buses cannot do likewise? So you see the Transport Board is being hamstrung by the law, but not the minibuses, and as soon as you try to pass legislation to control the minibuses

Asides.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: That is not proper legislation to control the minibuses. I have seen repeatedly, people want to take the minibus, the bus stop is about fifteen to twenty yards from where this person is, and do you know they would not go to the bus stop; they stand up there and wait and the minibus comes down and stops right in front of you in order to create a problem. I am not saying that the minibuses are not contributing to the welfare of the society, but at the same time because they are contributing to the welfare of the society, it does not mean that we should allow them to do as they like whenever they like and how they like. They should be controlled. I don't have any minibus nor do I have any friend who has a minibus. I don't own a Transport Board bus nor do I have any friend who owns a Transport Board bus. But I was Minister of

Transport, as a matter of fact I was the first Minister of Transport and Works when this country became independent.

Asides.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: It was one of the few times that it made money. The Honourable Members on the other side think they can score a point, but they cannot score any points with me in here because I am giving you facts. You cannot deny the fact that the minibus is enjoying a facility here in Barbados that they could not enjoy anywhere else, and my view is that both the passenger as well as the driver of the minibus should be charged, because the passenger is aiding and abetting when they don't go to the bus stop, and the minibus driver is carrying out the aiding and abetting by stopping here, there and everywhere. This is the problem that we are faced with, and until you start to make the minibus operators understand that they are part of the society and they are to give as well as to take, but not to take all and not to give, then we will get things better. My view is and will continue to be

Asides.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: I have no objection to the minibuses going into the byways and dropping off people with loads and so on, that is all right; that is the service that they should give, but when it comes to the highways, all of you on the opposite side drive and all of you know that what I am saying is correct, that the minibus will stop worse than the taxis, and taxis are really bad; the minibus drivers as long as they glance down an alley and see somebody running to come out, no matter the person may be a hundred yards down, and I am certain it is not any Ben Johnson who is going to run out there in ten seconds flat, they will stop and stop immediately, nothing to do with your running into the back of them, because you would be at fault because you hit from behind.....

Asides.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: I can't know all the minibus drivers. I am speaking in a general way. Do you want me to walk about and know every minibus driver? I expect you to know better than that. Ask your colleagues or ask anybody over here if what I am saying is not true.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Boxill, please address the Chair.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: I am addressing the Chair, don't mind I am looking over there.

The honourable Member knows what I am saying is true.

Getting back to the part with the Transport Board, I don't know where he got the idea from about this side agreeing to privatise the Transport Board. The Honourable Member should know, he is old enough, no matter he may only have one year's experience for the amount of years he has, that when they were running this country, or to put it another way, when they were mismanaging this country, the rumour was that the Barbados Labour Party was going to sell the Transport Board over to some big private concessionaire. I don't know who he was. This was rumoured. I am not saying it is a fact that they were going to sell the buses, but this is what the rumours were.

4.10 p.m.

Aside.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: I am not inventing anything. This is a fact. I am not saying that it is a fact that they were going to sell the buses but this is what the rumours were.

Aside.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: They started at George Street and ended right there at Roebuck Street but the point is that when the Honourable Member comes in here and says that this side planned to privatise the Transport Board, my view was and still is – I have said it repeatedly and I am not afraid to repeat it now again – we had no right with the people's buses when we took them up. I remember you took up a lot of buses from the lady in St. Andrew and when you looked at some of them – they were on the road running, they were doing a job – you said that they were old iron and you were not buying any old iron and you left the lady with these buses, that you said were old buses, on her hand.

You are talking about unfairness? You are talking about taking advantage of people? What could be a greater advantage than that? All of this, I have to repeat it again so it would go down for the third time, came about because of a penny. You know the old saying that for a lack of a nail a shoe was lost and for the lack of a shoe a hoof was lost and for the lack of a hoof a horse was lost and then a man and a whole army went through, well, this is exactly that. Because of a penny we, today, are in here asking this Chamber to guarantee a loan of something like \$13 million.

Aside.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: Of course. It may not be any big thing to you because you started it. You created this problem that we are in and do not misunderstand the situation.

When a Government comes into office it has to accept a lot of the responsibility that the former Government which went out of office left them in, so what are you going to do? Are you going to say that we are not going to do anything for the Transport Board? You would be the head one to run out and talk. We still have to keep the Transport Board.

He just said, Mr. Deputy President, that he agrees that there are certain ancillary measures which the Government has to take and there are certain services that the Government will have to continue with though they might be losing money on them, which is true and maybe the Transport Board is one.

The point I am making is the Transport Board did not get bad in 1986. The Transport Board got bad from late 1976 and he knows that too and let me go on to give you a history before I sit down then.

When I was Minister of the Transport Board, we had 2 chairmen, 1 manager and I had a whole 7 years going backward and forward between the Ministry. We had 2 chairmen and let me tell you why the 2. We had 2 because 1 died and we had to get another one and we had 1 manager who was there until they came into office and got rid of him. Let them get up and deny this. When you are coming to me you must come good because I am going to make you look small.

Then after they found that they were on a skid row, they had to send back for the manager that I had appointed to be manager. They had to get him to come back and work for them although they claimed that he was this big – you know once you vote for the DLP you are a big all sorts of names yardfowl and all kinds of things. Well, they had to send back for that yardfowl to help straighten out their business. Let them get up and deny this.

The reason why the Transport Board started going down the drain as I pointed out to you – it made money when I was the Minister because we had stability, 1 manager, 2 chairmen. When you came into office every time you got a Minister at the Transport Board they got a new manager, a new chairman. It cannot work so and they were changing Ministers of Transport and Works more often than they were changing their own underwear, Mr. Deputy President, so this give you an idea.

Do not let them talk to me that kind of way because I am an old politician. I am not any Johnny-come-lately and they know what I am saying is true and this is why the Transport Board has found itself in disaccord because there is no continuity that went on there. Sam came, Cow went, and then the Duppy came, so they must go down the drain because Sam did not know what Cow was doing and Cow

did not know what the Duppy was going to do. Then we the taxpayers have now to bear the brunt of this.

In reply to the question that he asked, I can answer him but he is not asking me so I am not answering him.

Aside.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: I am not answering it that way but I want the honourable members opposite – when I say the honourable members, I am talking about the 2 members from the Barbados Labour Party. I am not speaking about the

(Aside)

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: I am always learning and I never stopped learning anyhow

I am not speaking about the Independent members. I am talking about the Barbados Labour Party members. They must understand that we on this side not only can read, but we do read. Not only that we hear but we do listen and we are not just guessing what we are saying or what they would like us to guess.

We are making facts that are facts, not hearsay facts. We are making facts that we know and I can afford to speak on the Transport Board because, as I pointed out to them, I have been there longer than any other member in this Chamber or out of it so I know from where I speak.

With those few remarks, Mr. Deputy President, I just want the Honourable Senators to realize this. TTC which is Toronto Transport Corporation is a big corporation because Toronto has something like 3 million people living in it and Toronto Transport not only runs the buses but it also runs the trains and every year, Mr. Deputy President, they have to keep raising their fare because they are losing money.

When you look any evening you go down in the subway you wonder where these people are coming from. You ever hear, according to Shell Harris, people like peas? Well, these are like flies and yet still these people have to pay. There is no getting down there without having a ticket and yet, still, every year the TTC loses money and this is a big elaborate country. This is Canada I am talking about. This is Toronto, the largest city in Canada and they are losing money and the Honourable Member comes in here to make a hullabaloo because the Transport Board is losing money. Yes, the Transport Board.....

Aside.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Is this on a point of order, Senator Tull, that you rise?

SENATOR L. R. TULL: But he also has to give me a chance to speak. If you rant I cannot say anything. On a point of order.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: If I give way?

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: You may speak, Senator Tull.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: The Honourable Member is misrepresenting what I said. At no point in my contribution did I rail against the Transport Board losing money. The sole point I made in respect of losing money was that the Minister was making out that the deficit was cut in half but all the bills were not in but I said nothing at all critical of the Government about the Transport Board losing money.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: Mr. Deputy President, I do not want to hold up the debate but I guess the other members would like to get on but I would ask that the Reporter read back what the Honourable Member said. You said it and you implied it, tacitly and otherwise. Do not give me that kind of nonsense. You are trying now to duck out because I have you in a Boston crab?

Mr. Deputy President, I quoted TTC to show to the Honourable Member that with a population of over 3 million – I am not saying that all 3 million travel on the Transport Board, but at some time – they are losing money and losing money every year. A little 2 x 3 place like the Transport Board with the amount of buses that can park in my yard.
4.20 p.m.

The Honourable Member comes in here and is raving and ranting when he knows, and he knows better than most of us in here that.....

Aside.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: That is true – the minibuses have the most lucrative routes, and they got these most lucrative routes when the Barbados Labour Party was in power. Now I am not saying that anybody in the Barbados Labour Party owned buses. I am not saying that at all because I do not know. But I am saying what is a fact that the most lucrative routes were given to the minibuses during the Barbados Labour Party's time. And like all of us in here, I mean we have ears to hear, he that has ears to hear, let him hear. I am not saying who had and who did not have. Nobody can deny that the Transport Board buses were sent to the very way out unprofitable routes and the minibuses were allowed to ply the shorter routes. What do you expect to happen?

Then when the Honourable Member was talking about parts at the workshop. Nobody came from St. Lucia, Mr. Deputy President, and carried away the parts from the workshop. Nobody came from Grenada or Guyana. The parts that were carried away from the workshop, as the Honourable Member said were carried away by the Barbadians. People from among us.

Aside.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: No! I am not saying it is alright. How can it be alright? It is my money that has gone down the drain. How can it be alright? But what I am saying is there are people in this society – you see, the receiver sometimes has created a greater evil than the thief. Because if a thief knows that he is going to steal something and there is nowhere to sell it, he is not going to steal it. But the moment he knows that he can get it sold here is where the problem comes in. The receivers are the people who are encouraging this sort of behaviour.

And I can tell you, Mr. Deputy President, before I sit down, let me tell you this, that some of the greatest receivers in our society of stolen property are some of the people that you would least expect to get themselves involved in such an unsavoury act.

I say no more. I thank you.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Comissiong.

SENATOR D. A. COMISSIONG: Mr. Deputy President, as a member of the Transport Board, I feel that I have an obligation to respond to some of the criticisms that have been made of the Transport Board here this afternoon.

Mr. Deputy President, when in opposition, it is easy to make criticisms.

Aside.

SENATOR D. A. COMISSIONG: And it is easy to have all sorts of exaggerated and unreasonable demands of Government. For example, Mr. Deputy President, on the one hand we hear a criticism of the Transport Minister's desire to compete with the minibuses and at the same time we hear lamentation about the deficit of the Transport Board. Well I do not think you can have it both ways.

I do not understand the Minister of Transport to be saying that we are out to destroy the minibuses. I do not understand that to be our position at all.

Aside.

SENATOR D. A. COMISSIONG: No! Certainly that is not the understanding of the Transport Board. We see the minibus operators as legitimate partners in undertaking the transportation work that has to be undertaken in this country. But we are saying that we need to strike a balance.

It cannot be fair to the Transport Board that the Transport Board be expected to run buses on the minimum profit bearing routes whilst the minibuses maximize the maximum profit bearing routes. We have to strike a better balance than exists today. And I do not understand Dr. Blackman to be saying anything more than that. And I repeat that that is the conception of the Transport Board.

Even if we look at history, I do not think that anyone can make a case that this Democratic Labour Party Government since coming into office in 1986 has done anything to even attempt to destroy the minibus operators in this country. We see minibus terminal facilities for the minibus operators and we have had instances of tax breaks for minibus operators.

We believe that we have to strike a better balance and it is very necessary for us. This is the only way in which we are going to make a long-term and substantial dent in the deficit of the Transport Board.

And let me say, Mr. Deputy President, as far as I am concerned, the public owned transportation services should remain a permanent feature of this country.

I was somewhat disturbed by the remarks I believe of the Chairman of the Barbados Chamber of Commerce urging upon the Government that we privatize the Transport Board. If we privatize the Transport Board, Mr. Deputy President, lots of people in this country are going to suffer. The Transport Board performs an outstanding social service by, number one, operating on the non profitable, often country routes, the long routes. If you privatize the Transport Board, it is the people from the rural areas of this country, the people from St. Joseph and St. Andrew and St. George South who are going to suffer, because minibuses do not operate on those routes. Very few of them are profit bearing routes. And the Transport Board often has to operate these routes at a loss.

In addition to that, minibuses do not operate during the extensive hours that the Transport Board operates. We operate midnight buses. How many minibuses do you see out on the road at midnight taking 4, 5 and 6 people to their homes? Very, very few, if any. How many minibuses transport the hotel workers at those times of the night and early morning? The Transport Board takes our old age pensioners and our school children and provides a service for the Police Force and the nurses as well. If we privatize transportation in Barbados, these people are going to suffer.

So my personal position is that I am against privatization. I agree with Senator Tull that a number of our minibus operators are legitimate small businessmen who should be encouraged to earn a living and to build up their businesses. I have no problem with that. In fact, that is in keeping with my own personal political philosophy. I would like to see that class of small businessmen strengthened and built up, and this leads me on to another area.

4.30 p.m.

I continually hear these allegations of victimization, and these allegations disturb me because as a person with a philosophy oriented towards the small man in this country, when we speak about political victimization of workers, we are speaking generally about the small man, the man at the bottom of the ladder. As far as I am aware there is no political victimization of workers at the Transport Board. But if Senator Tull has evidence about this type of victimization, I would like him to give that evidence to me. Because I for one as a member of the Transport Board would not countenance any senior officer of the Transport Board victimizing any of the workers of that corporation. I would not countenance it and I do not believe the board would countenance it. If the Board countenances such a situation, I would not be prepared to sit on such a board. So if there is any such evidence give it to me. But you know these types of allegations are easy to make and we do not just hear them in relation to the Transport Board. But whenever Governments change you tend to hear these allegations.

As far as I am aware, the Transport Board has a good personnel relations climate at the moment. We have a good personnel relations climate and we are making progress. The Transport Board is making progress. You would not believe that from the criticism that is heaped upon the Transport Board from time to time and from the recitation of woes, some of which we have heard in here today. But when I hear the recitation of these woes coming from Members of the Opposition, like Senator Boxill I often wonder whether everything began in 1986. We speak as though everything began in 1986.

