
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 - 99

THE SENATE

Wednesday, February 22, 1995

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Wednesday, February 22, 1995, at 11.15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator F. W. GOLLOP, (President)
His Honour Senator C. L. BOLDEN, (Deputy President)

Senator the Honourable R. R. FARLEY, (Minister of Industry, Commerce and Business Development) (Leader of the Senate)

Senator the Honourable P. C. GODDARD, (Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business)

Senator the Hon. G. S. H. MURRAY, (Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office)

Senator Miss C. Y. FORDE

Senator T. E. BARKER, (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs)

Senator Miss O. P. SYMONDS

Senator D. T. GILL

Senator Miss J. C. ODLE

Senator N. A. LYNCH

Senator N. P. WELCH

Senator J. A. WORKMAN

Senator Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON

Senator C. LeR. TROTMAN

Senator the Venerable Archdeacon J. L. SPRINGER,
G.C.M.

Senator C. K. LAURIE

Senator Mrs V. J. DAVIS

Senator Miss A. P. THOMPSON

Senator C. A. MASCOLL

Prayers were led by Rev. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I am commanded to lay the following documents:

Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements of the Barbados National Bank for the year ended March 31, 1994.

Report of the National Insurance Board on its operations of the Sugar Workers' Provident Fund for the period 1st January to 31st December, 1992.

Annual Report of the Community Legal Services Commission for the year 1993-94.

Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the Barbados National Bank for the year 1991.

Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements of the National Petroleum Corporation for the Financial Year April 1992 to March 1993.

Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Barbados Board of Tourism for the period April 1, 1992 to March 14, 1993.

Report on the operations of the Barbados Drug Service for the fiscal years 1987-1993.

Annual Reports of the National Assistance Board for the years 1991 to 1992 and 1992 to 1993.

Annual Reports and Audited Statements of the St. Joseph Hospital for the years 1990-1991, 1991-1992 and 1992-1993.

Animals (Diseases)(Amblyomma Variegatum, Heartwater and Dermatophilosis) Order, 1994.

Animals (Diseases)(Amblyomma Variegatum, Heartwater and Dermatophilosis)(Prevention and Control) Regulations, 1994.

MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE SENATE AND MOVED BY A MINISTER

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that Standing Order 45(2) be suspended for the remainder of this sitting.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

FIRST READING OF BILLS

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I should like to give notice of the following and also ask that they be read a first time:

A Bill to amend the Constitution entitled the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1995.

A Bill to amend the Police Act which is cited as the Police (Amendment) Act, 1995.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1995

Order No.1 was called – To move the Second Reading of the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1995.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to move the Second Reading of the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1995. Sir, the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1995 is being introduced in this Chamber after its passage through the Lower Chamber, the purpose of it being to provide for the protection of salaries and conditions of service of public officers and soldiers, the persons employed under the Civil Establishments Act as well as the Defence Act.

This Bill constitutes an Amendment to the Constitution. The Constitution, as all of us would agree can be broadly described as the basic and governing laws and principles on which a society is governed. Written Constitutions tend to set out the broad framework within which laws are passed.

We take this Constitution in Barbados as set out in Cap. 1 to be the supreme law and all other laws must fall under the Constitution. This sets up two classes of law, as I understand it, the law of the Constitution as well as ordinary law. Of course Constitutions would be amended from time to time because if the Constitution forms the social contract between a society and its rulers then as there is a change in the nature of that contract, there would naturally be a need for a change in the Constitution to reflect that change in social contract.

Another reason for amendments to Constitutions from time to time relates to the requirements for good governance. From time to time Constitutions may have to be amended to give effect to those requirements.
11.25 a.m.

This administration, Sir, has spoken and we have given our commitment to wide ranging constitutional review. In fact we have already announced our intention to create a Constitutional Review Committee which will review the Constitution, in a sense Sir, to ensure that we safeguard our multi-party parliamentary democracy and that we of course protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals.

As you would expect, Sir, that review will be wide ranging, it will be comprehensive and it will cover some of the anomalies which we have already identified – matters relating to qualifications for citizenship and the anomalies that exist with respect to whether your father was a Barbadian or your mother was a Barbadian, whether your father and mother were married, if they are from two different nationalities and so on. There are some other anomalies which I am sure, Sir, you are very well aware of.

Another important feature, Sir, of the need for constitutional review relates to the saving of pre-independence law that remained on the books on independence in 1966. Section 26 of the Constitution creates that saving clause. Clearly, Sir, as we evolve as a society you will discover that there will be need for changes in some of those laws that were saved.

Much ado has been made in other places about whether what we are proceeding to do today should have been done under section 26 and I will deal with that a bit more as we proceed today. But suffice it to say at this

early point, Sir, that a repeal of section 26 without first of all amendments or replacements of some of the ordinary law which were saved by section 26 would lead to a state of lack of law – I almost said lawlessness but that is a different connotation – in that for example the Civil Establishments Act which was saved at independence by section 26 clearly sets out certain functions and when we introduce our new Public Service Act then that would create the correct opportunity for the Civil Establishments Act to be repealed.

I am saying, Sir, that the repeal of section 26 would have to be the last stage of a process of replacing certain aspects of pre-independence law which in some cases might be offensive to modern concepts and precepts with new laws that are more relevant.

Sir, today we are seeking an amendment to the Constitution by way of the addition of a new section, Section 112A. We have decided to proceed in this manner because we do not believe that the public servants of Barbados should need to wait for the work of the Constitution Review Commission with all of its wide ranging features to be concluded.

We also believe, Sir that a great anomaly which exists between the protection offered to certain classes of public servants and other classes of public servants need to be addressed.

Now, Sir, the Civil Establishments Act provides for the Minister responsible for establishments on behalf of the Government to set the terms and conditions of service, including emoluments of the public servants of Barbados.

Now, Sir, as I indicated earlier that is a 1948 Act. However, in framing the Constitution those persons involved considered it important to protect certain classes of public employees or certain classes of persons paid by public purse from any arbitrary use of Government's setting of emoluments and other conditions of service by way of the insertion of section 112 of the Constitution. Now that section, Sir, if I may quote it for you, speaks to certain classes of employees and it says, Sir, "There shall be paid to the holders of the offices to which this section applies such salaries as may be prescribed by or under any law."

11.35 a.m.

It goes on to say, Sir, that the salaries payable to the holders of these offices for which this section applies are hereby charged to the Consolidated Fund and so on. The important Section 3 of that Section 112 says: "The salaries and allowances payable to the holder of any office to which the section applies and his other terms of service shall not be altered to his disadvantage after his appointment and for the purposes of this subsection in so

far as the terms of service of any person depending upon the option of that person, the terms for which he opts shall be taken to be more advantageous to him than any other terms for which he might have opted". Section 4 indicates those classes of persons to be the offices of the Governor-General, Judges, Director of Public Prosecutions, Auditor General, appointed members of Judicial and Legal Services Commission and members of the Teaching Service Commission, Public Service Commission and the Police Service Commission.

Sir, a quick glance at that will indicate that whereas within the work of the Courts, judges are protected by that section, magistrates are not. You will also agree, Sir, clearly magistrates tend to deal with an enormous volume of work that goes before the court system. If we are following the principle by which certain officers need to be protected from what can very well be discriminatory or arbitrary use of that power making it rather than a matter of economic policy instead an economic weapon, then I am sure you will agree with me on consideration that it is important for good governance if we are able to protect public officers from the use of an economic weapon such as the arbitrary adjustment in their emoluments and other conditions of service.

Sir, the other reason for this approach to what is really our stated goal is that in the case which has become so popular, Gladwyn Ophelia King vs. The Attorney General, it was upheld that the Government was well within its rights within the framework of the Civil Establishments Act to cut salaries. It was held however that because of the protection offered by Section 112 that those particular officers mentioned in that section were protected from that aspect of the Civil Establishments Act. All that we are seeking to do, Sir, is to add the other class of workers to that section to have them granted the same protection which the evidence and the judgment in that case has proved to be an excellent and water-tight way of protecting against the reduction of salaries or altering salaries to their disadvantage, which some persons may want to suggest is not the same thing as reduce. But I am sure you will agree, Sir, being a reasonable man, that altering something to one's disadvantage is the same thing as reduce. I am sure the public servants are able to come to that conclusion being logical and reasonable people.

Sir, we are not considering this matter in a vacuum. This matter is being considered because of the experience arising out of the 1991 pay cut. We have to look, Sir, at that whole situation to see why there is a justification for this amendment. The pay cut was listed as being a tool of economic policy and it was part and parcel of the programme designed by the Government's policy-makers well informed by some self professed architects and draftsmen. But, Sir, we believe that the country can, must and will be managed in such a way that disadvantaging

public servants will not form the main plank of any economic policy. But importantly as well, Sir, in this amendment we are seeking to ensure that the possibility of reducing public servants wages cannot be used as an economic weapon and as a tool of tyranny within the Public Service.

Sir, let us look back. Public servants were told that they needed to have this pay cut if they were to avert all kinds of disasters that only popped up within a six month period. I am sure you will recall, Sir, that prior to the 1991 election we were told that not only all was well, but we never had it so good. You will recall, Sir, that the leaders of the Barbados Labour Party were labelled as negative forces and prophets of gloom and doom when they reported that in their view the economy was headed for trouble. You will also recall, Sir, that having gone into an election with a Manifesto setting out certain proposals and so on the last administration within a few short months of that period not only reversed those policies but indicated quite clearly that a Manifesto was not a social contract.

But apart from that, Sir, the public servants were being asked to forego the wages to which they were justly entitled as a means of curbing expenditure in the Government sector. It is significant that in the years leading up to the September 1991 Mini-Budget at which the wage cut was announced that no care appeared to have been taken about curbing of expenditure. In the period between 1989 and 1991, there were many projects involving significant Government expenditure that were started and many of them today are yet to be completed. Several of them were financed on budget, Sir, and they did not form part of a well planned and conceptualized Capital Works Programme, Sir, and these items were not considered to be problems at that time, Sir. The impression was given that these items would not lead to a need to control revenue. I am saying that you cannot speak of the need for public servants to contribute to their country's welfare by foregoing their salaries without speaking to the other aspects of expenditure.

11.40 a.m.

I am sure that during the course of this debate these matters will be more fully explored, but suffice it to say at this point that Barbados would have been in a very much different position if in the period prior to the 1991 elections there was not that significant element of electioneering where the projects that were started without proper planning and as a result could not be completed; where the figures pertaining to the regrading exercise and the salaries revision that was undertaken at that point seemed by some strange coincidence to almost equate the level of cut that was required, so in other words you give on the left and you take away on the right, and blessed by the name of the

taker. We are saying that the public servants of Barbados must not be made the victims and they must not be made the whipping boys for policies over which other persons had control. They should not be made to pay for situations which could have been averted by other means.

But to the Bill, Sir, in terms of the text of it and so on, some heavy weather has been made about some other aspects of this matter. The public servants of Barbados have been major contributors to Barbados' development over the years. This administration is firmly committed not only to restoring the level of confidence which they need to have in their employers by addressing the matter of the protection of their remuneration, but also the whole question of the conditions under which they labour, their physical conditions; also the nature of the practices within the Government Service.

You will recall, Sir, that a retreat was held in January this year in which the senior public servants and the political directorate were able to confer and set a process of public sector reform in place. Public sector reform has been the subject of almost as much speculation and fictional and imaginative mouthings and writings over the years as outer space or life on the planet Mars has been, but we are moving to give effect, we are moving to bring it into the realm of reality. In fact, arising out of the discussions that we had at that retreat a small booklet has been published on the key components of that. Already various sub-committees and task forces have been established to further develop that work. All of this is being done as part of the longer term development of the Public Service, public service reform.

A key element which this Bill will address today, Sir, is the whole question of confidence. The public servants need to be able to proceed in their daily work with the confidence that they will not be caught by surprise as they were in 1991. Heavy weather as well has been made about whether the action that we are seeking to take today should have been done by way of constitutional amendment, which simply seeks to not only use the supreme law of the land to give effect to our desires, but also create a common class of employee within the Service, or whether rather than using the supreme law it should have been done on the basis of the word of the Government. But, Sir, I am sure you have heard the phrase: "Once bitten, twice shy" and you would agree that given the words that we have heard in the past from the last administration compared with the action; given that you have heard that a manifesto is not a social contract; given the various things that are said and not done or done and not said, I am sure you would agree that there will be persons out there who would have been cynical of any mere public statement that we plan to do X, so we are simply seeking to place within

the four walls of the law those matters which we intend to pursue.

Now, Sir, to the amendment, 112A. We are proposing to insert that particular amendment immediately after Section 112. The structure of the insert is very simple and it says at Clause 2 of the Bill:

"The Constitution is amended by inserting therein immediately after Section 112 the following as Section 112A:

The salaries and allowances payable to the holders of offices established under the Civil Establishment Act and the Defence Act shall not be altered to their disadvantage."

That is not only good, clean, simple language, but it follows the language in Section 112 which has been held to be as solid as a rock in the case of the prescribed holders of the offices under 112 and we are using the same tried and proven wording to ensure that holders of the offices described under Section 112A, namely persons employed under the Civil Establishment Act and the Defence Act, cannot have their salaries and so on altered to their disadvantage, which we all agreed that reasonable persons would be able to interpret in the same way that the Privy Council has interpreted the same wording in section 112.

11.50 a.m.

I believe this matter is a simple one and I believe it should be supported by all present. I believe that they would welcome this amendment that we are placing in the Constitution to give the kind of protection which the workers justly deserve. Sir, this amendment would seek to remove somewhat of an anomaly because while we have on one hand the protection of Wages Act which would prevent private sector employers from unilaterally and arbitrarily cutting the wages of private sector employees, here you have the largest single employer being able to arbitrarily and unilaterally cut the salaries of its employees.

We believe Sir, that this amendment that we are introducing today is just an intention of the longstanding tried and proven record of this side in terms of protecting workers' rights. I am sure you are aware, Sir, of our record dating back to the 1950s of progressive legislation relating to the rights of workers. I am sure you would be aware, Sir, of the legislation that we would have passed in the period 1976-86, all of which aimed at protecting the rights of the workers. It should really come as no surprise that we would move with some alacrity in ensuring that we on this side as employers, being perhaps the single largest employer in Barbados, would want to remove those anomalies which exist between employment in the government sector and the private sector.

You will agree, Sir, that the availability of high quality persons for work in the government sector is essential for the national development of Barbados. We have been privileged in the past to have an extremely high quality public sector because in those days, 25-30 years ago, many of the best brains and many of the persons with talent and ambition opted to go to the public sector because in those days conditions of service in many cases were better in the government sector than in the private sector. Having passed the various legislation and created the various work climates which have improved the lot of the workers in the private sector in terms of the guarantees and protection they have as well as the salaries, you face a dangerous situation where you already have salaries in the public sector which are lower for equivalent levels in the private sector. If your conditions of service, particularly the security of tenure as well as the security of your emoluments, the very conditions of service, become mere subjects of the whims and fancies of any administration that is in power, you run the danger, not of feeling the backlash today, Sir, but of not being able to recruit persons of obvious talent, drive and ambition to work in the development of this country into the next few centuries.

We see the import of what we are doing today not just in correcting a situation that went wrong in the past or not simply as addressing a concern that is with those of us here in the present; but we see it as a matter of addressing the long term employment and developmental need of the country and we must have an effective, efficient, high quality government sector if we are not to retard the progress of this country. We must not have a situation where employment in the government sector is so backward, so insecure, that we only get the rejects of the rest of the society for work in the government sector.

In 25 years time, if that were the case, you would not be able to recognise this fair land. So, Sir, we are convinced that this amendment to the Constitution by insertion of section 112 is of sufficient magnitude to justify it. We believe that its long term impact will be quite positive for Barbados. We believe that the ability to adjust wages downward should not have to form the major economic policy instrument in managing this economy and we certainly believe that the retention of this arbitrary power by government would be giving any government that may arise from time to time – we certainly would not do it but we certainly want to ensure that if there are persons less responsible than ourselves who may happen to sit on this side at any point in time that they would not be in a position to use that flexibility in the arrangement as an economic weapon.

We believe that the work of the government officers is important in terms of the regulatory functions, particularly, that they have to perform. They are

often called upon to deal with matters where there are conflicting interests and we believe Sir, that the concept of the independence of the public service must be reinforced by the terms and conditions of work. You cannot claim to have an independent public service whilst you retain the right that if they anger you tomorrow, Sir, to decide to dock their pay. It just cannot work like that.

So, Sir, I am pleased to ask that this Bill now be read a second time.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. President, given all that Senator Farley has said, I would wish to ask one question. Why is there the need to rush this amendment through the Upper and Lower House? If, indeed, it is important, one would wish to know, does not the Government intend to be around for the next five years? I, however, intend to show that the issue surrounding this amendment and some subsequent initiatives are all designed really to appease an international financial institution.

Mr. President, this debate as I see it, really can be conducted at three levels: legal, political and economic. Let me state a fact that the legal perspective ought to be a very straightforward perspective though the process could be complicated. It ought to be straightforward because it should be informed by the political and economic circumstances which have prevailed. It may be complicated because the foundations of law really are logic. In logic we are all well aware that one can very well construct a false premise and reach a true conclusion.

In fact, if you were to investigate the matters in this debate you would see that the premise from which this thing was constructed was indeed false, that is, that the civil servants who indeed were asked to make a sacrifice for the country and did so in the best interest of the country – and evidence has shown that the measures taken over the last three years can be regarded as having pulled Barbados out of difficulty.
12.00 noon.

In that context, I wish to respond by asking why then would the Prime Minister suggest that the measures which we have put in place, the financial system of liberalisation attempts as he said which have been done with some great pain that have indeed begun to bear fruit – The Prime Minister of Barbados made this comment while in Washington to the newspaper editor, or the newspaper man, Tony Best. I do not know him. Indeed, Sir, one is asking the question then, why if indeed the measures put in place were not successful, how could the now Prime Minister admit to the fact that the measures have indeed started to bear fruit.

Let me just go on to this issue, the legal perspective. I listened quite attentively to the debate in the Lower House and I would say that the most able individual on the Government side to discuss the issue was indeed the member of Parliament for St. Joseph. I am convinced that though he structured again part of his discussion on a false premise by suggesting that the issues in this amendment are only to be considered within a legal and political framework, he however concluded that if indeed the Government is able to manage the affairs of Barbados in an efficient way that they can avoid the need for a cut in public sector wages up ahead. How then can you, having suggested that the issue is a purely legal and political issue conclude that an economic outcome can prevent you from making any further cuts that may be required in the future? But that is not even the issue, Sir. Therefore you are saying that there is a false premise which was constructed but that he reached a true conclusion, that the issue about this amendment surrounds the question of putting effective policy in place to guarantee the future of Barbados. We cannot be misguided here on the issues.

Sir, the political perspective has more to do with posturing here than substance. I say that because I think it really is an act of opportunism and let me just explain that in its right context. Just prior to going to Belize the Prime Minister stated that his Government is looking at a macro-economic programme which will be agreeable to all. After the Conference the Prime Minister is stating that the technicians in the Central Bank of Barbados and the Ministry of Finance are putting together a macro-economic programme which is home grown.

Why is it that the phrase "agreeable to all" was used prior to the Conference in Belize and after the Conference in Belize one is now saying that the economic programme will be home grown. It therefore means that some set of individuals, precisely the international financial institutions have, in fact, to agree to that programme whenever it is constructed. This is not the first time because if one were to look at the structural adjustment document produced by the same technicians in the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank of Barbados and the Ministry of Trade, February 1994, one would recognise that this document was indeed the brainpower of those same individuals whom you now intend to entrust the power into. I quote:–

"The document has its origins in the discussions which were initiated between the Government of Barbados and the three Washington-based multilateral financial institutions. The discussions were intended to develop a programme of internal consistent macro-economic reforms for which the MFIs would have provided assistance."

It goes on, Sir:..

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: On a point of order, Sir. Will the Honourable Member state whether it is a published document or if he is going to make it a document of the Senate.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: This would have been laid in the House of Assembly.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Just tell us what it is, please.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I told you what it is at the start. It is a structural adjustment strategy document prepared by the Central Bank technicians, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Trade. I said that at the beginning. It is already a document of the House, to show you how short you are.

"to achieve the objective of ..."

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL:

"thorough analysis of alternative reform options, sectoral working groups were established."

Sir, this question of having a home-grown macro-economic policy is nothing new. The technicians of Barbados were at the forefront of the economic programme of Barbados since 1991 and the greatest benefit of that programme in fact has been that for the first time in the history of Barbados decisions were made on a comprehensive set of data prepared by the technicians of Barbados. We have had policies in the past, and I will refer to them soon, where individuals within a central bank of the Ministry did not have the adequate information to make those decisions. So the political issues have to be looked at in their true context.

Sir, I go further. I am putting this debate in its political context. The partial liberalization of foreign controls in Barbados recently done at the beginning of the week is part of the process as well. It was not an issue, however, that was designed or suggested by the current administration.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: On a point of order, Mr. President. We are talking about amendment to the Bill. I now hear about liberalisation of foreign exchange which we have not heard about and we are told it is part and parcel of a programme which dealt with cutting salaries. I am wondering how the Honourable Senator is relating something which is happening in February 1995 to something which occurred in a Bill which was a 1991 Bill. If the Honourable Senator wants to praise

himself about something, I think he should find a different method of doing it.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I rule that there is no point of order. As I understand it, the Senator is merely trying to put the Bill in its proper perspective and I am giving him an opportunity to do that.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Thank you, Sir, and I will continue with your indulgence.

Sir, the issue does not stop there. Since the Conference in Belize the Prime Minister of Barbados has stated that there is a pending removal of import licences in Barbados. These things are all inter-related because there is a design to subtly appease the international institutions such that when the same macro-economic programme is put in place it would be agreeable to all so these are subtle attempts to ensure that the foundation would be prepared such that there may be the possible draw down of funds from the IADB. But that will not happen in the near future because the process of accessing funds from the IADB is a very long and sustained process, as the individuals will find out. In fact, there is an order of suspicion surrounding the entire links of the initiatives being taken in recent times in Barbados.

12.10 p.m.

What is more is that when the Democratic Labour Party Administration decided that it is going to move towards trade liberalization efforts the Barbados Manufacturers' Association took a strong position in relation to the removal of licences. Our greatest competitor is not North America. The greatest competitor of the manufacturers of Barbados is within the CARICOM region. It is within that context that a decision was taken not to lift the licences on certain goods coming out of CARICOM so as to provide the same kind of protection. But I am not surprised because the same BMA which lauded the Government for the removal of 2 1/2% import duty on CIF value and then went on to suggest that thousands of jobs would be created only last week asked for easement.

