
THE SENATE DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1994 – 99

THE SENATE

Monday, March 24, 1997

The Senate met in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, on Monday, March 24, 1997 at 10.15 a.m.

PRESENT

His Honour Senator Sir Fred 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 Foreign Trade and International Business)

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

Senator Miss C. Y. FORDE (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture)

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

Senator the Hon. Miss O. P. SYMMONDS, G.C.M.

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 S. P. BERNSTEIN

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

Senator C. K. LAURIE

Senator Mrs. V. J. DAVIS

Senator Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON

Senator J. D. E. BOYCE

Prayers were led by Fr. Errington Massiah.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The Senate is in session.

MESSAGES FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Mr. PRESIDENT: I have received the following communication from His Excellency the Governor-General dated the 18th March 1997. It reads as follows:

"Dear Mr. President, I shall be away from the Island from March 19 to 26, 1997 on a visit to St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In accordance with the provision of Section 29(1)(b) of the Constitution, the Honourable Sir Denys A. Williams, KCMG, GCM, will perform the functions of the office of Governor-General during my absence. As the Honourable Senate will not be meeting prior to my departure it will not be possible for the usual formal message to be sent down to your Chamber. Will you therefore please bring my absence formally to the attention of the Honourable the Senate when next it meets."

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

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

1. The Annual Reports of the Barbados Transport Board for the financial years 1990-1991, 1991-1992, 1992-1993 and 1993-1994.
2. The Companies Act (Exemption) Order, 1997.
3. The Duties, Taxes and Other Payment (Exemption) (No. 2) Order, 1997.
4. Report on the Probation Department for the year 1992-1993.

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.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On the motion of Senator the Hon. R. R. Farley the Appropriation Bill, 1997 was read a first time.

ORDER NO. 1 – THE APPROPRIATION BILL, 1997

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to move the second reading of the Appropriation Bill, 1997. This annual exercise, Mr. President, is perhaps one of the more important actions that we are required to take as an Honourable Senate during the course of a given year.

The requirements of the passage of this Appropriation Bill is rooted in the Constitution, Sections 108 and 109. In addition to its constitutional necessity it also provides an opportunity for the Government to bind its plans and programmes as it seeks the approval of both Houses of Parliament for the expenditure which is required to finance those programmes. And to the extent, Mr. President that Government expenditure is an important component of the macro economy of small open economies, then the discussion of Government's expenditure plans for a given financial year becomes an extremely important exercise. That many economists will point to the critical role which Government expenditure can play either in capitalising on opportunities for growth, not only of the economy but for its people or it also points in the direction of gloom and doom for an economy, if inappropriate choices are made.

So that, Sir, I want to start at the outset of this debate to set our discussions in that context where you recognise that what we are discussing, although expressed in numbers, goes beyond that and that Mr. President, we will equip ourselves accordingly. Sir, if you had set these Estimates in their proper context I believe we would have to look at the economic framework within which they are made. You will recall, Sir, that Barbados is now emerging out of a major recession, a recession that would have started in the early 1990s, and in fact we have just about retained the position in terms, if measured in terms of normal GDP, which we would have been at in or around 1989.

That is illustrated by the fact that after something of a cumulative 12% decline in the economy between 1990 and 1992, we have now been able to post just about a

cumulative 12% growth which basically brings us back to that which is expected to be financed in a 60:40 ratio, Sir. That is an important consideration as well, Mr. President, when we consider the spending options and spending choices which are embodied in these Estimates.
10.25 a.m.

It is also important to note that we are still very much in the process of structural reforms in the economy and that we must understand the dynamics which this reform process happens to be. This reform process is one that is being carried out in many places in this hemisphere and it will lead us ultimately to a fuller participation in what the cliché refers to as the new global order characterised by greater openness, greater liberalisation and all that goes with it.

In 1997 we must approach the Estimates debate and the presentation of Government's proposals for spending within the context of recognising the importance of a number of the factors within that overall reform process which have a profound effect on the economy both at the present time and also into the future. Those issues relate to things like the need for physical discipline related primarily to the management of the deficit, controlling public expenditure while at the same time being able to satisfy the legitimate aims and aspirations of the people.

In many cases the decision which Government would be required to make with respect to public expenditure largely rests on the basic question: Do you tax more or spend less and the subsidiary questions which would arise in each of those two sides of the equation.

Also within the general reform process which is sweeping the hemisphere and which points in the direction of economic management, which is sustainable, are issues relating to management of the exchange rate, improvements in the tax system, the whole issue of public sector and public service reform particularly as it relates to the efficiency and effectiveness of governmental operations and, of course, the need to attract more and more foreign direct investment as well as the stimulation of the local entrepreneurial class.