This \$13 million debt, Mr. Deputy President, this guarantee that we are resolving here to offer the Barbados National Bank today, this debt relates to expenditures that were incurred largely before the Democratic Labour Party took office. What happened is that the Transport Board consolidated all of those debts that were outstanding and that were in fact subverting the credit worthiness of the Transport Board with suppliers in town. We consolidated that and wiped them off in one fell swoop with a loan from the Barbados National Bank. But those expenditures for the most part do not relate to the Transport Board since the Democratic Labour Party took office. They go back beyond

that. So if we speak about woes of the Transport Board, let us be fair enough to acknowledge that they predate May 1986.

We also hear about woes relating to the travelling stock. But that problem too predates 1986. The fact of the matter is that the last time buses were purchased for the Transport Board was in the year 1982 to 1983 – the last time. In other words, a period of at least 3 years was allowed to elapse under the last Administration without any buses being purchased and that is an unacceptably long period of time not to be replenishing your rolling stock. 1982 to 1983 – that was the last time buses were purchased. Consequently, we have a number of buses that are approaching or have surpassed the 12 year life span. Now the 12 years are accepted as the acceptable life for a bus in Barbados. We have a number of buses that are approaching that and I believe some even have surpassed that. In fact, we have some buses on our books that have a book value of something like \$100.00. Now buses like that should not be in operation because they probably cost more to operate than they actually make. You have to spend so much on repairing them and maintaining them that they probably cost you more to operate than you can actually earn with them. But we have a duty to perform. We have to get the travelling public of Barbados to and from their homes and their work places. So we cannot afford just to take or put down buses because they may be uneconomical. But the point is this. If throughout the years there had been a properly planned programme of replenishing your road stock, we would not be in that position today.

Now we, Mr. Deputy President, are in the process of acquiring at least 45 new buses in this present fiscal year. Within the next 5 or 6 months, we should have even less than that the next 4 months. We should have at least 45 new buses and we hope that we will have even more and that will go a long way to reducing a lot of the problems that we presently have. Right now we have buses breaking down because they are overworked. Even some of the newer Mercedes Benz buses, those that were purchased in the 1980's, have deteriorated way beyond their years because they have had to bear such heavy work-load. They have had to be overworked and, therefore, even they have deteriorated beyond their years and call for more repairs and more maintenance than one would normally anticipate. But we hope that with the new buses coming in 1989 that that problem will be alleviated somewhat.

Another problem that goes to account for the problem we have with rolling stock is the fact that during that period of 1980 to say 1986 there was almost no preventative maintenance programme of the rolling stock at the Transport Board rather than preventing major repairs from taking place in the buses. That programme was never in place and this is something that we have instituted. So we

must not get the impression that the woes began in 1986. The woes predated 1986. When we took over at the Transport Board we could not even find a chief engineer in place. You are running a transportation system with hundreds of buses and you do not even have a qualified chief engineer in place. Your buses must deteriorate. How can you have a preventative maintenance programme if you do not have the expertise to implement it. In fact, there was very little management in place when we took over. I also heard Senator Tull refer to theft in spare parts at the workshop. Again, if he has evidence of this, I would like him to give it to me. Because my understanding is that we have in place now much tighter controls of the allocation of spare parts than we had in the past. So if Senator Tull has evidence of theft and misappropriation, he should make that evidence available.

Mr. Deputy President, I want to end by saying that all is not bad at the Transport Board. There is a number of people at the Transport Board who are good workers and who are making a good contribution to bringing around the fortunes of the Transport Board.
4.40 p.m.

We have in place a hard working Board of Directors and a good management team for the most part. In fact, Mr. Deputy President, our financial officers estimate that the deficit of the Transport Board for this fiscal year will be reduced to some \$12.2 million. This is down from a deficit of over \$20 million, or certainly around the \$20 million mark, and all indications are that the deficit will be cut to \$12.2 million by the end of this year, so progress is being made and it is not only being made as a result of the efforts of the management staff, but of the workers as well.

Too often the criticisms we hear of the workers of the Transport Board will lead you to believe that they are some strange creatures from some foreign land, but they are Barbadians like the rest of us, and even though we do acknowledge that we would have some bad workers among our staff, the fact is that we have a number of very good workers who are dedicated to the Board and who are making a valuable contribution in bringing around the fortunes of the Transport Board.

I should just like to conclude, Mr. Deputy President, by saying to all members that we must be reasonable in our criticisms, we must not behave as though we have short memories and we cannot remember the days before 1986. Let us be reasonable. The Transport Board is making progress and we intend to ensure that that progress continues.

I support this Resolution, Mr. Deputy President.

SENATOR A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy President, I should just like to make a few observations on this Transport Board Resolution. As a matter of fact, this Resolution is dealing with money which has already been expended. All these funds were incurred previous to 1986, as Senator Comissiong rightly says, and this is a means of clearing the slate in order to put them on some kind of viability.

I do not know, Sir, when you talk about the Transport Board where to put the blame. Successive Governments have had no end of problems dealing with the Transport Board. They have incurred expenditures over the years and it seems to be a problem to get the Transport Board to operate in a way which would bring some kind of results in proportion to money which has been spent to keep that operation going. Nonetheless, it is a great social service and I think the Government will have to continue to provide a service like that, but they operate under a very great number of difficulties, Sir.

The Minister made reference recently to the great competition being provided by the minibuses. This is an ongoing problem. The answers are not too easy to find, but we know that, as Senator Comissiong was remarking a while ago, the Transport Board has to carry scheduled times and move off at certain times, whereas the minibuses operate more or less *ad hoc* and they turn around any time and pick up passengers. On the other hand, if you take a route like Gall Hill, for example, route 16, there are so many minibuses on that route that I do not know in the name of God how the Transport Board could continue to put buses on that particular route, because there are so many minibuses plying the Gall Hill route on mornings that the Transport Board bus comes on after, when the minibuses have carried away all the people. So it seems to me that it is a useless exercise to have Transport buses being run on that particular route.

At the same time Transport Board still controls some very good routes. Route 1, for instance, from town to Speightstown is a very good route, it is flat. You have the Silver Sands to Bridgetown route. That should be a very lucrative route as far as I am concerned. There are very few minibuses on the Silver Sands to Bridgetown route, but it seems that whatever money is made on some routes is eventually lost to other routes, but there have been a lot of problems in the Transport Board itself.

There have been a lot of problems in the workshop, there has been the disappearance of parts, buses breaking down. If you go into the yard at Mangrove, Sir, you will see so many buses up there you will be scared. There is some kind of cannibalism with the buses up there at Mangrove, they take a part from one bus and they fix another bus. Eventually if you go on taking parts from different buses,

there will be a lot of buses which cannot function. That is a problem which has always plagued the Transport Board and continues to create losses at the Transport Board.

I do not know which Government has ever come up with a solution to the myriad problems which face that Board, because you hear of tyres disappearing, batteries stolen from buses. You put down a bus tonight, tomorrow morning there is no battery. All these problems you have at Transport Board and I do not know how you are going to get them solved, but I think we have to continue the service to the public. It is a social service and the minibuses do not operate on a kind of continuous basis throughout the day and it is at that point that people expect a bus will come along the normal way and relieve the problem on the roads. When it is the rush period the minibuses more or less get all the passengers. That is something the Transport Board will have to consider how they are going to be able to compete with the minibuses at those peak hours.

I should like to support the Resolution, Sir, because this money has already been expended. The Minister has given the assurance that he is looking for new buses, as Senator Comissiong has said, and I believe that with a new injection of capital of this nature, the deficit has been reduced, and we look forward that we will hear a little better report from the Transport Board in the coming year in the effort to help relieve the congestion on the roads.

Thank you, Sir.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, the matter before us has to do with a guarantee by the Barbados National Bank to the Transport Board, and the Addendum tells us that the loan was obtained by the Transport Board to liquidate outstanding debts to the National Insurance Board and other creditors. That is a disgraceful example for a Statutory Corporation to be setting to the private sector who successive Governments upbraid for non payment of National Insurance contributions.

4.50 p.m.

I hope that this is not a matter of paying off some and an amelioration of the very bad habit of non-payment of National Insurance contributions on the part of the Transport Board.

But there is another matter. There is a Resolution for in excess of \$7 million. This \$13 million is a guarantee, but then there is another matter, a Resolution for \$7 million which is to do with the purchase of buses, and that is not before us, but I have heard much about the purchase of buses, and I wish to have my input as well.

Now, Sir, this whole problem with the Transport Board and the minibuses goes back to the first Democratic Labour Party administration where in my view the minibuses were answering what was clearly an unmet need in our community and what is still an unmet need in our community. In the time of the Barbados Labour Party between 1976 and 1986 we tried to accommodate the minibuses, we tried to regulate the service and the quality of the service as well that they were offering to the public. In the early months of 1986 these minibus people were wooed by the Democratic Labour Party, there was nobody like them in the world. They promised them the earth and all that there was therein until after 28th May. Now we are hearing that the Minister of Transport wishes to run them off the road. He has declared war on the minibuses, but there are certain particulars in which the Minister of Transport, the Minister of Finance and Prime Minister and the Development Plan are at variance on this question of public transport.

In the new Development Plan which is a document of this House and certainly in the Prime Minister's statement last night which is already a document of the House, I would like to quote where the Prime Minister last night said:

"As far as the public transport system is concerned, additional buses, some purchased as complete units overseas, others built here in Barbados on imported chassis will be acquired, and this will help alleviate some of the hardships which commuters suffer because of inadequate rolling stock."

The Prime Minister is admitting that the commuters suffer hardships because of inadequate rolling stock.

"With the new buses in place, the Operations Department of the Transport Board will be streamlined, and the rostering and scheduling of buses should greatly improve. During the Plan Period, a new headquarters building for the Transport Board including workshop facilities will be built."

Now this is the important paragraph, Sir:

"Phase 3 of the Fairchild Street Bus Terminal Project will commence."

This is a project that started in the time of the Barbados Labour Party, but this Government's concept of phase 3 is different from the former Government's concept of phase 3, and I will show you how that is so. The Prime Minister went on to say in respect of the Fairchild Street Bus Terminal Project phase 3 commencing:

"This calls for the extension of the existing terminal to take in that area now housing the Fairchild Street Market, and construction of a new terminal to replace the two at the Jubilee Gardens and Princess Alice Highway. Additional bus stop shelters throughout the island will also be erected."

And then he went on to health. The Prime Minister has said not a word about replacement of the Fairchild Street Market. All we are told is that it is to be replaced by phase 3 of the Fairchild Street Bus Terminal Project and that a new terminal to replace the two at Jubilee Gardens and Princess Alice Highway will be constructed. Not a single word out of the Prime Minister's mouth about minibuses.

Now in the Barbados Labour Party's manifesto of 1986, it is again important to point out the similarity of wording at page 11.

"The Fairchild Street bus terminal will be fully operational with the completion of the public hall, staff facilities and 32 vendors' booths."

We know it's there. It has never been officially opened but it is there and people use it.

"The operation of the River Road bus stand will eventually be incorporated into the project."

The River Road bus stand, not the Fairchild Street market.

"The minibus operations at Jubilee Gardens and Princess Alice Highways will be amalgamated into a proposed new terminal west of the General Post Office. This new ultra-modern terminal facility will serve the northern routes."

So the Barbados Labour Party made it very clear what it was prepared to do in the new administration in respect of the minibuses. The Prime Minister has said not a word last night in his speech about the minibuses.

Now I turn to the Development Plan for 1988-93 - I am so pleased that you are furnished with a copy - at page 132 under Head - I believe it is called Transport and Works, the subhead I am dealing with says "Public Transport". Chapter 13, Transport and Works, page 132, Public Transport, and it goes on and on about the Transport Board and what they will do and so on and so forth. Then on page 133 it says:

"Government will provide improved bus terminals and passenger shelters for commuters. The improvements will be effected through:

- implementation of Phase 3 of the Fairchild Street Bus Terminal Project. In this phase the terminal will be extended to include the area now occupied by the Fairchild Street Market."

Those who operate out of that market and those who patronize that market are very interested to know from the Prime Minister or any other Minister for that matter what alternative accommodation is planned for the Fairchild Street market, and what upgrading or other plans there may be for what is now termed the River Road bus stand.

He also goes on to say that improvements will be effected through construction of a new terminal to replace the two at Jubilee Gardens and Princess Alice Highway. Note carefully, Sir, lifted straight from the Barbados Labour Party's manifesto, but this time with a twist. The Barbados Labour Party makes it clear in its manifesto that the minibus operations will be amalgamated into the proposed new terminal west of the General Post Office; amalgamation of the operation they now have at Jubilee Gardens and Princess Alice Highway. This Development Plan only says - no mention of the minibuses - "construction of new terminal to replace the two at Jubilee Gardens and Princess Alice Highway."

I am led to believe, reading the whole, that they are talking about Transport Board buses and not minibuses. The minibus drivers and many of the people who patronize the minibuses, I dare say all of them, will be very interested to know what plans the Government has for proper terminal facilities or terminus facilities for minibuses. The Development Plan does not tell us that. The only reference that the Development Plan makes to minibuses is at the very end, the penultimate sentence, where it says "Minibuses constitute an important and essential part of the public transport system in Barbados."

I begin to wonder if the Minister of Transport and Works was consulted at all about this document, because he is saying an entirely different thing, and the Government is saying one thing in this Development Plan and yet the Plan is suggesting another. I think that this is only lip service to the minibuses. It is all right to say that they are playing an essential part, but what accommodation, what amelioration is the Government making to help the minibuses to provide this very important and essential service according to the Development Plan?

5.00 p.m

It goes on to say, and hear now -

"The Government, in order to improve facilities for passengers of minibuses, will construct a minibus terminal of similar standard to that which now serves the Transport Board at Fairchild Street."

I find this hard to understand. I am careful not to say "hard to believe." I find it hard to understand. What are we being told here? That the Government is going to build another bus stand the size and quality of what we now have at Fairchild Street exclusively for minibuses? "We will construct a minibus terminal of similar standard to that which now serves the Transport Board at Fairchild Street", but it is careful not to say where its construction will be.

