

THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 - 96

THE SENATE

Wednesday, March 31, 1993

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, March 31, 1993, at 11.15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator M. deL. JORDAN, (President)

His Honour Senator J. J. PAYNE, (Deputy President)

Senator the Honourable L. V. H. LEWIS, G.C.M.,
(Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office) (Leader of the Senate)

Senator A. MORRISON

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

Senator the Honourable Dr. C. D. CLARKE
(Minister of Labour, Consumer Affairs and the Environment)

Senator Dr. F. W. ALLEYNE

Senator Miss Y. V. WALKES

Senator Mrs. M. BARKER-WELCH

Senator Mrs. A. STRAUGHN, G.C.M.

Senator Mrs. M. WALCOTT, S.C.M.

Senator the Rev. Canon J. L. SPRINGER

Senator J. G. BELLAMY

Senator T. E. BARKER

Senator Miss M. A. MOTTLEY.

Prayers were led by Rev. Fr. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, I am commanded to lay the following documents:-

1. Training Report for the year April 1, 1991 - March 31, 1992.
2. The Land Valuation (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations, 1993.
3. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) Order, 1993.
4. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payments (Exemption) (No. 2) Order, 1993.
5. The Exchange Control (Authorised Dealers and Depositaries) (Amendment) Order, 1993.
6. The Business Transfer (Bank of Credit and Commerce International (Overseas) Limited (In Liquidation)) Vesting Order, 1993.
7. The Customs Tariff (Amendment) Order, 1993.

MESSAGE FROM HER EXCELLENCY, THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am in receipt of the following Message from Her Excellency, the Governor-General dated March 23, 1993:-

"Dear Mr. President:

I shall be away from the Island from 24 - 29 March, 1993 on a visit to St. Croix. In accordance with the provisions of Section 29(1) (B) of the Constitution, the Honourable Sir Denys Williams, GCM, will perform the functions of the office of Governor-General during the period of my absence.

As the Honourable the Senate will not be meeting prior to my departure it will not be possible for the usual formal message to be sent down to your Chamber. Will you therefore please bring my absence formally to the attention of the Honourable the Senate when next it meets."

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

SENATOR Mrs. A. STRAUGHN: Mr. President, I crave your indulgence to speak under Section 11 of Standing Orders, page 6, section (k) Personal Explanations.

Mr. President, in making my contribution to the Estimates debate on Monday, March 22, 1993, under Head 32 - Education, among other things, and at the very beginning of my contribution, I talked about Teacher Training. In my notes, and I crave your indulgence to refer to them; under Teacher Training I mentioned the training of educational administrators and instructors for professional and personal development, for improvement and growth, for better performance and I mentioned that training was an area of intensifying interest. There I paused to express my concern over what I referred to as a grey area of concern. That grey area was the training of adult education instructors. I said that that area was overlooked.

The "Nation" newspaper of March 24, 1993, page 18A under the heading "Straughn Take Care With 14+", in one of the paragraphs I am reported to have said, and I quote "that education provided the most effective means of equipping persons for life and living yet teacher training was being overlooked."

Mr. President, the statement is incomplete and therefore it distorts the facts. My notes here can substantiate what I did say, and in due course, Hansard. I want to state that it did cause some inconvenience and embarrassment to me because I received a number of calls from interested people, among them teachers. If this statement had been completed it would have explained exactly what I said. The newspaper report and what I actually said do not agree.

Mr. President, I want to add that if the record which this Chamber produces proves that I did say what is recorded in the newspaper, I am quite willing to make a public apology.

Thank you, Mr. President.

11.25 a.m.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER NO. 1 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE BORROWING OF 10 MILLION EUROPEAN CURRENCY UNITS (APPROXIMATE US \$11 970 000) FROM THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK TO FINANCE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SEWERAGE SYSTEM ON THE SOUTH COAST

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. President, this Resolution seeks to borrow the sum of 10

million European Currency Units, about US\$11.97 million, from the European Investment Bank for the purpose of assisting the Government of Barbados in financing the construction of a sewerage collection treatment and disposal system on the South Coast of Barbados.

Mr. President, I have, on several recent occasions, pointed out that there has been a severe bunching of external debt service repayments in the years 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993. These outflows of foreign exchange have not been matched by either net capital inflows, unilateral transfers or increase export earnings from either tourism, manufacturing or agriculture.

The net result, Mr. President, has been a deterioration of our net foreign reserves position. Recognising the tremendous threat to the entire country when the net foreign reserves fell to less than one month's imports, the Government took the prudent steps of seeking the early advice and assistance of the International Monetary Fund in implementing an 18 month stabilisation programme.

This programme began during the last quarter of 1991 and during the last two quarters of 1992 the actual key economic performance ratios of Barbados have out-performed by substantial margins, the target levels set by the IMF. This IMF programme was scheduled to end in March 1993 but due to its late start, has been extended through May 1993.

Mr. President, the Government's financial picture continued to strengthen during the first nine months of fiscal 1992/93. There has been a marked increase in the liquidity of the banking system as measured by the excess reserves which could be found at Table B 21 at page 33 of the Central Bank Economic and Financial Statistics for the month of February 1993. A cursory glance at that Table would show that from August 1991 through March 1992 excess reserves were negative which means that the banking system was very illiquid - no funds to lend. However, from April 1992 to December 1992, excess reserves were positive. This means that financial resources were available for the productive sectors if those sectors, tourism, manufacturing and agriculture were in need of funds for investment purposes.

Mr. President, before actually getting into the specific details of the loan I would like to state, for the benefit of this Honourable Senate, that the limit for loans raised under this Act, the Special Loans Act, Cap. 105 is \$500 million - half a billion dollars. To date, 37 loans have been raised under this Act and the amount outstanding at December 31, 1992 is \$283 809 086, just slightly over half.

I make this point, Mr. President, to more or less re-assure this Honourable Chamber, when we hear

about Government's excessive borrowing and over-borrowing, that given the multiplicity of instruments for Government borrowing, that it is conceivable that at times, Government could over borrow under one facility while there is more than adequate balances under various other instruments. And here I think specifically about the overdraft facility on the local loans from time to time. For the benefit of Senator Barker, there are no sinking funds requirement under this Act.

The proposed terms and conditions of the loan are as follows: The amount is as I previously stated, 10 million ECUs, terms 20 years, including 5 years grace and interest rate at March 16, 1993 was 7.75%. The interest rate subsidy is 4 percentage points, therefore the interest rate at that time would be 3.75. However, the interest rate would be determined on the date of signature of the finance ...

Mr. President, in conclusion, we should note that the proceeds from this loan will allow the country to further strengthen its foreign exchange position. It would also allow the country, by applying these funds to the South Coast sewerage project to improve its basic health facilities. The proceeds will also add to gross capital formation of the country and as a consequence increase gross domestic product, hence economic growth will occur.

By undertaking these projects, either employment will increase or unemployment will decrease. There will be an improvement to the overall tourism product by improving the quality of the seawater and also fishermen who fish in the in-shore areas, by improving the quality of water, could expect to have the quality and the quantities of their catches improved.

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

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Thank you, Mr. President. It was on the 24th February 1993 that we discussed in this Chamber a Resolution to borrow money under the Special Loans Act, Cap. 105.