Those are some of the factors, in my estimation, Mr. President, which all of us as policy makers have to include in making decisions on these Estimates.

The further context in which I want to place this presentation this morning, Sir, is in terms of a general review of our economic performance during the last year after which I will speak more directly to the specifics

in terms of the performance of Government, in terms of its finances.

In 1996 the economy would have expanded by some 4.5 per cent and this, as I indicated earlier, is one of the contributing factors for us being at least and at last able to get back to where we were before. So that after this fourth consecutive year of real growth, then we would have been able to reverse that 12 per cent contraction by an expansion in the region of 12 per cent.

It is important to note, as well, Sir, that the impetus for that growth, particularly the 4.5 per cent in the last year, would have been a strong performance of the foreign exchange earning sectors. This is significant because in the past we have had economic options which have been able to push growth. But there was growth in unsustainable areas. So that persons who were perhaps seeking to establish records and wanted to be able to boast about the growth in the economy took policy actions which would stimulate growth, but the growth clearly was not sustainable, because it was not rooted in the foreign exchange generating sectors of the economy, also known as the tradeable sectors, Sir. We are satisfied that with the areas in which our growth has occurred, that this growth would be sustainable.

We note, for example, if you look at some of the sectors quickly, that agricultural production increased in 1996 over what it was in 1995. Particularly important in that regard, Sir, was the performance of the sugar industry where output would have increased by some 52 per cent to reach a projected target of just under 60 000 tonnes of sugar. The prospects for output for this year and 1998 look very promising.

It is also heartening to note that there has been an increase in output in the non sugar agricultural sector as well.

In terms of the tourism sector which is of pivotal importance to the economy of Barbados, there was a real growth level in the region of 3 per cent. This was occasioned by an improvement in our marketing efforts as well as attempts by the private sector, by way of more intensive investment either in new plant, or the refurbishing of existing plant, to really improve the quality of the product offered to the visitor. All indications are that we are on to a good thing there.

The offshore sector performed very well also. By the offshore sector we are referring to those international business and financial service companies involved in activities ranging from offshore banking to international business companies, to exempt or captive insurance firms, and so on. Our figures indicate that something in the region of 895 new companies would have been formed in 1996.

This, of course, is because of the nature of the companies which are involved which ended up making a significant contribution to the economy of Barbados.

As you would be aware, Mr. President, I am sure the difference between 895 companies formed in Barbados and 895 formed perhaps in other jurisdictions relate to the contribution which is made to the local economy. In Barbados the majority of companies that are formed are what we can term as active companies where they are actually engaged in some managerial and other related activity. Whereas in other jurisdictions, there are simply name plate companies and the benefit to the economy of the country really starts and ends with the receipt of a fee for registration.

Manufacturing, Sir, did not do as well as the others although there is some difference of opinion of what the exact numbers would say. But according to the Central Bank projection based on provisional figures up to November, there would have been a decline of 1.7 per cent in the output of the sector.

It is interesting to note, however, that the exports of manufactured products from Barbados have increased. In fact, the provisional export figure for December 1996 is \$428 million for export goods. This is up from \$338 million last year. Last year you would recall, Sir, would have been the first time since 1985 that the figure for export of manufactured products would have gone past the \$300 million mark.

The overall growth in exports, based on these provisional figures, would have been in the region of 26 per cent. The fact that the Central Bank figures would suggest that there is a decline of one period over another would perhaps have to cause us to look more closely at the matter of the domestic market.

The Barbados Investment and Development Corporation has researched the matter and they have also been in discussion with the Statistical Department and the Central Bank. It has recognised that there are a number of things which can account for this apparent difference in the direction of indicators, one being the fact that the index which is used, the index of industrial production, is based on a base which is rooted in the period of about 1982. Clearly the production mix in terms of what weights one would assign to subsectors of manufacturing in 1982 would be different from what would be applicable in 1997 because the emphasis has changed. In addition to which, in terms of comparison of 1996 figures and 1995 figures, the largest decline according to the Central Bank's figures would have been in the garment sector.

10.35 a.m.

It is interesting to note however that in that sector, during 1996, three firms closed but 7 were opened and also that in terms of a comparison of one period with the other the third quarter of 1995 accounted for an unusual and unseasonal increase in output in that particular sector. The index which is used to indicate this kind of output would have registered 46.6 in the third quarter of 1995 when the average for third quarters previously never reached beyond the mid-twenties but fluctuated between the mid-teens and the mid-twenties. So there is further investigation to be done to determine the precise situation there. But coming out of the general economic review of the performance of the country during 1996, and which forms the context in which Government's decision of expenditure would be taken for 1997, it is pleasing to note, Sir, that job creation has accompanied economic expansion. And this is not an expansion which is known by the professionals as jobless growth, this is growth with jobs, growth in jobs, and growth for jobs and whatever permutations and combinations one may want to put on that.