The minibus operators, like the Transport Board, have need of a bus stand at the Fairchild end of Bridgetown as well as the Cheapside end of Bridgetown and the Government is very careful not to say where this minibus terminal, similar to that at Fairchild Street is going to be constructed. It is impossible to construct it at any mid-way point between the two unless you are going to put it on Broad Street, or on the Wharf side. It is really quite impossible to do that.

The Government has to know, certainly the Minister of Transport and Works has to know that the same commuting needs that the Transport Board is seeking to answer are not any much different from those which the minibus operators seek to answer, and you are not going to do the minibus operators or the minibus commuters any big favour if you build a minibus terminal at one end of the town and expect that people would then walk the whole length of Broad Street to the other end of the town, whichever end of the town it is going to be, if it is going to be in the town at all, or wherever it is going to be and I find this plan wondrously silent on that. I find it an omission of the greatest proportion so I am very interested in discovering, if I can this afternoon, exactly what it is the Government is proposing to do and if any of this \$13 million is expected to go toward any of the programmes which are set out under Public Transport in the new Development Plan. I am not aware that anything has been voted in this financial year for anything that I see here under Public Transport but I would be very interested to know.

But, there are other things in which I am interested and I am not the only one who is interested either, Mr. Deputy President. We hear about new buses and we hear shouts from over the other side that some are going to be bought next week, or next month, or whenever and that there are to be Mercedes Benz buses from Brazil, \$7 million.

I want to know if there is any truth in my understanding that a local company, Motor Services Ltd., was approached by the Ministry of Transport and Works about the purchase of buses for the Transport Board, Hyundai buses, to be exact.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: It does not matter how you pronounce it. I think you know what I mean. Eighty-four thousand Barbados dollars per bus was a rough quotation. It is my understanding that Motor Services was given to understand from the Ministry of Transport and Works and/or the Transport Board that Transport Board would be very interested, or the Minister, or the Ministry, in seeing 2 or 3 on a trial basis and, I believe, that several teléxes, and faxes and all the other modern technology of communication were put in gear except that a few weeks later the Motor Services Ltd. learned, like the rest of us, through the Press, that the Minister of Transport and Works was, in fact, in Brazil negotiating for buses at U.S. \$62 000 per bus.

Now, I must tell you, Mr. Deputy President, if we cannot speak frankly about things in here, then we cannot speak frankly about them anywhere. There is a lot of talk at the side of the road and because we are politicians we have to listen to it and learn to be able to sift but it seems to me that what the Minister of Transport and Works was not able to achieve with Mercedes under the Barbados Labour Party when he was Minister of Transport and Works, seeking to do a bus deal with Mercedes in West Germany which was – I use the word advisedly "intercepted" – he has now achieved with the said Mercedes in Brazil under the Democratic Labour Party as their Minister of Transport and Works.

I do not understand why the Minister himself has to be involved in this. He is one of the worse drivers in this nation. I speak of my own knowledge. He takes avoiding action where there is nothing to be avoided. He knows nothing about buses and I do not know why he had to be so personally involved in all of these transactions which had to do with the sale of buses. I am deeply concerned about it and I really want to know if it is true that we could have had these Hyundai buses which are said – if I am to be contradicted, contradict me but bring substantial evidence to show me that you are making your contradiction creditable.

I am told that these buses were suited to the terrain in Barbados. Why would the Government be looking to buy buses at U.S. \$62 000? You are talking about almost \$125 000 for a bus when the Hyundai people were to offer you their bus at Bds.\$84 000 per bus.

The people who are the agents for Mercedes for Barbados are smiling all the way to the bank anyhow because if the buses come from West Germany, if they come from Brazil or Timbuktoo the Mercedes agents here are bound to draw a commission so it really does not matter to them who went to Brazil, who went to West Germany, as long as the decision is for Mercedes they will smile all the way to the bank.

You are talking about 50 buses. That is a lot of money you are talking about here and I really want to know. In my view this business of selection of buses and going to look at buses, and so on, is a matter for the technical advisors to the Minister.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: On a point of order. I do not think that the Senate should be allowed to hear comments that are, as far as I am aware, untrue. There is no Minister of Government who left Barbados to go anywhere to select any buses and I would like to have that matter withdrawn or struck from the records because unless the Senator can bring proof that this is so I do not think she should pursue it. As far as I know that is absolutely untrue.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, I refuse to withdraw it because I know it to be true. I heard it from the mouth of the Minister himself who boasted that he is going to select buses and that he has been to select buses. He did it in our time and he did it in this time and unless it can be shown to me that he did not do it I refuse to withdraw those remarks and I do not say them with any malice. There is a lot you do not know.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Ask about MP2. That is an Aside. That is not meant for the Chair, Sir.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: You do not know what is going on Boxill, man. You do not know what was going on.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Address the Chair.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: That is why we have to be concerned as Senator Tull said with the way in which tenders go out, or fail to go out, for supply of tyres at the Transport Board. It is like wells in the Ministry of Transport and Works. All of this is talk at the side of the road, Sir.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Because you are not at the side of the road but it deeply concerns us. It is the thin edge of the wedge and, as I say, it is not anything new. I have watched this phenomenon while I sat in Government. 5.10 p.m.

I am in the Opposition now and watch the same man using the same strategy and technique doing it now when he is a Minister in the same Government in the DLP administration. You have to ask yourself why he was so

insistent that he would have no other Ministry except this. You have to ask yourself these questions. We are not accustomed to this. You hear all kinds of fancy stories as you travel about what obtains in West Africa, what obtains in India and so on when it comes to contracts. Even hear about some of our sister countries here in the Caribbean. But we are not accustomed to that here. And I do not want to see it start here. I do not want to be a part of that. I do not want that to be a part of what transpired in my time.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Do not cheupse. Do not cheupse. You can only speak for yourself, Senator Boxill. Do not think that what you would not do, other people would not. But you must ask yourself. And I really would like a little explanation on the Hyundai deal, and if it is true in fact that these people made a proposal and why their proposal was rejected. There may be reasons why. I do not know.

I see here that the purchase of buses, and I know from my experience in the Cabinet that the purchase of buses entails provision of parts, provision of servicing and other such ancillary matters. And I do not know if the quotation in each case was an equal package. I do not know if it is that that accounts for the very large difference between eighty-four and what, nearly \$124 000 to be exact. But it is a large difference. And I think it is worthy of explanation. And I do not understand as I say why the Minister himself is getting so involved in these works. Because you see, as the Prime Minister said in his Statement last night, and I sat up when I heard it, some of the buses would be purchased as complete units overseas and others built here in Barbados on imported chassis.

Now we have not heard a word about what percentage of buses over the planned period in this Development Plan – the Prime Minister was speaking of the Development Plan – would go to local importers so that they would have some idea of what the time was at their disposal or what the Government might be requiring. And this is the complaint of the local bus builders all the time. You cannot buy a bus like you go in at Woolworth and buy a toy bus. They have to import materials, they have to import chassis, they have to have a work force. They have to know, a year, 18 months in advance what is likely to be on their assembly line. And it is not a large operation like it is an operation in West Germany or in Brazil or in the United States where there are large vehicle manufacturers. Even then they have to be able to tell you well over the next year or 18 months, this is what they know will come off their assembly line. And if for a place like Barbados they have to have specially appointed vehicles or they have to make certain adjustments on account of the specifications which the Barbados Government may require, they need considerable lead time

to know that. And I really do not think the Development Plan anyhow is the place that the bus builders in Barbados should be looking to get an idea. I would like to think that they had been consulted. There is only one set of bus builders. I would like to think that they had been consulted and they have an idea of what percentage of the business they will get. But I am not seeing any reference to that, either in the Prime Minister's Statement, not even by implication, nor am I seeing in the Development Plan anything to suggest that there will be something in it for the local bus builders who depend on some of the Government work too. And they cut back and increase their work force. From time to time it fluctuates according to how the Government work goes. Very, very, very important. Very important that we should know exactly where we are going with this.

We hear that a new Headquarters building for the Transport Board including workshops and facilities will be built. As I pointed out, you will find that in the Barbados Labour Party's Manifesto as well. but 2¹/₂ years later, the Development Plan does not tell us where it is going to be built, when in the planned period which is a five year period, we are likely to see the start up of works on this Headquarters, we just have no idea. This is just general statements. This is the Manifesto that was never delivered in 1986, lifted now from our own and put in place as a five year plan for 1988-93. But when you move from Manifesto to five year plan, you expect to see more details. You expect to see where the financing is coming from. And you expect to see where in the five year planned period the works might start. But you do not see anything. This five year plan, this Development Plan is reading like a Manifesto statement because that is exactly what it is. And it is not hard to recognize it for what it is. Because when you are like me and you have helped to put the BLP Manifesto's statement in place, you can recognize your own language when you hear it over the TV like I heard it last night, Sir. But it does not read like a Development Plan. So we are still no wiser.

The Development Plan in respect of Transport and Works as in respect of every other sector of our economy tells us nothing that we do not already know largely having learned it from the Barbados Labour Party's Manifesto, except that "I think deliberately and very cleverly, the Government has obfuscated whatever it is that they are planning for the minibus operators of this country. We made it clear in our Manifesto where accommodation would be made for them and this Government has little or nothing and what they have said is so largely unclear that the minibus operators will not know where they are. At least they know with the Minister of Transport and Works where they are, and he is planning for them to be nowhere.

But the fact is that the minibuses show by their very operation that they continue to service, a demonstrated need in our community. And until we can show that we have alternative ways and means of answering the need of working people in this country and all of those others who have to commute, including as has been pointed out already this afternoon, old age pensioners and school children, until we can show that we have alternative ways and means of satisfying that need, I am afraid that we have to face the fact that the minibuses will continue to service that need. And I do not know that confrontation with the minibuses, declaration of war on the minibuses, refusal to ameliorate the service that the minibuses offer is the answer to the question. But I will hope that I will get some answers to this question when this debate is wound up.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Prescod.

SENATOR T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Deputy President, I am not going to go into any long discourse on this matter. But I believe certain aspersions were made and I believe there is a necessity to reply to some of the remarks that were made by Senator Miller.

The problem that we are facing here is the philosophical divide, one, and the different perspectives that stem sometimes from class positions within this society. Before she began to speak in detail and attempt to discredit the Minister who was once considered to be honourable and pure by that side and who I know for a fact, up until the eve of election, they were still hoping to retain him as a candidate for the Barbados Labour Party. I am now surprised that these same people have all of a sudden discovered that he is unworthy and implying that he is involved.....

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, Sir.....

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Is this on a point of order?

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I... - Yes, on a point of order - hate to interrupt especially when the Senator has not really got to any point yet. But it is absolutely untrue to say that the present Minister of Transport was mooted to be a candidate in 1986 for the Barbados Labour Party. The Barbados Labour Party dismissed him from its Cabinet! And he is not in a position to say otherwise, he never having sat in that Cabinet. And he not being Dr. Blackman.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Prescod.
5.20 p.m.

Mr. Deputy President, I speak with great authority on this matter. I am the Legal Assistant of Dr. Blackman and on more than one occasion I have been the President of the St. Michael East division and I can mention a number of names that came to my house and asked me to ask Dr. Blackman to remain with the Barbados Labour Party and even an invitation to Ilaro Court to talk to the former Prime Minister. The present Leader of the Opposition can testify to this. It occurred in an attorney-at-law's office in Kays House. I can speak about that. I am defending the character of the Members of this Party because you are talking about kick-backs. It is the practice of the Barbados Labour Party to give the impression

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, on a point of order. That word has not been used in here not by me.

Asides.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Not by me. It has not. Where it has been used, Mr. Deputy President, is outside there in the Carlisle Car Park in 1986 when Mr. St. John put a proposal to Dr. Blackman which to this day has never been answered. I have never used that word and I will not have Senator Prescod put that word into my mouth. When I choose to use it, I will use it. You cannot speak for me.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Miller. Senator Prescod, you may continue.

SENATOR T. A. PRESCOD: The implication was clear. When she spoke about the difference in the prices of the buses that are about to be purchased by the Transport Board, she made reference to the cost of the buses and implied that the Minister went overseas and that he was involved in some sinister act. I do not want to go into this.

Asides.

SENATOR T. A. PRESCOD: I do not want to go into this in detail.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Let us hear Senator Prescod please.

SENATOR T. A. PRESCOD: You see, Sir, this class perspective in attempting to denounce the character of people has not been exercised once in here today. I have been denounced by the same Senator, one who has recently escaped from the same peasant class as me. I have been castigated and denounced as a political non-entity and she said it with great glee. So it is not surprising to me

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: No, no, no. Mr. Deputy President, this is not a debating society. This is not George Street, or Roebuck Street. What is said in here – Sir, I am on a point of order – goes down in Hansard and is there for the world to read 200 years from now. I have not addressed this man, this honourable Senator.....

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I have not addressed this honourable Senator for the day in this Chamber and I certainly have not used those words. I have never suggested that he is a non-entity or anything of the kind. He is saying that I have accused him already in here today and it is absolutely untrue.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: No, not today. He did not say it today. Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I have never called him a non-entity today or any other day Boxill.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: No you may not address – please address the Chair. Thank you. All right. Thank you for making your point, Senator.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, but my point of order is and I am very insistent on it, Sir, that I have never referred to Senator Prescod as a non-entity. I have greater command of the language than that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Senator Prescod proceed.

SENATOR T. A. PRESCOD: Because I am establishing the class, I was referred to as a clone, qualified as a political clone of Dr. Blackman. I do not perceive that as anything to feel proud about. It is an attempt to give the impression that I have no initiative and this is common behaviour. But I am happy to see that the former Minister now Senator, a reject of the last election, is now attempting to extricate herself by apologising for the remarks which she made. But I am cognizant that the debate has nothing to do with character, but I want to make those few clarifications.

Now, that Barbados Labour Party Government that now speaks with great authority about privatisation and disrupting the whole transport service – that is my interpretation – is the same Government which dismissed the concept of privatisation when they discovered that the private bus owners were not carrying out the kind of service that was on demand by the people of Barbados. They set about to nationalise the transport service and they achieved the opposite. They started off to nationalise the buses and today they are now arguing for privatisation. They believe

that the minibus service and private ownership should be allowed. All of that talk that we are hearing now. This is the kind of confusion that comes from the lips of the Barbados Labour Party.