Sir, I very well remember that date for lots of reasons, because that date marked in my view the low point in my life as a Senator. Sir, I very well remember the words of Senator Clarke and, Sir, with your permission I will quote from Hansard. It says: Thank you, Mr. President. It is most unfortunate when adults can see fit to conduct themselves in a manner... And it stops there. Senator Barker in his contribution indicated that there was something illegal by not having a sinking fund established for this loan. I will call the Chamber's attention to the fact that the Resolution clearly states that whereas by section 2

of Cap. 105 the Government is authorised from time to time to borrow from any bank, and he stops there. In that law there is no provision for the establishment of a sinking fund. That is the end of the quotation. So that I could not contradict him at that time. Since we are here dealing with the Resolution under the same Act and since the Honourable Senator drew to the attention of the Chamber that he was speaking to me primarily when he talked about the Sinking Fund, I feel that I have to respond. My response will be simply this that the Honourable Senator Dr. Clarke has unfortunately misled the Chamber on that occasion, because the Sinking Fund that I was referring to relates to the External Loans Act, Chapter 94(d) and not to Chapter 105.

11.35 a.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Clarke.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: On a point of order, Sir. I have never attempted either explicitly or implicitly to mislead this Chamber. I believe that Senator Barker is trying to jolt the polls of two different Acts. Because there was only one before us which is Cap. 105 for which there is no Sinking Fund. I firmly stand by my statement. That is the only statement that I wish to make at this point, Mr. President.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I stand by my word that willingly or unwillingly the Honourable Senator has misled the Chamber. Whether he sought to mislead them is beside the point. But the point I want to make is that there...

Mr. PRESIDENT: I do not think that can be permitted. You cannot say whether he sought to do it deliberately or not is beside the point. I mean the remainder of your statement you are welcome to make. But you must withdraw that.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I always abide by your rulings. The point is that the Honourable Senator gave the impression that I was incorrect when I stated that Government was acting illegally in operating a Sinking Fund. Sir, I was totally correct because...

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, on a point of order. The Honourable Senator either does not understand or he is purposely saying something that is not a fact. The External Loans Act does not apply to that borrowing nor does it apply to this borrowing. This borrowing is made under a completely different piece of legislation which requires no Sinking Fund. The External Loan Act when applied must be specifically stated in the Resolution and the money is borrowed only under that piece of legislation. Probably on another occasion outside of the Chamber I will explain

to him when the External Loans Act is used. But it is certainly not used in this instance nor in the instance to which he is making reference.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Lewis.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. PRESIDENT, I was going to rise just now because the Honourable Minister said that I was deliberately misleading the Chamber. Sir, I had to withdraw some remarks previously. Anyhow, I do not want to get into any conflict with the Honourable Members from the other side. But the point that I want to make, Sir, is that there is a provision for the Sinking Fund for external loans and at the time when the statement was made I was talking about the external loans. I was saying that there has to be a Sinking Fund and that the Government for the past 2 or 3 years have not been operating a Sinking Fund. So to say that it does not apply to this loan is beside the point. The point is that there is in law provisions for a Sinking Fund.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Clarke.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. President, I believe that Senator Barker would like to introduce his own debate in this Chamber. In both instances, one of the 24th of whatever the month and in today's debate, we are referring to the Special Loans Act, Chapter 105. It is the same Act that has been debated on both occasions. The other Act to which is mentioned is irrelevant because it was not before the Chamber.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I am not going to allow the Honourable Minister to do as customary to act and rattle me. I will stick to my point that there is provision under law. The Honourable Minister in his opening presentation singled me out. He called my name, Sir. Although the others were in here, Sir, he spoke to me in relation to the Sinking Fund. So I thought that I had to answer him.

Sir, I want to go on to the specific borrowing under the Special Loans Act, Cap. 105. Sir, this Resolution seeks parliamentary approval for the borrowing of almost US\$12 million to help, because I am told the total amount will cost around \$46 million. The Honourable Minister could not even give us that information in his presentation. But I heard from other sources that the total cost will be \$146 000. So this is only a small part, albeit significant part of the loan. I am sorry that the Minister did not give us more information about the purpose of this money.

Sir, we have been talking a lot about the need for the protection of the environment. I am glad to see that at long last after about 10 years of gestation that the Government is now about to do something about the sewerage scheme

for the South Coast. I am told also that the West Coast will probably soon come on stream. I want to say a little bit about the whole sewerage business.

Sir, it is a fact that our marine environment was in disposed of being contaminated by the disposal of raw sewage into the sea. We must recognise that if we are to maintain our position as our tourist country that we need to pay special attention to our beaches and to our marine environment. We have no difficulty on this side in supporting Government in this measure, especially since in our time we were the ones who initiated the project. If we were in office now, most probably the project would be far more advanced. Such is the nature of things under the Democratic Labour Party that things which normally take a year will take two, to put it mildly.

Sir, the Barbados Water Authority which is in effect both a water and sewage authority will ultimately have control over this plant, because it is part of their function. With your permission, Sir, I want to spend a few minutes talking about the Barbados Water Authority, especially as it relates to the whole system of sewage and sewage disposal. I am one who believes that water is one of our most precious resources and this is something that has been bothering me for a long time. Why is it that we are allowing millions of gallons of treated sewage to go into the sea? Right now from the Bridgetown plant after the sewage has been treated it is pumped into the sea. Sir, some biologists have been arguing that the water is so rich in nutrients that there is a build up – Sir, I have no verification of this, but this is what I have been told – of marine life which could possibly damage the coral reefs in years to come.

11.45 a.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Did you say marine life could damage the coral formation?

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Yes, Sir, the algae and other plants can choke the coral.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I understand what you mean.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: I am of the opinion that that water that is put into the sea could be used for irrigation purposes, especially as our climatic conditions would prevent large scale agriculture, especially vegetable and such other crops, without irrigated water. I was told that the cost may be prohibitive, that the problem is that the water would have to be pushed uphill as you go into the agricultural belt. I wonder if a feasibility study should not be done on this whole thing, because I believe that the benefits to agriculture, if you have a good supply of water, could be tremendous. As I said, I do not know if there are any engineering.....

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker, I think one has already been done on that. Maybe if you would wish to put it in the form of a question to the Minister.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Yes, Sir, I will follow up on that. It is just my own thinking about the matter and probably we could seek to make use of the water that is thrown into the sea. I cannot put my hand on it, but in the late 70s there was a study which showed that the rate at which our ground water is being used within 25 years Barbados is going to have to look at the East Coast and prevent the water from running off into the sea, because the report envisaged that after the turn of the century, with the build up of the population and with the increase in water toilets and so on, that we can possibly face a shortage with regard to our ground water supply and we may have to look for other sources. Sir, that is something I personally wish that the relevant authorities could investigate and look at the feasibility of using that particular water.

What about the Water Authority itself? I have been thinking a lot about the Water Authority, especially since the service of the Water Authority, is going to be very much involved, because they are the agency which would operate this proposed sewerage system. I say that as a matter of foundation, because I am very concerned about the quality of service by the Barbados Water Authority which has deteriorated significantly in recent times. I am going to be personal, because where I live every night the water goes off, between 9 o'clock and next morning. This is not only where I live, but I am told that other parts of the island are experiencing severe water problems.

The Barbados Water Authority right now is only responsible for the Bridgetown sewerage scheme, as well as the whole waterworks and they are going to be called upon now, at the completion of this project, in about four years' time, to manage the Bridgetown sewerage system, the South and West Coast sewerage systems, in addition to the actual collection and distribution of water, so that is going to create additional strain on the Water Authority. A similar question I am going to ask is, if at present they are unable to provide proper service to the island, what will happen when they have additional responsibilities now for the West and South coasts sewerage systems? This is the time that we should again look at the Barbados Water Authority and see if there is any way we can get them to improve their management, maybe because they have a very big task with regard to the whole water supply.

Sir, that brings me to a point that Government should consider, whether or not the Water Authority should not be a statutory corporation, to the extent that a lot of the Civil Service regulations would not apply to them. Right now there is a lot of political interference in the affairs....