Therefore I am saying that I am not at all surprised with the silence on this particular initiative and consultation would have been had with those individuals prior. Because I sat in meetings with the same individuals discussing the question of the BMA and other private sector individuals in Barbados.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I will discuss the whole question of the manufacturing sector a little later, Sir.

Political perspective in this debate is clear. There is a mandate which has to be fulfilled by the Barbados Labour Party and that mandate is short. It is 30 000 jobs to be fulfilled. As such no plan has yet been devised or even any plan suggested by the Barbados Labour Party in terms of how those 30 000 jobs would be created. In fact I expect the Barbados Labour Party Government to resort to the 5, 4, 3 plan because at least, it is a plan. It is a plan that has a structure.

Asides.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Mr. President, in the same document which I referenced earlier there is a Table which is very instructive which is also being developed by the same technicians at the Central Bank of Barbados and the Ministry of Finance.

In this document at page 11 there is a structure which talks about growth. There is a structure which recognizes inflation. There is a structure which recognizes the foreign reserve performance, the balance of payments, the fiscal deficit. There is a programme. What is very instructive about this is that this same Table identifies that the unemployment rate, given this presentation will be reduced to 15% by the year 1998. These are the same technicians that will be utilized by the Government of Barbados in determining any macro-economic programme that will be put in place for job creation.

Why is it, Sir, that given this structure, given the connection with the reality that the technicians identified an unemployment rate in 5 years or 4 years time of the order of 15%? Why is it that they did not discuss within this same plan the fulfillment of full employment within Barbados, within 4 to 5 year periods? There are other questions that I will ask later, Sir.

The issue in this debate really has to do with the economic circumstances that prevailed in Barbados since the 1970s. In that context, I am going to look to locate the 8% wage cut within its political or uneconomic circumstances by addressing the issues that prevailed in the years before.

Just let me make one serious comment here about this particular issue. The significant difference between the Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party in terms of the management of the Barbados economy dates back to the great Errol Walton Barrow in terms of his thinking about the whole question of foreign borrowing. It is an issue which we have to confront into the Twenty-first Century.

The issue is this that prior to 1976 the then Minister of Finance, the Prime Minister took a position that Barbados ought to move ahead on its own steam. As a result he never borrowed money from the Americans. He

never sought to go beyond the shores unless he was absolutely certain that he was capable of repaying. In addition to that, it was also a case in which he took a decision to borrow only when he can make sure that he can convert that foreign borrowing into something productive.

The late Tom Adams was of the opposite view that foreign borrowing ought to constitute the major basis for advancement in this country. That constituted the major fundamental departure in economic management between the Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party. That is a fundamental difference.

Let me also say, Sir, that the first and only time that the Barbados economy was mismanaged was around the period 1981. Thereafter errors might have been created but errors were created only on the basis of lack of judgement. But not the question of mismanagement. Just let me explain that in the full context. The introduction of the Central Bank in Barbados did some harm to Barbados because it offered Governments to print money. In 1992, 1993 it was not the first time that a Government of Barbados had exceeded the ways and means limit at the Central Bank. It was not the first time.

You have never done research and you continue not to do your research Senator Barker. You have to do your research. Mr. President, I am now quoting - There are instances. I have done my research - from Dr. Courtney Blackman and this is a "Social and Economic Studies, Volume 38, No. 4, 1989." You can take note, Senator Barker. You have to. I quote, Sir:

"The Barbadian authorities exhibited considerable restraint throughout the 1970s with respect to money creation powers of a Central Bank. Indeed there were times in 1978 and 1979 when the amount of Government debt held by the Central Bank was negligible. There was a fall from grace in 1981 when credit outstanding to Government rose by 50% and advances to private financial institutions doubled. But this pattern was reversed to some extent under the conditionalities of the IMF programme in 1982-84."

There is no need to come and treat the IMF as if it is some foreign agent simply designed to come and destroy the plight of the Barbados economy.

Asides.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: But there is evidence to show why that happened. Did I hear reference made to spending for political purposes in Barbados? Is that what I heard? Between 1979 and 1981, employment opportunities are important within the Government service, they increased by nearly 5 000 to 7 000 jobs. In 1979-80...

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: It cannot be true. There is the evidence.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Page? Annual Statistical Digest, page 197. Most of that 7 000 jobs increase would have been within the Government sector. Here is the evidence.
12.20 p.m.

Here is the evidence, Sir. In 1981 the fiscal deficit of Barbados rose to \$181 million from \$51 million in 1980. I repeat, Sir. The fiscal deficit of Barbados in 1981 rose to \$181 million from \$51 million in 1980. The fiscal deficit to GDP ratio was 10.8% which was even more than when the Democratic Labour Party Government went to the IMF when the deficit was 8.6%.

But, Sir, there is evidence. It did not just start and I am prepared here to demonstrate that the difficulties within the public sector of Barbados did not start in 1990. Let me explain some other things, Sir. I well understand and appreciate why it is that the then Prime Minister in 1989, and he had very good reason to believe it, that the economy was on sound footing, Sir. In 1989 we were in a position where the fiscal deficit of Barbados reached its lowest level as a ratio of GDP. In 1989 per capita income in Barbados reached a historic high. Unemployment fell significantly in 1989. Tourist arrivals reached their highest level in 1989 as well but little did we recognise that in spite of that very favourable performance the United States Market, even in that year, was on the decline.

Sir, in spite of the low fiscal deficit, the high growth of 5½%, the high tourism arrivals, there was one underlying weakness within the Barbados economy and it is that in that same year the foreign reserves of Barbados fell by an unprecedented amount in 1989.

Sir, are you listening? Foreign reserves of Barbados fell by an unprecedented amount in the year 1989 when Barbados recorded high growth, low fiscal deficit, high tourism arrivals and reduction in unemployment. Sir, there is a lesson to be learnt that there is only one major constraint within the management of the affairs of Barbados and that constraint is foreign exchange and no Government can proceed in this country without recognising that is the issue.

What happened in 1990? In 1990, if we recall the Budget speech, the Prime Minister of Barbados who apparently was instructed to reduce the fiscal deficit from 8.6% of GDP to almost 1% decided that in the interest of this country he would bring it down to 4%. And, Sir, the Opposition spokesman on finance criticised the

Government of the day for not accepting the advice of the then technicians at the Ministry of Finance and other places.

In the following year when confronted with additional difficulties which resulted from, for the first time in the history of Barbados, debt repayment of the order of \$300 million in 1990, debt repayment in excess of \$300 million in 1991, the Government then made the decision rather than do this thing on your own to bring the fiscal deficit down, it made more sense to approach an international organisation from which you were capable and able of receiving some kind of foreign reserve or foreign exchange support. So that decision was taken.

Would you believe, Sir, that when the fiscal deficit was targeted to come to 1% of GDP that the same Prime Minister of the day criticised the Government for taking draconian measures. Yet in 1990 when advised by the Ministry of Finance and he refused and instead of dropping to 1% he came to 4% he was criticised for not accepting the advice to come to 1%. When he did it the following year he was told the measures were draconian but I have the Prime Minister to deal with in this speech. Therefore one is asking the question, could he understand the 8% cut in 1992 without understanding the economic circumstances that prevailed long before that? I am saying, Sir, that we cannot understand and that is why I invite you to go back with me in order to understand where we came from and where we are going.

I have support on that score in 1981. You can check the works of Dr. Michael Ward, Dr. Andrew Downes, Dr. Delisle Worrell. You can then check the work of none other than Mr. Owen Arthur. Sir, and I am now quoting from Mr. Owen Arthur, today's Prime Minister. The document has to be a document of the House. I am going to make it a document. That is why I brought it and it is entitled "The IMF Policies and the Balance of Payments in Barbados" written by none other than Mr. Owen Arthur, Research Fellow at the Institute of Social and Economic Research 1983.

Sir, the good thing about life is that when once you have put your ideas in writing they can be revisited. Sir, I now quote from Mr. Owen Arthur our present Prime Minister. At page 26 of this document which I intend to make a document of the Senate:

"The economic preconditions of Barbados' approach to the International Monetary Fund were established in 1981."

And he goes on to describe those. Then he says a little later in the article

"In our analysis the fiscal errors committed in 1981 were three-fold."

And these things must be told. The first was the error

of estimation of current revenues, and he is saying there was an over estimation apparently of the current revenues. And that is instructive because one of the first statements made by the Prime Minister on assuming office in 1994 is that the technicians at the Ministry of Finance were incapable of making adequate and proper forecasts.

The second error, according to Mr. Owen Arthur.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I can reference without quoting and I am referencing. The second involves the continuation of a policy of income tax reduction. This is another one of the errors which Mr. Owen Arthur, the Prime Minister is saying the Government of the day committed. The second involved the continuation of a policy of income tax reduction. So the Honourable Prime Minister is saying that income tax reduction in 1979-80 gave rise to some of the difficulties experienced in Barbados in 1981 and hence caused the Government to approach the International Monetary Fund. It is that same individual, the Prime Minister of Barbados, who is now purporting to be the saviour of the middle class in terms of trying to restore all of this and trying to give all kinds of privileges. But yet still he has now recognised the reality and went on to suggest that he has to have restraint.

I am not finished, Sir. The third problem related to the mounting of a capital works programme which could only be sustained by excessive domestic credit creation particularly during the first half of the year. So we have three problems giving rise to that. All of these economic circumstances are significant in understanding that 1991 in Barbados did not drop out of the sky. Mr. Erskine Sandiford, the then Prime Minister, took the responsibility to put measures in place to correct a number of the ills created in this country by previous administrations.

Sir, may I also say that in this context I have to give full praise to Sir Harold St. John in 1985.
12.30 p.m.

So this is not an attempt simply to be partisan. This is an attempt to understand that the circumstances of the day require us to appropriate that we cannot just adopt measures willy-nilly. Sir, I go on in the research on Mr. Owen Arthur. I recall in that year that we introduced levies. We carried interest rates to the highest and what is most amazing, Sir, is that the private sector of the day in 1988 accusing the then administration of allowing the economy to reach stages of deep depression unlike anything known before. We have a situation where around April 14, 1988 Mr. Owen Arthur is critical of the private sector for suggesting that the measures in 1986 were in fact working inappropriately for the private sector of the day.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: You see these two individuals. Look how they smartly sit next together and these are the same two individuals who are now talking. I will not pass it around. I will not be diverted in this exercise. Just let me carry on. Sir, I am putting the debate in its economic perspective. It has to be put in that way because it is an economic issue. The 8 per cent cut in Barbados was engendered by economic circumstances and should not be reduced to any political and legal debate. It has nothing to do with mismanagement.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, I continue. I said at my opening that...

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: On a point of order, Mr. President. Did I hear correctly that the Honourable Senator said that the debate should not be reduced to a legal or political debate? Is that what I heard? Is that what you said?

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, I am saying that the economic circumstances give rise to the measure and therefore the legal and political levels are secondary.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: You did not say that just now.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Well, that can happen in a debate.

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order please.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, I continue on page 27 of my document.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, let me withdraw my comments and that individual has taken a toll on me before in this Senate. He has been sent deliberately to address me, but he is on the other side and I am on the way up. Let us go forward, Sir.

On page 27 and I quote: "Those measures were supplemented by further fiscal adjustment in the 1982 Budget, the purpose of which was to restrain the extent to which the size of the fiscal deficit generated credit expansion in the recession." These are the words of the Prime Minister of Barbados and I go on, Sir. "New taxes on payroll and other indirect taxes were hence introduced..."

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: On a point of order, Mr. President. I believe the Honourable Senator said that he was quoting from a 1993 research paper of the ICR by one Mr. Owen Arthur. He proceeds to say however at this point that the Prime Minister said that. I believe that can mislead the Senate in that the statements are not written by the Prime Minister of Barbados but "in 1993 by Mr. Owen Arthur".

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Point is taken, Sir. Mr. Owen Arthur who is now Prime Minister stated that new taxes on payroll and other indirect taxes were hence introduced. Capital expenditure was almost in half, public sector employment was reduced and a wage restraint policy was put in place. Sir, in 1991 therefore it was not the first time that any Government of Barbados sought to reduce the levels of employment within the Public Service. Public sector employment was reduced to in excess of 2000 workers at that time.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: But let me go on, Sir, because this needs to be in its economic context and I am going to do that. In terms of wage restraint within the amendment, there is a clause that talks about "disadvantage". Sir, you can disadvantage workers in many respects. You can cut wage or introduce tax. You can reduce the amount of work per week or you can legislate as was done before. Because the question of disadvantage is this, Sir. If indeed the economic circumstances which prevail lead to an issue where the workers are getting about 5 or 10 per cent increase in salary and you only give those same workers 1 per cent, you have disadvantaged those workers. So the issue of being disadvantaged is not a big issue. You have to discuss the question of disadvantage. You have to put it in its context. What you have here is a discussion in which the economic circumstances which came about in 1991 cannot rest solely on the shoulder of the Prime Minister of the day. This is a situation in which Barbados was grappling with some difficulties within the Public Service for a number of years and that the circumstances at that point required us to take a tough position and I have no doubt that the Senators here understand and respect that those measures were necessary and that they have proven to be necessary.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Well, you do not have to respect that they were necessary. What is important, Sir, is to recognize that it is as a result of those measures which were put in place that the Barbados economy has shown some growth and some life, and you are now trying to ride on that freedom – the freedom to move and groove economically.

In 1994, Sir, as of September the Economic Review of the Central Bank, December 1994, the measures that were put in place were beginning to reveal the kind of benefits which we were all hoping for them to reveal. We have seen growth in the order of 4 per cent. There were unprecedented levels of foreign reserves and that is the consequence of the measures. But let me explain the question of unemployment. At the time when the measures were put in place, Sir, there was need for restructuring of the Barbados economy. There was need to restructure especially the public sector of Barbados and, therefore, one of the greatest measures of the success of the economic programme of the last administration, Sir, is the shifting of employment creation from within the public sector to the private sector.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, you should really give me some protection here. I do not mine the asides. I just would like to be heard and I have a right to be heard in the Senate.

Sir, at the time of the programme, the unemployment rate in Barbados was in the order of 25 per cent. By the end of 1994 and September for sure, that unemployment rate had declined by almost 4 or 5 per cent. That translates into job creation of the magnitude of 5000 to 6000 jobs. Sir, if indeed the Government Service where there was some retrenchment of workers in 1991 and there was no job creation within the Government Service, then all of the job creation since that period would have been in the private sector.

12.40 p.m.

The economic programme of Barbados was designed specifically to achieve that objective and on that measure and that measure alone it has to be regarded as a success, because it was designed specifically to shift employment creation from the public sector to the private sector, and that has been achieved, it has happened.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: It has nothing to do with Kirton, it has to do with having addressed issues of the stabilisation tax, having restructured the system of the direct and indirect taxation, the trade reforms and the like. These measures have all led to the restoration of growth within the Barbados economy, and growth that can now be regarded for the first time as sustainable. What we were doing in the 70s and 80s in terms of job creation within the Public Service was not a sustainable strategy. It is not me, the great Errol Walton Barrow suggested that the only way that we can proceed on a course of sustainable development is if we rely increasingly on our

own resources. The question of borrowing is simple. If you borrow and borrow and borrow, as was done since the 1970s, and you are in a situation where you are not earning adequate foreign exchange to repay those debts you are going to confront the reality some day soon, and that happened to Barbados.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Those are frivolous issues. The circumstances in Barbados therefore leading up to the economic situation in 1991 has to be seen in its wider context. It cannot be seen merely in terms of that year and that year alone. But I will not concern myself only with the past, I am very concerned about the future because I suspect that there is some kind of confusion as regards what strategy should be put in place to create jobs within Barbados. I am not yet convinced, neither have I heard any plan by the administration to create jobs. I have not seen any strategy to create jobs.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Budget? A budget will not help. A budget cannot cause any shift in the structural resources of Barbados. In that regard, Sir, as I try to look ahead, I am going to now look to put the 8% cut within an economic context that looks to the future. What is most amazing is that the Prime Minister of the day who would have made his measure of contributions over the years, and I am also now going to quote him again, and this time I am quoting from a book entitled Public Finance and Fiscal Issues in Barbados and the OECS, edited by Dr. Neville Duncan. I quote him at page 110 of that document.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: I hesitate to rise, Mr. President, on a point of order, but Standing Order 35(1) speaks to the scope of debate and it suggests that debate on any motion or Bill should really relate to such motion other than a motion for Adjournment, and unless we are discussing a motion for Adjournment, which gives us wide scope, I wonder if the Honourable Senator is really staying within the matters relating to the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1995.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, the question of an 8% cut of the public sector wage bill is. . . .

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please proceed.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Thank you, Sir. On page 110, I quote Mr. Owen Arthur:

"Technological development issues have not been addressed and without doing so it would be impossible to build a successful manufacturing sector."

This is the now Prime Minister of Barbados. I repeat, Sir.

"Technological development issues have not been addressed and without doing so it would be impossible to build a successful manufacturing sector."

I am saying that the future development of the manufacturing sector, as has been admitted by the now Prime Minister of Barbados, has more to do with the question of technology than it has to do with even labour inputs, and therefore a simple restoration of 2½% on c.i.f. will not bring the manufacturing sector out of its plight.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I must say this last comment is totally irrelevant. I cannot see how you can tie that in with the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1995 which is before us.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Is it? Sir, I am saying, to put it into its context, that the future of Barbados has more to do with our ability to adapt to technology than it has to do really with the labour side of the issue, and that has implications therefore for the future labour cost and wage bill within the public sector as well as the private sector. That is the light in which I am seeing the connection between the whole question of technology, which is a component in the production function of the manufacturing sector, and the 8%, because this 8% has implications when one looks at the public sector. The private sector takes its lead in terms of wage settlements from the public sector, and therefore one is seeing a connection between the two realities.

Sir, I also go further. The 1991 measures which were introduced also sought to address an issue relating to severance payments. Mind you, if it is that there is a principle not to reduce the nominal wage of workers in Barbados, that same principle should inform the Government to restore severance payments to its original position. The principle that the worker is at the heart of any strategy and that he should not be disadvantaged should be extended to workers who are also severed in Barbados. But the Prime Minister of Barbados cannot take that position, having in 1987 agreed in principle to an amendment put forward by Hilford Murrell that rather than ask employers to make a monthly deduction for severance payments, that there should be consideration given to putting in place insurance policies for employees. That would reduce the burden of the monthly cost for the employer.
12.50 p.m.

This is a position, Sir, that was supported. In fact, in 1987, Mr. Owen Arthur suggested that part of the stress and difficulties being experienced within the manufacturing sector was as a result of the burden of the severance payments, and I can therefore infer from that that Mr. Owen Arthur would have been in agreement with an adjustment to the Severance Payments Act. That was

in 1987, August 23. The comments might have been made around the 22nd.

Sir, I say that in relation to technology, because in the 1950s and 1960s when such measures were put in place the manufacturing sector of Barbados would have been a labour intensive sector and, as a result, we had social systems being put in place for the protection of the worker. No problem with that. But for the manufacturing sector to make the kind of transition that is necessary for them to be competitive in the new global environment and more particularly into the 21st century, that manufacturing sector must be able to make technological changes to its benefit. The only way that that can be done is if in the pursuit of increasing competitiveness the manufacturing sector is able rather than be labour intensive to become more technologically intensive.

Therefore Sir, as a consequence of that, I am saying that the Severance Payments Act, its major merit, was to provide the manufacturers and the private sector in Barbados with that opportunity to shift from labour intensive units to more capital intensive units. That fact has to be appreciated. There is no one that can destroy that argument. It has its foundations in that the only way Barbados with its existing wage structure can move towards a more competitive environment within the manufacturing sector is if we shift towards a more high-tech kind of manufacturing entity within that sector. It cannot happen any other way.

So, therefore, Sir, that strategy on the severance payments, which is part of this entire economic perspective which I am giving to the 8%, has to be seen within its ability to contribute to the future development and growth of the manufacturing sector. No one can dispute that.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, it does not stop there. I have heard references being made to other issues in this thing. I have heard the whole question of the IADB being suggested and that there was some difficulty with the IADB and the Democratic Labour Party Government. Sir, that cannot be true. Mr. Iglesias, only less than a year and a half ago, delivered a speech within the Central Bank of Barbados and was highly supportive of the Democratic Labour Party Administration.

That is not the issue, the issue resides with the technicians. You have to do battle with the management. It is not a question of the managing director saying that we can accommodate you. Let me go on record and say that in spite of whether or not a programme is put in place, that is home-grown or has come out of the arms of the international financial institutions, there are certain issues

which have to be recognised. Those issues have to be recognised and I came prepared to discuss those issues.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Mascoll, I know there is a perceived problem of relevance, but I think it would be fair to draw to your attention that you have four minutes to conclude your speech.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Only four minutes, Sir? How come, Sir?

Mr. PRESIDENT: By virtue of Standing Order 32(8).

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: It doesn't destroy the effect of the speech, Sir.

Sir, I make sure that when I am batting I put the bad ball away. So regardless of whether I am batting in test or one-day it is the same effect. I don't poke because it is test cricket or one-day cricket.

Aside.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: You are batting more than two candidates.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please address the Chair.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I am saying to you, Sir, that even in terms of restructuring, that the BNB... There is a whole range of problems which have been identified within this document for the BNB. So whether or not you want to take the advice of the international financial institutions or you want to take sound domestic advice, you have to move on the basis that there are difficulties within those institutions and correct them. We all know the difficulties of the BNB and that is why I came here prepared. Sir, I quote from this document again:

"As a result of these factors, the number of problems outlined by the BNB by the end of 1991 Government guaranteed loans by the commercial division of the BNB..."

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I really feel constrained to rise because the goodly Senator Mascoll should really be giving a press conference, but we spent some 58 minutes listening to a general economic lecture. We really have not addressed the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, and to introduce the BNB and its specific difficulties, Sir, falls very far outside of the matter before us.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I agree with your point on irrelevance, but in any event the Senator has only two minutes left.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, we must also respect that in terms of the future there is a need for financial sector reform, there is a need for trade reform and the like and therefore, if you are saying that you can manage the economy effectively to avoid a cut in any public sector wage, it has to do with the wider economy. It cannot be confined to any 8% cut. The BNB is important in this entire thing, the sugar sector, the tourism sector. These are all critical because the management of the economy is critical and it is not me who said that. These individuals are saying that they can manage the economy, and the economy goes beyond the public sector.