I want to make just a few points.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy President. I sincerely hope that Senator Prescod is not seeking to interpret anything that I have said or that Senator Tull has said or any other Member of the Barbados Labour Party has said in Parliament to suggest that we are for privatising the Transport Board because he could not be further from the truth.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you. You may proceed Senator Prescod.

SENATOR T. A. PRESCOD: What the Minister is opposed to are concessionaires, 6 and 7 buses owned by one individual. It is well known and the sociological point must be made that close blood relations have expressed in the public domain a desire to purchase the Transport Board, an established and well known minibus owner with close blood relations in here. So I deduce from that kind of behaviour that they would be happy to see the Transport Board fall so that they can expand their own dynasty.

The reality behind the decision in purchasing the buses is clear. The realities are clear. Now there are some figures here before me and I am happy that Senator Comissiong gave me these figures, and I believe that the figures are correct. Mercedes Benz from Germany cost \$210,000. From Brazil, the decision to purchase them from Brazil - \$122,000, almost 100% per unit. Now the Hyundai Bus that Senator Miller talks about - \$90,000. Two years ago the point that she is making. Today those buses cost \$135,000. So one can see the comprehensive way in which the Minister went about in selecting the buses from a specific location, the same Mercedes Benz for \$122,000. Why should one, out of this type of thinking, come to the conclusion and distort all the facts and try to impress upon the public of Barbados that something diabolical is happening within the Democratic Labour Party and this particular Minister is doing all of these devious things, and then make a special remark about MP2? All of a sudden you are going to hear about MP2. They only discovered that something has happened with MP2 in 1988. What type of politics is this if we are going to continue all along in all our lives to distort certain facts in order for simple political expediency? Nobody can take them seriously if this is the kind of line that must be taken at all times. We must come back to some sober analysis and try to do things that are progressive so that we can assist this country in coming out of the difficulties which were created by them prior to 1986. They believe in some political hope. I do not know if

it is the environment in the Lower House has caused them to get this feeling. But they are distorting the facts and they know the truth.

5.30 p.m.

If the presumption was that they believe that what they are saying is right, then we can accept the suggestions as genuine, but the presumption is based not on believing that they are telling the truth. They know from the inception that what they are saying is not right, but they set about to come in here and distort the facts.

This party is committed to assisting the working class people of this country forward and they would not use any instrument or method to serve as an encumbrance against any minibus operator or any poor man becoming involved in any form of enterprise, so do not make the point anymore. You cannot speak with any credit on assisting poor people.

You built a big Central Bank building and you disbanded the plan which would have catered to the poor people around Church Village. You disbanded the swimming pool in Kensington Lodge because you felt that the people in the City were not suitable.

Aside.

SENATOR T. A. PRESCOD: There is the infrastructure there. The infrastructure is already there for the pipes and all the electricity, and then it is covered with mould, and you know that.

Aside.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Will you refrain, Senator, from your loud asides, please?

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Then I must get up and protest on a point of order, Sir. These things are not true. That is a serious misleading, and all this thing done in the honest rhetoric in the name of the poor people.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Are you addressing the Chair, Senator?

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: All the truth will come out eventually. The truth will be known, man.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: But I cannot let that go down in the record.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Are you addressing the Chair, Senator? You may proceed, Senator Prescod.

SENATOR T. A. PRESCOD: Mr. Deputy President, I am not going to be much longer, but I have been a member of the Board of National Housing and when I was there the decision was made, and I personally went to what was called Cecilia Barracks to observe what work was done on that particular element of the project, and it was agreed by the Board to fill that swimming pool in with mould, because they felt it was not necessary.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order. I rise again. I am getting angry because lies are being told to this honourable Senate. I was a member of Parliament at the time, Mr. Deputy President, and there was no construction, foundation laid for any swimming pool at Kensington Lodge. It was felt at the time that people needed places to live and not necessarily to swim in, and even so with Kensington Lodge it was felt that if we could have got more units in for people to live in, we would like to have done it. There is absolutely no truth in all the story you are hearing about pipes laid and mould being put on them.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator.

Asides.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I will deny every time he misguides the House.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Please proceed, Senator Prescod. Let us not have these loud asides.

SENATOR T. A. PRESCOD: Thank you, Mr. Deputy President. Sometimes people would like me to believe that I do not have the capacity to understand what is going on. They probably feel that I am insane. I said I was a member of the Board and I observed it.

Mr. Deputy President, I believe that I have made a number of points that were necessary to clarify the distortions made by Senator Miller in particular, and on the basis of my presentation I believe that I have alleviated some of the difficulties that arose as a result of her presentation and therefore I just want to say that I give my full support to this Resolution for \$13 million.

Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Mr. Deputy President, I want to make this intervention not so much on the detailed aspects of transport policy, but because I think that something has happened here this afternoon that obliges me to examine on my feet certain aspects of our system.

I think, you know, listening to all of this, I must confess, unpleasant episode which I did not enjoy, I think that perhaps some time or other those who are going to look at the Barbados Constitution, whenever that happens, might consider the possibility of a provision which allows Ministers perhaps to belong to one House but to appear in both Houses to answer and to take part in debates. If we can ever reach that point, I am sure the sort of experience we have had today will be obviated.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: It may be intensified, but at any rate Ministers will be able to answer for themselves not only when there is heated exchange which seems to affect their characters, but on matters of fact with which other Ministers who themselves are not in charge of the Ministries may not be familiar at all levels of the issue.

I do not believe that Dr. Blackman went to Brazil. I say this quite frankly because there is nothing

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: But I thought that is what we all heard, that he had been

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Well, I am sorry. I understood from the Senator's riposte to Senator Lewis that he was saying he had not gone and the Senator over there was saying that he had. That is what I thought. I was just saying I do not think he went to Brazil, I never heard it, and there is nothing that I know of his recent travels which would indicate that that was one of the places he visited.

The second point is this. We are accused on this side in respect of this debate – well, others, but particularly of this – of lifting large chunks of the Barbados Labour Party's Manifesto and putting it in the Development Plan. I have not read the Barbados Labour Party's Manifesto and therefore I can only address half of that problem. If the former Minister and the distinguished Senator is correct, it means then that the people by their votes trusted one side to carry out the promises made to them by the other.

The third point I should like to make, I do not want to detain the Senate, is something that I recollect. I really do recollect this. Before the change of Government there was a letter published, maybe in 1983 or 1984, I cannot remember, either by Mr. Butcher or on his behalf complaining or answering Mr. Vic Johnson or Mr. Jordan on the question of why he was not allowed to build buses in

preference against the choice of the then Government to have buses brought in from Belgium. This did occur. I cannot now remember the details, but I think in fairness to the issue we ought to recall these things, so that there has been an occasion before when for reasons said to be good and sufficient by a Government, they decided to bring buses in from outside.

5.40 p.m.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: On a point of order, I am not saying that is not so. I know it is so. What you need to go on to point out is that it is the one occasion when the Acme Company here didn't get a chance to build a number of buses which were coming from a particular place, and that is because of a quantity of orders which they had from down the Islands and from the same minibus men here. The same Butcher had had copious work from the Barbados Labour Party Government. So it is not as though there was a policy of not giving him work. That was the one occasion.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you for your point of order.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: If that is true, I answer by saying that it is my understanding that several of the new buses are going to be constructed here.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Do you mean you are buying a chassis now for \$135 000.....

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Tudor, you may proceed.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: The point I want to make is that we can have good reasons in each Government for policies which in retrospect we do not always think the same thing about, but it happens and therefore we cannot throw these accusations at each other as if we had just suddenly discovered that the people who preceded us or who come after us are doing the very wrong things while we ourselves did the right ones. I think we need more balance to the debates, and I do think that it needs to be considered as a general principle whether we might not some time amend the Constitution in the direction which allows Ministers to speak in both Houses even if they are constitutionally Members of one.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy President, I feel constrained to reply to certain comments made throughout the course of this debate. When I introduced the Resolution certainly I would not have foreseen that it would have drawn the sort of responses and participation that it has. Of particular interest is Senator Tull's comments in terms of the Government and its attitude towards the Minibus Association. Senator Tull is

well aware that this is a Government with a human face on it, and no attempt has been made to exclude the minibus operators from being part of the local transportation system.

In the first place, Senator Tull asked in whose interest are we running the Transport Board. The answer unequivocally is, for the travelling public as the first step. Now I am at a loss that between Senator Tull and Senator Miller we seem to be getting conflicting statements or interpretations. Senator Tull asked what is going to happen to the minibus operators. Senator Miller turned quite aptly to page 133 of the Development Plan which is a document of this Chamber and read out the last paragraph, and I will read it again for the record.

"Minibuses constitute an important and essential part of the public transport system in Barbados. The Government in order to improve facilities for passengers of minibuses, will construct a minibus terminal of similar standard to that which now serves the Transport Board at Fairchild Street."

This statement is consistent with what the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance said during the Budgetary Proposals, when he said he was going to rationalise the public service in this country. In terms of similar standard, similar standard in and of itself does not mean similar size, but it does mean or could mean similar facilities, because after all, the travelling public whether they travel by minibus or by the public transportation system are all Barbadians who travel, and the intention here is to improve the service to the travelling public within Barbados whether they use the public transportation system or whether they use the minibus system.

Senator Tull enquired why the buses from Brazil, based on the records which we have before us, the buses from Brazil being of the same brand, if you have similar buses, Mercedes Benz in this case, it is easier to maintain stock so that parts are interchangeable and the buses on the bottom line are much cheaper than from elsewhere. I do not know how many of the buses are actually in condition to run on any given day. This would vary from day to day, but on the question of tyres, it is my understanding that these are always put out to bid, and I think this answers your question as to how the buses are purchased.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: In answer to the question raised by Senator Goddard, what we are seeking here is a guarantee for debt that was incurred in August, 1987, to the Barbados National Bank in support of current obligations. It was all part of that debt, the operating deficit in that financial year. The \$13 million was unsecured. Although the Transport Board had had authority

under the Act to borrow monies, there was no guarantee offered to the Barbados National Bank; and I believe, a sleight-of-hand for accountants, it was an attempt perhaps at off balance sheet financing where you did not bring to book everything that should have been brought there, and it is part of the window dressing exercise that accountants go through from time to time; but these were current expenditures, and the Transport Board from earlier years, like other companies in the private sector, elected to ride the trade by failure to make payments to the National Insurance Scheme, and this was to bring this up to date and make payments.

There is now no attempt to ride trade in the city, but to make payments on a prompt basis, and in our efforts we try to take into account in the operating period all expenses incurred in that period and to make provision for it. By so doing we are trying not to underestimate the deficit because sooner or later you ride the trade for three, then four, then five months and you never know what the true deficit is in any one year. Right now we are actually trying to indicate and pinpoint the deficit in a given year.

Talking about the deficit, on good report it has been reducing and in the next year we hope that it would fall even further. So in specific answer to your question, Senator Goddard, it was for operating expenses because the buses which would be purchased would be purchased from the capital vote which was approved in the other Chamber earlier in the month.

On the question of whether or not we are having some of the buses made locally, the answer to that is "yes", and I think at this point in time at least ten buses will be assembled locally. We understand some of the problems which the manufacturer or assembler of bus bodies have encountered in the past, and some of these arose from lateness of placing orders. It is my understanding that prior to the DLP going out of office that they had buses made locally, then this was stopped when the BLP came to power, and we are going back. But the attempt now is to make sure that buses are made locally because we want to ensure that Barbadians do the work and save foreign exchange. What we will hope to do is to give him sufficient time and not to expect the impossible from him by giving too short a leeway in which to supply us with the buses.

Again on the question of whether or not the Minister went to Brazil, I thought I heard that over here myself. To the best of my knowledge normally if a Minister travels he has to indicate where he is going to Cabinet, and in this case, since I have been in the Government, when Ministers travel

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, please!

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: When Ministers travel, they have to indicate where they are going, and there is no record before Cabinet that this Minister travelled to Brazil.
5.50 p.m.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: No, but this is a fact.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, please. Let us hear Senator Clarke.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy President, with those few comments I move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ORDER NO. 6 – RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE LOAN OF \$2.3 MILLION TO THE CARIBBEAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy President, an analysis of CBC's financial position for the 5 year period 1983 – 1987 indicates that the Corporation was unable to generate profits in the last 4 years and the net result of that was an erosion of its equity base.

Just to give you some figures – retained earnings of \$3.5 million were experienced in 1985 falling to \$0.8 million by the end of 1987 and the projected shortfall in 1988 will be \$5.4 million and this will wipe out the equity base entirely.

The rationale or reasons given for the shortfall and the non-profitability of the corporation are as follows. The high debt which can be used for finance is \$22.0 million – physical expansion programme – the cost involved in the development of STV services and heavy outlay of staff costs. The expansion programme is financed by 65% debt which is cost equivalent to 12% and 13% of revenue.

On the staff side, there are over 200 employees who are members of the staff. This is a classical case of over-leverage in a corporation using short-term money for long-term purposes with the net result of doing business in the corporation.

If CBC is to become more profitable financially, the outlays on STV and the heavy staff costs and the debt service burden must be controlled rather closely. To reduce the debt equity ratio and by so doing reduce your interest

expenditures, it is proposed to inject equity of \$2 million in CBC in financial year 1988 - 1989 and a further \$2 million in 1989 - 1990.

In addition, there will be a loan of \$2.3 million to the CBC on the following terms and conditions. The loan, again, will be an amount principal of \$2.3 million, the interest 6% per annum. The life of the loan will be 12 years including a 2 year grace period. The repayment schedule - interest will be capitalised during the grace period but payable quarterly in arrear on March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31.

The principal payable quarterly on the interest payments is based on 40 instalments of \$64 400 each and the drawdown will take place on presentation of invoices for capital equipment.

To safeguard itself and to monitor more closely the operation of CBC the Ministry of Finance will require:-

- (1) Up to date quarterly expenditure and revenue figures for the preceding quarters before any monies are drawn down;
- (2) Projections of revenues and expenses for the 2 succeeding quarters so that we can monitor cash flow requirements;
- (3) An annual marketing plan broken down quarterly.