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Morrison, I do not want the asides. Please go ahead, Senator Barker.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Thank you, Mr. President. A body of this importance has to be free of political control and manoeuvring.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: On a point of order, I really do not like interrupting my good friend, Senator Barker, but as far as I know, and there is no evidence before this Chamber that there has been any political interference by this Government in the operations of the Barbados Water Authority.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Thank you.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Thank you, Sir. I am very glad that the Minister has given us this assurance. Will he assure me that in the future there will be no interference either?

Sir, I just raised those points to alert the Chamber to the fact that standards have to be maintained. Even though the cost of our water service is much higher than in other places, yet we are accustomed to better service, and any time the service has slight deterioration, we must nip the problem right in the bud before it escalates.

Sir, this brings me to another point. The Minister of Health in the Other Place made the point that as a result of this sewerage scheme it is likely that water rates will rise, that when this system comes into operation in about four years' time it is likely that water rates will rise. Sir, I have a little bit of a problem with the whole idea of rate fixing by the Water Authority. The Water Authority is a monopoly basically and I wonder if it is not time that their operations come under the scrutiny of the Public Utilities Board? The same way that the Telephone Company or the Light and Power Company cannot raise rates without the approval of the Public Utilities Board, I do not feel that the Water Authority or, for that matter, the National Petroleum Corporation, should be allowed to raise their rates without a public hearing and without the approval of the Public Utilities Board. I see no reason why the Water Authority should be treated any differently to the telephone company. This is something we have to address.

11.55 a.m.

I remember when the water rates were raised after the Bridgetown Sewerage Scheme came into operation the Democratic Labour Party which was then in Opposition, where they rightfully belong, raised a hue and a cry about the increase in water rates which resulted from the Bridgetown Sewerage Scheme. In true DLP fashion,

they did not tell the public that when the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister was Minister of Health in the latter years of the then DLP Administration he entered into an agreement with the IADB which caused the water rates to rise. When the water rates rose then it was not a result of the then Government's action but a result of an agreement which was entered into in the latter years of the previous DLP Administration. We are having the same thing now. Now, we are entering into an agreement and part of the agreement is that when the scheme comes into operation in approximately 4 years time that water rates will rise. In 4 years time it is most likely that a different party will be in Government and all of us in here sincerely hope so.

Sir, what will happen then is that in 1997-98 when we have to raise rates as a result of this agreement I am sure that members on the other side would be up and around the country talking about how wicked we are to raise water rates when the Honourable Minister of Health indicated yesterday that it is most likely that the rates will rise as a result of this. My memory can be long so I will listen. I might be dead but I am sure that posterity will record my words and people will say, "Yes, he had the DLP true to form."

So, Sir, I am very serious when I make the point that the actions of the Water Authority must be subject to scrutiny by the agency which regulates monopoly utilities in this country. Sir, this is something that we have to look at so that both the service offered by the Water Authority and the cost of that service would not be regulated as a result of Government's whim and fancy but rather for an economic reason, for raising rates. Sir, that is something I will pledge myself to.

I remember we used to pay when I was living at home \$15 a quarter. When it was at that low level you could get away with it but now it has reached such high levels and is threatening to rise more the public must have a right through the agency to object to the particular rate. I think the rates were raised about 2 or 3 years ago purely as a revenue-raising measure.

While we are on that point I want to say that around 1987 when as a result of the give-away budget of July 1986 when revenues plummeted, the then Government took a decision to move all of the money that the Water Authority had collected, some of it from special grants and quite a few million dollars of their own funds. The then Prime Minister decided he must have his hands on it to shore up the Treasury. The result was that a lot of money that the Water Works had earmarked for future work was taken into the Consolidated Fund. So I wonder if the present water woes that we are experiencing now did not result from that decision to strip the Water Authority of funds. A lot of woe is due to the fact that a lot of pipes that need replacing have not been replaced.

Again, near where I live almost every day you see the Water Authority digging up the road up there because of the rotting pipes which are bursting. I am wondering if that decision taken about 1987 or so is not having a detrimental affect 7 years down the line on the service of the Water Authority.

Sir, I want to make one last point and that is the Minister in his presentation – I do not know how it got in but he brought it in – talked about the IMF stabilisation programme in his introduction. I did not see the relevance at that point and I still do not see it now. I just want to pick up on 1 or 2 points. He said that the performance of the economy especially in the latter half of 1992 outperformed the target levels set by the IMF. He talked with pride in his eyes about the performance of the Barbados economy in the 16 or 17 months under the IMF programme. I just wonder if the IMF target had anything to do with unemployment because I am sure that is one area where the performance of Government would have outperformed the IMF. Not even the IMF would set a target of 25%. The Honourable Minister in his presentation when he was talking about the IMF targets could have mentioned that to give a complete picture of the targets we have passed.

I do not have the latest unemployment figures for March but I am told March will be out in April so that when we come back from our well-earned rest I am sure the Honourable Minister will give us the figures for the first quarter of 1993. The Honourable Minister also made the point about the increased liquidity in the banking system. Sir, I have to agree with him the Honourable Minister is quoting figures and I have the figures right here in front of me. There is excess liquidity but he forgot to mention – probably it slipped him – that this liquidity resulted from the fact that little or no investment activity was going on so that the commercial banks found themselves with a lot of money and nobody except Government to borrow the money for enterprise. So having a lot of liquidity in the banking system is nothing to shout about. All it means is that people are not borrowing money so if that is his idea of a sound financial position it shows the level of his thinking. There is no plus to having a lot of money lying down in the banks when the manufacturing sector and other sectors have no confidence in the economy and hence will not borrow the money to improve their ventures or to start new ventures. So the Honourable Minister should know better than to bring these figures and talk about improvement when he knows, and he knows that I know, that the fact there is liquidity in the banking system is no big thing.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: On a point of order, Sir, I take no authorship or pride in assuming anything that Senator Barker knows. He is

saying that I know that he knows something. I want to disassociate myself from those remarks, Mr. President.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, for one moment I wish he would disassociate himself with the remarks on the financial position and strengthen them but he is not prepared to go so far. But I understand.

With those few words, I hope that Government will in fact take heed to the points raised about the Water Authority. It is a vital area especially as we seek to improve our health and environment that the Water Authority must be allowed to function properly. I will be talking about that on every occasion that I get because it is too vital an area to be left to politicians. Thank you.

SENATOR M.s. M. WALCOTT: Mr. President, I recognise that very careful planning has gone into this project, but I do hope that no effort will be spared to ensure that it fits into the environment in a satisfactory way, that is, and with no possibility of offending any of the areas around there; making sure that the mangrove swamps will be well protected; and the lakes there in Graeme Hall are not disturbed. I also understand it is planned to take the effluents far out to sea so that the waters close to the shore will not be affected. If all these plans are faithfully carried out, I think this project is going to be welcomed in the South Coast. I certainly know that many residents in that area are looking forward to it. They have to employ additional expertise sanitation services because of the low lying land at that point. Other people have had to dig extra wells. I hope all these problems will be alleviated.
12.05 p.m.

I think the Honourable Minister in presenting the Resolution did mention that he expected the quality of the sea waters would improve and the fishing alike. I know there are regulations to control the fishing of the sea urchins. I am wondering when this Project becomes effective if these regulations could be seen to be enforced more carefully so that the population of the sea urchins can be better protected. If this is not done I think Barbados will lose this specialty form in their fishing waters altogether because I understand the urchins need at least 2 years' growth before they are even touched. I do not know how it can be done because it is very difficult to check on people diving, what they are diving for and how they dispose of it. I would like to think that the regulations regarding fishing in these improved conditions are very carefully monitored and policed.

I welcome the Resolution, Mr. President, and very much look forward to the time when this Project is put into effect. With those few words I want to support it.