In that regard too, the Prime Minister of the day in 1987 also said this about the BDB; that the BDB was hindering growth within the private sector of Barbados. Mr. Owen Arthur in 1987 said that the BDB was hindering economic growth in Barbados. It therefore means that he is of the opinion that that institution is in need of reform as well. So no one can confine me to discussing the public sector within this debate when this debate is to do with the economic management of Barbados. They don't trust it? It is here. I have never had a difficulty with dishonesty.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I hate to interrupt the Honourable Senator, but I really think I need to jump to your defence. I hope the Honourable Senator was not reflecting on the Chair when he suggested that no one could confine him to dealing with the Constitution (Amendment) Bill in this debate. I think, Sir, that he...

Mr. PRESIDENT: I did not take it as a reference to the Chair. In any event, Senator Mascoll, will you please conclude?

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, just let me conclude by saying that even though... This is a man whom I respect quite a lot, Dr. James Buchanan who is a Nobel Prize Laureate in Economics. He is of the view and I quote:

"Politics is not a process of fact-finding or identification of truth, but rather of conflict resolution between individuals."

I want to differ, Sir. I want to suggest that the entire future of Barbados rests on the whole question of providing facts and identifying truth and minimising conflict. Therefore, in that context, Sir, I am saying that the 8% cut, though it was hurried through the Houses, both the Lower House and the Upper, because we are saying that a government that is here for five years, why is there a need to bring this issue up front so early in a programme. I am therefore saying Sir, that as it relates to the 8% cut that I will not seek to reduce the work that was done by the last

Administration, given the evidence that is provided in terms of its success and that it could have remained an option because even during that period even though the politicians might not have yet been privy to it the technicians of the day had already calculated that the Barbados dollar would move from 2:1 to \$3.25 to \$1. There was a threat of devaluation and I am aware of that, Sir. I thank you, Sir. 1.00 p.m.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, we had a long rambling speech from the last Senator and he has not touched on the Bill yet so we are none the wiser for his quotations and his verbiage. Nevertheless, I would like to answer a couple of questions.

First of all why are we introducing this Bill at this time? Unlike the party that Senator Mascoll represents, we believe that a Manifesto is a sacred document. We said in our Manifesto – this is already a document of this House, and the people of Barbados in their numbers voted for us – that we would make it impossible – and I want to use the same quotation "never again in this country will it be possible for a Government to reduce the earnings of its employees without their permission."

Sir, we went to the people of Barbados in September of last year and we told them that this is our intention. We are here now in February making good our promise to the people of Barbados. It is a matter of faith between the governed and the Government. Senator Mascoll would not understand the rush because the party that he represents treats their Manifesto as nothing more than toilet paper but we have presented this to the people of Barbados and we are going to be judged on our ability and willingness to carry out the promises as contained in this document.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker, I think the last reference is unparliamentary. I would ask you to withdraw it.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I withdraw any comment which does not meet with the standards of this Chamber.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Perhaps you could use different words.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Well, tissue paper, disposable tissue paper.

So, Sir, as far as I am concerned it is no rush. It is a matter fulfilling a contract especially as the public servants of this country have been shabbily treated in the past eight years by the Democratic Labour Party Government. We want them to know that at long last they have a Government whom they can trust that when they say they will do a particular measure they will do it at the

earliest opportunity. We are not going to wait until two months before the next election to go and run through a Bill. That would be rushing but as soon as it was convenient, we have brought this measure to both Houses. The Government must be commended for its timeliness in presenting this matter.

Sir, Senator Mascoll alluded to the fact that the policies that were pursued in 1991 have borne fruit. I know they have borne fruit. The evidence is there. Let me show you the evidence, Sir. I am quoting from the Annual Statistical Digest as quoted by the Central Bank of Barbados for 1994. I am looking at the unemployment figure. I am talking about the fruit that the policy has borne. At the end of 1993, 24.7% of the people were unemployed, the highest level ever in this country of Barbados. That, Sir, is the fruit of the 1990/91 policies that almost a quarter of our work force, about 30 000 were unemployed by the end of 1993, so the policy has borne fruit. I shall use the Biblical quotation "by their fruits you shall know them". Not only that, Sir. In 1992 what happened? It was 23.0% so from the time this programme was instituted in 1990 where unemployment was 15% every year unemployment rose from 15.0% to 17.0% to 23.0%, to 24.7%. That is a matter of record. That is the fruit that the 1990/91 proposals have borne.

Not only that, Sir. I go to how we as a country performed in those years and I note that our real GDP in 1993 was back down to the 1985 level. That is a matter of record. That is not my figure. That is the Central Bank's figure that the real GDP in Barbados at the end of 1992 was \$801 million and in 1985 it was \$786.9 million so their policy reduced the country back to the 1985 level. That was the fruit of the 1991 policies. Senator Mascoll would conveniently ignore these facts.

In case you want to know about the 1994 figures they are not yet available so I cannot quote what is not available. I am only quoting what is available and even if there is some improvement in 1994 the country was so far back that it had reached rock bottom and it is only because of the resilience of the people of Barbados that we had a little improvement in 1994. They had taken this country down to rock bottom. There was nowhere to go but up because if there was anywhere to go but up, they would have carried us.

Sir, while they were talking about what happened in the early 1990s, it is a matter of historical record that every year in the Economic Report which was given to the Honourable Senator it shows that all the countries in the Caribbean were showing positive growth rates except Barbados, Haiti and one year or so Guyana so that the DLP Government has put us in the same league as Haiti. He is talking about the fruits of the programme? They are there for all to see but Senator Mascoll conveniently ignores these facts.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Can I rise on a point of elucidation, Sir?

Mr. PRESIDENT: Only if Senator Barker will give way.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, let him speak.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, the thing is not just to quote real GDP data. The issue is that for all those years in Barbados the Barbados economy was experiencing what we call "unbalanced growth". Therefore when you compare 1984 with 1991 - the export foreign exchange earning sectors - real GDP was in fact higher in those sectors than in 1984. That is a desirable trend that the trend is towards growth within the foreign exchange earning sectors so you cannot talk about GDP in a big sense.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, the Chamber is not impressed by the pathetic display to elucidate. No elucidation. The point is that the figures are showing that we are now back to the 1985 level. He can justify it how he likes but we are back to the 1985 level. That is what they have done. They have taken our economy and carried us back into time. One step forward and three steps backward, 5-4-3 - 5% decline in 1992, 4% in 1991, 3% in 1990 - 5-4-3. It is here.

Sir, whether or not the economy improved, Senator Mascoll can talk about that as much as he likes.
1.10 p.m.

I am philosophically opposed and morally opposed to the argument that the end justifies the means. That is false and immoral because the end never yet justified the means because the means represent the ends in making. If you have immoral means then that is going to taint the ends. The end never yet and will never justify the means. On a moral point you cannot use illegal or immoral means to achieve good ends. I am sure that Senator Springer will agree with me on that point. You cannot use immoral or unjust ends and means to bring about desirable ends.

However Senator Mascoll puts it cutting the civil servants' salaries cannot be justified in terms of any apparent success that it brings in.

I want to go a little further and look at the economic climate at that time. Senator Mascoll had a lot to say about the foreign reserves. He made a point that the events of 1989 did not show that the economy was in serious decline. He knows better than that. Again I am going to go to the official publications. It will show that in 1989...

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I rise on a point of order, Sir. I never said that about 1989. I said that we

had growth. We had the lowest fiscal deficit. We had the highest tourist arrivals. We had a reduction in unemployment. The foreign exchange levels dropped to an unprecedented amount. What I am saying is that all of the growth which we experienced was as the result of a high import bill. You cannot say that I said that.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Therefore, Sir, anybody who has any training in economics will know that if your foreign reserves declined by \$170 million that you are in serious trouble. No matter what the other indicators are saying, if your foreign reserves drop by that amount any person with the modicum of common sense will know that that unprecedented rise in foreign reserves...

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senator has risen on a point of order.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, my information shows and it is a very authentic source that the foreign reserves in 1989 declined by \$85 million not \$170 million. It is an important point.

Mr. PRESIDENT: It is not a point of order.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Is it a point of clarification then, Sir, or elucidation?

Mr. PRESIDENT: You rose on a point of order.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: I have made my point as a result.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Sir, I have the figures in front of me. First quarter 1989, Foreign Reserves \$381 million. Third quarter \$217 million - It was about one hundred and sixty something million dollars, pardon me for saying one hundred and seventy million dollars. I apologize. If you go to third quarter 1989 you get something like one hundred and thirty something million dollars. To use the word from the Honourable Senator "unprecedented" in foreign reserves.

I am saying that if the Government were understanding the economy they would see that in 1989 that we were in serious trouble indeed. To make matters worse, and this must be said, if we look at the wage bill in the public service we notice something there. We notice that in 1988 it grew by just under 5%. In 1989 it grew by 5.9%. In 1990 what happened? It grew by 13%. It rose from \$374 million in 1989-90 to \$423 million in 1990-91, a 13% rise in the wage bill. What caused that, Sir? Two things. There was a minor salary improvement in early 1990. It was not much because the DLP is not accustomed to treating the civil servants with any respect or giving

them what they deserve. But, Sir, \$33 million was paid out to senior civil servants in December 1990 and this was against the advice of the technocrats.

Asides.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Timing is important. What happened at the end of 1990 to have caused the Government to pay out this vast amount? I can only, in my innocence, ...

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, as far as I know Parliamentarians are not allowed to call the name of civilians in debate because those persons are not privileged to answer them under the same conditions in which their names are called. I hear the Honourable Senator shouting across the Chamber Cranston Browne whom I know leads masqueraders at Kadooment time. Then I heard Branston Collymore, a man whom I know used to be a civil servant and in recent Letters to the Press he wrote an article clarifying that he was a civil servant and he was in charge of the adjustment in the ...

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Civil Service.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Right. Reclassification programme. I am saying that the Honourable Member cannot and it is not proper for the Honourable Member to sit in his seat and shout these asides across the Chamber because it creates a bad impression and it goes to say that if another Honourable Member who is on his feet then raises the name in the debate he will be outside of the rules. At least we have to play the game carefully and we have to play it on a balanced method.

I would ask that the Honourable Member, if he wants to make those statements, follow the Rules and do it on his feet, after having given the requisite notice so that it can be dealt with within the ambit of the Rules.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I think His Honour Senator Bolden has made a valid point of order. It turns on the question of interruption. I think we are having too many interruptions today. Every Senator is going to have the opportunity to speak and therefore the Senator on the Floor should be heard in silence. Please proceed, Senator Barker.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Thank you, Mr. President. I repeat that in December 1989, \$33 million were paid out to a few top civil servants in the regrading exercise. The Honourable Senators are conveniently forgetting that there was something called back

pay. Because it was backdated to a few years. Whoever wrote the article in the newspaper conveniently forgot to mention that there was a lot of back pay element. While it was \$11 million in one year the total sum was \$33 million. That is a matter of record. Not only that.

I remember, Sir, that soon after the election of 1991 that a Bill was introduced in this Chamber – I was recently made a Senator then – and that Bill increased the salaries of Ministers and Parliamentarians. That was about March or so of 1991.

When the 8% cut came the top civil servants already had their big slice and the Ministers had their big slice. So that when they got their cut, they were virtually back to the level they were at at the beginning of the year. No effects whatsoever to them. But the lower end of the Civil Service, where the people did not benefit from the regrading exercise, they were the ones who suffered as a result of the 8% cut. What we saw was a cynical manipulation of the service to that extent, because, Sir, the object could very well have been to ensure the loyalty of the civil service which is a very powerful force in this country by giving them \$33 million just as they were about to call an election. But the point, Sir, and I want to repeat this point, is that the person who benefitted greatly from the regrading exercise in December 1990 and the ones who benefitted from the increase in the Minister's salaries in 1991 did not feel the devastating effect of the 8% cut.
1.20 p.m.

Sir, this vast increase in the civil service wage bill of 13%, an increase of almost \$50 million was the major source of the instability in Government finances in 1991. It was too much in too short a space of time.

And, Sir, I will repeat what I said that the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance was warned against the regrading exercise. The technocrats said the economy could not bear it but no, an election was coming around the corner, and in the words of the former Prime Minister, he was not about to commit political suicide.

Aside.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: It had nothing to do with that. It had to do with fiscal mismanagement of a deliberate and a wicked sort. That is what it was, a wicked act of fiscal mismanagement and then when the results became evident and you found that you had to cut back then you went to this heinous act of cutting the poor civil servants' salaries. It was wrong and it cannot be defended on any grounds, legal, political or economic, because the economic grounds are not there nor moral grounds I should also add. The economic grounds were simply not there. When all around in the Caribbean the countries were experiencing

recognizable levels of growth, Barbados was the only country apart from Haiti and Guyana which was recording setbacks. The same economic wind that blew over Barbados blew over St. Lucia and Dominica and Grenada. The same economic wind, the same tourism. I repeat, Sir, it is fiscal mismanagement. That is why, Sir, we can put in this amendment and go to sleep comfortably because, Sir, we know that we will never allow the fiscal affairs in our country to be so mismanaged. We know, Sir, because we know that if the Government of the day was exercising a modicum of economic common sense that we would not be there. And to make matters worse while you were cutting civil servants' salaries you were building the monstrosity called Sherbourne which is a major headache for the Government. \$30 million to finish it. God knows how much was spent already. While you were cutting civil servants' salaries you were leaking money at the St. Joseph Hospital. While you are cutting civil servants' salaries you are building a polyclinic in St. John, God knows what is the rationale for it because right now it is there unfinished. While you are cutting civil servants' salaries you are building a school in St. Thomas for which the demographic figures for Barbados are not supportive because our population and school age is declining and you are building more schools at the same time you are cutting civil servants' salaries. Total mismanagement. While you are cutting civil servants' salaries you are putting up a building at Queen's College. All of that is going ahead while you are cutting civil servants' salaries. You talk, Sir, about the economic conditions? Not you, Sir, but he talks about economic conditions. The same conditions which up to now the Government can waste all of that money.

Aside.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Not much. Total stupidity, Sir. And so the Government was warned time and time again, you cannot afford this sort of activity. The economy at the same time when your foreign reserves are slipping you are engaging in this sort of wasteful activity and then when the problem comes the only people you can go to are the vulnerable civil servants. No defences. And the poor civil servants had to pay for the crass stupidity of an administration to which economic management was a bad word. And, Sir, the Honourable Senator has the gall to come in here and boast for about an hour and up to now he has not given us one justification for the dastardly act that they perpetuated on the people of Barbados in 1991. In one hour, ranting and raving and rambling and quoting from the dead, the living and the unborn and giving us not one reason, not one sound reason for cutting the civil servants' salaries.

Sir, what are the consequences of this 8% cut? Sir, other speakers will talk about the suffering so I do not have time to. But, Sir, there is an important factor that we must not forget and that is, that the future development of

Barbados depends on a well trained, well equipped public service. That, Sir, is a fact. The future of Barbados depends upon a properly functioning public service. Sir, a lot of people talk about our public service. If there is a great level of inefficiency in the public service then all of our plans, all of our grand ideas will come to nothing.

It is very important, Sir, that we continue to attract in the public service some of the best brains in Barbados. Legal brains, economic brains, accounting brains, we must be able to attract these men within the public service. But, Sir, these highly trained people are in great demand elsewhere in Barbados and outside of Barbados so if they know that a Government can wake up, especially, Sir, if my friend Senator Mascoll is in the Government, the Government can wake up and cut their salaries by 15%, 20%. Would they waste their time working for an institution where they cannot plan for tomorrow where they are afraid to take out a mortgage, where they are afraid to go into any long term planning because, Sir, tomorrow you may hear that your salary is cut?

Sir, I do not know if this was done but I am sure that there have been some exodus especially in the highly qualified ranks in the public service and, Sir, we cannot afford it. We have to make sure, as I said before, that we have these people not only attracted to but remaining in the public service with their skills and with their expertise. And, Sir, putting this provision in the Constitution as we are seeking to do now is going to mean, Sir, a lot to those people. They can now with confidence apply for and work in the public service knowing that their conditions are protected by the Constitution. And, Sir, listen carefully, I have heard a lot of comments that it can be rescinded, but, Sir, evidence will show that in 1991, if that element was in the Constitution the 8% cut would never have taken place because in the Lower House ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker would you please conclude your speech.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Yes, Sir. In the Lower House the Government did not have the 2/3 majority at that time and in the Upper Chamber the measure passed by one vote, so if this measure was in place at that time there would not have been an 8% cut. Sir, even although we know a wicked Government can reverse it they must have 2/3 majority in both houses and that is important. So, Sir, I will say that there has never been an economic justification for the 8% cut and I, Sir, want to commend the Government for having the wisdom and the fortitude at the earliest opportunity to bring this very important measure to this Honourable Chamber.
1.30 p.m.

I urge all Members to give this measure the support that it deserves. Thank you very much.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to move that the Senate be suspended until 2:30 p.m. this afternoon.

The question that the Senate be suspended until 2:30 p.m. this afternoon was put to the Senate and agreed to, and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the sitting accordingly.
1.33 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This sitting is now resumed.

SENATOR Mrs. V. J. DAVIS: Mr. President, I am glad that we are all amused that I am standing. I have pleasure in speaking on this Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1995. Well, I agree that this Bill has its legal, economic, social and all of those implications. But I am going to be speaking on this Bill as a former member of the Public Service.

First, let me say that I recognize that the Constitution is a very serious legal document governing the laws and the rules by which any country is governed. It is because of the seriousness of this that I am prepared to speak. I have heard and I know that it is the law and I must say right away that I could not be speaking from any legal point of view because I have no pretention to being anything like a lawyer or anything like that. But I must say that the Constitution does allow itself to be interpreted and reinterpreted and, as a matter of fact, that is what the legal profession spends all of its time doing in giving opinions, interpreting, reinterpreting, misinterpreting that language. I am saying this because I was a teacher of English and language begins to take on all kinds of mystical proportions that we have expressions like "alter to one's disadvantage" and "reduce" and all of those kinds of things. It is susceptible to all sorts of interpretations.

I am also concerned about the fact that what man has done man can undo. The fact that I hear in the same way a two-thirds majority could change the Constitution that a two-thirds majority can change it back. Strangely enough and I suppose again it is because my discipline is not the law and my discipline is more about humanities that I am more inclined to think about human beings in terms of their goodness and their spirituality and wonderful things like these. A friend of mine reminded me though that it is all well and good to talk about the spirit of the law, but the law is only something that is written down and it has to be interpreted. But I am prepared to feel that way given the spirit of the law, given the sense in which the Government is prepared to redress what I consider important. I say this very seriously because I was one of the victims of this 8 per cent cut. I am saying this as a person who just before I retired that I was never able to get it back. I lost

8 per cent of my salary and I retired without any recompense. I am prepared to talk about this from the point of view of a simple public servant. If a Constitution has to do with laws and it has to do with freedom of human beings and security and their fundamental rights, I am prepared to accept that all of this was done in good faith. I am prepared to accept that and this is why I am talking about it.

Security, freedom, rights – I must say this for every public servant in Barbados that whatever people might say, however they may highlight the negative aspects of a few people in the Public Service, this country cannot be run without its public servants. It cannot be run without its teachers, it cannot be run without its nurses, doctors and its people who are seeing that the Government is run. People must stop ill-speaking public servants. They get little pay and they have to work. The main thing that I am concerned about is the security aspect of it. If we have no rights over our property which is our money, then public servants have almost nothing but their salaries. I remember when this traumatic experience took place. I remember rushing to my bank to try to get my mortgage rescheduled. I remember that there were people who had to withdraw from their little money that they had to put towards their cooperative. It was really a traumatic experience.

Sir, the thing that bothers me and I always say and will continue to say as a public servant, I am always happy to pay my taxes. But the thing about being a public servant is that we have no choice about this. The Government takes out its due before we get it. We are not like people who are self employed and they can choose when. They take it out and we have a fixed salary in which to work and to operate. I must say for public servants that they are the backbone of our society. They try to educate their children, they pay their mortgage, they try to pay their bills and they work for this and that. The only thing that public servants have, aside from the fact that they live from one month to the other, is some sense that there might be some security. To think that that security could be taken away from them and in the way it was taken away from us in 1991, it was painful for me personally. I am not just talking from a personal point of view, but I am talking for all of the men and women out there who are trying to make ends meet.

Sir, I remember there were children who could not pay to come to school everyday. I remember there was a lot of disruption and a lot of terrible things happened. I felt that this is one area where we should have some measure of security. Public servants with the little pay we get and with the backbone of the society that we are, with the fact that our taxes are paid and are taken out from us, we should have a measure of security.

Now the other thing that I want to speak to is this economic question. I think we elect people and we have

Governments on the assumption that they would take such good care of the finances and the monies they take from us. I am not an economist or a lawyer. I was just a simple public servant. Public Servants have that simple faith. I suppose that is the simplicity of people who are not economists or lawyers or things like those that the people we elect to run the country would be people who are going to be taking care of our best interests, would be people who are going to manage our affairs of those same taxes that we pay in such a way that cuts in salaries would not become an economic tool that one day it would be grabbed from us and without any warning. What was most painful about that was the fact that we are a small proportion of the working population. I was very aggrieved. My grievance must come out by the fact that we were not the whole society. We were people who worked faithfully and they took our taxes. Why were we being punished? I have to say this. When that slip of paper came around, I refused to sign the paper because I knew they were going to take it whether I signed it or not. But I said that I was not going to be party to this terrible act when one month I am paying my mortgage and the next month I cannot pay it. I must say that I felt that I was pretty privileged that I did not have children to take care of anyway.

Sir, I would hate to see that Governments retain this power to do this to the backbone of the society, to the people who cause the society to run and move. I am absolutely impressed by the former Honourable Senators explanation about the economy and the economic situation and all of that. But as I said, I am talking for those simple civil servants who in their simplicity thought that Government was there in a way to protect us, we their faithful servants. At least the one thing that we had and the one thing that we could have gone to the bank about was the fact that we were supposed to have some kind of security because of the fact that you were a public servant. You got your money at the end of the month or whatever.