These are the safeguards which the Ministry of Finance is taking to monitor closely the operations of the CBC.

Mr. Deputy President, with that background I move that this Resolution do now pass.

SENATOR J. S. GODDARD: Mr. Deputy President, I was not able to write down the figures that Senator Clarke quoted but I got the gist of what he was saying in that the last 4 years CBC has been losing money, in fact, has been losing a fairly considerable sum of money and that there are plans afoot for injecting some \$4 million in new capital and, in addition to that, is this loan of \$2.3 million so that there is a restructuring of the loan capital by some \$6.3 million.

That is very commendable but a repayment of loan can only come out of future earnings and I understand that it is a 12 year loan with a 2 year moratorium and that the interest rate is very concessional at 6%. Notwithstanding that, I repeat, the repayment of a loan can only come out of profit unless you have other assets that you can sell off to supplement your cash flow.

Also, Mr. Deputy President, unless that trend of losses is stopped and reversed, the injection of new equity capital can be eroded very, very easily and we will see that within another 2 or 3 years if that trend is not stopped, Government will come back and ask for new equity capital for the corporation and, possibly, a rescheduling of this loan plus a request for a further loan.

The point I am making is I am not trying here to evaluate the function of CBC. I am talking about its financial viability. Unless it can be turned into a profit position, what we are doing now is just a very, very short-term measure and these costs, like what I said earlier with respect to the Transport Board, would become charges on the Treasury or the Consolidated Fund in due course.

I know there has been argument about privatising CBC to make it more profitable and I have no strong views on that one way or the other. I realize it has a certain social and developmental function to perform in relation to the information, educational and entertainment functions.

It may be though, Mr. Deputy President, a thought that a little competition may be the stimulus it needs to make it more efficient and more effective. I cannot help but notice how we have two daily newspapers and the wonderful effect competition has between the 2 of them. Admittedly there are both privately owned.
6.00 p.m.

I cannot help but notice that we have at least two a.m. radio stations plus Rediffusion of course, and the competition between them has a very salutary effect in forcing them into a market discipline having to watch their costs, having to maximize the revenue, having to provide more value for money to their customers. I am just wondering if the tonic that CBC TV needs may not be a little competition from another station.

To get back to the substantial point, Mr. Deputy President, though, it is the financial viability that I am stressing. I have a little experience in this because some 20 years ago I had the honour to serve on the Board of CBC and I was involved very much at that time in introducing monthly financial reporting and budgeting to the corporation. So I speak with some feeling for the Corporation. And unless this is done and monitored and management is forced to explain variances in a very disciplined way, we may just be trying to implement recommendations of a consultant and come back to tarry-ho a year or two down the road. So I am trying to bring experiences of many years ago to bear on the problem. And I really hope that a very, very serious effort would be made to restore that CBC corporation to sound financial viability.

Thank you.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Wickham.

SENATOR J. C. W. WICKHAM: Mr. Deputy President, I do not share Senator Goddard's optimism entirely about the virtues of competition because there are some situations, and in Barbados there are examples of that, where the introduction of competition does not necessarily result in improvement of the problem. What often happens is that both things become inferior because both things seek a level of mediocrity and indeed of inferiority in an effort to woo what they call the ordinary man's taste. Unless we have a clear alternative equality, unless the competition gives a clear choice, clear option between bad and good, to put it crudely, or good and better, then we do not in fact have any improvement.

What I have failed to understand all these years is why a single station with a virtual monopoly with reasonably intelligent people who seem to be working for it, who travel, who are always going on courses cannot produce a better product.

I do not find the CBC's station quality of their television at least compulsive listening. Not by any means. And I cannot take the argument that they have to take the programmes which are offered to them from the United States, the junk which is offered to the viewing public. Because there are good programmes in the United States and why do we not see them? I think we get cheated by reduction of the viewing and to some extent the reading population on the grounds that this is what the people understand, this is what they like. And I think that Barbados' reading and viewing public is insulted daily by the fare which they offer in both newspapers and on the radio stations because we get equated at the lowest possible level. There is something wrong. And to make it worse, the monopoly station does not make money. It seems to me there is something wrong there. That equation of monopoly, the profit, does not seem to work where the CBC station is concerned. I think we deserve better from both sections of our media. Maybe we do not scream. Maybe we do not insist hard enough on what is good. It is really quite shocking that we have to be satisfied when we are exposed to much better things, and much better things are available at the quality of programming and journalism which exists in Barbados.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Shorey.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: Mr. Deputy President, I rise to make one or two comments in connection with the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation dealing with it under the Resolution before us.

I am concerned for example with what I would put and some of the things I would put under the phrasing, "such other purposes as the Minister responsible for Finance may approve". And I assume that that would normally include the personnel and the programming and so on and so forth.

There are three particular matters I should like to touch on, Sir. The first really is a two-part one and it has to deal with the – and it relates to something that Senator Wickham touched on, the kind of fare provided – it has to do with the kinds of ads that are from time to time presented over the TV station and also over the radio station. Personally I find one of them offensive, that is the one under – interestingly enough a letter in the press expressed a similar view – this is the one which has to do with the Jubilee, not pronounced in that form. I find that offensive and crude and it seems to me that somewhere along the line the management has to accept responsibility for accepting or refusing certain kinds of ads. I do not know the relevant legislation but I find it difficult to believe that the management of the station is duty bound to accept all ads in whatever form they are presented. I would find that one very difficult to believe. Assuming therefore that some measure of decision-making is left as to whether they will accept a certain kind of ad, then I would suggest in this Honourable Chamber that the station should have it drawn to its attention from the highest possible authority in Government that some things are not acceptable in terms of quality.

The other related matter is the one dealing with Panther condoms. I find that undesirable because of what it appears to encourage. I see no counterpart advertisement talking or promoting essentially self control, discipline. And it seems to me that what we appear to be selling to youngsters is easy sex. You have it when you want it. That is the tenor of the advertisement. I think that that is a pretty close paraphrase of the words used in the ad.

Sir, the third and most substantial point I should like to raise has to do with something of recent occurrence, the dismissal of a Moderator of two call-in programmes. Since I did not give notice that I would wish to call someone's name, I think I should not call the person's name but I believe it is fairly clear to whom I am referring, a Moderator of two call-in programmes, one of which was normally during the day in Guttaperk and the other was on Monday evening I think called Standpipe. 6.10 p.m.

Sir, the explanation, if one could call it that, given by CBC, by the Management, has something of a hollow ring to me. It would appear that the statement made would wish to convince the public that the person's dismissal, or since it was a part-time job maybe a discontinuance of services

might be a more appropriate phrase, but his no longer working there was due to comments which he made or the way in which he acted following a receipt of a notice, and as far as I can remember words to the effect that in the circumstances, it could not be assumed and I am paraphrasing now, that he would be willing to conform to the rules and regulations of this station. However, Sir, what is interesting and what was from my point of view very carefully omitted from any statement by the station was that the gentleman in question had written at the time at least one, possibly two articles, but certainly one, reflecting on what he perceived to be his treatment at the hands of the Government in direct relation to matters with which the Prime Minister when he held other Ministries was concerned.

I am not aware that the accuracy of the statement has been refuted. What I am certain about is that for many citizens as for myself the statement, Sir, is that I am not aware that any attempts were made to refute his statements on grounds of inaccuracy.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy President, on a point of order. I think Senator Shorey is referring to an article which appeared in the Press. It is not a document of this House and he was quoting from it, and trying to draw certain inferences.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: All right. Let us hear Senator Clarke first and then I shall make a statement. Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Yes, on a point of order. I believe that Senator Shorey is seeking to draw certain inferences....

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Please let us hear Senator Clarke.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: He is seeking to draw certain inferences from an article which appeared in one of the newspapers, and it is not a document of this House, in an attempt to impute improper motives of the Prime Minister based on the article. I think it is completely out of order.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Shorey, we cannot permit certain debate on a matter arising out of a newspaper article at this time which is not before Parliament. I have been so advised that that is not in accordance with the Rules, but you may proceed.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: Mr. Deputy President, are you ruling – I am not quoting – that I cannot make reference to the newspaper?

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: No, and also you may proceed. I mean you have made passing reference to something which has taken place and then you may proceed with the matter of CBC. There is nothing wrong with that.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: I was, therefore, arguing, Sir, that it is very difficult to believe that the action taken by CBC did not take into account or was not related to the articles written by the gentleman concerned.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: But I am sorry, Senator Shorey, that is what I am saying. That is not permissible in accordance with the Rules of Parliament.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: Mr. Deputy President, I am taking your ruling, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: You may proceed Senator Shorey. Please do not interrupt the Senator. You may proceed Senator Shorey. Please let us hear the Senator.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: I am concerned about the treatment which has been meted out to this individual especially in view of the fact if I remember correctly a Member of the present Government shortly after the elections made a statement indicating that – and I think that I speak subject to correction, but I am fairly certain that I am accurate – no one would be banned from the use of the station. It would seem to me that the grounds on which the banning of the gentleman or his discontinuance of his services were....

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Yes, Senator Clarke. Senator Clarke is on his feet.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: In the absence of facts, it is out of place. We are trying to try a case here without the facts and we cannot have this, Sir, with all due respects, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you. One minute, Senator Shorey.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: I am merely referring to the statement made by CBC in explanation of its action and I am merely saying that the grounds appear to be, particularly insubstantial.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I am sorry but comments on a newspaper article and statements made by CBC etcetera cannot be brought before this House. I am very sorry.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: Can I then, Mr. Deputy President, regret that the action that was taken of the removal. I am not referring to the newspaper article. I am not referring to the statements of the station. I am merely commenting on the fact that a part-time employee of the station has been removed from functioning.

Asides.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: It seems to me, Sir, that this is a matter that deserves more consideration and is one that perturbs and has perturbed a number of citizens, and one would wish that future action would be consistent....

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Clarke. Let us hear Senator Clarke on a point of order.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Senator Shorey is attempting to draw inferences from facts not presented before us and he is going over that line over and over again and I cannot sit down.....

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: But you taught me this here Senator Tull. You get over there and interrupt all the time. No, but he cannot do that.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Shorey, you may proceed without that.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: Sir, I am merely saying that one hopes that future action of the station will be more consistent with the kind of policy stated by a Minister. Can I call the Minister's name?.....

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Shorey, this matter cannot be aired here. It is contrary to the Rules of Parliament.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: Mr. Deputy President, I am really sorry. I am really trying to understand your ruling, Sir. I am trying to refer to statements made by Mr. Taitt that persons would not be barred from using the station and I am only trying to say that I trust that in the future such action will be consistent with the kind of policy which he appeared to enunciate. Thank you, Sir.
6.20 p.m.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: Mr. Deputy President, I intended leaving here, but after hearing.....

Aside.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: When I am finished. I did not hear Senator Goddard, but from what I gleaned from what Senator Wickham said, I assume Senator Goddard was saying we should have another station or something like that. I am not sure. Then I heard Senator Wickham saying two do not necessarily make it better.

Aside.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: I did not hear you, so do not get up with.....

Aside.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Let us hear Senator Goddard on a point of order.

SENATOR J. S. GODDARD: On a point of order. Mr. Deputy President, I said that was a possibility. I was not advocating that.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I appreciate that you said that. Thanks for the clarification, Senator Goddard.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: I agree with Senator Wickham when he said two do not necessarily make it good, because we have a monopoly here with the Telephone Company. Are you going to bring in another telephone company because the service was not good? It would not make it any better.

Getting back now to Senator Shorey's remarks, what really irks me, I do not like this pontification and this sort of idea that Senator Shorey wants to bring inside here, that he is the keeper of the peace and that he only can see things as wrong. A man gets fired. What is wrong with that? He has been fired. All right. Where was Senator Shorey when Gerry Richards was unceremoniously discharged, not only fired?

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: No, it is the same principle, Senator Boxill. We cannot permit this.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: What can't you permit, Sir? A man has been discharged. He is not the first person that has been fired from any place. The next thing is, as I asked Senator Tull, if the gentleman had made the sort of unsavoury remarks to the former Prime Minister, who was the Minister of their Party, do you think he would have been still there? He would have been fired ever since.

The gentleman wrote in the papers something that I thought was offensive. Senator Shorey said he saw no rejection or disagreement or denial of the remarks that were made by the gentleman who got fired, if you do not want me to call any names. Everybody knows whom I am talking

about, but it was in the papers. A denial was in the papers, so apparently the Senator only reads what he wants to read. Whether a denial was in the papers or not, the point is, you cannot disrespect the Prime Minister like this and then expect that you should be still working under the Prime Minister. You were not going to do it in Germany, you were not going to do it in the United States, you were not going to do it in England, why should you do it here? Are we any less than those people?

I find it completely anathema to me that you can come in here to raise an issue about somebody who has been dismissed. Gardeners got fired, a former General Manager was fired, another member – you say I cannot call the name – was fired. I did not hear anybody come in here asking about that. Not only that, but the present Manager has been threatened to be fired before anybody get into power, you know. Henry Forde said he is going to fire him when he comes into office. I did not hear Senator Shorey say that that is wrong. That is right because they are doing it.

Nobody from the Democratic Labour Party fired Mr. Moutley. There is a Board up there, and if he got fired, he got fired from the Board, not from the Prime Minister or me or anybody else. He got fired from the Board, that is what the Board is there for. This is not the first time he got fired, anyhow. If I am not mistaken, Senator Miller has fired him too.

Aside.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: We cannot have this. Senator Boxill, we must not have this.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, on a point of order. He has to withdraw that. I have never fired anybody.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: Mr. Deputy President, I did not say definitely, I said from what I have heard. I said I think. Do you mean I cannot think now?

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, we cannot come to a point where debate in here is going to be trivialised, where you have honourable members.... ..

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: Is she making another speech? She cannot make another speech.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I am not saying we cannot make the odd joke, but there has to be an element of seriousness and I cannot allow myself to be misquoted. Please withdraw that, I have never fired anybody, I have never had that power.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: The gentleman they were referring to was fired by the Barbados Labour Party when Senator Miller was a member of the Government. Get up and deny that now.

Aside.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: All right, let us stick to the debate, please.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: The point that I am making, I do not like these extraneous matters being brought in a snide way about the facts of the matter were never denied. How does the Senator know that what the gentleman wrote in the paper were the facts of the matter? How did he know that these were the facts of the matter?