SENATOR THE REV. CANON J. L. SPRINGER: Mr. President, a matter such as this ought not to be

controversial in any way because I think we all agree that we must protect our environment which includes the sea. I would welcome more debate on matters relating to the regulation of the Sewerage Treatment Plant and also to certain matters that should go hand in hand with the setting up of such a plant, for example, education.

I think we ought to spend some time educating our people as to the dangers involved. In looking at the expenditure one might wonder whether it makes sense to spend \$10 million units or U.S. \$11 million on such a project. That is why I would like, if you will bear with me, to refer to some of the dangers involved if we fail to soon complete our Sewerage Treatment Plant and regulate the treatment of sewage all over the island.

There is beach erosion which can be traced to the disposal of sewage in the sea because it destroys the coral reef. That results in the death, of course, of the very insects that produce the coral. There is the destruction of our sea-eggs, so well loved by all of us and our fish are finding other waters outside of the danger area, if not dying. There is the contamination of the water itself. Over the years people have testified to unpleasant scents in the sea. One hopes all of this will be corrected in due course.

I wonder, Sir, whether after spending so much money on this Project we will follow it up by insisting that the various plants involved and residences connect up. I remember when the Bridgetown Sewerage Project was set up that there was some lengthy period of time during which there was debate on who should pay the cost, what should the cost be and there was sheer apathy on the part of some of the institutions and residences involved in terms of connecting up. I have not had any information recently on how this has been remedied but one hopes that is a thing of the past and there will be some regulatory body to ensure that soon after the completion of the Project all those concerned will connect up otherwise we could have wasted a lot of money.

I would like, Sir, with your indulgence, to speak more broadly on matters of the environment. There are people in Barbados who believe that the sea can kill anything. They believe it can kill AIDS, VD and you can throw anything in the sea and it is going to remain pure. As part of our educational process in the area of the environment or a more friendly attitude to the environment, we need to explain that all of this is myth. There are bodies of water overseas in other countries, large lakes and rivers that have died. We happen not to have those 2. We have the sea. I suppose the sea will be the last mass of water to die but it can die and we must begin our education on how it ought to be treated.

The last time we referred to the beach and the sea when we were discussing the matter of protection of

tourists I referred to some abuses that were taking place to see if we might control the flow of effluence into the sea. What are we doing about people who take horses into the sea where people are bathing or those who think it is alright because they love their dogs to take them into the popular bathing area? All this has to do with pollution of the environment. I think there must be some kind of regulation how people behave in these ways that pose danger on our beaches and in our sea and probably run the risk of scaring away the tourists.

Sir, I am sure it is well known in Barbados that there have been, from time to time, some absence of discretion in terms of how other areas of the environment have been treated. Senator Walcott referred to the Graeme Hall Swamp. We know of stories of large fish dying for unknown reasons and some suggesting that maybe there were chemicals disposed in the lake by people who are unfriendly and unkind to the environment and, therefore, to themselves and the rest of us. I hope this matter too will be controlled so that Graeme Hall Swamp and other bodies of water which we have will be protected from such pollution and contamination.

I would like, Sir, just before I end, to make mention of the disposal of asbestos in Barbados, if you permit me, speaking generally on waste disposal. This is one of the vital areas. Asbestos being such a harmful substance, is not being treated in the way it ought to be when it is being removed. You go to sites where buildings are being repaired and you see it all over the place uncovered and unprotected. You see it put on trucks going along the Highway without tarpaulins, uncovered and blowing about the place. Recently in the newspaper there was some publicity of it surfacing again in a certain district.
12.15 p.m.

Now I think it is time that the authorities, whatever authorities there are, regulate these things. What has been contributing to this is that whereas sometimes Government authorities have handed particular tasks to individuals or firms, they in turn sub-contract to people without telling them what substances they are dealing with and then they treat the substance as though it was paper or any harmless material.

There is a need to regulate the disposal of waste of any kind, including asbestos. From the time it has been touched until the time it has been carefully disposed of, I feel there must be adequate education through out the community while we are putting these projects into place, so that people understand the danger involved and join with us in protecting the environment.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Springer is it asbestos per se, or is it the fragmentation thereof? Which is it that is dangerous?

SENATOR THE REV. CANON J. L. SPRINGER: Yes, Mr. President, it is the fragmentation of the asbestos and the moment you touch it for the purpose or repairs you are fragmenting it and that is really the problem. If it could be removed so carefully, so as not to be broken then there would be little or no danger at all. But I am talking, Sir, of the cases in which it is being ripped off, especially by people who are not aware of the danger involved and then they contaminate a whole area.

I, Sir, have no difficulty in supporting this Resolution and I hope that soon we will find funds to expand our interest in the environment generally and the disposal of all kinds of chemicals and waste. Thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Bellamy.

SENATOR J. G. BELLAMY: Thank you, Mr. President. I must admit that when I got the summons to come to Senate today I expected to be in and out in a very brief time. I did not expect that we would be here for any lengthy period. However some points have been made which I feel disposed to comment on and I feel that I would be failing in my duty if I did not make certain comments.

In the way that this document was introduced the Honourable Dr. Clarke made some reference to the fact that we were led to seek assistance from the IMF as a result of deterioration in our net foreign reserves. And if I am memorising what he said correctly, I do not want to misquote him and I am sure he will correct me if I say the wrong thing, but I understood him to say that this was due to the fact that foreign exchange had not been earned through tourism, manufacturing, and agriculture at a pace that was needed to keep abreast of the expenditure that we were making during this period of time.

That is one way of looking at it and it is for this reason that I continually make the point that I believe the only way we are going to really plan our future out of the difficulties that we find ourselves in, is when the 3 major players of business, the unions and the Government actually get together on a continuing basis and discuss these matters, all recognising their individual contributions to the problems that we are in and seeking to find common solutions to this difficulty.

From the area that I am most concerned with, business sector of our economy, I cannot allow a suggestion that it was due to almost or entirely only to, the non foreign exchange earning of that sector that we were led to approach the IMF. Of course there should always be and has been for certainly the last 5 years that I am personally aware of, particularly about 3 years ago,

serious criticisms of Government's expenditure. So one cannot get into that sort of comment without bringing in Government's expenditure, capital as well as current expenditure, in the lead up period that led us to the IMF.

I just wanted to bring that in and this takes us into a whole long debate which has been debated over and over in this country. But I feel that I would be failing in my duty if on occasions when representatives of the Government apparently insinuate that the fault lies with the business community as addressed in tourism, manufacturing and agriculture that I have to stand and represent my side, so to speak, that this is not the only contributor to the problem and perhaps if we were not as heavily taxed as we have been for so long those very sectors of tourism, manufacturing and agriculture would have performed considerably better in the earning of foreign exchange.

So, it is from that point of view that I felt disposed I should stand here today and make these comments. Having stood, I would also ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Clarke.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: On a point of order, Sir, I did not want to interrupt Senator Bellamy, but for the record I would like to restate what I said on that very score. I said at that time, Mr. President, I am quoting here from my notes. I have on several recent occasions pointed out that there has been a severe bunching of external debt service repayments in the years 1989/90, 1991/92 and 1992/93. These outflows of foreign exchange have not been matched by either net capital inflows, unilateral transfers or increased export earnings from either tourism manufacturing or agriculture. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR J. G. BELLAMY: Thank you for that clarification. I am still however going to stand by the comments that I have made because in the closing comment Senator Dr. Clarke has just reminded us that he referred to the lack of earnings from the tourism, manufacturing and agricultural sector of the economy, in conjunction with the other problems stated.

I have no problem with that. However, I do not know if that is intended to mean that Government's expenditure during that time period was only conditioned by the bunching of debt repayments etc. This is an issue that has been debated over and over and it probably will continue going on being debated over and over. I am not going to continue that aspect of it but I still feel that I must make these points whenever the opportunity arises. One can of course continue into lengthy areas of concern where money was spent by the Government and this has been done several times in the past.