Sir, I will end here because I still think that talking about the spirit of the law is not something that is written anywhere and people can dismiss, and men can get back again and say that we have two-thirds majority and change the Constitution. But I do think that because our Constitution is almost sacred, although it is a legal document that this might not so easily happen, I believe that this Government is probably rather sincere in trying to see that this situation would never happen again. Thank you.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Symmonds.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: Mr. President, thank you. As I listened to Senator Davis, I recalled her solicitude when we marched side by side in protest and indignation at what was happening.
2.45 p.m.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss O. P. SYMMONDS: Yes, I am proud to say I marched, three times. As I heard Senator Mascoi I was really aghast not only when I listened to his diffuse and tedious speech, but to see that he is still wrong-headed. There is still this attitude whether you like it or not you have to put up with it. In other words, like it or lump it, instead of a wish to propitiate and admit that they were wrong.

I returned to the Teaching Service between 1992 and 1993, so I am not just speaking vicariously, I am speaking personally, from the heart, as one who was able to regard it feelingly, a member of one of our Unions, a member of our Coalition. I found in the Teaching Service that there was tremendous angst and suffering, the morale was low, there was a sense of dispiritedness and the cut affected especially people in the middle and lower income group. It was not only the 8% cut, but there was the adjustment in the interest rate as well and consequently people had to find more money and there was less money to be found. Some even had to stop their savings with the Credit Unions. I do not know if Senator Davis had mentioned that. Many of these people were trying to buy land and build houses and they had to stop building houses.

Not only what was done was reprehensible, but how it was done. Mr. President, it was inequitable for an individual's salary to depend on what may be termed a majority vote of his or her co-workers. It was grossly inequitable. In our system in the final analysis it depends on the negotiation machinery. The last Government made colossal errors of judgement, which were then magnified time and again. They boxed themselves into their own corner and then when they could not get out of the corner they made these grievous errors, especially with the 8% cut, to try to get out of it.

Our Leader has already mentioned some of the legacies and therefore I will not go into it, but I want to mention too that at one time there was talk about bonds and then you heard no more about bonds. There was no further discussion about that.

I would also like to say, before I forget, because I think it is very important, that I think that Gladwyn King is to be highly commended. I do not know if it is wrong to mention a name in a context like that, but I think everybody knows that she brought the case.

This Bill seeks to rectify the calamity of the 8% and to ensure that the salaries of civil servants are safeguarded. Mr. President, the Barbados Labour Party Government has continually enacted legislation of great significance and benefit to workers because it is in conformity with its

tenets of what is best for the people of Barbados. Some of the legislation was mentioned in the Other Place, but I think it merits repeating. I think the Leader of the Senate left it to us to expand, because he referred to legislation but did not specify and therefore I should like perhaps to indulge in a little specificity. There is the Accident and Occupational Diseases (Notification) Act, which provides for notification and monitoring of industrial and work related accidents and diseases; there is the Employment of Women, the Maternity Leave Act; there is the Factories Act, the Holidays with Pay; there is the Miscellaneous Act which protects minors from forced labour and from unscrupulous employers. Of course we know of what has been of great benefit, the establishment of the Trade Unions; there was the Severance Payments Act, which the last Government reduced considerably and the unemployment benefits.

I am happy that the Government has brought this Bill, and brought it so early, because as Senator Barker said it is a promise that has been kept and I am exceedingly pleased to support it.

Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, the issue before us today, the amendment to the Constitution, seeks to rectify a grave injustice indeed. This amendment will give civil servants security of pocket and peace of mind, because a lot of them do not have the peace of mind because they still live in fear that this 8% could happen again and that it may be 10% or 15%, but we know under this Barbados Labour Party Government that will not happen and this is why we have brought this all so early in the game, to give back security and peace of mind and pocket to individuals.

It was a sad day in the history of this nation when the then DLP administration thrust this vindictive and inhumane policy upon the working class people of this country. Few of us can claim not to be working class, because I am sure if we look around this table we can see that all of us in here are working or have worked at some time or other for what we wanted in life and we have achieved up to today and some of us will continue to work well beyond the age of 62, I am sure, so there are few of us who can claim not to be working class.

As a working class business woman I too tasted that bitter pill of that tyrannical power. I have to say that in the line of work that I practise I come into contact with a lot of people who tasted it too. They felt it at every strain, every seam of body felt it. It is no mean thing, vanity apart, because the nature of my business is, one could say, a vain one, but at the same time when people have to stop and ponder if they could even afford to look respectable

on the streets, right away you know that your esteem is going to be lowered. If your esteem is gone, where are you? Without self esteem you can do nothing in this world. I think we all know that. The women felt it especially, and we know that the women, with all due respect, are the corner stone and the building blocks of this society, because this society depends on women. We are raising the children, in some instances without men, and doing a fine job wherever possible, but that job was made even more impossible with less money to do it with. Children were going to school hungry, as Senator Davis alluded to, and Senator Symmonds, because they were directly in contact with the children at that time. How can an individual be expected to produce on an empty stomach? How can you expect a child to sit down in school and concentrate and learn on an empty stomach? There is no money in the kitty to buy adequate food. To this day there are still not enough funds in the kitty for children to go out there and for people to go out to work, if they can find work, and we are certainly working to obliterate that imbalance which was created by the former administration.

2.55 p.m.

The men too. When you interface with men out there and they can hardly look you in the eye because they are embarrassed, because they feel less than men because of the situation they found themselves in because of this 8% cut, it really makes you feel you want to jump and scream – I don't know if that is non-parliamentary, but that's the feeling.

We must not forget that we are dealing with people's lives, Mr. President. We talk about the legal aspect of it which, of course, is terribly important and the economic aspects of it; but none of those things are important unless you are dealing with the humane aspect – people. Without people none of that matters and I want to say that some of the men will tell you straight that they were at the lowest in their morale since slavery. Most of them were not born in slavery, but they know what a lot of their forefathers went through. They wondered, could this happen again? We don't want this to happen again, to be afraid to expand anything, not even to put on a little siding on the house. The mortgage you can hardly meet for those who are able to reach that stage in life where they can afford a mortgage.

This amendment will see to it that the civil servants' salaries are not altered again to their disadvantage and this is why we are here today. This caring, sharing Barbados Labour Party Administration – and notice I say "sharing" because we don't just say, "Like it or lump it. Tek this, and this is what it is. No ulcers, thank you." We are going to people participation. That is what it is all about. We are firmly committed to the belief that the working class in the public sector should have the same constitutional rights as

the people who own property in the private sector. As Senator Davis said, the wage oftentimes of a public servant is his property. It is all that he or she has.

If you don't have a wage, you can never hope to own property. So we have to guarantee that we can never be in a position again where that wage or salary will be cut to such a stage. How could an administration that purported to represent the masses, that claims to want to facilitate the upliftment and the betterment of the Barbadian people cut salaries by 8 per cent? Willy-nilly, I don't think is parliamentary but just so, thrust upon you without warning. You don't know what hit you from the back or from the front or from the side.

I have heard one member of that organisation say how painful it was to have to do it. Yet at the same time, I want to know if it was so painful to spend the money on Sherbourne Centre and on St. Joseph's Hospital. These are the two incidents that I keep referring to over and over again because while they may have some importance at some stage in the economic scene of Barbados, at that time, it was unimportant, when people were suffering, the economy was as it was. Senator Mascoll might want to elaborate on that if he should take another point later on. At the same time, mismanagement, misconduct... Insensitivity is the point I am trying to make, gross insensitivity, particularly at such a vulnerable and unstable time in the economy of this country.

Within six months, Mr. President, members of that Administration voted for that 8% and the economic package that went along with it. Within six months afterwards, we were seeing a series of layoffs. So not only were we experiencing less in the pay packet but there were some instances where people were going home and sometimes more than one in one family. Instead of having a solid pay from both people, oftentimes you were seeing the case where there was nobody working in that household. We are looking at approximately... This is not even the conclusive figure but you are talking about 2 703 went home. I am quoting from Hansard of January 14, 1992 at page 135 – 1791 from the civil service and 912 from statutory boards.

The majority of those layoffs just happened to come from the neck of the woods where I interface on a frequent basis with individuals, areas like the Ivy and Licorish Village, St. Barnabas and the Pine, Two Mile Hill or "where we born".

I don't see that the question should be if you can vote for it or against it. It is clear. We have to vote for it because we don't ever want to have a situation again in this country where we are going to be in the position that we were in and are still in because until the end of this

sitting 8% could happen again if two-thirds of us do not agree to go that way.

Mr. President, we Barbadians since 1938 have advanced through the ability to earn, to pay our rents, to buy our homes, to create a better standard of living by the wages that we earn. They must be secured and they must be protected. This is why I have absolutely no problem supporting this amendment today. Thank you.

SENATOR THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON J. L. SPRINGER: Mr. President, I will begin by saying at the outset that I will be supporting this Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1995. As I understand it, Sir, it seeks to deter or prevent Government or any future government from easily or unilaterally reducing the salaries of a certain category of public workers. I am afraid that I cannot join those who are saying never again because we recognise as one speaker has already said – I think Senator Davis – that all you need is the correct majority in the House and the Senate at any one time to overturn what we are now overturning.

One hopes that that will never be the case, but it would be, I think, a bit too ambitious to say that it can never happen again. However, there is absolutely nothing wrong with taking steps at this time for the time as far as our eyes can see to ensure that the suffering, the pain, does not easily or soon return.

Sir, while I am prepared to support the amendment, I have concerns really as to whether or not we should be doing this. I say this to say that we have the word of the Prime Minister and he is an honourable man. We have the Government's word and we have the manifesto promises. We have all these reasons why we should not have to legislate on a matter of this nature.

I suppose one has always got to add human nature being what it is, but I was interested, Sir, to hear a number of persons in the asides earlier on when Senator Mascoll referred to the political, the economic and the legal aspects of the amendment and he omitted to mention the moral. A number of persons mentioned the importance of the moral aspect in this whole thing and indeed I think that we are moving into an area of our development in this country and probably about the world where morality is bound to play a greater part in matters that once would be regarded as strictly legal or strictly financial. I am happy for that.

At the time of the elections last year when the various parties got together along with the Church with the code of ethics, that was a step in the right direction to see that politicians were prepared to get together under the supervision of the Church at that time and underline the

importance of ethical matters or matters pertaining to morality.

Sir, it does really offend me that we have to go to these lengths to ensure that matters like this Constitutional amendment are handled in the way they should be handled. The Constitution of our country in its Preamble had this to say and I quote:

"Now, therefore, the people of Barbados affirm their belief that men and institutions remain free only when freedom is founded upon respect for moral and spiritual values and the rule of law."

3.05 p.m.

Now, that is a very important statement, Sir, as you would agree, and notice the emphasis placed on moral and spiritual values in our beloved Constitution. Then notice too the order of importance. I see it as an order of importance rather than simply a listing of concepts that the Constitution saw fit to place moral and spiritual values ahead of the rule of law which is what we are dealing with here, trying to make law or laws to ensure that what we want done will be done.

I am asking that whatever we do in this regard or in any other regard we will never forget or neglect the moral content for I think that it is that sense of morality in all of our undertakings and the knowledge that we are serious about morality that more than anything else will reassure people who have had difficulties with laws, social arrangements and political arrangements in the past.

Morality in this sense would ensure and insist that the workers would not be disadvantaged. A sense of morality means that. Morality too would ensure that no future moral Government would want to go the route of overturning what we are doing here today. Having said that, Sir, let me say that the real heroes in this whole crisis are not the politicians of whatever party, not legislation, not outstanding individuals who figured, and several persons here figured one way or the other within parties or within groups. I myself had the opportunity to be part of a mediating team which challenged the Government to retract on the matter of severance payments and one or two other points.

I had the distinction of sitting and chairing the very first meeting of the Coalition partners held when they graciously agreed to allow for some mediation. I had the opportunity to be one of the team of clergymen who sat in on the final meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister which cleared the air. We were sure that if the people of Barbados had marched again that it would not end like the previous marches and there was a need for persons of level head to sit down together. There was a lot of hurt and

we had to make sure that there had to be an end in some way. I was part of that. Sir, I am not claiming to be a hero in anyway.

I think the real heroes in all of this were the gallant people of Barbados who made the sacrifices. Those were the heroes. The heroes were the people who lost their homes, jobs and some their families and never retrieved these things. The heroes were the trade unions who exercised restraint in spite of their demands. I saw emerging a sense of maturity in the political arena at that level where the trade unions were concerned here in this country.

The people who are the heroes were the teachers who signed, and many of them voluntarily signed the documents that made the 8% cut take place. I do not know whether they would have regardless but I know as a chairman of a board that a process was gone through and that several people felt that the only way out of our dilemma was to sign away 8% and many gallant teachers were involved here. Then there were the other public servants who made the sacrifices, those on statutory corporations.

I am saying, Sir, that we have to say congratulations to those people of this country who acted in a very mature manner at that very critical time in our history. We saw a Barbados that had matured. There were great sacrifices. We saw on our side where the Church is concerned examples of what you might call a christian principle of doing something believing it to be for the good of others in spite of the difficulties and hardships involved.

I still think, Sir, that a lesson can be learnt from all of this. I do not think that we should let the lesson escape us. The main lesson as far as I see it is that we cannot go it alone. We are all in this together. We need each other and we will not survive if we attempt to go ahead alone.

So, Sir, let us legislate to ensure as far as we are able or can see at this time that what happened in 1991 will not happen again soon. But let us also seek to get some measures in place as best we can to help those who were the worst disadvantaged, not the ones who had the 8% cut but the ones who lost their jobs and have not got them back yet, the people who are still striving for some means of livelihood. Therefore, what I am trying to say, Sir, is that our legislation and our efforts must not stop at simply changing the Constitution or even reinstating the 8% cut, but we must go further and look to help all these heroes who have, whether conscientiously or unconsciously, managed to save their beloved country and ours.

I will end, Sir, by saying that I do hope the day will never come, whatever our views on this or whatever side we take, when there are no people in a country who are prepared to do something on behalf of others. I am going to declare my support for the amendment, Sir.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to add my contribution to this debate this evening. I really want to begin by answering Senator Mascoll about the haste in which this amendment has been brought to Parliament. Senator Mascoll's concern is that the Government is here for five years and that there was no haste in the matter.

I want to speak from the point of view of someone who interacts with a number of civil servants daily. I speak about my position in relation to the courts where we find that the administration of justice literally came to a halt immediately on the reduction of pay. I will say this. Any Government coming to power as it did in September 1994 upon a promise that it would correct an imbalance in the Constitution which affected certain sectors of civil servants would be forced to bring this particular item to the Chamber at this time.
3.15 p.m.

For those who do not happen to interact in Government Departments daily, I should like to tell you what happens. We have to go to the Registry every day. My friend Senator Workman would tell you this. Persons were laid off in the Government, some 4 000 to 6 000 civil servants were laid off unceremoniously. I can say this has been a habit of the Democratic Labour Party of getting rid of civil servants throughout its history, as I know it. I remember during the 1970s a very historical review of your activities. In the 1970s we remember all those teachers who were sent home and all those children 13 and 14 years old who were turned out on the streets left to wander. You sent home the teachers and you sent home the children. This time you cut the civil servants and you send them home.

When you went to a Government department you found an attitude, a sluggish, don't carish attitude, when you say to a civil servant, "Come on, help me. Do this." The reply was: "What do you expect? They sent home my assistant. They cut my wages. What do you expect out of me?" That persisted until the election came about. During the election 80% of the civil servants you met said "I will vote for you on the premise that you are going to remove that difficulty." If you gave that promise, you must do it. You must not do like the Democratic Labour Party did in 1991.

I heard Senator Mascoll say he must praise Sir Harold Bernard. He knows why he said so. I must give praise to Sir Harold Bernard then Harold Bernard because in 1986 the then Democratic Labour Party came out early with the \$15 000 tax free and when Mr. St. John said I will not go down that road, the country cannot carry it. I will tell you something now. At a meeting held on a Saturday morning at the Barbados Labour Party Headquarters, nearly every potential candidate said to Mr. St. John, "Mr. St. John for Christ in Heaven sake, say \$15 000 even if you do not mean it."

He said: "I will not do that. If you want somebody to do that, find a new leader, not me." He said the country cannot carry it and I will not do it.

We went into an election speaking about \$12 000 tax free. The Dems went into election \$15 000 tax free. Gabby came out with a tune after, "Back raise, back raise." You back raise Bree St. John and you won the election. That is why you must praise Mr. Bernard St. John now.

But immediately after that and I have lived to hear that the very Democratic Labour Party attempted to slaughter their own Finance Minister at the time, Dr. Richie Haynes saying that he foisted it upon the Party and the country and when he could not manage it, he walked out of the DLP. I heard that from you all. That is your position. You have fooled the people and then you looked to put the blame on somebody. You tried to put the blame on the then Dr. Richie Haynes. I heard you all say that none of you had seen the Budget and the first time you knew about it is when it was delivered in Parliament. That is the way you ran an Administration. That the Members who were supposed to support a Budget did not know what was in it. I heard that.

You must praise Mr. St. John. The honesty and the morals of the man to lead a political party in such a way that the public out there can accept the words of the party. In this exercise we gave an undertaking to the public. The Barbados Labour Party Administration said, in advance, that they would make the Manifesto a document of the House because they believe in everything they put in that. Contrary to what the Democratic Labour Party said. We said it was a social contract between the voting public and the political party which formed a Government. But the Democratic Labour Party has never accepted that concept. I am saying to you that that is the basic reason why the Government has come to this House at this time.

Mr. President, Senator Mascoll persisted for an hour to justify what they had done during the relevant period. But I have said in here before that, with conviction, they have no sympathy for people in this country. They have forgotten from whence they came. His conviction is, murder them if you can. You must murder them and think nothing about it. That is his conviction because he persists in here.

He is saying that a 5, 4, 3 plan is still an equitable situation for Barbados. As the goodly Archdeacon has said we have to think of those who have no jobs because the philosophy put forward by Senator Mascoll and his crowd resulted in numerous people being put out of work. As the former speakers have said we in the legal practice because the Senator said you must not look at this in a legal or political way. He said you must look at it purely from an economical standpoint. In other words, do not care who

suffer or die once economics will reign, that is all he thinks about.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL rose.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Yes, get up. I know I would get you.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, I did not say that. I said that the debate can be conducted at three levels, a legal, a political and an economic. The goodly Archdeacon has raised the moral level. I did not reduce the debate to any murder. I think you should withdraw it because I did say there were three levels and I said it should not only be reduced to a political and legal debate but that the economic component is significant as well. I think it is unfair to suggest that I ignored the legal and political elements which I took time to look at, as you can recall, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I thought that Senator Bolden was putting his interpretation on your speech. I was not aware that he was actually misquoting you.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: He is suggesting that I did not give any respect to the legal and political elements of the debate. I did that in the opening preamble to my economic perspective.

Mr. PRESIDENT: You have made your point. Senator Bolden, please continue.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I still do not understand on which level the Senator conducted his debate. But I know this that on whatever level you look at, it brought suffering to Barbadians. The persons whose salaries were cut found themselves unable, as other Senators have said, to pay their mortgages. Because that was part and parcel of a package handed down by the IMF and the Senator was careful to say that the technicians in this country were involved. If the technicians accepted the IMF policy and medicine, it resulted in harm and damage to the Barbadian population. Because, Mr. President, when you cut the salary I know the results.

We have a situation in this country – we do not like to face reality – I remember the trade unions started out by trying to help Barbadians when the banks refused to help them because banks have a policy. Do you know what one banker told me? "We do not lend money on bankable projects. We lend money to whom we know." The credit unions stepped in to the void and people would take their salary, divide it into components and it is on that basis that they purchase their houses, their homes.
3.25 p.m.

One of the DLP Senators, in many papers and in this very Chamber, suggested that you drag the credit unions under the umbrella of the Central Bank and curtail their lending. So that is the philosophy of the DLP, you must curtail the lending of the credit unions. But I get back to the question why the 8% cut was so heinous. You have people who would come into your office, "Mr. Bolden I work for X dollars a month. I can put out so much for mortgage, so much for my car payment, so much for my furniture payment et cetera, and many of them are left with no more than \$200 or \$300 a month to survive because when you look down in West Terrace and those houses and you look at the single parents down there and you work out their salaries you can see the borderline on which those people have been existing in order to put a suitable home over their heads. But the Honourable Senator prides himself with being part and parcel of a programme that had those people running left, right and centre. Ask the banks like Barclays Bank how many of those homes are now locked up in the banks' coffers because those who live in them now do not even have an equitable interest in them any longer.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Because you cut off everything that could have been done to help those people. You cut 8%. You cut the interest off mortgage and you allowed insurance rates to climb to the detriment of the majority of people in this country. And now you, still today, in 1995 say you are sticking to a principle that has brought so much hurt and harm to Barbadians, and talking about the need for bringing this today.

I join with the other Senators who have spoken that it is time we begin to think about our brother. That is what you have to do. You do not position yourself that your salaries are secured, nobody can touch your salary, but still reserve in your bosom and under your armpit the right to deal with the ordinary civil servant who has no redress against you. I join and give credit to the trade unions of this country because had it not been for them we would have gone back to the 1930 situation with riots. Do you know who were locked up in the riots? It was only the black people like "today is going to be a funny night", and they spent time in jail. So that is the situation and today 1995 I can still hear that that is my policy and I am sticking to it. Well that should be a lesson to all home owners in Barbados first. It should be a lesson to all public servants in Barbados and let me warn civil servants, they may pick out one or two of you to elevate you above anybody else but you must remember this, there is a civil servant who worked as a civil servant up to one day and the next day he was the first Minister named in the 1986 DLP Government and you know what he said: "They have their own agenda". The civil service has its own agenda.

Now if he knows that they have their own agenda and he is bound to know, the only persons who can have agendas are those at the top because those at the bottom have to tow the line and if they miss and talk out of turn they get banished to places like MTW or the BMC and those places or they go home.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: It does not matter what strategy you adopt with me you could never handle me because you do not know what is going on in this country.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Bolden please address the Chair.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I am addressing the Chair, Sir. If the Honourable Senator was aware of what is going on in this country he would not have offered himself for a candidate in the last election after producing such a policy to harm, especially the people living in the area in which he ran. If he knew what was happening in this country, if he knew how to read the thoughts of men he would not have been in that position. So I do not worry with him.