Aside.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: Don't mind you. You do not even know how to run your own business and you want to run in here.

The next thing I want to mention, Sir, and I heard it come out of Senator Wickham's mouth, we had a terrible let down here. Senator Shorey was going good all the time when he talked about the two programmes he found to be abhorrent, with Jubilee and that kind of nonsense and the other one with the contraceptives. I agree with that. He was going good, but the moment he had to go off for some reason or other and spoil the whole issue, that is what caused me to be on my feet, because I am not going to sit down in here, as I have said before, and allow members on that side or this side to desecrate the party I have made such a sacrifice for and not get up and defend it.

It is not fair for anybody to say that the gentleman was fired by members of the Democratic Labour Party. There is a Board that was set up, and if the Board found that the man was not complying with some rule or regulation it was the Board's right to get rid of him like they would get rid of anybody else. But unlike the Leader of the Opposition, who has already given notice that if – and that is a long "if" because as I told him already and I will tell him again, he will never live long enough to become Prime Minister of this country – but he said if he ever became Prime Minister the first thing he will do is to fire the Manager of CBC.

Aside.

SENATOR N. W. BOXILL: I did not fire Shirley King, she fired herself. Do not give me that now, that is extraneous too. I do not know why the Deputy President does not call on you to behave yourself.

The point I am making, and I want to continue, Sir, is that the papers of this country – I have said it before and I will repeat it – the media, both written and spoken but moreso written now than spoken, are extremely dishonest in this society. They like to give a lot of half truths and no truths at all, once it suits their purpose, and a lot of white lies, with all respect to you, Sir.

It is true that the media will have people who will like one party or another party, that is their democratic right, but I think it is the duty of the media to put the facts before the people, and not only the facts, but the truth, for all facts are not the truth, and let the people assimilate for themselves, but this kind of biased reporting that you get about the place all the time, which is not only unfair but an insult to the intelligence of the people of Barbados, with the sort of pornography, because the kind of thing that you are getting out of the Press today is nothing more than pure pornography, but all that has happened it is in a more licentious way than one would expect.

6.30 p.m.

I remember when I was a youngster, I could afford to take up either of the two leading papers at the time which were the Advocate or the Herald and read the editorial, and the grammar, the spelling and everything was there. You could start to learn from them. You take up either one of these papers today, and look at the editorial which should be the leading article. Read the editorial. Apart from its being biased and one-sided, the spelling is bad, the grammar is worse; the young people can't learn anything out of the papers today. So it is nothing more than pure pornography that they are sending out. No wonder the calypsonian had to talk about what they were sending out.

Coming back to the point, Sir, before I sit down, this is not the first, the second or the third time that I have heard Senator Shorey make remarks in here, starting off very good with my agreeing with him and then for some misguided reason he gets tripped up and seems to think that he can bring in some snide remark accusing this Government of vilification of someone outside whom the Government had absolutely nothing to do with. The Government did not fire the gentleman in question, and I don't believe that the Prime Minister had anything to do with it at all. But I am saying that if I were a member of the Board after that article appeared in the paper, I too would have asked him to resign. I thank you.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy President, about a year ago I took up a placard and I marched in front the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, and I did it not because I did not have anything to do, but because a matter of principle was involved. The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation had refused to cover the Annual General Conference of the Barbados Labour Party, and I and others

felt sufficiently strongly about it that we did something that is not too common in Barbados. Now we did not do it, Sir, because there was any political there was a political element, but that was not the major cause. It was because in our Constitution and in our practice and custom for a very long period of time is the right to free speech and free expression of opinion, and I believe that this debate if it went in that direction can't go wrong. When the Democratic Labour Party in its manifesto in 1986 said that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation would open windows of opportunity for every kind of opinion in this country, we took them at their word. But a number of developments in recent times have brought us to the conclusion that the Democratic Labour Party in the area of broadcasting and use of CBC have gone down the same path as it has in many other areas of its public activity, that is to say, that it promises one thing and delivers another.

Now I do not know all of the circumstances of the Mottley firing, but there is a certain amount of convergence, let's put it in terms of juxtaposition of events. You can't seriously tell me that in this country you can't honestly express your honest opinion about anybody, the Prime Minister or his chauffeur. The honest expression of opinion is guaranteed by the Constitution of Barbados, and to hear now that when you express your honest opinion about particularly someone in public life that you are rude and you should get fired big men expressing an opinion and you are talking about being rude. But it is that juxtaposition of events that has caused a great deal of disquiet in Barbados.

I saw the Government introduce here a Freehold Purchase Act and they have in the explanatory note that they are passing an amendment to obviate public dissatisfaction with something. There is a lot of public dissatisfaction over this thing at CBC, not because of a personality. I may not agree with what the particular personality says or how he conducts the show or how he handles people, but he has a right under our laws to be able to talk up in the way it suits him, and I think the essential point, and all the bluster that we get on the other side cannot change that, is that people must have the right to express themselves in this country not only beside the street corner, but also on the public media of this country. Barbados Labour Party is committed to that. We are the ones who opened up the airways at Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation for Guttaperk, so that people of every ilk could get on it and say exactly what they feel, and even when the Democratic Labour Party installed a line of speed dialling boards in George Street to get in the calls to criticise and abuse the Government, we did not shut down the programme, because we believe that people in this country must talk. There is nobody over concerned about who is not the Government. Let people talk.

You don't need necessarily an independent station. I don't know why you need to sell of CBC. I hear that but I have my own views on that. I don't know how you are going to take the public media, the only one you have got, and sell it off; and you are selling off the only hospital you have got. I don't necessarily go along with that. But you need some rules. You cannot allow for instance the Prime Minister – and Senator Boxill will probably tell me I am rude because you can't say anything about the Prime Minister for him – you can't allow the Prime Minister to use air time making a lot of political points, and then tell the other side that they must not have time to make their political points too. We have to draw the very narrow line between a Minister of Government or Prime Minister making statements relating to their Departments and Ministries and so on and making naked political statements, and when they do there must be rules in this country that allow other people to express their naked political points too.

In countries where these things are well refined and sophisticated, that is exactly what is done. You would see it on television in the United States of America. You would see it on television in the United Kingdom where one opinion is expressed and they provide time for a private citizen or another political party to come the following night and give their opinion on that particular statement. We need that in this country. We see a lot of things have happened in recent times in this country where there is the feeling that a number of the traditional mores, traditional values are being rapidly, not gradually, being eroded, a number of things that we take for granted we can no longer take for granted. They don't even want you at a political meeting to get heckled. As soon as a man gets in the crowd and tells you you are talking foolishness, a policeman comes trying to hustle him out of the crowd and carry him to the police station. It is getting as bad as that. You have got to be able to talk, and those of us who experience these things like a little heckling, it sharpens you. We are accustomed to driving our cars along the road and people expressing their views to you through the window of your car. The public media is no different. C.B.C. belongs to the people of Barbados and the \$6 million or \$4.5 million...

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: \$2.3 MILLION.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Whatever it is, the money that is going to go into CBC for this further development is the people's money. It does not belong to Mr. Sandiford and company. They are welcome to go and open a radio station if they feel like. They could do it right there in George Street, but this is a public company and therefore these rules about the Government cutting off people to prevent them from expressing themselves at their whim and fancy is unacceptable to me as it is unacceptable to a large range of people in Barbados. Don't let us get into this

business that we are going to do it in one administration and the other administration and "A" did so and so and "B" did so and so. Mr. Deputy President, I do not care which administration it is, whether it is the Barbados Labour Party administration or the Democratic Labour Party administration.

6.40 p.m.

We have gone through that and fought dog fight over it. We can move to a higher plain now and I am not only saying it because I am in Opposition. When I am in Government I will say it. We move to a higher plain now where we take into consideration the legitimate interest of this small nation of ours. We cannot keep fighting over these things all the time.

I hear Senator Boxill mention the fact that the Leader of the Opposition said that the General Manager would go. If the General Manager of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation allows himself to be manoeuvred into doing a lot of silly and foolish things and making a lot of wrong judgments, I feel sorry for him. I genuinely feel sorry for him.

I believe that he is working under the kind of pressure that a General Manager of a Statutory Corporation should not be called on to endure. I really believe that that should be the situation and I am a little bit sick and tired at this constant to and fro of the Democratic Labour Party coming to justify what I consider bad practice by saying that it is not new.

There was a time when the Democratic Labour Party in Government had a programme called "Meet Your Minister". You met your Minister just before the elections so that they could get a lot of air time to proselytise. Now, that was wrong. The Barbados Labour Party had to endure it. During that period the Barbados Labour Party could not go on the television station because that was a ministerial edict. Do not give those fellows a play at all.

Now, that changed. The Barbados Labour Party came into Government and that changed and, as a matter of fact, when we were in Government, we used to invite the leader of the Opposition, the late Errol Barrow, to come on television any time he wanted. Just tell them that he wanted to come. We used to tell him that all the time because he is representing an alternative point of view that nearly half of the people in the country wanted to hear and funny enough, we wanted to hear it too so do not go back to this thing where every other week now there is a question of whether you are going to cover this or you are going to cover that or whether you are going to give reasonable time to one opinion or the other.

Now, a number of public issues arise from time to time and, as Senator Wickham said, you do not have all bad programmes in the United States. You have a lot of good ones and you see a lot of good ones on the public educational stations. There is an American channel 13 in New York City where you get hot cross programmes and that is owned by the state so you expect that when the state owns a station that you do not have to break your neck for a lot of crude commercialism because if you are intending to educate, inform and entertain as a public service, it is a service that, perhaps, has a cause.

Now, I am not going down the line and saying you should throw good money after bad and you should give it massive injection of capital all the time and keep losing money. I am not going down that line but I am saying that a public television station has a duty over and above that of a private commercial station, and, particularly, in a small developing country like Barbados. We have a lot of work to do, Sir.

I served as a Minister of Education to this country for 5 years and I also was the first Minister of Culture in this country and I know what we have to do and I know what has been done so far and I know we have a long way to go and I think that our public television station, and I am agreeing with other speakers before me, Senator Shorey and Senator Wickham, that we have to develop a better quality of programming.

The thing about it is that we have this weakness for what is not indigenous and in these days now - when I was a boy it was what was British. Now-a-days it is what is American and you hear a lot of talk by the people who are in the position to do something about it talking about cultural penetration and, obviously, the television is the worse form and the most potent form of cultural penetration and they go on and they call it cultural imperialism and the obverse to that is cultural colonialism. Now, these are fine phrases and everybody who has caught up the latest catch words use them but you need more than catch words.

As a Minister of Education in this country, and as a Minister of Culture, I recognise and I am being modest about it - I am not saying I went into the Ministry with this knowledge - but when I got involved in education and culture and dealt with the people in those areas and watched the sources at work, I realize that we have a serious educational programme to do in Barbados, not only for children but for adults, and our education programme I am talking about is not the formal education of things they teach you with textbooks in classrooms.

I am talking about teaching about an awareness of yourself and your society demonstrating clearly the value of the good things in it and trying to do something about the

bad things. This is what we should be talking about on a television station, not all the foolish little petty things we hear week after week this body cannot talk and this body is fired because they have a view that does not square with the other one and Ministers getting involved and interfering. That is not necessary.

The people of Barbados will recognise where the television station in Barbados is doing the right thing and if they recognise that, the Government or the Minister at the time will get the credit for it. You do not have to force any credit out of it so I have no quarrel, Mr. Deputy President, with the continuing ownership of CBC by the Government of Barbados.

I do not mind if there are seven television stations. They will work for two good purposes; one stated by Senator Goddard the possibility that the competition may sharpen television operations in view of this country.

In addition to that, it will give people a choice. At the moment if you do not like what is on, you stop it. You can have a choice and hardly anything could be wrong with that but I am hoping and I am urging on the Government that if it ever gets around to granting licenses to other television stations to set up in Barbados, that they will not be blanket licenses; that tied to them should be some very clear conditions - as my friend said, quality control. We control everything these days in the interest of the people as a whole.

When you introduce legislation making barber shops have a sink and running hot water, this was to protect the health of the people of Barbados. When you say you have to stop butchering pigs in the backyard where you do not have any proper facilities, that is to protect the health of the people of Barbados.

6.50 p.m.

We have to protect, Mr. Deputy President, the other side, the spiritual and other side of Barbadians by dismissing all the foolishness we see. And believe me, Sir, I am not making the point that a lot of the imported material is bad but the local good. There are some atrociously bad local programmes. And I think that we have to look at them too. This is a highly sophisticated and educated country. We have reached the heights and produced the best in many areas of human endeavour, physical skill, mental, intellectual and otherwise. And I do not believe it is beyond the competence of Barbadians to start again, because if you continue, we are going to carry along a lot of the baggage from the past.

Do you know what I would like to see, Mr. Deputy President? That you shut down the television station in Barbados for a year. I would get abused for this tomorrow.

But who cares? Shut it down for a year and tear up everything and start. Because you started so badly. I am not blaming Governments now. I am not talking about Governments. We in Barbados started so badly with our television station and its broadcasting and what we broadcast that I do not know that we do not need a new start.

A lot of people say that this is pseudo-intellectual arguments, that people like to see the lifestyles of the rich and famous and the other things that I do not know, I do not watch television too often. Even in my own house, Sir, I may not be able to go home tonight and say you should shut down television for a year.

Laughter.

Aside.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: I do not watch television a lot but I hear a lot about LA Law and I hear it is a good programme. I do not watch it. I have seen it perhaps once. In fact, part of a programme once. But I hear it is a good programme.

I am not saying that any programmes brought from overseas are not good. Let us cull the best that they have to offer and reject the foolishness. And at the same time, let us work here in Barbados in using our own indigenous skills to match anything anybody else can produce anywhere.

Now I want also, Mr. Deputy President, Sir, to say this. The Minister in introducing this measure talked about cutting back or monitoring or whatever is the word he used, certain areas and one was personnel. I got the impression, and if I am wrong, the Minister can tell me, let me give way because I do not want to misrepresent him, that CBC is overstaffed, that it has also, he has not said this but other people have said it, that it has too many commissioned officers and too few non-commissioned officers.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Clarke.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: I think I should read what I was saying, "The shortfall in the corporation's accounts is due mainly to the high debt which has been used to finance this \$22.0 million physical expansion programme, the cost involved in the development of STV services and the heavy outlays from staff costs."