When the clarification was just offered I was at the point of saying that we perhaps would have seen a better performance if we had not had to bear the taxes that we have been forced to bear over these years.

As I pointed out just last week in the debate on the Estimates, when one looks at the actual revenue achieved by the Government – the ten year period between 1982 and 1992 – you will see that it has practically doubled from approximately \$500 million in 1982 to \$982 million in 1992/93 as estimated, and expenditure has outstripped that along the same lines. This is expenditure both on current and capital account and we are well aware, as I stated last week, of the constraints in which the Government has found itself due to the tremendous proportion that has been accorded to debt service and also the significant proportion that is accorded to salaries and wages which is the highest component. Even though after the IMF involvement that area was cut, salaries and wages is still the highest single component of expenditure. And one can continue along those lines. As I said, having risen and following on Senator Springer when he referred to the sizeable amount of money that is being borrowed now by virtue of this Resolution, he was asking that through education of the public that we make sure that the public appreciate the manner in which this money is spent. This, of course, is only a fraction of the total spent on the sewerage project as I understand it. I am not entirely sure what the total cost is going to be. But we have already been told over the last couple of weeks that the major part of the funding for this project is coming from the Inter-American Development Bank. I would like to be assured that we have actually secured all of the funding deemed to be necessary for the project.

12.25 p.m.

Another concern that I have is this. We have already the Bridgetown Sewerage Project which made its way up Bay Street and stopped at a particular point. I wonder if I can be told whether the South Coast Project picks up from that point and continues on or whether there is going to be a gap between the two. There have been rumours of such. I would just like to know that we will have a complete sewerage project along the South Coast. Also, I would appreciate if we know at this point in time a specific time-frame for the full implementation of the project. We want to know when we can expect its completion to take place, because we are effectively securing the money. Obviously, we would appreciate knowing the full time-frame of the project and that the construction begins as quickly as possible and that we achieve the final development as soon as possible in the light of all of the concerns that have been previously expressed about the environment and our surrounding waters.

With those comments, Mr. President, I support the measure.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Alleyne.

SENATOR Dr. F. W. ALLEYNE: Mr. President, I fully endorse the comments made by Senator Springer but particularly his opening comment. There is no right thinking person who lives in Barbados or comes to Barbados even for a short period who can do other than support this Resolution. It is not a controversial matter. Senator Barker, in speaking about one half of an hour, made a single comment with which I partially agree, when he said that the Water Authority should be regulated by the Public Utilities Board. Note that I said partially agree with him. I say partially because, whereas I agree that it should be regulated by the Public Utilities Board, I would like to see a fully functional Public Utilities Board that is staffed and has the management to carry out the functions entrusted upon it under the Act. I do not know of a single instance in Barbados where the Public Utilities Board in the past has monitored those utilities and, when they were over recovering because of the rates that were approved, they intervened and reduced the rate. That should have been done on several occasions and has never been done. So I cannot support putting the Water Authority in that regime. I would like to see it under a fully functional Public Utilities Board. However, that is an aside, Mr. President.

I want to say by way of continuing where Senator Springer left off that I have seen the Bridgetown Sewerage Project. Senator Springer has put his finger on several of the difficulties which we encountered in making that project fully operational and redound to the maximum benefit of those who have to pay for the project. I think, Mr. President, that successive Governments have laboured under a severe disability. I call it disability because it is a deficiency in perception of what development is. Successive Governments in Barbados have held to the view that development is about putting up more factories, putting up more hotels and so on and so forth to create jobs.

Mr. President, I wish to submit that development is about much more than that. The development over the last 40 years which we have seen in Barbados and what we have called developed has created for us many of the problems which we are now trying to solve. In the 1950's and particularly the 1960's, hotels went up all across the West Coast and South Coast with inadequate planning for long term sustainable development. So that what we are paying the price for today is what we should have planned for a long time ago. Notice that I said sustainable development because, in the words of "Our Common Future" on that landmark study on the environment of the Brundtland Commission Report, they set out very clearly what is meant by sustainable development. It is development that lasts. It means that in this generation we should be able to satisfy our needs without compromising

the ability of future generations to meet their needs fully. It is in that context that I wish to see this project.

Mr. President, I hope that this Sewerage Project is seen by this Government and Barbadians generally as part of an effort to close the gap between environmental policy, which Senator Springer spoke about, and economic policy. The two have to go hand in hand. It is no point in putting up a hotel now on the South Coast or on the West Coast without recognising that it has implications for the capacity of the environment to maintain its integrity over time. I would like to think that when we sit down and start to put together a development plan that we do a thorough environmental impact assessment of every project which goes into that plan. In Barbados, we must abandon the habit of approving any project by the private sector or public sector unless a thorough environmental impact assessment is done. There is no point in going ahead and because there are so many jobs quoted in connection with the project we rush at it and then 10 or 15 years later we realize the damage which we have done to the environment. It just does not make sense.

In Barbados at this time, Sir, we have the Coastal Conservation Project. They are doing great work in trying to arrest coastal erosion. There is the Soil Conservation Project where they are trying to arrest the deterioration in the Scotland District area. Now there are these sewerage projects and there are several other activities going on in the area of environmental planning. My concern, Mr. President, is that there is little coordination of these projects which will produce for us in Barbados a coordinated environmental programme. I recall earlier this year that Senator Clarke spoke about the Government's commitment to bringing to Parliament an Environmental Protection Act. That is desirable. I want to see this South Coast Sewerage Project within that larger context. I think it is time in Barbados that we start to see the wider whole rather than the micro aspects where we have a little project here and a little project there without seeing the inter-relatedness between these projects.

Sir, I mentioned the Coastal Conservation Project and the Scotland District Project but there are several other initiatives which impact on the environment.
12.35 p.m.

Mr. President, I make those points to say that it is time that we have in Barbados an overarching body which brings together all of these initiatives, which attempts to arrest the damage to the environment which Senator Springer refers to as pollution, which attempts to arrest that deterioration of the environment, and go further and promote people's understanding of the fragility of our environment. In the final analysis, Mr. President, if I quote from the words of that ESPN promo, "you can run

from pollution but you cannot hide", and all of us in Barbados have to understand that this is the only country we have and therefore we have to protect it.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Mrs. V. C. FRASER: Mr. President, I should like to agree with a lot of what Senator Alleyne said, because I have been concerned myself about the water and sewerage authority, especially the water aspect of it. I am concerned for quite a few reasons, and I like him would like to see it carefully scrutinised and carefully streamlined into a proper institution that has people who are well trained to monitor certain difficulties which are being experienced by consumers.

For example, one of those difficulties is the metering system. You have a meter and you feel that a meter would have helped, then you get a whole lot of problems. One quarter you pay X, the next quarter you pay Y, the next quarter you pay Z, and you do not seem to understand what that system is all about. You ask for these things to be monitored, the whole thing is checked – I suppose properly – and then you hear you need another meter. But you have another meter which is supposed to work and then the price goes up again, so something has to be done at the level that we either have people who understand about the engineering aspect of that to monitor these situations. I feel in the type of organisation that Senator Alleyne is talking about we would see that and that would be a very good thing for Barbados.

Senator Alleyne seems to be going down the same road as me this morning. I have always thought seriously about our environment. Growing up in an area where I was close to the sea and to watch the way how Hastings has been eroded, polluted and confused, because nobody felt that they should sit down and study carefully that there is something called conceptual planning. Before you put things on paper even, you think of what effects they are going to have on the people of the area, on the country as a whole, and I think that whenever these things are going to be done, at the conceptual planning level the people in the area and other people, including various organisations, should be included in this type of planning. You should also solicit from other people how you feel this will effect the environment in Barbados.