Sir, you heard the Senator speak about economics, managing an economy, and he wants to preserve the right to cut civil servants salaries because he said you must only remove it if you are sure you can manage the economy well. But let me ask him, let me take him back to such things like CARSICOT. How much money has been thrown down the drain without up to now an answer to CARSICOT? And it raises one point in here and I can say it now. In the other place I heard one Member talking about you should not bring this amendment in this way despite the wordings and the interpretation by the Privy Council which is known to be the highest court in relation to Barbados. He said he will not let any Law Lord out there tell him what to do. I am saying today, loud and clear there is talk in Barbados and in the Caribbean about abandoning the Privy Council but I am going to say we had better be careful with that movement because you have now seen in here that if you ever get a final court of appeal in the Caribbean where certain persons can try to influence certain persons God help the unfortunate one of us. We have to be very careful because when you have political judges, and you have politicians who do not care about law, order and justice, then you are looking for trouble.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I called any name? I called any country? It worries you? Sir, I talk about managing an economy and when you come to manage an economy you have to obey the law. I am

asking the Honourable Senator to give me answers to CARSICOT and he knows where I am coming from.

I go further. You are a young man and you are looking forward. A lot of young men do not reach old age. Thank God I am not a young man because you do not buy experience.

Mr. President, when you talk about managing an economy you do not do things like putting money in St. Joseph Hospital. You do not do things like Sherbourne where the contractors have now said that over and above the unfinished state of the building you now have to go and repair what is the roof because they were not given the opportunity to water proof it.

You talk about managing an economy? It goes back, Sir. The philosophy of that group has always been the same. Let us talk about the North Point. They bought a ship called "North Point" to carry cement before they had a cement factory. They broke every rule in the book to bring that boat to Barbados that is why I have said, we have to look at law and order. They broke every rule in the book with that boat.

You talk about managing an economy, let us talk about Bath Plantation. These are the things you ought to learn. You are a young man. You do not know what went on in this country.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Bolden, please address the Chair.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I apologise to the Chair, but I am asking the Chamber to look at these things. I have just been reminded about International Seafoods.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Oh, that is even worse, Sir, if we look at the history, but all of these happened under the same political party. I would not even talk about the ZRs because I hear they will be dealing with that.

3.35 p.m.

Sir, the Honourable Member is trying to support his political party and what they did. The Senator talks about he is a young man. Well, I am glad that he is a young man because he does not understand. He talks about the Severance Payment Act. He has not had time to read the Severance Payment Act and know why it came into force in Barbados. He does not care about people. So he does not understand. Thank God, we have in this Chamber the Honourable Senator Trotman. He will remember... You want to get up again. Get up.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: On a point of order, Sir. He cannot say that I do not care about people.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I agree with you. That is a valid point of order.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: With all due respect, I withdraw that. I withdraw that, Sir, but I would say that the tenor of his speech and his philosophies do not take into account working class people. Because we were without anything called a Severance Payment Plan in Barbados until we had a series of fires in Barbados such as Fogarty's, part of Cave Shepherd, D. V. Scott and the Whitepark Branch, the open spot opposite the Immigration Department. All of those were burned out in a short space of time. There was a Commission of Enquiry and there were beliefs that these places were deliberately set on fire to throw workers on the street overnight without any recourse to anything. The Severance Payment Act was brought into force to protect the workers who found themselves without jobs through no fault of their own. The unions supported it 100 per cent, but under your regime you decided to join with the IMF and cut back what would be given to workers when they are thrown out of work. Because the IMF has a philosophy that you must operate like the United States - Today, a boss walks in and he tells you to go home and you go home. Those are the philosophies which they supported and put forward by the Honourable Member to this Chamber.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I do not know anything about Carter and Company. Those who know about Carter and Company can speak for themselves. I will not drag anybody into this debate. But all I am saying is that, when you listen to the Honourable Member, you must analyze his speeches carefully. His philosophy is to speak early when the Press is in the Chamber that next day you get a full page of what Senator Mascoll has said. But it is by that very Press that you will be destroyed. Sir, I apologize. I withdraw that statement, Sir. I humbly withdraw, Sir.

Mr. President, this Bill has great implications for Barbados as a whole. As Senator Davis has said, no country can survive without an efficiently working Civil Service. If those in authority do not take into account those who have to carry out the administrative work and functions of a society, then we are looking for disfunction. We must make the Civil Service happy. Everybody will not work 100 per cent. I know that. I was present in this Chamber when a certain civil servant came down here one day with a cutlass to cut off a Minister's hand because the Minister had asked to transfer his brother out of that Department because he said the brother did not work.

But those are exceptional cases. We need to have a properly working Civil Service. We must not pick out a few and give them high raises and high pay to the detriment of others because that will also bring discontent. We have to satisfy everybody that the law is even for them as the new saying is that "the playing field is even" and I go 100 per cent in supporting this amendment to the Constitution.

I would say that there are lots more things that have got to be done with the Constitution. Constitutions are living documents. In Barbados, as soon as you talk about amending the Constitution, it affects everybody. Because they have had experiences where the Constitution has been amended much to their dislike. But I am going along with this and I am going to say to the Government that I believe it is time that we have a standing Constitutional Committee. I think we need a standing Constitutional Committee. Life does not stay stagnant. Life moves on from day to day. There are new and greater interpretations being put on every aspect of life in every word which is written from day to day. We cannot expect to educate our children and ask them to sit by and accept what happened in the 1950's as being current for today. A simple illustration like the mini-bus and ZR vans will tell you that as long as you have a progressive society innovations will come in and the law has got to move with it. The law must move with the innovation that man develops.

I think that this amendment today is but the beginning of a process. It has got to come at this time to make those people who have been affected by it feel sure that the Government in power has kept its word to them. Having done that and, if as I understand it we are looking towards a new system of Government where you are awarding people for their ability, their productiveness and all of these various things, you must show them that when you are put there because of your ability that no Government can come next time and willy-nilly and cut your salary because we do not know the mind of tomorrow's man. We do not.

Sir, Senator Springer asked why does it come at this time because you have the word of the Prime Minister, but this is good for today. Let us assume God forbids that there is another Prime Minister in another six years and he decides that he does not like what we have said and he goes back on those words. It might be from the same political party or from another political party. You cannot bind him but the Constitution binds the country. It binds Parliament until such time it is amended in accordance with the law. If after now you never get a political party that can muster a two-thirds majority, it will stay on the books. But you may soon find that one day that somebody may have to put it on an objection ballot if you do like what Senator Mascoll would like us to do. We are saying as the law stands today the way to guarantee that you are going

to put your words into action is to pass the amendment and pass it in the terms that the law-lords have pronounced on and interpreted to be a safe set of words to achieve what is intended. I chose my words very carefully.

I hope, Mr. President, that the Members of the Chamber think carefully when they vote.
3.45 p.m.

It is being said that faith is being lost in politicians because people no longer can accept our words. It is time for this Chamber, above any else, to speak its mind and show the public that there is still integrity in men of politics. Having given your word, and the public acted on those words, you must carry through the other part of that contract. It is a social contract which should never be broken, and I am satisfied that with this Bill before the Chamber the Barbados Labour Party Government has kept its part of the contract with the public of Barbados. Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I think anybody who had the fortune to listen to this debate in its entirety up to this point and those who would be privileged to read the account of it later, would likely be grateful to the Honourable Members who spoke after lunch for bringing some sort of sense, balance and reasonableness to this discussion.

After the introduction by the Leader of the Senate, we were subjected to a near hour of outpourings from Senator Mascoll which could best be more charitably described as "His Master's Voice". It reminded me very much of what I had already heard, except that it took some three hours in another place, and I hope that his imitation of his master's voice does not next induce him to take to modelling.

But that apart, I am glad for the Honourable Senators who spoke after him, and who brought two of the most essential elements into the discussion, namely those elements of morality and humanity.

It is all right for people like Senator Mascoll and others of his persuasion to indulge in all kinds of intellectual gymnastics and contortions in seeking to justify what can only be described as the unjustifiable. And all the while they are busy talking about the relative merits of their theories and experiments which, to all intents and purposes, have been outstanding failures and through which people have suffered.

Rather than spend an hour quoting copiously from various documents, I would have expected that out of the experience of his training and the experience of the last six months or so, he would have injected some element

of original thought into the discussion. I guess we are not going to be favoured with that, and it therefore fell to the lot of those Honourable Members, as I said, to bring the human element into the discussion.

If his party had had any sense of shame, any sense of discretion and humility – I guess simply having taken the drastic step of cutting people's wages they would not want to say that it was wrong and support this measure – they could have stayed silent. That would have indicated that they have some sense of shame. But to seek to become grand apologists for what everyone holds to be a highly reprehensible act, betrays a certain dearth of political rectitude that I think we should not like to see the likes of again.

Apart from that, Sir, I feel doubly strong about being part of this debate because it is a debate to me which seeks to bring some sense of fairness and effort to redress an imbalance, which I consider, to be one of the best of the imbalances that one could seek to redress by trying to restore to public servants, and not only restore, but to enhance for public servants, a position which had been used against them to their peril by the previous Government.

One of the reasons I feel so strongly about this, Sir, is that I must confess that my first job had been in the Civil Service and since then I have had a very fond feeling for the Civil Service since it taught me a lot of useful lessons which I have been able to put to advantage in the other places I have worked.

I am not one of these people who think that the Civil Service is a place of last resort for people of lesser abilities to operate in, because as several members have said, we have had the good fortune, and while we might take that good fortune for granted, there are other people who still today, with all our faults and all our deficiencies, look to the Barbados Civil Service as a model of performance, as an institution where there is scarcely ever an accusation, far less a hint of corruption, or things of that sort.

Therefore, I think we owe that type of gratitude to the civil service. One way you can do that is to seek to remove any objects or any situation which could cause them uncertainty and anxiety and those kinds of negative feelings which they would have experienced with the 8% pay cut.

Mr. President, Sir, we should not really have been so aghast and flabbergasted and surprised at the willingness of the previous Government to institute such a harsh measure against the public servants. One would recall that for a while they were accused of being "an army of occupation" by a previous leader on the part of that Government which took such a step. I guess that having been deemed an

"army of occupation", therefore the next best thing to do would be to use weapons against your "enemy" in the form of an army of occupation. Hence, there was no reluctance on the part of that Government, I perceive, to be able to impose that 8% pay cut on the civil servants.

That apart, we also have to remember the almost unhealthy act whereby that Government sought to give a regrading, as it was euphemistically called, to a small number of people, an elitist band of civil servants, while the vast majority of them suffered and enjoyed no beneficial results from that so-called regrading. So against that kind of track record we should not really be too surprised that this was the next thing to come. Once again, Sir, it has fallen to the lot of the BLP to come to the rescue of Barbados in general and the Civil Service in particular in this case.

I am really surprised at people who could want to ask what is the rush, because I think in doing so, apart from those who might be genuinely not appreciative of what is being attempted here, I think there is some element of people just trying to be opportunistic in using that pseudo-argument.

If it is right to be able to correct an imbalance, if it is right to do something moral, how can you accuse somebody of wanting to do it swiftly? I would think therefore that all credit should go to Government for seeking to put in place a promise and one should not be surprised that this Government is seeking to fulfil its promises because, after all, we were "the first known government in this part of the world which between 1976 and 1981 and 1986 published on the one hand, in the same document, the promises from our manifestos and on the next page we gave our performance vis-a-vis the particular policies and where we fell down. Where we did not perform, we said so. By and large, they were two outstanding documents which no other party has yet sought to replicate and I challenge them somewhere down the road when they become the government, to do the same too.

I am sure that in the time ahead we are going to be repeating that tradition. So therefore this is just another way of our showing that what we promise we do. We keep our promises. Therefore, Sir, I think that we are well on the road to redressing some of the imbalance, restoring some of the confidence and some of the faith in the future and in their profession and their personal lives and in the government and country that had been stolen very rudely and abruptly and taken away from the public servants.

When I joined the Civil Service, and up to 1991, and for many years thereafter, one of the greatest attractions of the public service was the question of security – security

of job, security of tenure, if you want to put it that way. But the point was that once you were in the public service and you performed you were secure in your job. Up until 1991, it would have been heresy for anybody to advocate in Barbados that public servants above all people would have been subjected to pay cuts and things of that nature. Totally unheard of. Totally unthought of.

Therefore, the outcome was that we were left with a public service demoralised, devastated and in low self-esteem because, apart from taking away one of the major bastions of the culture of the public service, their security, as Senator Davis referred to it, what we saw was a wrecking of the Barbadian dream for many people, particularly where their educational opportunities and their ability to own or maintain a home, where people like the Honourable Members outlined very graphically and movingly either had to suffer the indignity and the psychological trauma of seeing their houses sold, or seeing them rented out so they could pay the mortgage and things of that nature.

3.55 p.m.

It had a devastating effect on the Barbadian psyche in general, particularly the public servants because owning a house is an essential part of a Barbadian dream along with getting a good education if not for yourself, for your children in order to maintain the tradition, and a system of upward social mobility that has done so much to allow Barbadians and Barbados to enjoy the high standard of living as the No. 1 developing country.

All of that has come about because of the large element of home ownership that obtained in Barbados and the good quality of the housing stock which has not come about by accident. Apart from our Barbadian tradition, Governments on both sides of the fence have, until recently, taken steps and introduced measures to make sure that people can acquire and maintain a home. These certain concessions were also dragged away from them, having been given in over-lavished numbers in 1986 in that grand scheme of give-aways.

Mr. President, like I said, we have a Public Service that we can be very proud of. This security which will come about as a result of this amendment must do a tremendous amount, as I suspect, to restore confidence, restore people's willingness to perform at their best, and to enhance productivity and efficiency in the Public Service because public servants are people too. I know the past Government did not think that they are people too. They have blood in their veins. They have feelings. They have goals. They have ambitions.

If people are comfortable in their work, if people are comfortable in the knowledge that their pay will not be cut

drastically by 8% unceremoniously as it was done last time, I have no doubt then that it would be only fair to expect that they will have a greater feeling of self-worth, a greater sense of well-being and a willingness to do their best for their country because they feel that they too at long last would once again have a stake in their country and be able to share in the benefits in which they have sacrificed and the benefits that hard work will bring about and not have to live with the spectre of having it dragged out from under them at any person's whim and fancy.

Mr. President, we in the Government do not feel that it is just enough to amend the Constitution to give people that sense of well-being again. We think that apart from that, people must not only have that sense of well-being but they must be given increases. My Senator friend, Senator Trotman, will attest to the fact that the Minister of Finance and Prime Minister has already advanced, and it has been accepted, that not only is the wage freeze over, but public servants will be getting wage increases.

I know it is long since they have been able to enjoy such a benefit and therefore I am sure that it will add not only to the enhancement of their standard of living and their material worth, but it will also add to their psychological good health resulting, I suspect, in even higher levels of productivity and efficiency.

Apart from that, Sir, not taking the Public Service for granted, we are embarking on some serious matters under our programme of Public Sector Reform. Much has been heard about the success of the initial effort taken in the retreat. While that provided the grand scheme of things, it has to be translated into definitive action and particular plans and programmes. One of these plans and programmes, as has also been stated, is the attempt to bring some high level of maturity and organisation to the Public Service through the large scale implementation of a programme of computer literacy whereby in the 1995/96 financial year government has already earmarked...

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: No, this is not borrowing money. What I am talking about ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please address your remarks to the Chair.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, I understand the chagrin of the Honourable Member, because everything that we seek to do that is good they try to jump onto the coat tail and say we thought of that too, or we talked about that, or had written it down but did you translate it into action. That is the point. The point is that you might have borrowed money for

computerization. What I am talking about is something that will be paid for by the taxpayers of Barbados. It is provided for in the 1995-96 Estimates which will be debated in another month or so under which \$100 000 has already been put in place to institute this programme of providing an opportunity for public servants at all levels to become computer literate.

I am pleased to say that we have had a very good response to that initiative with not only the public sector and people who conduct training seminars and training courses in the computer field expressing their willingness to participate and, of course, generate some economic activity by providing them with business so they can keep employing people, but even a certain secondary school of which I think Canon Springer has intimate knowledge and of which he will be very proud, has even got into the act and has volunteered to provide – I am talking of St. Leonard's School – their 90 computers which they have to be put at the disposal of the Public Service to help provide opportunities and hardware et cetera in order to speed up the process so that as many of the 23 000 public servants can become as computer literate as possible.

Apart from that, Sir, we came into office and found a situation where lots of people had been acting in established posts for as much as sometimes up to 10 and 15 years. The Prime Minister has indicated that he wants to see an end put to this bad practice. Only a few weeks ago we approved the appointment of 98 security guards some of whom had been acting...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Murray, this may be useful information but I think you are straying somewhat.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: I am trying, Sir, to show certain things. One of the things that people had complained about I find most was not the 8% pay cut or even the lack of a raise, but the fact that they did not feel secure in their jobs by having acted for a long, long time. They feel that some time overnight a boss can say "we no longer need you tomorrow" and they too needed to be given some sense of security, the same sense and confidence of security that would have been brought about by the constitutional amendment. Those are some of the positives that are stemming from that that are related to this constitutional amendment because we thought that it was never too good to do something good for the Public Service or for the country in general.

Sir, what we are seeking to do here is to restore a psychological contract. I know the previous Government had no previous idea of a social contract. We are seeking to institute a psychological contract between the public sector and the employer whom, as I am sure the Senator would admit, one would expect to be (not only as the largest employer) the model employer. But we are seeking to create a bond and a sense of trust and respectability as

security between the public sector, and the Government so that for many who enter the public sector, thanks to this constitutional amendment, they can go to bed and go to work assured in the sense, the feeling and realisation that they can make a career out of being a public servant and let it be a proud undertaking for which the country can continue to be grateful.

I thank you. With those words I beg to support this amendment.
4.05 p.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Trotman.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: Mr. President, I would wish to let you know that this issue is one that is very close to my heart, and that it is one that, I am sure, is close to the heart of my colleague who is immediately on my left, Senator Rickinson, and indeed very close to the heart of the entire Coalition of Trade Unions and Staff Associations, who sacrificed very much in 1991 and for whom this matter became a matter that was very sore. I hope during the course of this brief intervention to be able to speak to that matter. But I merely wish to say one word of caution to the Senator who preceded me.

I have no doubt in the Government's integrity and its desire at the level of the Minister of the Civil Service to have the integrity of which he has spoken. I have merely the concern for drawing to his attention the need that there is to ensure that we do not get only appointments to the public service for persons who have got employment after the 6th of September last year while persons who have been working in the same places for 6 and 7 years remain disappointed. We cannot have that kind of an arrangement. I will be drawing it to his attention privately later on because I do not believe that my function is to raise the matter publicly, unless I have first given the opportunity to the Senator to have those matters corrected privately.

Asides.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: I said since. Mr. President, I am not concerned with appointments that were made on September 4th or 5th. I am saying that this is the great combination of persons who are correcting the evils of the past and you do not correct the evils of the past by perpetuating those evils. If we are going to be serious about our role here in this organization, especially in this Chamber the aim is not to become so political that we fail to realize our function which is, under your honourable direction, to be able to bring a sense of balance to bear where justice is not just spoken by the mouth but is seen to be done and is actually done. That is what I am talking about.

I want to thank Senator Bolden for his praise for the labour movement. I am sorry he is not here so that I could thank him properly. I am particularly pleased that it seems as though other people have been very copious in their praise for us during this period because, as you may remember, Mr. President, when crisis was declared in July, 1991 the leaders of the Coalition of Trade Unions and Staff Associations, and I want to include all the people in that group including BAMP who have subsequently left us, we were careful to put our interest in Barbados as a nation before any narrow, partisan interest.

I among those was very careful to indicate that political interest could not come first. I had a political point of view, the Coalition was aware of it and at every stage, became aware of it and it never – notwithstanding what newspapers said during that period – prevented us from putting the cause of our country first. That is why we demanded in July and August 1991 that the number of lay-offs should be reduced to the merest minimum. We recognized that Barbados was very delicately poised in a situation where we might end up in very precarious economic and financial straits. We accepted therefore that there would be a certain level of lay-offs, but we are of the view that those lay-offs should be kept to the merest minimum and that we should ensure that, to the extent that was possible, no household in Barbados should have been so positioned that there would not be at least one member of that household in a job in this country.

Regrettably although we reached agreement at the level of the negotiators to that effect, in the actual effort to implement it, sometimes the people responsible saw family connections or social connections being much more important than the material position of the country and we were not always successful.

We also suggested that we should maintain the parity of the Barbados dollar because we felt then and we still feel now that we should do nothing that would endanger the two to one relationship between the Barbados dollar and the United States dollar. I am pleased to see that all political shades of opinion were united in that particular position.

We also said that there should be, as our third condition for co-operation, no reduction of wages or salaries. We said that even if individuals were prepared to accept it or individual unions were prepared to accept it – because when the discussions started some organizations said to the Prime Minister that they were willing to make that kind of a commitment. None of them was the Barbados Workers' Union nor the Nurses Association, nor indeed none of the other people for whom we currently speak. But we felt that that was not the road to go for even if a trade union went in that direction any individual could have challenged that before the courts as being

unconstitutional. We took that position even though there were unfair criticisms in the press and in the call-in programmes because we took the position that because all of those people who knew better than we did – I am referring to the legal luminaries – because they all felt it was a straightforward case before the courts that we would allow the law courts to make that determination rather than bring the fragile economy of Barbados to complete disruption and destruction by taking prolonged industrial action.

People went for us and accused us of all kinds of things. But I am pleased today to hear that people are saying we acted nobly and are giving us praise. We would wish in this regard not to accept it all ourselves but to accept that part of the leadership of some of those political parties that had a role to play at that time that they should accept some of this praise. I particularly recall that the Leader of the Barbados Labour Party at the time, I thought we had agreed that there would be a title here but, Mr. President, it has not quite materialized and I do not know why, I mean Mr. Henry Forde if you allow me to call his name. That he was very careful to give us the kind of support and encouragement even though he was a political leader who may have got advantage to himself and his party he persuaded us that we should not make the kinds of moves that would endanger the economy of Barbados and he supported our position which was to go so far but not to bring the country to a halt.

I also wish to thank and congratulate Dr. Richie Haynes for giving a similar position even though he could also have benefitted.

The press I cannot be so liberal in my praise with and if you would permit me, Sir, I would think that there ought to be some newspaper jail that some people can go in and be placed into especially Managing Editors of some newspapers.