Now I did not say anything about reducing staff. So I just wanted to clarify that point.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: But one understands that if the Minister is saying that the staff costs are heavy that — they talk about inferences all the time — maybe they are higher than they should be. But I am not getting into that particular aspect of it.

There is a view abroad that they have too many generals in comparison to the number of foot soldiers at CBC and that there is a lot of rivalry and back-biting and undermining and so on because too many people feel that they know it all and they should be the boss or they should not take instructions from one person or another. And it is in that kind of staff atmosphere that CBC is trying to do a job. If that is the case, let the Minister give the Board a mandate to clear that up. And when he clears it up, some people will quarrel and some would say it is a good thing. But that is the nature of Government. You have to take decisions. And whatever decision you take, however good you think it is, somebody is going to criticise it. When I was Minister of Education and we decided to give \$100 to every child in every secondary school, some people met me on the road and abused me and asked what can \$100 buy. They were not getting anything before and we decided to give them \$100 and they abused me and said: "You know what is the price of a pair of shoes? What is this \$100 going to do?" So when you make a decision in respect of CBC, whatever it is — and my friend does not agree with giving it at all — but when in Government we make a decision, some people are going to like it and some people are not going to like it. I do not care what the decision is. But CBC continues to be troublesome. And no piecemeal, patch-work kind of approach to CBC is going to solve the problems. You want to dig out some things from the root, not just prune them. Because the debates I am hearing on CBC, you have been hearing them for nearly 20 years. And it is the same thing over and over and over and over again. And it is about time this Government, they are the Government now, grasp the nettle and make the kind of changes that would make CBC a perfect vehicle for the purposes for which it was set up.

Applause.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Tudor.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Sir, you know I hope the Senator will not feel that I am flattering him unduly when I say that I enjoyed that speech. But ironically enough, it is the sort of speech which anybody could have made from this side 4 or 5 years ago. And this tells me something.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: Well anybody could have made it. In other words, you could

have taken the text of it and put it in the mouth of anybody on our side and it would most likely have still been a valid criticism against the governing Party then. And this tells me something. That again the problem may not be with individuals but it may be with the systems or the context in which we operate.

I long for the day, and I say this quite frankly, when some General Manager at CBC will say, I support the Barbados Labour Party but I serve the country. Or, I support the Democratic Labour Party but I serve the country. I think that what one really needs is something in the minds of people in executive positions that their politics and their patriotism do not always or need not always confuse them.

A lot of things in the last regime people said about that side. There was a fear for instance about Mr. Tom Adams which I could not see was justified, as there had been a fear about Mr. Barrow which again I could not see was justified. But I believe that in a small society, people get an exaggerated appreciation in the proper sense, in the sense of weighing of power. And you think that if somebody wields political authority, that invests them with a quality which they normally would not have had or would not have shown, if they did not have that power.

Nobody in England is afraid of a Prime Minister. Not really.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: I do not think so.

Laughter.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: I really do not think so. I think that in the case of Mrs. Thatcher, they would rather not tangle with her.

Laughter.

SENATOR THE HON. SIR JAMES TUDOR: I really do not think so. But generally speaking I do not think so.

I think however that in small societies, one does, it would appear, come up against the perceived realities of power which may not in fact exist.

I can remember hearing complaints at the time of the 1981 General Election that an official at CBC was very inconsiderate to Mr. Barrow who was at that time the Leader of the Opposition at the time of the party political broadcast. That he was supposed to have done – what is it, half an hour? – one of the two broadcasts. He would have

had a fifteen minute and a half hour or vice versa and he was cut down. That was the complaint. He was cut down to 24 minutes. But on the other hand, when the then Prime Minister went to do his, he went over to 33. I can quite believe both of those stories as they took place and it is because somehow or the other we find ourselves in situations which when everyone of us has the Government other people have grievances against us whether true or imagined and have a perception of a fear and oppression merely because the other side has the Government.
7.00 p.m.

I could truthfully say that I lived 10 years under the Barbados Labour Party in absolute freedom from fear. I cannot say although I took issue publicly with Tom Adams – I could not truthfully say that at any time he did apart from platform speeches say anything about which I could take offence or of which I could feel fear. But people may say well that was because it was Cameron Tudor and that he was able to take care of himself both in speech and in writing. It may have been true. But truthfully I think most people do tend in Barbados to have an exaggerated fear of Prime Ministers and what they are supposed to do. Having lived near Prime Ministers and had to deal with them, I really sometimes have thought that they need to exercise a little more power and more heavily sometimes.

The second point I want to make is this. This is equally important. Probably with the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation we may need to look at the role of the so called Broadcasting Authority if we have it still. I do not know. We may have to examine in the particular context of the media what is expected, what role the board of a corporation such as CBC should play and the parameters within which it should play its role. But here again when you say that you have to say something else – that people who accept public positions whether as executives of statutory corporations or as members of the governing bodies of such corporations ought to consult themselves very carefully before they undertake the responsibilities as to whether they really understand what those responsibilities are.

I do not myself think that Ministers really want to be involved in these matters except perhaps in a sense of giving general direction. Ministers from my experience have too much on them and too much to do and would certainly rather not be brought in or dragged in the sort of things that if we are not careful, we would be dragged into every minute of the day. You cannot govern a country globally so to speak and be worried by people asking your opinion or wondering how you feel about this, that, and the other. That is not a good thing for a democracy. People who hold responsible positions ought to be able to make decisions fairly and firmly without in any way being afraid of doing what is wrong or offending people. I think that

when you establish in the public's mind that you are fair-minded because you do your business intelligently, I think that confidence is built up. Otherwise, whenever a Government changes we will hear the speech which was made on the other side and alternately the sort of speech which could be made on this side when they are in power.

I myself did not like the Leader of the Opposition's remark about firing the General Manager of CBC if or when there is a change of Government. But if you say that you do not like that, you have also, I think, got to ask yourself whether from your own point of view and from your own perspective you may not perhaps be doing or saying something which gives the same sort of impression on the other side as might be taken on one side. This is why I say that it is necessary for us all, whenever we are in Government or in Opposition, to examine the systems under which we work to see the context within which the politics of the country run and see whether we both, not only when we are in power or when we are in opposition, take time out to show concern for this problem and work together outside the area of controversy to put it right.

From all I can see, Sir, and I do not want to detain the Senate, it can be sometime before any Government in this country contemplates really getting rid of CBC as a statutory corporation. I do not think that is called for. But we still have to improve it and make it serve the whole country. So that we have to find out what makes it work, why it does not work, and therefore rise about the level of making complaints when something goes wrong, merely because that Government is in power and then letting the other side make the complaints when somebody else is in power. I think that we have to get pass that stage. I do not pretend to know all the answers. But I think that when you find that you are having problems with an institution it is well to establish guidelines for it which all can agree on and which perhaps may save politicians from the worry of being thought to being dictators or to be tyrants when in fact they may not be.

Thank you, Sir.

Applause.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Miller.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, Sir, when the Minister of Finance was approached by the Minister into whose portfolio the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation falls about this matter of the \$6 million plus that is going to be invested in the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation – because this \$2.3 million before us this evening is only part according to what the Minister of Finance tells us is an investment in excess of \$6 million which is intended to be given to the Caribbean

Broadcasting Corporation over a period of time – I think not exceeding the next 2 or 3 years – we know that the Minister of Finance and the Minister into whose portfolio CBC falls is one and the same person. Having listened to my colleague Senator Tull and having listened to the Leader of Government Business in the House, I began to wonder that the Minister of Finance may well have benefitted by consultation by these 2 gentlemen. Because I do not know how well the Minister of Finance has been advised when making the case for CBC by the Minister into whose portfolio CBC falls.

Let me say from the outset that I do not watch the television not because I do not like the television. For the most part I do not have the time and even if I were prepared to make the time, I am just not prepared to watch the vulgarity and the violence and I am not saying that just because I am in the Opposition. When I was in the Government, I complained bitterly in this Chamber at the time about the violence on CBC Television to the point where the then General Manager and the Chairman of the Board came to see me in the Ministry and asked me to particularize these matters of violence that so offended me and I did. Then they made the same old sad case under pen all that we have heard here already tonight. We have to resort to North American programming if we are going to make money. We have to resort even now even though I have never seen the advertisement about Jubilee clearly now to the most vulgar and morally unacceptable advertising. Money at what social and moral cost we ask ourselves. That was the same story I heard. People like to watch the violence and advertisers are prepared to underwrite the violence. So they are prepared to show it. The sad thing is that – and I have been saying this again when I was in Government. I said it most recently a couple of weeks ago in Italy where I was attending a meeting where we discussed Developmental Journalism and I make this point all the time – it is such an irony that in the Third World the Governments tend to own the media more than they do in the First and Second Worlds. Yet in the Third World, they exert least control over the power that the media have to educate their people to be a vehicle for culture and all of the other positive things that I have heard said here tonight, and Barbados falls into that pot like the rest of the Third World does, because we have an element of choice.

7.10 p.m.

CBC in all its 25 years, I gather, when you look at the balance sheet, is in the red. There may have been a few years when it made money, but for the most part it has lost money and it continues to lose money, and it seems to me that if in all of that time we had been strong, whoever was in Government, and said let us decide that we are going with local programming no matter how expensive they say that it is – although some General Managers have insisted

that it did not have to be overly expensive, but the majority of them tend to use that as an argument – and let us use it as the vehicle for all the things that Senator Tull, Senator Tudor have talked about, and other Senators – Senator Wickham also – who have spoken this afternoon, I do not think CBC would have lost as much money. A new generation of young people in Barbados would not have been so much exposed to violence and vulgarity as they have been over the past 20 years, and on the whole I think they might have been better off.

Now, I gather from the Development Plan – you know, it is the only guideline you have to go by, Mr. Deputy President, and you have to bear with me, and remember I only saw it for the first time today – but looking at page 110 of the Development Plan, the Government has made it clear that over the next five years the STV, known as Subscription Television, will be maintained and further developed. Then it goes on with a lot of technical jargon about Omni Directional Transmit Antenna and so on and so forth. The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Minister in charge of the CBC had better know that there are some of us who understand what all this technical jargon and gobbledygook means, but it seems to me, never having seen it myself but having read and listened to people who know about these things, that the Subscription TV is a total failure, and I am deeply concerned, as Senator Goddard is, over the investment of more money into the Subscription Television services, and the Development Plan says that the Government intends to continue to invest in them.

There has been a lot of talk about CBC losing money, but I have never had it clearly distinguished for me between the profit and loss situation with the CBC Radio as opposed to the CBC TV. The point has been raised this afternoon, again by Senator Goddard, and I could not agree with him more, that perhaps what CBC needs more than money or anything else, even talent, is competition. But CBC Radio has competition, a lot of private sector competition and I hope the Minister will be able to tell us if it is that CBC Radio is making money, which I suspect it does, but it is CBC TV which has to be carried by radio as far as it can do, and then the rest of us who pay taxes are being invited to continue to carry CBC after 25 years.

I really do think that the STV therefore is a total failure, as far as I can understand it, and I think we should think twice about whether we are going to continue to prop it up, especially with the taxpayers' money. I see the last sentence, a short sentence, in this part of the Development Plan on Strategies under Communication Services, Chapter 9, the last sentence is "These services" meaning STV, CBC, the *Official Gazette*, the Government Information Service, "will not be privatised." A clear unequivocal statement. I will invite the Government perhaps to use some

of this same money which they are about to invest in CBC to look at the feasibility of privatising in part some of the services that CBC just cannot seem to make economic.

I really do not understand why the CBC cannot make Subscription TV work. Everywhere else it exists I understand that it works. It is the very nature of it. I was made to understand, when I heard it mooted in the Cabinet where I sat that it was going to make a great deal of money and bail out other services, and help to carry other services. I see now that the opposite is the case, and even though we have invested so much money, you hear that you now still need to increase the transmitter power at Sturges, you need a technical adjustment to the tilt of the Omni Directional Transmit Antenna and you need to establish repeater sites at certain locations. All of this is in the Development Plan.

How is it that before we instituted and established the STV we did not know that we needed these things? Modern communication, new technology is such that I did not understand that we were doing it on a sort of trial and error basis. We did something and then found that did not work and now we are taking advice, or perhaps not taking it, and perhaps we are going to try these other things and, as Senator Goddard suggests, just a few years later discover that they are not working either and STV is still not working and you are going to come back here now and ask us to underwrite further not only the cost of losses of past years, but of more money you would want to invest. I have very grave reservations about it.

I see that the Development Plan is saying that the feasibility of extending the technical capacity of CBC Radio to provide better coverage and wider reception beyond Barbados will be examined. I should like to suggest that CBC examine also the subscription television services before they invest in all of this new technology. Though I understand, as the Government is saying in its Plan, that it is committed to maintaining publicly owned broadcasting system for the people of Barbados, and that the television and radio arms will be maintained as essential elements of this policy, perhaps the one area of the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto which they seem to have overlooked, might be recommended to them.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: I know you don't want to hear it, but you have to hear it anyhow. At page 14: "Create a CBC Production Company to produce, market and distribute Barbadian and Caribbean Video and audio cassettes of radio and TV programming." It seems to me that the private sector is doing this and making a bunch of money out of it. I know it is so easy for some Departments of Government, and CBC has proved itself I am afraid over the last 25 years to be one of them, to make even the most

simple thing appear complex and difficult and impossible of achievement, but it seems to me that this idea of a production company to produce, market and distribute cassettes and videos, we just have to look at the way in which the video shops have sprung up, not only in this island but everywhere in this region to recognise that there is almost a limitless market there. Even though the technology is changing and we have compact discs and other new technology coming, there is still a remarkably large market in this hemisphere alone, and I somehow have a feeling that that has the potential to be more of a money maker than the decision to go on limping on with the Subscription TV, which no one wants to watch. People pay to watch it, do not watch it. A lot of people who pay to watch it apparently have satellite dishes and do not watch it anyhow, and it seems to me that the subscriptions are going to fall within the next year or two. I do not know why the people who wrote the Development Plan failed to look at pages 13 and 14 to see what the possibilities are for making CBC a more financially viable operation.