We are a small island and we have no right with so many trees being uprooted. Some of these trees are valuable trees to this community. For fruit trees there is an Order on the Statute Book which says that you should consult the Ministry of Agriculture, but it seems to me as though nobody thinks that they should. Of course when you cut down those trees you can have erosion, especially if it is on a slope, and then you find all that soil being washed

away as soon as it rains and it goes into the sea. You can also find your house being undermined. I have seen that happen in a particular island just in one day because of the lack of proper planning. This house was placed on a slope, which I understood certain people said not to put it and the house came tumbling down. Nearly half million dollars went to waste.

We must be mindful of the things that will be for the future for our children. I have always used that Chinese ethic, because the Chinese always believe they are not planning for themselves now, but they are planning for future generations. It does not matter to them how long the thing takes, as long as when it is done it is done for ever. That is their concept of it. They do not want to build a building now and then all the other factors confuse them. I hope that we would not become like some people who were unmindful of the environment on Christmas Island. They forgot that that island was inhabited by crabs and because they had a lot of money and were millionaires, they went and built some of the most luxurious houses and one day the crabs came back to town and they had to move out. Mr. President, I am just saying that to say that all sorts of things could happen when we do not get our environmental plans correct.

I believe that the Scotland District area where a number of things are left out of control, not because necessarily of the persons who are in charge, but the persons who are in charge cannot sit down all day and police situations. I agree that we must have a sustained educational programme about the ecology, we must have it also about the environment, because this is money which we hope to spend for the long term development of Barbados, and therefore we will not pollute our marine life and not have any fish to eat and have to import fish. These things may look a little difficult, but they will have a serious impact on our future and if they are done correctly, Mr. President, and if a lot of proper planning goes into it and discussion with persons who live in the area, who know how it can have a very serious effect on the development or the non-development of the structures being put up or of the particular area, then we will be able to stop things.

12.45 p.m.

I believe in preventative medicine not the curative. We must try now. There is no point blaming anybody now at this stage. The point is that whatever has happened has happened. We now have to ensure that whatever is going to be done now we go forward with the right type of planning, implementation and, most of all, the right type of people who will be looking after Barbados and not looking after themselves and remembering that there are future generations to come.

I say this because anything we do now will affect the children to come and those not yet born. I feel very strongly, Mr. President, in supporting this Resolution that everything must be scrutinised very carefully, not that we are suspicious of anybody but it must be scrutinised in a way that will cause Barbados to move forward.

With that, Mr. President, I thank you for allowing me to make those remarks.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, I wish to move that this sitting be suspended until 2 p.m.

The question was put and agreed to and Mr. President suspended the Senate until 2 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This sitting is resumed. Since we broke, it has been drawn to my attention that we received a copy of the Annual Report of the Ombudsman for the year 1992. He did write in accordance with the provisions of subsection (6) and (9) of section 13 of the Ombudsman Act, Cap. 8A of the laws:

"I have the honour to submit my report on my functions under the Act with respect to the year 1992."

Therefore this will be made a document of the House.

Order No. 1 (resumed)

SENATOR A. MORRISON: Mr. President, I rise to support this Resolution and to make a contribution in relation to the Barbados Water Authority which has been drawn into the debate.

I should like at the beginning to make reference to certain remarks made by Senator Barker in his contribution – and I will paraphrase his remarks – that this Government is the one which has done damage to the Barbados Water Authority and at the same time causing the Barbados Water Authority to be in the position it is in today *vis-a-vis* its finances. Senator Barker seems not to be very clear on the historical background to most measures before this Parliament.

If one will take a cursory glance at the historical developments of the problems of the Barbados Water Authority, one would see a distinct trend which originated in the period 1981–86 when the Minister of Finance under the Barbados Labour Party Administration had given certain commitments to the World Bank at the time to deal with the deficits which had been created at the time of the

Barbados Water Authority *vis-a-vis* the sewerage project for the Bridgetown area. Those funds totalled \$11.2 million and that commitment was never honoured by the Barbados Labour Party because of the fact that it was trying to conceal that commitment and it was told it had to raise water rates which it did not. The result was that the Barbados Water Authority found itself short to the tune of \$11.2 million which it never received from the central Government of this country.

Furthermore, we have as a result of the intransigence of the Barbados Labour Party found ourselves in a situation which was causing a lot of problems even to secure this second loan financing for the South Coast Sewerage Project and which will impinge also on the West Coast Sewerage Project in the future. A condition of the first loan was that all the houses and businesses in Bridgetown should have been connected to that sewerage system. One of the first acts we did when we got in power in 1986 was to make soft loans available to the people of Bridgetown in the private sector so that they could borrow money in order to intensify connections to the Bridgetown Sewerage Project.

I think, Sir, we have almost completed those connections with the assistance of the Barbados Water Authority and we have been able to remedy that situation with the result that the IADB has seen fit to approve the loan to this Government to the tune of \$53 million in order to assist with this new South Coast Sewerage Project and also other funds which have been made available through this loan which we are now dealing with under this Resolution which is being supplied by the European Investment Bank as further funds to assist in this exercise.

So, Sir, far from being the main culprit as the Honourable Member would have us believe in this House that the Democratic Labour Party Administration was the main culprit in this exercise, when we examine the facts carefully we will see it was in fact the Barbados Labour Party which put the Barbados Water Authority in its present financial predicament.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: On a point of order. I did not want to interrupt the free flow of the speaker but he mentioned the action of the Barbados Labour Party. Through you, Sir, could I ask the Honourable Parliamentary Secretary if he would tell us whether or not the Democratic Labour Party did in fact take money from the Barbados Water Authority? The point I am making...

Mr. PRESIDENT: You cannot speak on a point of order on something which the member has said and interrupt his speech to ask a question.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: I agree with your ruling, Sir, except that he is giving the impression that we

were the ones that caused the problem without highlighting the fact that his Administration...

Mr. PRESIDENT: You cannot tell him how he must structure his speech.

SENATOR A. MORRISON: Sir, all I know is that in this exercise we were able, because of the extreme pressure that was put on the consumers in Barbados as far as water is concerned, to lower the rates of the Barbados Water Authority in order to accommodate the hardships which were being levied on the people of this country. That is our total involvement in the whole area of the Barbados Water Authority.

Sir, I must take strong exception again because the Honourable Member in his diatribe against the Administration of the D.L.P....

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: On a point of order. The Honourable Member called my speech a diatribe. Is that parliamentary?

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker, will you please not interrupt unless it is a genuine point of order? Thank you.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: On a point of explanation, Sir. I thought it was genuine. My English as you always tell me, Sir, is deficient. So I just wonder if the word "diatribe" is parliamentary.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker, that is for me to decide. Senator Barker, do not interrupt on trivial matters. If it is a point of order and it is a genuine point of order, we accept that. But, do not interrupt until it matters.

Senator Morrison, you may continue.

SENATOR A. MORRISON: Mr. President, Sir, if I may clarify my remarks for the benefit of the Honourable Gentleman who just sat down. I must say that the Honourable Member made certain provocative remarks in this Chamber in the morning session which would tend to portray this Government as a government which did a lot of damage to the Barbados Water Authority by reference to the fact that he has been saying in his whole contribution to the debate that there is a lot of political interference in the administration of the Barbados Water Authority.

Sir, I happen to be a Member of the Ministry of Public Works, Communications and Transportation and from time to time I have had to deal with matters relating to the Barbados Water Authority. I do not know of any occasion, and I can make a strong denial on this occasion, that I have never at any time interfered with or even tried

to direct the workings of that Authority. I can make the same statement for the Deputy Prime Minister who is the person under whose portfolio that Authority resides. We do not intervene.