The Constitutionality of that debate, Sir, was something which we all felt at the time would easily have been satisfied to the satisfaction of the workers. I recall that even after we lost the debate at the level of the first trial and we lost the first appeal in Barbados that we said to the Prime Minister of the day that we were of the view that we were going to win the appeal before the Privy Council and that therefore, he could make life easy for everybody by paying the expenses of our lawyers and therefore put us in a position where we would be able to negotiate the level of the repaying that had to come back to the public servants from the 8%.

The Privy Counsellors did not quite see it our way. But that is not to say that we are still not very much on the ball in this issue. I would wish, Mr. President, to make

you aware that whereas the Gladwyn King case has been lost, the Trevor King case is before the courts. No relation, so far as I know. But there is yet the matter pending. I would wish that when we speak to this issue you would recognize that the trade union movement is speaking from a certain position of keeping the fires burning.
4.15 p.m.

So if I do not say certain things, Mr. President, to the Leader of the Senate, for example if I do not speak about a return of the 8% that is merely because I am still satisfied that we are going to win that case of the 8% before the courts. I am still satisfied that because Governments have a continuous conscience that the commitment which was previously given that if we win one case that the Government would then take that one case which we win about the unconstitutionality of the cut and apply that to the entire public service and I am still satisfied that although we have a different complexion of Government in that a "D" has swollen to become a "B", the Barbados Labour Party has replaced the Democratic Labour Party, I am still of the view that Honourable persons as they all are, the one would satisfy the commitment of the other and that therefore the 8% matter is still very possible within the pockets of those persons from whom it was taken.

Let me say, Sir, also in connection to this matter of the 8%, that we must not make the mistake of believing that it was a case in which only one union or maybe two unions were involved. Mr. President, the press erroneously suggested that only two unions were involved in this matter and I wish to make it very clear that there were 10 unions involved in this – unions and staff associations – each one paying to the level of its commitment and that we were all participating unions in that. I do not wish to detain you by calling the names of them all but it was not any particular group. It was all of us and the amount of money we have so far paid the attorneys exceeds \$50 000, so there was not any freeness that was given by anybody to the workers. The Trade Unions' money has gone into this and I do not wish the suggestion which appeared before to be maintained which suggests that anybody was doing us a favour.

At the same time I wish to express thanks to the attorney when once we got past the Barbados cases for undertaking, at the level of the Cheltenham and Dr. Ramsohoye for doing their bit at the Privy Council level as a service to the people of Barbados and not charging as otherwise might have been charged. I think the records need to make these positions very clear.

When therefore we look back at this matter of the 8%, Mr. President, you would appreciate that I would want to support the measure that is before the House. I

understand that in another place the Prime Minister may have been charged in that he may have had to satisfy certain organisations or persons. I do not know what he had to do, Sir, but I do know that a promise was made to – it was not political propaganda, it is the truth. It was a promise that was made to my colleagues and myself in July 1994 and I have no problem with accepting that that promise having been made then should be observed at this time, that in the event that the Party became the Government, this matter would have been corrected. I believe that promises should be kept.

I am not, Sir, going to enter into this debate about whether this is the right time or it is too early a time or too late a time, it is my feeling that the measure is being taken at this time because as we move from a position where there has been a certain regime relating to freezes on wages and salaries to the negotiations for a new protocol and as we move towards discussions in which the Prime Minister would be hoping to have discussions with the trade unions and staff associations and with the employers of Barbados regarding reformation within the total public service that I would think that the Prime Minister would be trying to set the tone by establishing a framework, an environment in which those discussions might be held on a basis of it being a clearer relationship of trust and empathy between one party and the other party, between one person and the other person. Therefore I could see the relevance and the soundness in the timing of this particular exercise.

Any criticisms which people would have, and I would have some as well as anybody else, might therefore have to be directed towards other channels. One of my concerns, Mr. President, has to do with the language of the amendment and it grieves me that the language of the amendment is such that it has occasioned so much contention.

I am aware that depending on where one stands or does not stand one is able to read language to say different things and the same words said to one person may become a compliment whereas to another person those words might be seen to be an insult. And we have to concern ourselves, it would seem to me, Sir, not only with the language that couches the particular bit of legislation but we have to concern ourselves with the spirit within which that language has been clothed. It would seem to me therefore that the point that Senator Archdeacon Springer made is very pertinent to this that the morality part of this particular issue is more significant than any other aspect of it and I believe that if we come to grips with the fact that people are addressing this because they see it as a matter where a Government is morally bound to correct something that did not go well that if the occasion should arise later on where a problem emerges that then we might be able to see a commitment by those persons towards a meeting of the minds after a physical meeting of the bodies in which

together we can work to find an alternative solution which does not have to take that particular course in much the same way as in 1991 the trade unions and the staff associations were saying to the Government of the day, "We have an alternative. Let us together examine that alternative because we are of the view that were we to work together we could satisfy the interest of the people of Barbados without having to remove that 8%".

That was not done. I do not blame any body for being hard hearted or hard-headed. Perhaps hard-headed but I do not believe in the hard-hearted aspect of it because I believe in the integrity of all people and I believe that people were trying to extent of their commitment or their ability to deal with an issue and it is my understanding therefore that nobody was trying to do anything dishonest or harsh or improper. It just so happened that when the Prime Minister agreed with the trade union and the staff associations that we would have gone the route of the giving of bonds where the workers together would have made contribution and where the only outstanding matter, Mr. President, was the interest that was to be paid on those bonds, that somebody who appears to me to have been greater than the Prime Minister, coming from the Central Bank, indicated it could not work. It was not Senator Mascoll, Sir, let me hasten to say. No, Sir, I would not have anybody suggest ...

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please. I only expect to hear Senator Trotman at the moment. Senator Trotman please proceed.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. President. I was merely making the point that if we recognise that we are a people full of resourcefulness – we the Barbadian people and those visitors whom we have embraced into our bosoms and made part of ourselves – and within that resourcefulness I believe that we have the wherewithal to meet problems that arise and to deal with them frontally. If we realise that, Mr. President, I think we can deal with issues of disappointment, issues of setbacks, in a way that does not need to take us the route that 1991 took us in that unfortunate position where on the Saturday we were all agreed that we were going the route of the bonds and by the Wednesday we had been disappointed because a new position had been taken.

I have a second concern, Mr. President. The second concern is that the legislation speaks to workers under the Civil Establishments Act and to defence persons but it does not address 40% of the public servants. I am aware that that may have been deliberate because the Attorney General would be aware that there is a case before the Courts which would have implications for members of Statutory Boards.
4.25 p.m.

But I would have liked to think that within the debate there would have been commitments towards those people at the statutory boards and those unestablished and temporary workers that they would be treated no less favourably than the people who are covered by this Act. Although I am concerned about that, I am concerned about it more because it has led to a debate which is not necessary in my view, that I am concerned about it believing that something will happen out of it. Because I cannot see any Government be it Barbados Labour Party, Democratic Labour Party, or NDP Government which would give this kind of protection to one level of worker and will seek to deny it to another level of worker. I could not see that happening. I do not think that Barbados has reached that stage of degeneracy. So I believe that it is merely a question of our working towards the eventual legislation which will also bring unestablished workers and workers at statutory boards within the broad ambit of the legislation. I would believe that, if that was not spoken to earlier today, the Leader of the Senate might want to give the assurance to the public, which the assurance I am sure this Honourable Senate would take, that that in fact will be so.

I have a third concern, Sir, and it is the necessity for the Coalition of Trade Unions and Staff Associations to have to pursue the second case. I believe that there will not be the need for the third case, but I mean to pursue the second one. This is the Trevor King one. I should have liked to believe that in as much as we recognize that this is a moral issue and the Government has seen that it is a moral issue that we could have lifted this entire thing to the stage where the second case was no longer necessary. But, of course, that might mean that the consequential statement might have had to be made regarding the restitution of the 8 per cent. The Government may prefer to wait until the Courts determine in the favour of the trade unions before it speaks to that matter of the restitution. I am waiting for the next couple of weeks when that statement is made by the Courts.

Aside.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: No, no, Mr. President. I could never do a thing like that. I would not be so disrespectful. I am just an optimist. You cannot be a trade union leader unless you are an optimist. If I were not an optimist, Sir, I would not have waited for a whole week hoping that diplomatic channelling would work in a particular recent case that does not need to be mentioned for which the Advocate now blames me. But it is because one is an optimist that one can rely on the good faith of your leaders in the private sector and in the Government and on your good and graciousness for allowing me that deviation, Sir.

I wish to make the point, Mr. President, because I know that I have just 15 minutes more.

Aside.

SENATOR C. LeR. TROTMAN: We are on slightly different clocks. I must have misread at the beginning, Sir. I would wish to make the point that the economy is still very delicately poised and I am not saying this as a tangent. I am saying this as being very much related, Mr. President, to the 8 per cent matter. We have to be careful in recognizing that delicate positioning of the economy to realize that debates of this sort, important as they are to how we resolve the business of this Honourable Chamber, must always be seen within the need that there is for us to frame out the kind of economic and financial strategies which putting Barbados first will at the same time not neglect the good interest and welfare of the people. I would wish to suggest that we have to ensure the following, Sir.

We have to ensure for the sake of argument that the reform programme which the Government is embarking on is not allowed to become one and the same thing as the 8 per cent matter. I might take some explanation of what I mean here. I am saying that we have to be careful about how we proceed on the reform factor and I believe we have to deal with institutions before we deal with persons. Therefore, it would be wise for players to bear in mind the wider objectives which the Honourable Prime Minister has and not to put him in a difficult and embarrassing position by any statements they make regarding reformation of institutions when we are now talking about reformation of institutions.

We must as well, Sir, ensure that adequate consultation takes place to involve the stake holders within the economy. There are going to be times of plenty. At the moment, there are times where the plenty is in the heart. We have in all of those occasions, Mr. President, to recognize that people are very often prepared to go with us if they are taken along into the confidence of the individuals. It is my belief that Government has already indicated a willingness to do this but that we have to ensure that we formalize it at all levels and that we ensure that it is not merely something being done at the level of the Prime Minister, the leader of the private sector agencies and the leader of the trade unions and staff associations, but that when it gets beyond that that consultation is known in the breach and not in the observation of it. I wish, therefore, very seriously to urge that we recognize that problem and we need as well, Mr. President, to ensure that ambiguities do not replace clear and precise agreements.

Through this debate over the last few weeks, there has been much left to our understanding of language, particularly the understanding by the legal luminaries of language. I am a very simple person with a very limited vocabulary and very limited knowledge. I would, therefore, be one of those people who would not wish to be caught in a position where language understood by me to mean one thing but re-examined by me tomorrow would be asked to

mean something else. I, therefore, would urge that we should be very careful to spell out what we mean in many of these things so that when the word is challenged and when persons read Hansard, they will be left in no doubt whatsoever regarding the text and regarding the spirit of any exercise that we are involved in.

Mr. President, you have been very kind to me although I think your clock is not like mine, but I thank you nonetheless.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Forde.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Thank you, Mr. President. Sir, I agree with Senator Mascoll that this amendment has a political, legal and economic side. I also want to add, Sir, it has a moral and social side and I shall want to deal with the social aspect of it particularly when I know Honourable Senators who have spoken have dealt with the moral aspect of it. Sir, I give this amendment 108 per cent of my support. I do this, Sir, because I have been a victim of that serious measure that was taken by that administration being a member of the working class.

Sir, I remember in the proposals that the Barbados Union of Teachers had and I speak from a teacher's perspective for the 1990-92 proposals that consideration was given on increases because: (1) of the Government's tax structure at that time, (2) the erosion of teacher's spending power, (3) the cost of living expenses, and (4) the impact of future budgetary measures of teachers' salaries. I will just use those four. The proposals were at that time since we were anticipating some increase in salary – 15 per cent for Z36 – Z17 and 12 per cent for Z16 – Z6. Sir, those negotiations never became a reality. You will agree, Sir, a couple of weeks after the General Elections of 1991 that Ministers' salaries were raised. The small man did not get any raise. Their standard of living, meaning that of the Ministers evidently, had to be uplifted. The small man was still at his same level. Mention must also be made of the Democratic Labour Party's Manifesto of 1991 which questioned: "What can we cut?" Sir, ordinary workers like myself did not benefit by the re-classification and regrading exercise of which I know ordinary folk just got \$300 or \$200 in back pay while others got \$6 000, \$8 000, and \$10 000. When people were able to boast, that they were able to pay half of the money down on a new car and the ordinary folk out there did not in anyway benefit.

Mr. President, the 8 per cent cut was compounded with a wage freeze. We paid stabilisation tax. The purchasing power of the workers was reduced. Hence, the availability of credit restricted the extent to which individuals could borrow to purchase consumer durables. Who suffered, Sir? The working class again.
4.35 p.m.

The imposition of a luxury tax affected the workers of Barbados. To buy a television set, to buy a washing machine, to buy a video, all of those things affected us because we could not buy. Who suffered, Sir? The working class. There were reductions under the Severance Payments Act and the unemployment insurance was reduced. Working class again. There was a loss of over 2000 jobs. No Minister lost his. Nobody at the top in the civil service lost his or her work. The ordinary folk in MTW, the teachers, the nursing aides, most of those people in the social services went home and they were the major ones at the bottom of the ladder when it came to salaries.

Sir, there was also a reduced work week. Again the ordinary folk. I am talking about 1991-93. I followed the discussion closely. I have always for the past 25 years given wholehearted support to my union. From the 1970s, way down the line, you will see my photograph in the newspaper because the media people always target me. Fortunately I don't say anything too negative that they can destroy me with; but it was deliberately done to promote who I am. But I have no problem with that. I don't have to be scared of my identity. Therefore, Mr. President, I was at the forefront of the Union as an ordinary member but plugging to see reform and plugging to ensure that that 8% cut did not come about. The idea of bonds, as was mentioned by Senator Trotman, was identified by the unions. The plan was for the unions to lend the Government the money to be returned in bonds.

The discussion with the Government was halted and the Finance Minister unilaterally took action to achieve stabilisation of the economy. Sir, the issuing of option forms is another story. This document I found in some old files. I always keep things. "Agreement for the Withholding of Part of the Emoluments of Permanent and Temporary Staff in the Public Service" was circulated to every individual in the public service. Circular No. 9/91 MP007 Vol 1. It is probably a document of the House, but I can leave it, as I don't have to deal with this again in this lifetime.

"It is important to ask that the employees reflect at this time on the traditions which have been enshrined in the concepts of the public service. These traditions call upon public servants to give of their best even in the most difficult circumstances."

Who were to give of their best, Sir? People whose salaries were raised just a couple of months just before the actual election? The working class people did not have any raise to accommodate such and the only thing that we in the civil service had to rely on was our salaries and that was standard. It was fixed. We can afford to do another job, but as far as I know it is against the law for a civil servant, even if you go to sell bread when you come home from work, Sir, people seem to be informing the authorities

that you are doing a second job. That is against the law as far as I am aware. So we had no other means of increasing the little we had and that little we had was drastically cut.

Sir, the option forms came. I objected to them, but I did return mine with about four passes in the section that said no and signed it Cynthia Y. Forde, J.P., patriotic citizen of Barbados. I have a copy.

I offered to Mr. Ronald Jones, the President of the BUT at that time, to put my name as the person who objected but Gladwyn King... I respect her, Sir, if you would allow me to call her name and I am proud to know that another St. Thomas person can come out and make history. She is from Rock Hall in St. Thomas, Sir.

Sir, further aggravation as a result of the increased fiscal imposition on the workers came in the mini-budget in 1991 - this ties in with the other one - where workers said that they were coerced and threatened to sign the option forms and senior people in the last Administration were there to tell them, do this and do that, with the hope that when they signed the forms people would not lose their work, the dollar would not devalue and a number of things would not happen. But Sir, that was not to be. This is the stark reality coming from Your Humble Servant who was seriously affected by that measure.

Thousands of others were in worst condition than I since their salaries were evidently smaller, and I am talking now about people in MTW weeding the road and bus conductors and nursing aides and so on. Theirs were definitely less than mine. I have walked this evening Sir, with my salary slips for that time and I can make it a document if that is necessary, Sir, because my salary in 1991, September 25 was cut by \$240 for the 8% cut and then close to \$100 for stabilisation tax. I went home with \$300 or so less than what I normally had and that could have paid for a little motor car on the road. Every month until 1993. These are the slips here. Anybody can look at them because the money was very small, but it was cut tremendously. If I felt it the way I did, the ordinary person out there had to feel it worse, particularly if they had three or four or eight or ten children like most parents do nowadays.

I had to tighten my belt, Sir. I could not get ends to meet. I am speaking as a member of the working class. Fortunately, I did not owe a mortgage like most others, but being the kind of community person I am there were many people who called even from higher levels in government. Some of them were crying. That is why we went out and formed an association called Women Against Poverty. Sir, it would have frightened you to hear some of the comments poor women were able to make, especially those who lost their work in the end.

There were cuts where both husband and wife lost 8%. Sir, that was 16% between the two salaries. Some who had gone off to rent houses for their privacy and otherwise had to return to their families. People lost their property. Sir, you know that when Barbadians go out there and try to acquire a property that property is their heart and soul. Then to lose it, especially if you know you paid even half of what that property cost, it even makes your situation worst. Motor cars were taken up by the bank. Houses were taken up and a lot of people were left suffering from trauma. Dr. Walcott is among us and he knows.

Sir, a lot of them suffered from mental anguish as a result of those austere measures. Those who lost their money, that 8%, particularly those from the middle class who are the ones who employ a maid, a baby sitter, a gardener. When that 8% was cut, that helped the unemployment rate to escalate because they could no longer afford to pay those people or to have them to do their services because their money was also cut.

You are aware, Sir, that the private sector did not have an 8% cut, but I know that a number of people lost their work as well. Their severances were tremendously cut. They too felt the pinch but not as directly as most of us in the Government service did. I want to mention Sir, that in my workplace because all of this says it is not just a couple of civil servants... When you know you have an old aunt and another old relative and you are a person accustomed offering to those who are less fortunate, it is extremely difficult when your money is cut and you cannot fulfil that duty. Therefore I saw children during that period because of the loss of employment or that 8% cut for their parents, who came to school hungry at 9:00 in the morning with nothing in their stomachs. Their parents could not afford to buy them books. Some of them could pay no lunch money. The shoes and clothes some of them were wearing were all tattered and torn. Of course, it left the teachers and the other workers in the school who had a conscience, and most of them did, to try to get means together to assist those children out there who were suffering.

4.45 p.m.

I took on the responsibility – I am not lauding myself, I am just using this to show how deep the feeling was towards that 8% cut - to form some sort of welfare system where parents came and said, "Give me an underpants. Give me a bra. Can I have a tin of Milo?"

Aside.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. President, it is okay if one has been born with a gold spoon in their mouth or one had an opportunity in a job where they could acquire a certain amount of money which could accommodate their lifestyle but when it comes to actually

living in a community where you see people suffering or you were born in humble circumstances and you can identify with those people, then you get to understand the position that they are in.

Sir, I was deeply hurt and I have done my part in sensitizing the people of Barbados regarding this with the kind of squandermania that I saw going on around at that time when I knew that proud Barbadians who do not like to rely on welfare were the ones who were suffering. I saw Nelson statue turned from one direction to the next at a cost of just around \$240 000 when welfare services in Barbados were cut and people who were heavily relying on those services no longer had access to them. I saw the St. Thomas Secondary School that had cost a few millions at that time standing with bush all around it. Persons have already mentioned Sherbourne Centre and I still have questions where that is concerned and the Polyclinic in St. John that is very much still unfinished. When I saw that kind of spending, Sir, I wondered. Do these people who have imposed this 8% cut have the hearts that I feel Barbadians should have? It left me feeling deeply hurt and concerned.

Sir, I am no economist but I know that any set of right thinking individuals who would conceive such a plan in the light of the harsh economic times in Barbados between 1991 and 1993 really did not appear to have the interest of the working class at heart. I would not like to have to endure those harsh situations again. Therefore I am totally against any idea today February 22, 1995, or any other time after, if salaries of workers in Barbados are to be cut in any way.

I have already commended Ms. Gladwyn Ophelia King. I think she should be seen as a boss in the light of the...

Aside.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: That is not a gesture, Sir. That is a very bold step that Gladwyn Ophelia King took, a humble civil servant who was one of the people working for just over \$16 000 a year to be able to say to her union, put me up and let me go out there and challenge this plan that this Government has embarked upon. I think she should be commended for such a bold and brave step.

Sir, I give wholehearted support to this amendment. I wish to commend the Government at this time for the commitment towards an election promise to the people of Barbados in 1994 that they would want to amend the Act so that salaries would never be cut. It is all right to talk but I believe in facts and not impressions. I believe in promises and performances. Therefore, the step indicates that these people are not only talking but they are putting action to whatever the mouthings were.

I trust, Sir, that the support of other Senators in here would go towards this particular amendment so that the workers of Barbados can feel comfortable to know that their salaries will never be cut again.

I thank you very much.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: Mr. President, over the past few weeks I have heard many interesting, enlightening and educational discourses in the Other Place and here today. What we do seem to be missing in most of these speeches is how did the 8% affect small businesses and medium-sized businesses. We cannot separate the credit squeeze which came before the 8% and the lay-offs which came before and at the same time as the 8%. We know that at Budget time when you hear that Government has given a tax credit of 1% the millions of dollars that it costs Government. Let us look at what that 8% can be translated into in terms of money being taken out of the small business and medium-sized business community.

I look, Sir, at the small and medium-sized businesses as being the briquettes of the economy. They keep the heat in the economy. In scientific terms we would say that the Barbadian economy up until the late 1980s was in thermo-dynamic equilibrium. A big word, nothing really serious about it. What it means is there is a certain amount of heat in it and it goes forward a bit, goes back a bit and it is stable. It was in equilibrium but here then, because of not taking heed and listening, that equilibrium was set back. In terms of years some people say we went back almost 15 years.

When we speak about businesses in Barbados we seem always to concentrate on the big ones, agriculture, tourism and that sector. I would like to look at the transportation, the small manufacturers, the fisher-folk, the small maintenance men who have replaced the handy-man/yard boy, the gardener type, those fellows who drive around with small Suzuki vans having their weed whackers and power tools. They trim and paint. They are responsible for a significant part of the economy, the small construction men.

Sir, with the minibuses, behaviour notwithstanding, these fellows circled all around Independence Square like a circus at that point in time because the people reacted seriously to this 8% and wherever they could cut a dollar they did so. The nurses who shuttled from Lower Broad Street over the river to the QEH, the porters and the children of those people whose salaries were cut were unable to take the bus. We heard the minibus men cry out, yet they had to pay the same permits, the same renewal licences et cetera. Lots of them have gone out of business

and they had the vultures waiting in first slip to snap up those vehicles which they could no longer maintain.