7.20 p.m.

We know that it can make money. There have been years when it did, but I think the Government really has to offer us more than they have tonight to reassure us that this \$2.3 million which we are invited to approve by way of Resolution to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation to assist it in meeting its financial obligations is not going to be a case as one editorial quite properly put it as throwing good money behind bad. We need a little more, in fact I suggest perhaps more than a little more; we need a lot more to be told to us. The Government benches are being too mean and they are not just telling us enough. I don't want to think that it is because they don't know anymore than we do, and this money is going out at large and now we are going to hear that they will have to decide what they are going to spend the money on. I would like to know where the \$2.3 million is going. It is not sufficient to tell me that it is going to help to meet certain financial obligations. I know that, but I really would like more particulars than we have been given. Thank you, Sir.

SENATOR Mrs. V. C. FRASER: Mr. Deputy President, in supporting this Resolution I would only briefly like to make one appeal as regards CBC, and that appeal is that if we say we are nationalistic, I think the business community has to be called on to support more of our local programming on CBC. One of the problems I find is that you get programmes from abroad being sponsored by nearly all the local companies, and yet we fail to get the local programmes. I have seen on Independence Day, for example, some very good programmes and you wonder why can't these programmes be sponsored by some of our local business people in the same way they spend money, and this is foreign currency that has to go out of this country, to buy these programmes to bring them here, and

then no money is going to these local talented young people. I think that if we really want to encourage talent in this country, we have to realise that young people are not going to continue to use their talents for free all the time, and when we have these various programmes and these young people are so talented, they are not going to just come and do it on a programme and you say "thank you" and they go home.

Many of them have great specialisations and they have great skills, and I think we need to build up a set of local programmes and we need to continue to market in our own local area and to get the business people to be convinced that they are good programmes in Barbados, and there are people who have the necessary talent and expertise, because many of the business people say to you after they have seen a local programme, "Oh yes, this was a very good programme". But why wouldn't they sponsor that programme and allow CBC to get that money and allow it to remain in Barbados? So I am making this appeal because some of the things that you really see, really, like one Sunday evening I saw a programme, I think, about dinosaurs or something. I thought you could have had a good local programme with some choirs or something like that or with some young people doing a dramatic performance, because you see some excellent dramatic performances from the Pine Creative Workshop and so on.

I think too often we tend to have the attitude in Barbados that a Governmental organisation or quasi-governmental organisation should have everything done by government, but we forget that we out here in the community and the business people who sponsor the other programmes are all Barbadians and need to look at things baradian if we are going to continue to say that we are nationalistic. When it comes to the whole question of some of the advertisements, I do support that we have some advertisements that in other fora we have discussed, but what I want to see generally is that people come up with some positive suggestions. In this country we have to come up with some positive suggestions for anything that is public and anything that is going to affect our life styles in any way, and CBC television is a very strong medium and it has a great effect on any young person or any person watching the television, and therefore I believe that we have to come up with suggestions, send them to the Board of CBC, and I don't think any right thinking Board would not sit down and weigh those suggestions carefully for the improvement of a national corporation. So I am once more appealing to the business people in this community and any other organisation that has money to put some money in the programming and to help to change some of the styles of programming if we want to see it go forward. I say this as a nationalistic Barbadian, Mr. Deputy President. Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. Deputy President, there are some major concerns about the probability of CBC in the future, but before I get to that, perhaps what I might do at this stage is to point out some of the reasons for the losses which CBC has sustained over the period. One factor was the loss of television licence fees beginning in June of 1986. There has also been a decline in AM Radio revenues. There has been a tardiness in getting STV on stream. The finances I mentioned in the introduction, the financing of the capital project was done by loan rather than by equity and \$14.5 million was involved. Another factor was the high cost of STV royalties, and because of this, in order to break even they would need about 20 000 subscribers to attain break even point. There has also been a problem in getting the service out to various areas because there has been a problem with the antenna which needs to be shifted. I am on foreign territory here. A study has been done on this and we believe at this point in time that the necessary correction is in place.

The salaries bill for the Corporation has leapt from \$1.8 million in 1980 to \$3.9 million in 1987.

Now what has really happened is that because of sustained losses over time the company is virtually insolvent. That is, the equity base has been entirely wiped out. What we are attempting to do here, and we could have done this all by equity, however we do believe like Senator Goddard suggested, that the Corporation itself should begin to pay its way. So we are making an injection of about \$4 million over a two year period in equity and introducing the \$2.3 million which we are now seeking in the form of a loan, and the reason for the mixture of equity and loan is to reduce the debt burden which all loans will incur. We believe, and I share Senator Goddard's concern here, that the repayment of loan can only come out of profit. We do feel at this point in time that with a change in the product mix, that is, the introduction of STV, now that the technical problems have been corrected, that the Corporation can return to profitability.

Furthermore, one of the problems we had with this company is that we were getting financial statements rather late. We saw financial statements about eighteen months out. We are beginning now to require these quarterly and also a marketing plan. We figure that sufficient has not been done to generate revenues, because Government has always been the stop gap, and a marketing plan now is also required for review. An annual marketing plan will have to be submitted for review.
7.30 p.m.

These will help us to see where the problems are. The new product mix between STV and the other services which we have been offering and we have demonstrated that the CBC can be profitable. It was profitable in the past

and while we would rather not go the route of reducing staff to return to profitability, the only route, failing that, is to increase incomes and we feel that with the new product mix we can increase incomes to restore it to profitability.

On this point, Mr. Deputy President, I move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. L.V.H. LEWIS: Mr. Deputy President, we have had a very long sitting and the contributions have been plentiful like the money in circulation in Bridgetown at this time of the year.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Maybe then like the people walking around in the malls.

I would like, Mr. Deputy President, before I make a motion for the adjournment to extend to you and all the members of the Senate sincere greetings, for this happy time of the year and we look forward that after the very brief Christmas recess that we will meet again early in the New Year. So I would like to extend to all of the members and their families the compliments and greeting of the season.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: Speaking on the motion for Adjournment, Sir, there is a matter which I would like to raise before this Honourable House.

Let me say, first of all, that I endorse entirely Senator Lewis' expression of wishes for the Members on the Senate's Adjournment.

The matter to which I wish to refer has to do with a debate on July 27 and my having got the copy of Hansard, my recollection of the debate does not square with the published report. My recollection is that in response to comments which I made Senator Comissioning in speaking used the words "field nigger" and I do not remember any action by the then President.

I feel uncomfortable about this and while I have no intention of casting reflections on the accuracy of the recording, I am uneasy because if I am correct, and I think I am, that those words were used, then I would not like to think that other words could possibly be omitted and I would wish to draw this matter to Your Honour's attention.

Thank you.

SENATOR D. A. COMMISSIONG: Mr. Deputy President, I was just in the lunch room and I heard something that I used the words "field niggers"? In what debate, Sir? In what debate did I use those words?

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Shorey you were rising. Yes? We shall hear you, Senator Shorey.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: I refer to the debate on Wednesday, July 27, Your Honour.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you.

SENATOR Dr. L. L. SHOREY: Mr. Deputy President, could I then ask that the matter be placed before the Committee of Privileges?

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Yes.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: It is not in order.

Senator Shorey, I have been advised that only a member may raise any matter pertaining to the content of his own speech and that is, therefore, out of order.

SENATOR L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy President, with great respect to your ruling, it cannot be that a member of this Chamber cannot say that the report of the Senate was inaccurate. I was here and I heard the words "field niggers" too and to say that only the person who use the word can correct it, that is an amazing thing.

What happens in such a case when the majority of people in here or all except the person who use it can clearly recollect that the words were used. We have to get the permission of that one person to correct the record? I do not understand that, Sir, I really do not understand your ruling.

SENATOR D. A. COMMISSIONG: Mr. Deputy President, I am trying to understand because I was not here when Senator Shorey was speaking but what context is he speaking about? Is he saying that I referred to another Senator in here in those terms? What is the context? I want to understand what this is all about. Are you saying that I referred to someone in this Chamber in those terms? Is that what you are saying?

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: All right, Senator Commissiong. Let us hear Senator Lewis.

SENATOR D. A. COMMISSIONG: You are saying that I used the word in Hansard?

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Commissiong you will give way to Senator Lewis, please.

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: I would like to very respectfully suggest that we should let the spirit of goodwill prevail at this time and if the Senator wishes to pursue the matter, that he should consult with the Clerks and find out what is the best and appropriate means to pursue the matter.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you Senator Lewis.

Senator Commissiong I think the matter will, therefore, have to rest at this time until we have some further direction on the matter.

Thank you.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Blackman.

Senator Morrison please let us hear Senator Blackman.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Deputy President, this is easily one of the more contentious sessions notwithstanding your indulgence in the Chair and I stood primarily to join in expressing the Christmas sentiments.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Let us hear Senator Blackman.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: However, Sir, I share the recollection of Senator Shorey and I think that, really, in the context of the debate, and I will just put it in the context for the benefit of Senator Commissiong because it happened 5 months ago.

It was a debate that came up in discussing the Highway 2A contract which was a Debate that came out on July 27.

Aside.

I remember the observation being made out here. I remember the observation made at one point "house nigger", "field niggers on the independent benches....."

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr. Commissiong, let us hear Senator Blackman.

SENATOR C. A. BLACKMAN: An observation was made, who was who so, Sir, I think with great respect, without imputing any reflection on the reporters whom I

want to thank for their tolerance for today's session lasting since 11 o'clock that really in fairness to all concerned, it should be looked at.
7.40 p.m.

I mean, you have been advised by the Clerk. But unless this body has some way or reviewing matters, then it could be a sort of thing that is going to fester.

I would like, Sir, however while on my feet to formally wish you a Happy Christmas, thank the staff of Parliament for their indulgences for this day and look forward that when we return in the New Year that perhaps somewhat more even tempers would prevail.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you. I should like to thank you and to thank the Thank you.

SENATOR Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy President, Sir, I wish on behalf of the Members of the Opposition to add my Christmas Greetings, in fact Season's Greetings to the staff of Parliament. And I wish particularly too to thank them for their hard work throughout the year.

And I wish to say a word of thanks to the press as well. I notice that now that we are meeting in this Chamber, we get a better press attendance. I do not know if that will necessarily mean that we will get better press coverage. But I should like to think therefore that when the Senate Chamber is all refurbished and nice and beautiful like this that the press will treat the Senate as they have today.

But in respect of the staff of Parliament, I want to say that I really have very large words of gratitude and thanks to offer for the work that they have done this year. It is not easy for them. This staff of three Clerks, as you see there, one Clerk and two Deputies service both Houses of Parliament. And even though our Parliament has ceased over the past couple of years to be a really very busy Parliament, it tends to be a start up and stop Parliament nowadays. We have long sessions like this and then we have long session where nothing happens. But it is difficult for them sometimes. For instance, they were in here until after 11.00 o'clock last night and at 11.00 o'clock this morning they had to start with us again and we are in here now until nearly 8.00 o'clock.

So they have had this sort of difficult management of Parliament's affairs over the year. And I must tell you, Mr. Deputy President, that I am not satisfied that they are getting a lot of help from the people who lead Government Business in here.

I am not happy with the scheduling of Senate Meetings. I do not think anyone is. I do not even think the President is. I made this point this time last year and I am

making it again. We are all busy people. We cannot have a situation as we have had this year where the Senate does not meet for 4 maybe 4½, 5 months and suddenly we get 2, 3 days' notice that we are going to have a Senate Meeting. It just cannot go on like this. I think that the Senate has to be treated with far more respect. I do not think that that happens in the House of Assembly. In the House of Assembly it is different where you have Ministers of Government who are servants paid and they have to come. Whenever it is called, they have to be here, often they are not. In my time, sometimes they were summoned back from wherever it is they had gone out of the jurisdiction.

But it is very difficult with Senators who are not paid. We get a small allowance. I think that is something that needs to be looked at too. The vast gap between what the President of the Senate earns, and this is not meant to be a reflection on the present President, because past Presidents have earned and we have this gap in the same way.

I think we seriously need to look in the Debates Committee or wherever else at this serious gap between what the President earns and what other Senators earn.

But it is not an easy thing when you are on business elsewhere, particularly out of the jurisdiction to reverse your business or postpone it or cancel it altogether to come to a Senate Meeting and then when you get to the Senate Meeting, and this is the next piece of difficulty, not only for us as Senators but for the staff as well, the Order Paper has no balance. The Order Paper really is no indication of what the business of the House will be. I know that that is a hazard for all Parliamentarians, but really we have had it to extremes in this House. You come in here with one matter on the Order Paper and then we end up like today with 6 matters on the Order Paper. We could not even complete today's Order Paper.

And in fairness to us and to the staff and to the whole way in which Parliamentary business is managed, this is just not businesslike. And I hope that next year, we are going to see some improvement in this.

In respect of the balance of the Order Paper, I do not think that the Senate has done nearly as much business this year as it might have done and perhaps as it ought to have done. PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS has been given very short shrift, Questions have been given even shorter shrift. I cannot remember the last day a Question was answered in this Chamber, well in the Senate. There are Questions which as Senator Blackman is pointing out are nine months now in gestation. So we expect a birthing when we return early in the New Year we hope and that next year we will see a better scheduling of the Senate's business, a better balance in the Order Paper, better notice

to Members of the Senate. And I hope that all of this together will help to make the life of the staff of Parliament easier.

And so to the staff and the Clerks, the press, to the Marshal, to those who cater to us and to all who service our needs in whatever way in here, I want to say special Season's Greetings to them and thank you for a year's work well done, particularly in the context of the fact that severe and most serious renovations are now being undergone on the Senate Chamber. And I hope that at a soon date, we would be able to return to our Chamber.

I thank you, Sir.

Applause.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Thank you. I should like to thank all of you who have so kindly expressed good wishes to myself and my family. And I should like to reciprocate equally good wishes for a happy season and a New Year of good health to all of you.

I must add my meade of praise to the entire staff of this Chamber, that is not the one which we are in at the moment but the staff of the Senate. And we look forward to returning in good health. And I hope that the spirit of the Christmas holidays will pervade and will continue long into the New Year.

The question that the Senate do now adjourn sine die was put and was resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly at 7.50 p.m.