I am not surprised about the Member's accusation because he has also confessed to this House that he does not know that the Barbados Water Authority is run by a Board. It is a statutory corporation. He asked that question in here. All these years we have had the Barbados Water Authority and he is not aware that the Barbados Water Authority runs its own business under the direction of the Minister. The actual day to day running of that Authority does not come under our purview. We just give policy directions to the Barbados Water Authority. We approve its budget when the year comes and that is our total involvement in the operations and works of the Barbados Water Authority.

2.10 p.m.

The Honourable Senator also made accusation about the Barbados Water Authority raising rates willy-nilly. Again, Sir, he is very deficient in the knowledge that the Barbados Water Authority does not raise rates on its own behalf or it does not have that power. Rates are approved by the Cabinet of this country. We get new rates coming into operation as a result of a Cabinet decision giving new rates to the Barbados Water Authority. It is not done by the Barbados Water Authority at all. It is done by an Order by the Minister. I am not surprised that the Honourable Member displays that kind of knowledge about the basic working of the Barbados Water Authority in general and of Cabinet Government in particular. One would not have to look too far for the reason of his deficiency because of his lack of acquaintance with the workings of Government as a whole.

Sir, I think it is my duty to inform this Chamber and bring to the attention of this Senate certain implications which this loan has for the Barbados Water Authority. It has very far-reaching implications for the Barbados Water Authority because under the loan contract we are responsible for the counterpart funds for this project. We are also responsible for the debt servicing of this massive loan which is very necessary in order to bring about the kind of environment whereby we can save our marine life and, at the same time, enhance our tourism project. These are very fundamental objectives of a project of this nature.

We are very glad the Government was able to secure this loan. It is one of those kind of loans the Inter-American Development Bank would be pleased to fund because it has very wide-ranging social consequences for the entire country of Barbados. We have been bedeviled over the past years by the coral reef being damaged. Sewage has been leaking into the sea on the south and

west coast. It has interfered with the inshore fishing. We see a very great scarcity of frays and sprats because the algae built up on the reefs result in the fact that there is little or no inshore fishing going on in this country. This project has very far-reaching benefits which I believe the Honourable Minister of Labour, Consumer Affairs and the Environment will be able to elaborate on when he replies to this Resolution.

Sir, I would just like to point out our problems at the Barbados Water Authority in relation to this Project. I would wish the Senate to be aware of these outstanding implications which we will have to face in the years ahead. There was a question raised about the arrears of the Barbados Water Authority. Subscribers now owe the Barbados Water Authority to the tune of \$27 million. We have to show we are in a position to collect most of those arrears and also be able to keep services going to the fulfillment of the Barbadian public.

We have to ensure that the revenue base for the Barbados Water Authority is adequate because we have to supervise the construction and the workings of this new project as well as the Bridgetown Sewerage Project, and in future the West Coast Sewerage Project. We have to be prepared in the early and make concrete plans which would obviate the problems when they occur as we go down the road. We have to maintain the Bridgetown Sewerage Project. We will also have to maintain the South Coast Sewerage Project. We will also have to provide counterpart funds when the time arises for the West Coast Sewerage Project. It has implications by way of revenue collection which would be adequate in order to service these projects.

We have to generate sufficient revenue, Sir, not only to service this Project but also to service the debt which we are now incurring in this particular exercise. It is not for the central Government to service this debt. The loan contract puts it fairly and squarely at the door of the Barbados Water Authority for the servicing of this Project. We will have to take certain measures in the future which I am now serving early notice on this Senate in order to cope with this kind of debt servicing and the maintenance of these Projects which might include probably a rate increase, for that matter, if it so happens, and more efficient collection of the arrears which now total \$27 million. These are all part of the loan agreement.

Sir, under the loan contract the Barbados Water Authority is required to provide counterpart staff and funds not covered by the loan from the Inter-American Development Bank. Our task has been made a little easier by the provision of this loan which we are now debating today because it would have been in the region of about \$10.9 million which we would have had to look for which is now being provided by the European Investment Bank.

Sir, our obligations at the Barbados Water Authority would take us far beyond the life of this Project. All down to the year 1997 we will have to know how we are going to service this debt and maintain the services which need to be provided under this Project. It is a long term commitment, Sir. It is not an easy matter. It will call for good planning, good housekeeping and to make sure that our management of the Barbados Water Authority is very efficient in order not to put undue burden on the people of this country. We have had, as a requirement under this loan, to give the IADB a detailed plan showing the measures we would introduce in order to at least collect 85% of the contributions of the rates which are now owed to us which have been outstanding for a long time.
2.20 p.m.

We also have to move into the area of metering and it is envisaged that under this contract we have to produce and to provide more meters in this country because the ultimate aim is to have more people under the metering system which might call for a big increase in meters being provided for householders in order to carry out the kind of wishes which the Bank expects of the Barbados Water Authority. So we have to embark on a programme, very soon, of the installation of meters in a number of households which would fulfil that aspect of the loan requirements which have been put down in the contract for this project.

We have had problems with universal metering for many reasons which I do not intend to go into at this stage, but would relate and would explain them on another occasion when the Waterworks is being debated in this Chamber. But we have to bow our heads and submit to this requirement. There will be more meters made available, soon from now, to other householders in that respect.

Right now, Sir, the present policy is that people who build new houses will eventually end up with meters but there are a lot of people who now work on the rate system, according to the rateable value of their properties, and they are in the majority but by and by, Sir, we hope to be able to provide more meters in order to fulfil that aspect of the contract with the Inter-American Development Bank. And we have to put measures in place very soon. We have started already and you will hear it in notices over the radio and on television about people who have not paid their rates that they will be cut off. This is in an effort to get people to come forward and pay their outstanding arrears so as not to be cut off. So we have already started on that exercise and we hope to reduce our arrears to such an extent that we would be honouring the World Bank conditions of the loan.

Those are the main features, Sir, of this loan and I just thought I would draw to the attention of this

House, the kind of obligations which we have to undergo and the kind of commitments which we have had to make in order to produce the kind of sewerage system which is very relevant in this year of Our Lord for the South Coast. After that we will tackle the West Coast because that is where our main tourism product resides and we have to continue to keep abreast of the times.

We have already provided the kind of loan situation for people to finish the Bridgetown Sewerage Project and to get everything in Bridgetown under that project. And, Sir, we are not going to repeat the experience in this new project which we had in the Bridgetown Sewerage Project because the Project Manager has moved very early to inform all the residents in the Christ Church area about connecting because when that facility is available for use we would expect that all the householders on the South Coast would have been connected to the system and no one would be left out or anything like that to really impair the proper use of that system.

We want every householder and every business on that coast to be connected long before this facility is officially open so that we can move into the operations and have a cleaner south coast and we will be able to improve our marine biology in that area as a first step in making this country environmentally clean. I hope my colleague here would be able to explain the plans which he has in mind for the environment of this country. I know he has a lot of information and he will share it with you when he comes to reply to the Resolution.

Sir, other attacks have been made on the Barbados Water Authority being not able to deliver water in some areas of Barbados. One must be reminded, Sir, that this has been an abnormal year and we have had more or less a drought. It is the dry season and as I said here in the Estimates we would normally have pumped 28 million gallons per day. That has now gone up to 32.5 million gallons per day which is very excessive and it has almost taken up the complete water resources which we know in this country. If the aquifers are not being refilled by rainfall and our reservoirs go low in water it means that we have to shut down some areas at night in order to be able to distribute the water on an even basis. And some people have been put to great inconvenience, Sir, which I apologise for on behalf of the Barbados Water Authority but which was inevitable in a situation like this where we are pumping water over and above the normal requirement being used in this country.