I look at the furniture manufacturers. They complained, but they had it three or four times as bad because they suffered the credit squeeze which I referred to earlier and we cannot separate credit squeeze from lay-off, from 8%. There is a common theme which runs through all this, and that is pain, agony and sorrow.

Then, Sir, with the 8% people were not setting up house. Therefore, what does that mean? The small furniture manufacturers were finding it difficult to get the work off their hands. The credit squeeze meant that they were not able to buy their raw material. They were not (in some instances) able to service their loans and they cried out. It is only with the change of administration that they rushed the new administration with a panoply of demands and we know today that part of their cries has been answered.
4.55 p.m.

Back then strict regulations still prevailed. No matter how they asked, or how they cried, they were not really listened to – not seriously. I see it difficult for such small businessmen not to be pleased to see this Bill pass which would give them some hope of doing business in Barbados in the future.

If we look at the building contractors, small construction men, we have heard time and time again that mortgages were not forthcoming and they too suffered. Lots of them could not pay their staff at the end of the week. Lots of them had to go to much smaller jobs because the competition was also fierce. The big contractors were then fighting with the small contractors to pave yards and to build picket fences. Some of them have left the scene. Some threatened to go to neighbouring islands.

The fishing industry certainly knows what this Party has done to upgrade fishing. This is not the Party that looks at fishermen as being a group of men who wear an old cork hat and an old jacket as they were referred to by a former Prime Minister. I remember quite clearly, I think his name was Mr. Johannes DeHaar who was the chief of the FAO who sang praises for the Oistin Complex and he said that the time is ripe for the take-off of fishing as a big industry in Barbados. The infrastructure was there. The fishing boats were there. That is not something that came under the last Administration.

But when you take a drive up to Oistins as I did quite regularly and I still do, the fisherwomen would say to you, Yes we have the fish but the people do not have enough money to buy fish which you know is a very cheap and rich source of protein. I have a letter here from a lady

who was working with NHC cleaning the houses and she was sent home. When she was working at NHC her salary was not enough and she used to buy fish in vast numbers, fillet them, debone them, whatever you care to call it and she was able to take out a loan where she had to pay \$124.14 per week.

She was laid off and she thought that what was her sideline job and is now her full-time job would have been enough to carry that loan. "No Siree." That was not so. She showed me this letter just weeks ago because the folks in the credit union, to whom Senator Bolden gave such high praise, told her either continue to pay this \$124.14 or we are going to refer the matter to the Head of the Civil Service. She was and is a clever lady, but although she is a witty person she still is not able enough to cope with that \$124.14 weekly.

The small maintenance men to whom I have referred have taken up quite a good bit of slack in the island in terms of beautifying. When one could have lain in bed a little bit late on Saturday and Sunday, rest assured that these men could look after the maintenance of their surroundings, in came the 8% cut, as Senator Forde stated so eloquently. It, the 8% cut, cause them to get up and do what they could have paid for just months prior.

But the sub-sector which really felt the brunt and the pain and which was very visible was the retail sector. When I say retail sector, I refer to those keeping shop – be they vegetables and fruit, bar and restaurant, pharmacies, supermarkets, boutiques. I am referring to those who buy and sell. That credit squeeze which preceded the 8% sounded the death knell. But most of them still held on. Then there were the lay-offs. Therefore that pool of shopper started to shrink and shrink at a fast rate. When one thought that it had stopped, in came the 8% cut.

The performance is evidenced by the numbers of shops that were closed. People had to get up and go. People were running pillow to post looking for loans. The loan sharks flourished during that time.

I cannot see how any sensible and level headed thinking young or old person cannot associate themselves with this Bill, a Bill which is going to take its place alongside other Bills like the Workmen's Compensation Act. That is what you call true social justice. The Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act. Holiday with Pay Act. That is legislation that has put Barbados into an envious position. A vicious circle was created in the distributive sector. We had banker losing confidence in wholesaler. Banker losing confidence in distributor. Distributor losing confidence in retailer. Conflict between retailer and staff.

Every week, every Sunday – I did it because I wanted to see what was being sold off belonging to me and to our company. I checked the middle pages of both editions. It was like looking for the FA results in the Sunday newspaper to see if Nottinghamshire had lost to Wolves. It was also like looking for the BCA figures to see who had top scored. You looked to see. I can almost recite it, "By order of the Mortgagee".

Which employee would have confidence in a customer or employer when you see his or her property, his or her, be it real estate or otherwise up for sale? The auctioneers and the bailiffs had a field day, the debt collectors. All sorts of receivers, all sorts of unsavoury activities started to rear their heads among the distributive sector.

How could you – even if you sit on the other side – be so hard in your hearts this afternoon as not to say aye? Mr. President, Sir, I heard one of the elder statesmen in the Other Place refer to himself I think as a Roman farmer, I think the name was Cincinnatus. I stand corrected. 5.05 p.m.

I think he said he was a Roman farmer but it reminded me, not a classic student, of one of my old Latin teachers who would tell us about Homer. And Homer said "those whom the Gods would punish they first make mad". And I would like, Sir, to plagiarise a bit here and say "Those small business men whom the Dems would punish they first make mad". They did it in the seventies and they have done it again in the nineties and according to one of the Law Lords the people would have had to remedy it by kicking them out and no small business person, no medium size business person, no large business even, functioning in the late eighties, 1989-90, up until now could have had any faith in them.

The Venerable Archdeacon he would know to what I am referring. We had to say 3 Acts every Sunday, the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity and, Sir, the people had no faith in that administration. The people had no hope and as far as charity is concerned, Sir, that was not in the vocabulary of the administration and with those words, Sir, I have absolutely no reservation whatsoever. My conscience is clear. It is well with my soul, Sir, when I say aye at the end of this sitting. I am most obliged.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I rise to support the amendment to the Constitution with the knowledge that the Constitution is the supreme law of our land and must not be tampered with lightly. However, the amendment is urgently required not because of the short term economic gain but more importantly because of the very high social cost that the people of this country, in particular the public servants, have had to bear and I will mention a few of them.

The nurses themselves. There was an exodus of very experienced nurses from Barbados, nurses that we cannot afford to lose because we need their experience to guide the younger ones. They left simply because, as you know, our women ... 70% of our children are born out of wedlock. In this country marriage is a middle class phenomena. It is not a normal thing in Barbados. People do not seem to realise that. Consequently the women, Mr. President, a large number of them are heads of our households and when there was this 8% cut a lot of our experienced nurses left for the United Kingdom, for America and for Canada and we have not recovered from that loss up to today.

In addition we had to import nurses from another country some of whom when we were waiting for them on the ward to work they had used Barbados as a stepping stone and they were in the United States.

Another very high social cost was the increased demand for our health services due to the large and very high rates of unemployment in our community. What happened was, because of the excess demand for our health services, it became and still is impossible for our nursing staff to give quality nursing care. As you know the unemployment rate still remains high but the supply of nurses has not yet been increased. Consequently the nursing care provided today is of a quality which the Barbados Registered Nurses Association, the only professional organisation for working nurses in this country, is not satisfied with.

In seeking to support this amendment to our Constitution I will also like to say that amending the Constitution is not enough. We need to get more involved in community involvement and negotiations. We need to get people in our institutions to be trained in the art of negotiation. Not only trade union leaders but we need to make sure that some of our senior civil servants are exposed to the training and the art of negotiation for Mr. President, as you know, negotiation really is a way of life and many, many problems can be solved through the art of negotiation. I will tell you why, Mr. President, that I am making this statement simply because for several years the Barbados Registered Nurses Association has submitted proposals in vain.

I am pleased to say, Mr. President, that we did take part in the recent retreat and I am happy to say that the Barbados Registered Nurses Association is in the forefront of public sector reform. Many of the proposals put forward we have put forward to the Government and we would urge the Government to look at them more closely. For example, the double tract of civil service administrators and technocrats, we have already submitted those proposals but we have not been invited to discuss them.

I think also that in order to avoid the need to even think in terms of cutting anyone's salary we need to establish throughout the civil service various councils of advisers. For example the Ministry of Health could have a council of advisers and the members could be drawn from the University of the West Indies, from the Private Sector, from various professional organisations concerned, from the community and from the public itself so that we would avoid getting the economy into the rut that made it necessary to take the arbitrary decision to reduce the emoluments of civil servants.

Mr. President, I also support Senator Bolden's call for a Constitutional Committee. That should go a long way since we all know that the society and the world is changing very quickly and we need to move with the times.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to caution any agency or person or persons who feel that because they have 2/3 majority that they can willy-nilly change the Constitution again to cut persons' salaries.
5.15 p.m.

Now for many years we have had free secondary education. We have expanded the brains of the young people. We have taught them to think and analyze and they are not going to accept this type of behaviour. They are demanding accountability. No longer will children be seen and not heard. The primary and secondary schools have done an excellent job and when we get those young adults they are analyzing and they want to know why. They are not prepared to accept what people in my age group or in your age group, Mr. President, will be willing to accept.

I, therefore, reiterate that I support this amendment but caution that we need to get involved in more negotiations. I thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Laurie.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, always we start sittings of the Senate with a prayer where we are exhorted to put aside partisan politics and to address the people's business. I saw the Leader of the Senate present the opening address on this subject with relatively little problem. But I do not think that it is really fair where the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate was not given a chance to express himself without considerable interruptions and so on. I would like to see an improvement...

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, on a point of order. The Honourable Member cannot comment on the Chair's ruling or conduct of the House. I think it is highly improper that after, Mr. President, you sat in the Chair and executed your rulings within the rules for any other Senator to get up

and criticize that. We are criticizing ourselves the moment we criticize the ruling of the Chair.

Mr. PRESIDENT: A valid point of order.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: I will withdraw any intended criticism of the Chair, Mr. President, and say that I only hope the ceiling when it falls, since I am sitting next to the Venerable Archdeacon, will not fall this side. What I would like really to address is the total absence of any comment on the role of the private sector in the position that has occurred in the last 5 years or so.

I remember in 1990 when it was the private sector who went to the Prime Minister and said that the economy of this country is in deep trouble, the Prime Minister refused to accept our view. He refused to meet with the private sector and only after many representations did we go public and publish what was very obvious to leaders in the private sector, was the perilous state of the economy. For that we were called the "gang of four" and to this day I am very proud to say that I was one of the gang of four. I would hope that the politicians and the unions would have seen that the private sector did play a very key part in the recovery of the economy of this country. If one looks at the wages and prices protocol and the prices part which was the part played by the private sector, the unions played an extremely responsible part. I will join anybody in congratulations to the unions for the role they played. I would say that the private sector should also be congratulated for the role that they played in keeping prices down. In fact, it was amusing to me to hear the unions saying that they are no longer interested in negotiating on the basis of the cost of living increases. There has been no cost of living increase virtually in the last 5 years and that has been due to the role of the private sector. It has been somewhat disappointing to me not to hear in the debate today that the Private Sector had anything to do with the recovery of the economy in Barbados. Thank you.

SENATOR J. A. WORKMAN: Mr. President, I rise to support the passage of this Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1995. I do so because I think that any right thinking person of any persuasion who has the care and concern for humanity at heart must give support to this Bill. Indeed, Sir, this Bill gives security to persons who are employed and can know that every month they expect a certain amount of money in their pockets on which they have to budget. As I rose, Sir, the atmosphere in this sitting, especially this afternoon, reminds me of the words of Jesus: "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" – A cry of anguish, because it seemed to him as if the support which he had during his life had been taken away from him. He felt vulnerable. Mr. President, that is exactly what the public servants of this country experienced and must have cried out: "Why have you left me vulnerable? Why have you taken away from me my support?" Today,

Sir, I experience with them their travail, their labour pains. But today, Sir, I am sure that at the end of this session all of us of right thought can rejoice and they too can and will rejoice, because after the pains of travail there will come the birth through the passage of this amendment to our Constitution.

People have expressed in here their own personal experience of the result of the pay cut. Others have expressed the experiences of others who have shared these experiences with them in their professional and other capacities. Just as I was thinking of those words to use to address the point on the vulnerability my learned friend, Senator Gill, used the very words which were coming through my mind of "how there were vultures" in our community waiting to snap up the properties and vehicles of the unfortunate public servants who could not meet their commitments. In my profession, I have had calls from three persons asking – "Johnnie, are there any cheap houses going because these people are not going to be able to pay?" It is immoral, it is iniquitous for any Government to put its public servant or any person in our community in that vulnerable situation. Much has been said about good Governments or other Governments being able to amend the Constitution and in the future change the provisions which I believe we will make today. But we stand here today as men and women of moral integrity and because of that moral integrity, it is a challenge to those who will come into these hallowed halls in the future to dare change the morality we have established for this country.

Mr. President, that is what this amendment is about. It may be seen as having a political, legal, economic, and a social aspect, but I want to go further and say that all things must be first founded in morality.
5.30 p.m.

When we begin politically, economically or any other "ly" other than morally, we will go wrong. This Bill seeks to bring us back on the moral track which this country needs to have again. The public servants today can rest assured, for I am sure that we will be this evening the moral midwives who will give birth to the security which they require and deserve. That is what this amendment is about, Mr. President.

Much has been said too about the spirit of the law and there has been much play used on the words "alter", "reduce" and "disadvantage", but those are not the focus of the amendment. The focus and the real question of the amendment is moral. Does it go towards restoring the comfort of public servants? Does it go towards restoring integrity among people of political life? I am stressing "among people of political life" because the integrity of politicians of this country has taken a serious bashing in recent times and there is need for a Government of men and women to re-establish the faith and confidence of the electorate in the men and women whom the electorate

have put there through their vote knowing that they can entrust not only the running of the country but even the running of their very lives to these men and women because they have integrity.

Section 112, which is the existing Section of the Constitution, gives comfort to those officers named there in respect of salaries and allowances; but it goes further and gives them comfort in respect of terms of service. This does not extend to the proposed amendment, and rightly so. Salaries and allowances cannot be altered downwards without disadvantage, because disadvantage, as I understand it, means that things are not as good as they were before. It prevents success or makes things more difficult when you are put at a disadvantage; but it is possible, Mr. President, to alter terms of service without putting the individual at a disadvantage and it is for that reason that those words "terms of service" cannot and must not be introduced in respect of the public servants.

Let me explain what I mean by that. A civil servant who may be serving as a Permanent Secretary can be seconded overseas for other service and then he is brought back home. There is a change in terms of service upwards at one stage and downwards when he comes back. That should not be and cannot be a ground for putting him at disadvantage, and therefore the draftsmen have obviously given great thought to this provision and recognised that in the Public Service there will be some terms of service which must necessarily have to be altered in order to carry out the business of the Government but which in themselves do not and cannot put the individual at a disadvantage; and so Section 112A makes it explicit that no right thinking persons will ever attempt to alter, reduce or put at a disadvantage the salaries and allowances of public servants.

You see, Mr. President, it is necessary for all people and it is necessary for public servants, who seem at times to be kept out there as just another set of people, to know that they have money in their pockets. They live by that money, that is their all, their property. It was King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden who won many wars in European history because there was much money in the Treasury, and I remember the late Mr. John Hammond, Headmaster of Harrison College, as he gave a history essay based on those wars in Europe. He gave us a model and he started off by saying: "Money is concentrated power". That is what we are doing today, restoring concentrated power to the public servants of this country once and for all.

And so, Mr. President, I have great ease in supporting this amendment. It is not tampering with the Constitution. To tamper with the Constitution is wrong. It is necessary from time to time to review and to change when necessary the Constitution, for the Constitution is that document

which pilots this country forward, and, as times change, as Senator Bolden and others have said, it is necessary to review and to change the Constitution for the good of the country. This amendment is only one step towards what I believe the Government intends in its Manifesto and I urge the Government to get on with its constitutional and other legislative review so that all the people of this country may be spurred on in confidence, that all the people of this country may be lifted to a better and a nobler life, that all the people of this country will again know that there are men and women of integrity and morality in whom they can trust.

Mr. President, I support the Bill before us.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, the debate this evening in my opinion seeks to assist the Government in carrying out what was one of its main planks in the recent political campaign, although, I must say, it differs from the promise, in that the promise was to amend Section 26 of the Constitution. I am not going to place any heavy weather on that. I would like to say why I have to take the position I intend to take this evening and my position is based on the spirit of the Manifesto of the Government.

In its Manifesto the Government states on page 21 that the existence of Section 26 of the Constitution caused workers' rights to be "decimated by an exploitative Government". The amendment therefore is premised on the belief that the measures implemented by the Democratic Labour Party Government in 1991 were done out of malice and hatred for the public servants of this country. Because I do not subscribe to that view, I cannot take the same position as many on this amendment this evening. I believe that all Governments of Barbados act in the interest of all Barbadians. I believe that from time to time there are circumstances in the country which cause Governments to take certain decisions. I would like to remind this Honourable Senate of a time in 1982 when a Barbados Labour Party Government entered an IMF programme and in that same year there were major lay offs in the public sector, an increase in corporation tax from 45% to 48%, credit restrictions, and as a matter of fact, fridges and stoves, things we consider to be necessities, were classified as luxury items on which one had to deposit 50%.

5.35 p.m.

Now despite all those things, Mr. President, I do not believe that that Government hated public servants, nor do I believe that it hated Barbadians in general. I believe the Government of the day took those measures because it recognised it had to do something to correct certain problems in the economy and, given the options which it had at the time, those were the options which that Government exercised.

I also believe that when we went to the International Monetary Fund in 1982 we were very aware that all of our important sectors were in decline. I believe we missed out on a beautiful opportunity to restructure the economy of Barbados at that time. I believe that had we gone further than trying to restore some balance to the fiscal position of Barbados we would not have been faced with the problems which we faced in 1991-92 ten years later. Since 1978, the then Prime Minister of Barbados was advised to take certain measures, one of which was the restructuring of the Barbados economy and at the time his reply was, "Public outcry would be too great."

Mr. President, I believe that what we had to face in Barbados in 1991 was a cumulative situation. There were several problems in the Barbados economy dating back to the late 1970s. I see Senator Goddard nodding. He is a businessman, you see. Unlike those of us who only spend salaries, he invested in the economy and he would know there were problems in this economy from the 1970s into the 1980s. Situations which should have been corrected.

We continued to try to borrow our way out of our problems. Eventually, we ended up in what people call the "debt trap", when we could no longer borrow anymore for the standard of living which all Barbadians enjoy. So to come to this Assembly and want to make believe that overnight an Administration waved a wand that totally destroyed this country is absurd to say the least.

Mr. President, I believe that we are all aware of the problems which were in Barbados at the time, because prior to the 1991 elections, the now Government, on its platform, advised Barbadians that it was in possession of information that the dollar would be devalued. A document was waved at Market Hill in St. George which was purported to be a document from the International Monetary Fund for the devaluation of the Barbados currency.

So to come here today and pretend that devaluation was not an issue is wrong, misleading. I will not say dishonest, Mr. President. I will not be stopped. We have made it a political issue and it must be discussed in political terms. You cannot on the one hand want something to be political and then want other people to treat it otherwise. I won't treat it otherwise.

Mr. President, in 1991 this economy was in serious crisis, a crisis which affected several other world economies at the time. The Government of Barbados in 1991 had several options to exercise. I have relatives, sisters, brothers, a mother who live in North America and who live in Great Britain. At the time that we were making certain decisions in this country, my sister had a 10% salary cut in New York. Three months later she was sent

home. She was working for the Board of Education which is the equivalent of the Ministry of Education in Barbados. My uncle who worked in London Transport for 20 odd years had to go home. My cousin who worked with Ford Motor Company for many years also had to go home.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member must not give half a story and mislead the Chamber. If she is going to relate about what happened in New York and what happened in England she must go on to say that there were back-up support services by which those persons would not have suffered. There were safety nets built into that system. I have a client in England who sent money down here to buy a piece of land and told me not to let the Government know he was buying land, and he went home.

Mr. PRESIDENT: No point of order. Please proceed, Senator.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President. The Honourable Senator may be able to perform many tasks, but not a brain transplant this afternoon, because I intend to say what I intend to say this afternoon.

I am one of those people who earn their living on the disposable income of people.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I don't like the reference to a brain transplant. It seems to me to be offensive in reference to a member of this Chamber.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: No. Did you hear what I said, Mr. President?

Mr. PRESIDENT: That was my understanding of what you said.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: I said that I would not have a brain transplant.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That's okay. Please proceed.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I think that we in here are all associated with some kind of political party. I believe most of us are aspiring to be politicians. Let us ask ourselves the question. Would any body of people who rely on the public support of 20 000 wake up overnight and decide to reduce their take home pay? Twenty thousand people in the public service are not 2 000 or 1 500. I want to submit Mr. President, that the decision to reduce the wages and salaries of public servants was a decision of last resort. I want to submit, Mr. President, that when given all of the other options at the time, one of which would have been more lay-offs and a devaluation of the Barbados dollar - and I heard the

trade unionist say that this evening. The trade unions under the circumstances cooperated with the Government of Barbados and agreed...

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, on a point of order, please. I would like to remind the Honourable Senator that even after the civil servants had allegedly voted in favour of this pay cut ostensibly to prevent a devaluation, at a press conference held the same afternoon, the then Minister of Finance and Prime Minister said that even after that he could not guarantee that there would be no devaluation.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, one of the things that hurts me is when I sit and I hear people say that a few people, some percentage voted for a cut, others voted against and therefore it cannot be accepted. What would Barbadians say about a government which has a 46% vote? If 54% of the persons did not vote for you, you are a minority government. Suppose Barbadians took up that same position on morality or whatever and said that we don't want to hear you because you did not get the majority vote in Parliament. Do you see? We are talking here about democracy where the vote of the majority stands. So to come and bring that kind of argument is so outrageous, and I cannot believe that we would say something like this in Barbados.
5.45 p.m.

I know that it caused you to get the Government. I understand how you feel about it but in the final analysis let us deal with the practicality of the situation. The 8% has been restored. What is it that civil servants want to hear today? I know that civil servants feel pleased to see the amendment. Although the amendment is supposed to be premised on these words, (the amendment does not say it but the document which preceded it stated) this "Never again in this country will it be possible for a Government to reduce the earnings of its employees without their permission."

Now, we have heard the lawyers. I understand about morality and all of that but I do not believe that any Government of Barbados, B, D or G would attempt to reduce the wages and salaries of public servants just like that.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: You are no politician so you can say that. You do not understand what is going on.

Mr. President, I would like to humbly suggest that the public servants of this country recognised things were happening. They recognised that they were going to suffer pain. I suffered pain too. I do not work in the Public Service but I depend on their disposable income. When

they got a 8% cut I had a 25% cut because they did not buy any insurance and I know a number of other people who rely on the disposable income who also had a percentage cut. It was restored.

Let me tell you what they want to find out today. They want to find out why this caring Government which is so keen on the 8% they already have back, in five short months has allowed their salaries to be reduced because of the increase in mortgage interest. On Sunday two of my clients spoke to me, one of them their mortgage payment had gone up by \$158 and another one his mortgage payment had gone up by \$175, in five short months. Now, I am not going to blame that on any Government. I would not be so callous.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. President, on a point of order. I am not really interrupting but I am just trying to keep the record straight. I think even the Honourable Member will admit that the Prime Minister has repeatedly said as recently as Monday that the interest rate increase that some people might have suffered that it would be a short-term effect and that it will not last until March.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That is no point of order. Please proceed.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, thank you. That is no point of order. The fact still is that in five short months these same public servants who just got back their 8% are taking home \$150, \$160 and \$170 less. It must be said. I am not going to talk things of convenience. I am going to deal with the facts this evening. I am not going to blame the Government because that supports my contention...

Mr. PRESIDENT: One second, please. There are too many interruptions. Almost everybody has spoken. Please allow Senator Thompson too to be heard in silence.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President. Despite what is happening at present, I will stick to my belief that the Government of Barbados has taken this measure at this time because it believes it is necessary. I am not going to be wicked and politically hypocritical and criticise you. I only drew it to your attention. I am not criticising you for it because I believe that all Governments of Barbados are responsible Governments, unlike you, and that when decisions are taken from time to time they are taken because the Government believes it is necessary at the time.

I do not believe that Mrs. Thatcher introduced the poll tax because she was wicked. I do not believe that Reaganomics was out of wickedness. I think that

Governments from time to time make decisions because they believe that in the final analysis these decisions would redound to the benefit of many.

When the Democratic Labour Party Government was adjusting interest rates short-term I heard the then Opposition say that the economic climate was so uncertain that businessmen could not plan, that before one could get accustomed to one interest rate there was another one out there. What is going on in Barbados? I never thought I would live to see the day when the interest rate would be adjusted and hear that it is only short-term because the then Opposition Leader said it was too little too late and that measure could not make any significant impact on the economy of Barbados. Is this the same economy or not? How come this economy has become so glorified in five short months that we can introduce an interest measure and reverse it shortly? I wonder. I understand interest rates and I wonder.

Asides.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: I will not be deterred. I will continue to speak. So, Mr. President, I believe that I am as moral as any of my fellow Senators. I believe I have the interest of the public servants at heart as much as my other fellow Senators do. Thirty-five percent of my clientele is in the Public Service. When they wept I wept with them but I took the opportunity to hold private discussions with them and I told them that I believed it was in their best interest.

I am now hearing the present Prime Minister talking about how great this economy is going and the prospects and how our credit rating has been enhanced. That is not something that happens overnight. The foundation has already been put in place.

This morning I heard a very interesting thing from the world news. I would like to share this with this Government because, do not forget, Job No. 1 is jobs and we have to create 30 000 jobs. This morning the ILO in the World News reported that 30% of the world's work force was either unemployed or under employed and that the world is facing its worst unemployment crisis since the 1930s. I want to draw it to your attention because we have a challenge in this country. It is a challenge for all Barbadians.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: I am a Barbadian. I do not intend to go anywhere to live. I cannot indulge in cheap politics unnecessarily. When I am on a platform I am talking politics. When I am in the Senate making decisions in the interest of Barbadians, I have to be frank, honest, clear and sincere and I will not be stopped. Therefore, Mr. President, I want to suggest to all my fellow

Senators here, the reason I do not believe that we need necessarily to rush this amendment – I understand it is a Manifesto promise but I will draw some Manifesto promises to you.

This is the Holy Bible of the Barbados Labour Party. You promised to make it a document of the House and we laid it for you because you seemed to want to forget. On page 29 under the Rural Development Programme, this Government promised that it would: "rehabilitate the Scotland District and convert it into an economically and socially vibrant region of Barbados. Thus, we will reclaim and stabilise the one-seventh of Barbados at present threatened by erosion and simultaneously modernise the roads, water, light and housing in rural Barbados."

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: On a point of order, Mr. President. I am somewhat at a loss, based on my interpretation of Standing Rule 35(1), as to what this matter that has been recently raised has to do with the substance of the Bill.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Well, Mr. President, I sat all afternoon and I heard about Manifesto promises. I was just drawing one promise to the attention of the Honourable Senate, one promise that already has been broken.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Thompson, Senator Farley has raised a valid point of order. It is irrelevant to what we are discussing and what the Bill is before the House.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I believe when we are talking about the reduction of the emoluments of public servants we are in a way discussing the economy and in all my information I have seen recently the environment is in the forefront of economic...

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: On a point of order. Mr. President, I believe it is imperative that it be brought to the attention of the Chamber that you must not challenge the ruling of the Chair. When the Chair has ruled we either accept or we seek to get around it in a different way but you must not challenge the ruling of the Chair. You must not bring the Chair into disrepute. You do not challenge a referee on the field. You must not challenge the ruling of the Chair.
5.55 p.m.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Bolden, I will deal with the matter. Please proceed, Senator Thompson.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I must be impacting because I am not given the chance to speak. I would want to say, Sir,...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Thompson, you are in fact now reflecting on the Chair. You have been given

every opportunity to speak. Please proceed in the time that is left to you.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Thank you, Sir. The reason I have a different approach to the debate this evening is because I believe the measures put in place under the last Administration have worked despite the pain. I do not want people to think that there is insensitivity on this side. There is not. There has been pain. The Prime Minister has admitted that the measures have worked. The economy has been stabilized. There has been partial restructure of the economy. This Government now has to continue the restructuring programme. It is my belief that in a restructured Barbados that is managed, in a restructured Barbados with a reorganized public sector, a vibrant public sector, the reduction of public servants' wages and salaries would not be an issue.

I therefore believe that what we need to do at this time is to make sure that we follow through with the programme of restructuring the economy. I think that is going to bring greater security to all Barbadians, not only people in the public sector, but all Barbadians. If we do not remove the emphasis which is now placed on the public sector, make sure that the private sector is vibrant, that it can take up the slack and lead or we could be faced with a similar crisis in future.

We must admit that the public sector has been overloaded, that people have been looking to Government over the years for job creation and that the climate has not been there for the private sector to take the lead. I believe that certain incentives have been put in place and I can see and feel the co-operation which is coming back from the private sector and things are beginning to turn around. I believe that once the private sector takes its lead and create jobs, once those sectors are stimulated and jobs are created in the private sector, there would not be that pressure on the public sector. If there is not that emphasis public sector wages and salaries would not constitute 50% of Government's expenditure because that is what it was.

Ask any businessman in Bridgetown – I have clients who own businesses. I have to review them on an annual basis – where in Bridgetown would you find a business with 50% of its expenditure in wages and salaries? But Government has considered it a social responsibility to do this. I am not saying that it is wrong. Government has, over the years, considered it a social and maybe a moral responsibility to make sure that its people have been kept in employment, even when it cannot afford to pay them.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: When I am in here I am no B or no D. I am a Barbadian. The Government of Barbados whichever year or era we are speaking about has over the years kept the public service

going. At times there are some departments which have been understaffed and some which have been overstaffed. The reorganization of the public sector which was on the drawing board before, and I am glad that this Government is carrying it through, it is vital. I believe that once we make sure that these things are put in place public servants will need have no fear about a Government attempting at any time in the future to reduce wages and salaries.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Before I sit, Mr. President, may I repeat I will not be voting with you. May I repeat, Mr. President,...

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Thompson when you say you are not voting with me, I have no vote.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I am sorry. I was responding to a very loud aside and my aside was also loud. I am very sorry.

Mr. President, had this Amendment been premised on more humane and considerate grounds, if this Amendment did not have such false accusations behind it, accusations such as a Government being an exploitative Government, had this Amendment not set out to prove that the Government of the Democratic Labour Party was wicked and vicious and hated public servants and got up one night and decided to send them home, it might have been looked at differently by this lady here.

I stand firmly on my belief that the Government of Barbados in 1991 recognized the crises which faced this economy at the time, having its options before it decided to take the route which would disadvantage its people the least. We recognized that the decisions have been painful. We never for one moment said they would not be.

I want to use this occasion to thank the public servants of this country for their patriotism, for their love and loyalty to Barbados. I want to thank them for coming to this nation's assistance by helping to rescue us to stabilize us and position us for take-off. I want to challenge this Government, you are poised to take-off. The wheel is in your hands, only you can determine whether we go up or down.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Goddard.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill though I am sorry that we were forced to even contemplate bringing it.

I think we have all learnt quite a bit here today. We owe a particular debt of gratitude to Canon Springer for introducing the moral aspect which, until that time, had been pretty well overlooked and Senator Davis who so eloquently spoke of the real trauma experienced by many thousands of people in this country. I think that it is unfortunate that the Government of the day, back in 1991, brought Barbados to the point where they felt that they were forced to implement this measure, the wage cut.

People in business recognize the value of employees because every business is founded upon human resources and the employees involved in it. The same thing with Government and the way it works. People are our most important asset and industrial relations are important in the business community and they are important in Government. You cannot have one set of values for one side and another set of values on the other. The intensely opaque nature of the decision-making process of the previous Government led to this debacle. The fluid base of their moral foundations were directly responsible for the action taken in the reduction of salaries in the public service.
6.05 p.m.

It led to the repudiation of their own Manifesto and called their sincerity into question. It damaged the reputation of the political process and it damaged the reputation of politicians.

At the heart of the matter is the appalling mismanagement and lawlessness that surrounded the previous administration. There were conflicts of interest in the leasing arrangements for trucks of the NCC. There was CARSICOT one and two. There was the removing of cotton under the Court's protection, in violation of a Court Order to North Point. There was confusion over the Highway 2 Contract which led ultimately to the use of current revenue funds for the construction of that contract, something that further damaged the cash flow of Government and the economy of this country.

There was the St. Joseph Hospital. There was Sherbourne. There was the sub-division and change of use of agricultural land and the attendant land survey requirements the majority of which have been carelessly done by one company. This led to the inevitable decline in sugar production and the PS International contracts with the BMC and importing sugar.

There was the printing of money and the exceeding of the legal debt limit of Government. Having broken the debt limit the law was amended to increase the debt limit to make Government legal and then Government turned around and broke that new limit again.

Now all this sets a certain tone. It has damaged the economy ...

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: Sir, I wish to know when the new limit of the Ways and Means Account was broken at the Central Bank?

Mr. PRESIDENT: You are not permitted to ask questions.

SENATOR C. A. MASCOLL: That is rhetorical. I am now going to proceed to clarify it.

It was not broken since it was increased to 17½% of GDP.

Mr. PRESIDENT: You are out of order, Senator. Please take your seat.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: All this lead to a certain tone in the community. It damaged the economy. We were at a point in 1991 where we were in an extremely perilous state. The Business community had warned the Government back in 1989 and in 1990 that they were walking on treacherous grounds. They chose to ignore the warnings. In fact they became rather abrasive about it.

There was a lack of consultation within Cabinet. Members seemed to be either in the dark or chose to ignore the facts of our perilous economic state of affairs. All this led to the economic conditions which led to the IMF intervention.

When you look back at 1981 the conditions were radically different. What happened was that there was an oil price shot and sugar decline that got government into a situation. The Government took early action, went to the IMF, got the foreign exchange to get them over a hurdle without cutting wages, without damaging the integrity of the country and without damaging the economy.

So we have a different condition. There were alternative measures that Government could have taken earlier on. It chose to ignore those measures. By choosing to ignore the corrective measures it was forced into a position where it felt that it had to cut Government's salaries. This was not necessarily the correct route to take. I might add that in addition to that they took measures which also had further draconian impact on the economy. They never understood that it was senseless to tax the inputs of production rather than the outputs.

The Honourable Senator in his speech ignored the fundamental change of the tax policy and the concrete actions taken by the present Minister of Finance to cut the Gordian knot of foolishness that taxed the input from manufacturing and agriculture. That has decreased so that is the issue that we are talking about. What it comes back to is the fact that there is now superior strategy and superior management brought to bear on the economy

of this side of the Table. That is what will create the 30 000 jobs.

Now I would like to come back to the moral aspect of it because it is something that deeply disturbs me and I really do think that an employer has a social contract with his employees and I think that the method in which the questionnaires were circulated and the pressure that was brought by some specific Ministers in their Ministries by going into the Ministry and brow-beating people on a one on one basis, one has to understand how the public service views a Minister and the power that Minister has. It is not fair and it is not right for people to exert undue influence and terrorise people in the public service into accepting something that they do not want to do.

I think that there is a moral consideration here and it is because of this and it is because of the blatant and naked use of power to go against what has become normal industrial practices in this country that this Government feels constrained to protect the public service against any future government and it has been so well put that what we are doing today is creating a moral barrier. We are creating a situation where no future Government could likely come to any Chamber of this Parliament and suggest that we once again change the Constitution to damage the situation of public servants. That is the crux of the matter.

We have seen the wreckage of the past 8 years. The wreckage is not just in economic terms, the wreckage is in terms of morality, of loss of confidence of the way people are regarded in this society.
6.15 p.m.

That is the wreckage. The economy you can fix quickly. It takes a long time to restore the confidence of people. It takes a long time to rebuild an ethical. It takes a long time to build that trust and that high moral value that we need in this country to progress. That is my concern and that is why I am deeply disturbed.

Other Honourable Members here, Mr. President, have spoken of this and I support their comments. I support this Bill and I am deeply saddened that the events in recent history have forced us to take this measure to really clarify the position of the public servants in this country. Thank you very much, Sir.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to speak in conclusion of this second reading of this Bill amending the Constitution. I want to thank those Honourable Senators who have made some valuable contributions to this debate. However, Sir, I would want to make some mention of the principal spokesman for the DLP in terms of his contribution to this debate. You

will note, Sir, that I had to rise on a number of occasions to question the relevance of matters raised in the debate. In fact, a better way of getting over the points raised, Sir, might have been by way of a general Press Conference. I do believe that the matters raised, as interesting as they were, Sir, spoke more to issues other than the amendment of the Constitution by the insertion of Section 112(a) to offer protection to the public workers of this country.

Sir, clearly the business of the Senate will include a wide range of matters. But one of the reasons why the Standing Orders speak to the scope of the debate is to ensure that we are able to focus on those matters which are on hand. In this regard, Sir, reference was made to the fact that we should not reduce the debate only to the legal and political implications of a particular Bill and so on. But I just would like to remind the Senate that we as parliamentarians in the Senate are the lawmakers in the country. So when we meet here, Sir, we meet to deal with matters of law. We will, of course, be informed by wider considerations of an economic, social and moral nature. But we cannot, Sir, appear to be disparaging to the legal aspect of what we are doing, because we are principally lawmakers.

Sir, what was interesting as well about this debate in retrospect was the manner in which several of the issues which led up to the point where we are today have been handled. Sir, I would want to reiterate that we cannot look at the question of the 8 per cent cut and the matters which arose subsequently out of that without really paying attention to how we got to that point in the first place and the alternative courses of action taken due to the general guidance and management of the economy prior to the point where it became necessary to explore such drastic options such as the cutting of the public servants salaries.

Mention has been made in the debate, Sir, of the situation of the Barbados' standby arrangements with the IMF in 1982 and clearly, Sir, that programme was a successful programme largely because it was timely and because of the quality of the management involved in the structuring as well as in the implementation of that programme. But I am surprised, Sir, that matters relating to the early 1980's which were addressed by that programme could sought to be included in the whole question of what happened in 1991. If those matters were still outstanding in 1989 when we were told how good the economy was, no mention was made of any left-over problems from the early 1980's at that time. But suddenly in 1991 and 1995 we were hearing that there were left-over unfinished matters from that period. If we were doing so well in 1989 and if the private sector was drawing attention to the economic difficulties through the "gang of four", if the leaders from this side were prophets of gloom and doom in 1990 leading up to the elections, then we suddenly cannot six

months after the elections in 1991 seek to bring in what happened prior to a successful 1982 IMF Programme.

Sir, the other question that we certainly will have to make some comment on is the point that was raised by Senator Mascoll when he said that we had some good indicators except for a dip in the foreign reserves. As Senator Barker quite rightly indicated, that is certainly an important indicator of the direction in which things were going. But what I am curious about, Sir, is the whole question of timing and whether the options relating to a negative adjustment in public workers' salaries would have been necessary if the actions to correct the problems which existed were done in 1990 as opposed to 1991. The question of the moral responsibility of Government has been raised in this debate and, as was pointed out, this is one of the dimensions of the issue – moral, legal, economic and so on. But where was the morality which forms part and parcel of good governance where a problem is known to exist and the trend indicates that the problem can only get worse? Then the moral responsibility is to take early and corrective action and thereby avoid a worsening of the situation. But where was that?

6.30 p.m.

Rather than seeking to cut Government expenditures through the elimination of a number of financial excesses we have heard mentioned so far, the horrendous losses through the mismanagement of CARSICOT, through Sherbourne and the other projects. . .

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: St. Joseph Hospital, I am being reminded, was another exercise. Mention was made of course of the decision to finance Highway 2A on Current Account. These were all contributors to the financial situation at the time, so where was the morality which would have seen the correction of those difficulties at an early stage and thereby avoid reaching the dangerous point where one considered that a cut in the wage bill was necessary? But, Sir, we are proud on this side to have been associated with a long tradition of support for workers' rights; we are proud on this side to have given birth to the Barbados Workers' Union; we are proud on this side of a legacy of progressive legislation which has seen the improvement in the terms and conditions of life for the ordinary citizen.

Mention has been made in debate of the Factories Act, the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, Workmen's Compensation Act, the Act relating to maternity leave, Holidays with Pay; all of these matters were matters which have worked towards the advancement of the ordinary citizen. It therefore falls on the shoulders of any Government that Barbados may have at any point in time

to ensure that the foundation which has been laid for the full participation by the ordinary citizen in all aspects of the economy – economic, political, moral and all those other aspects that were mentioned – is not jeopardized.

Now, Sir, some reference was made to our Manifesto. Senator Thompson queried why on page 21, which she referred to, we have not done this or have not done that. She made reference to Section 26 of the Constitution. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, Section 26 is a savings clause saving pre-independence legislation. We recognise that, of course, and on the same page 21 that she made a very brief reference to where it says that we will repeal both Section 26 of the Constitution and the offensive pre-independence statutes, it also went on to say that we will enact a new Public Service Act and General Orders. The paragraph reads as follows:

"For the protection of public sector wages and for the proper definition of relationships between employer and employee, we will enact a new Public Service Act and new General Orders."

As you will be aware, Sir, you cannot simply repeal Section 26 without having the requisite law reform. If you are going to replace the Civil Establishment Act, 1948 which was saved by Section 26, you will naturally need to have another device, such as a new Public Service Act, to redefine the relation between the Government as an employer and its employees. Although Section 26 was cited as one of the examples of how laws such as the ability of the Crown to be able to arbitrarily alter the wages of workers, which I am sure as you know, Sir, is really a throwback from our monarchical system of Government, where the Sovereign was deemed to be all powerful, was acknowledged to be all powerful. That was part and parcel of the system, and naturally if the Sovereign was all powerful, then the Sovereign would have power to give and to take away. But our modern constitutional systems of multi-party participatory parliamentary democracy has moved away from some of the concepts of the Sovereign, so although the State in this new incarnation holds some powers of the Sovereign, the Constitution seeks to curtail some aspects of the State in terms of its more arbitrary use of its power, especially in a negative fashion. So that Section 26 of the Constitution will be dealt with, but that has to be dealt with within the wider context of a broader law reform.

We have no difficulty in introducing this legislation at this time, for the simple reason that this amendment will not in any way be in conflict or be on contradictory terms with the intention of the wider review of the Constitution and dealing with the pre-independence laws that were saved, which in some cases have lost their usefulness.

The introduction of this amendment will give the public servants necessary protection. Contrary to what Senator Thompson might have inferred, paying adequate attention to the conditions of our public officers does not in any way mean that the private sector is being de-emphasised. What it does mean is that whilst we recognise the leading role which the private sector will play in the economic development of the nation, we are not abandoning the welfare of those persons who continue to be employed in the public sector.

In conclusion, Sir, I would want to reiterate the aims and objects of this Bill and that is simply to offer protection to those persons employed under the Civil Establishment and Defence Acts. I urge all Senators to support this important and progressive piece of legislation which aims to ensure that public servants will not simply have to depend on the word of a Government. We on this side know of course that our word is water tight, our word is good, but we want to ensure that if some other party should at some point in time form the Government of this country they will need to face the moral judgement of their colleagues in both Houses of Parliament if they want to attempt to reduce the salaries of public workers in this country.

I beg to move, Sir, 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. R. R. FARLEY, Mr. PRESIDENT left the Chair and the Senate went into Committee on the Bill, His Honour SENATOR C.L. BOLDEN in the Chair.
6.35 p.m.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Senate is in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On the motion of Senator the Hon. R. R. FARLEY, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. PRESIDENT resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the motion of Senator the Hon. R. R. FARLEY, the Bill was read a third time.

DIVISION

The question that the Bill be passed was put and resolved in the affirmative the Senate dividing as follows:

Ayes: Senator the Hon. R. R. FARLEY, Senator the Hon. P. C. GODDARD, Senator the Hon. G. S. H. MURRAY, Senator Miss C. Y. FORDE, Senator T. E. BARKER, Senator Miss O. P. SYMMONDS, Senator D. T. GILL, Senator Miss J. C. ODLE, Senator N. P. WELCH, Senator N. A. LYNCH, His Honour Senator C. L. BOLDEN, Senator Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON, Senator C. K. LAURIE, Senator the Venerable Archdeacon J. L. SPRINGER, Senator Mrs. V. J. DAVIS and Senator J. A. WORKMAN - 16.

Noes: Senator Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON and Senator C. A. MASCOLL - 2.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Honourable Senate do now adjourn *sine die*.

The question was put and agreed to and Mr. President adjourned the Senate accordingly.
6.42 p.m.

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