There is a lot of wastage too, Sir. When we come to the dry season people continue to use water for purposes other than domestic uses. People water their gardens and they water their lawns, despite the shortage of water and this has had a very debilitating effect on the ability of the

Barbados Water Authority to deliver water on a 24 hour basis island-wide in all areas and at all times. But we have not been lazy, Sir, we have been working very feverishly.

We have had the major complaints coming from a place called Apes Hill in St. James and we have tried to remedy the situation in Apes Hill over a period of time. We used to pump from Warleigh Reservoir to Apes Hill and then we shifted the Northern part of Apes Hill to Castle Grant Station and that has improved, Sir.

As soon as we had shifted the northern part of Apes Hill on to Castle Grant then it broke out in the southern part of Apes Hill and we had then to use the Applewhaites' wells in order to help to solve the problems at the same Apes Hill.

There have been problems in St. Thomas and we have been using water from Golden Ridge but it requires pumping, Sir. It requires pumping and that is another extra cost to the Water Authority because of the energy requirements in order to pump water in these various places when the water pressure is low. The only body who is benefiting from that is the Barbados Light and Power Company whose energy which we have to use in order to pump the water. In our capital works programme for this year, we are digging a new well at Hampton in St. Philip. We are on schedule. There will be dug a third well at Hampton in order to help service the St. Philip and St. John areas because Bowmanston is still one of the oldest water stations in Barbados. Bowmanston has a large track of water and they have addicts. Sometime we do not get to the real core of the water and some addicts can come to the point where you are not hitting the real stream and you can get shortfalls in water production. For instance, the people in Blades Hill in St. Philip, which is very near to Hampton, for the last week or so have been crying out for water. We believe, Sir, that when we have dug this new well at Hampton this will go a long way in solving some of those problems on the East and in Christ Church.

2.30 p.m.

We are also embarking in this capital programme for this year 1993-94 on providing a tank at Apes Hill which we hope to be able to install during this financial year to help with the requirements at Apes Hill as well as to institute a new pump in the area eventually which will make the supply at Apes Hill even more adequate. We have had some difficulties, Sir, but that is not to say that the Water Works is not mindful of the problems which we have had in the past year but that Barbadians are using water in excess of what they should be using. When you get a dry season like this, Sir, you run into problems. I am not trying to absolve the Water Works Department totally in this whole affair, but I think that we should be fair to them. They have not been sleeping. They have been

very wide awake. They have been trying to cope with the situation given the resources that are available to them and given the deprivations in which this Government has inherited from the lack of attention which was given to that Authority by the Barbados Labour Party's Administration in 1981-86 which we tried to correct and we are still correcting...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Morrison, you have one more minute.

SENATOR A. MORRISON: Anyhow, Sir, I would like to commend this Resolution to all members of this Senate. It is one of the best things that has ever happened to this country and the Bank is very conscious of the kind of impact which a loan of this nature can make on the country. The European Investment Bank has now supplemented the loan given by the IDB as a worthwhile project because of its big social impact for the people and environment of Barbados and for everyone who would benefit under this scheme. We hope that we will be able to continue when we have completed the South Coast Sewerage Project to turn to the western part of this country and do likewise. People then will see that we are not sitting down here but we are working very feverishly to make Barbados a cleaner place and a very good location for tourists to come in the future.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Clarke.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: Mr. President, in rising to wind up the debate on this Resolution, I am but forced bound to reply to the comment made by Senator Morrison who talked about delinquents and here, Mr. President, I remember Senator Barker when I mentioned liquidity in the banking system. I said that with the excess reserves that more funds were available in the system for the private sector to undertake investment. Senator Barker was at pains to point out that the mere presence of the liquidity represented the lack of no confidence by the private sector. However, I do remember last year in this very Chamber when there were no excess reserves in the system and the system was highly liquid the Honourable Senator Barker was at pains to point out that Government was crowding out the private sector and, as a consequence, he would wish that Government would reduce its activity in the market so that more funds would be made available to the private sector. I would like to let Senator Barker know that you cannot approbate and reprobate at the same time.

Senator Springer made a significant contribution to the debate and took it into the area of the environment. He made the observation of quadrupeds on the beach. I am happy to report, Mr. President, that within another couple

of weeks regulations should be coming before Parliament limiting the activity of horses on the beaches to make the beaches much safer and also more hygienic for the users of the beaches.

On the question of the South Coast Sewerage Project, this is a clear case of a symbiotic arrangement whereby we have two major projects occurring in tandem; one the proposed South Coast Sewerage Project and the Coastal Conservation Project taking place at the Rockley Beach. As a matter of fact, had one taken place without the other, it would have been a complete waste of time to undertake the Coastal Conservation Project at Rockley. For those who are not familiar with what is taking place at Rockley, we are extending the southern part of the beach at Rockley. That is the part going towards the Airport for people like Senator Barker who is always totally disoriented.

SENATOR T. C. BARKER: Sir, I beg your protection. The Honourable Senator said that I am totally disoriented.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Clarke, you will withdraw that remark.
2.40 p.m.

SENATOR THE HON. Dr. C. D. CLARKE: With pleasure, Sir. I did not mean to antagonise my good friend and learned colleague, but I recognise that at this season some of us are a little more sensitive.

To the southern part of the beach at Rockley the Coastal Conservation Unit is planning to take out the rubble rock that is there, enhance the beach, set up a breakwater – a man made reef, if you will – to reduce the wave action coming in on the beach, and to get sands and rebuild that beach, in addition to which, by this very simple action, we will extend the bathing facility at the beach and reduce overcrowding.

Here it is now you have the Coastal Conservation Unit working in close consultation with the sewerage project. In addition, the NCC will come in and landscape the whole area and plant trees. Then the Ministry of Communications will provide a new parking area, so you do not have people and vehicles competing for the same space. It is a comprehensive project. The artificial reef should restore some marine life which is now non-existent; the run off from the sewerage plant will be well outside the reef, so it will not have an impact on the waters inside; and by and large the overall quality of the water will be enhanced; and overall the area will be aesthetically improved....

Mr. PRESIDENT: Where exactly are you describing? The precise area.

SENATOR THE HON Dr. C. D. CLARKE: The Accra Beach, which will be totally upgraded and would be another part of the overall improvement of the environment.

I shall not detain the Chamber any more. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

ORDER NO. 2 - RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE
PUBLICATION IN THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE
OF NOTIFICATION OF THE ABANDON-
MENT OF THE ACQUISITION FROM
THE ESTATE OF C. A. DOWDING
(DECEASED) OF FIVE PARCELS
OF LAND AT HAGGATT
HALL, ST. MICHAEL

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, this Resolution deals with the abandonment by Government of 5 parcels of land situated at Haggatt Hall in St. Michael.

The background to this matter is that between June of 1981 and September of 1982 the Government of the day moved to acquire several parcels of land from the estate of C. A. Dowding (Deceased) in order to facilitate road improvement projects which were carried out in that area. A total of some 8 parcels of land were acquired for the road improvement, and after these had been vested in the

Crown it was discovered that some of the areas were not in fact required for that road improvement. There were discrepancies in the surveying of the land and it took a long time before the Ministry of Housing and Lands was able to sort the matter out.

From 1990 Cabinet took a decision that it was necessary to regularise the matter and it has taken all that time to get to us, because they wanted to be very precise about the areas of land which they would abandon, in other words, hand back to the owners of the estate.

This Resolution now seeks the approval of Parliament to carry out such an act, that is, to abandon the acquisition of the 5 parcels of land at Haggatt Hall and to hand them back to the original owners.

I beg to move that the Resolution be passed.

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

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. L. V. H. LEWIS: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Senate be now adjourned *sine die*.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to, and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly. 2.50 p.m.

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