The unemployment rate, Sir, has declined now we are advised by the statistical service to 14.5%, and that, Sir, is no mean achievement when one considers what the rate was in 1993 of 27%. It is also significant to note that these figures, and persons have a propensity to doubt figures, these figures are borne out by the fact, Sir, that there are now signs on construction sites going unanswered, masons wanted and carpenters wanted and, Sir, it is now becoming a little difficult to be able to find skilled persons to do certain jobs for you. We are pleased to note, Sir, that job creation has been a component of economic expansion in Barbados.

Inflation for 1996 was in the region of 2.5% and this was up from 1.9% in 1995 and it is one of those by-products of economic expansion.

Another factor, Sir, which sets these Estimates in context is the performance of the foreign reserves. The foreign reserves, Sir, have topped the \$600 million mark, and I believe the figure fluctuates almost on a daily basis, but it is somewhere in the region of \$610 million. It is important to note, Sir, because again one can boost one's reserves by a number of unsustainable actions like foreign borrowing, it is important to note, that the boost in the reserves has come as a result of autonomous private capital inflows primarily for investment purposes and that any foreign capital which would have flowed in for the Government was by way, by and large, of project financing, projects financed by the Inter-American Development Bank and one or two other areas. Certainly coming from the private sector investment would have come in hotels, in telecommunications, facilities expansion, expansions by the Light and Power Company and so on.

Not only, Mr. President, have we been boosting the foreign exchange because another way of boosting your foreign reserves is by not paying your external debt. It is important to know that we have been paying off loan after loan that we would have inherited, Sir, and we are happy to do that, Sir, because we are making sure that Barbados's standing in the international community is one of which we can be proud.

Mr. President the external debt ratio declined further to 13.8% and that is down from some 15.6%. So we are saying, Sir, we are earning foreign exchange, we are paying off our loans and we are therefore, Sir, in a position where the threat of devaluation is not with us, where, Sir, we are able to have the level of comfort in terms of the minimum import cover that people require. The experts tell us that 13 weeks is a safe target at which to aim and we are way past that, Sir. I believe, if my calculations are correct, we are somewhere in the region of around 16 weeks, Mr. President, and therefore, that is something of which we can be proud.

Another important factor in the 1996 situation is that the Government was able to finance its deficit without resorting to methods which would have crowded out the private sector because again that is another important factor that must be considered.

We were able, Sir, because of the high liquidity in the commercial banking system to tap some local banking sources for some deficit financing. The arrangement with the Central Bank, Sir, which was previously used and known in simple language as money creation, where one finances the deficit by some creative accounting on the economic level. But that kind of financing, Sir, is never sustainable and all the experts will agree that that approach to deficit financing by money creation is one of the greatest medicines to cause disaster in an economy.

These Estimates are set in the context where we can be pleased with the performance of the economy in 1996 and we are therefore in a position to consider some expansionary approach in these Estimates. What about 1997, Sir? What is the outlook in terms of the economy for 1997? What factors would we have considered in seeking to craft a set of expenditure proposals to give effect to public policy?

We are projecting, Sir, at this stage that we will have a real GDP growth in the region of 3% and notice, Sir, I am speaking here of real and not nominal. But more of that as we go on, Sir.

Again we expect this growth to be led by the foreign exchange earning sectors and gain access to the sustainability of this growth. The reserves will also continue to be boosted by higher capital inflows based on the list of

projects which are pending and therefore, Sir, will give us even more elbow room to operate. It basically puts us in a position, Sir, where we can move our economic planning and shift our priorities. Where in the first two years of this administration we inherited an economy that was now beginning to emerge from a recessionary period, where unemployment was still unacceptably high, where there was a need to build a solid foundation on which we can launch, I am pleased to report to this Honourable Senate, Sir, that this administration has successfully laid that foundation, and we are now able to take the economic flight out of the period of consolidation into the period of some further expansion.

10.45 a.m.

This provides opportunities for us to speak to the question of income distribution because the reality in economics is that you only distribute what you have. And part of the priority in the first two years of this administration was to build an economy in which wealth is generated, where opportunities are provided for investment in business, for jobs, and where as a result of economic buoyancy the Government is able to use its distributive function to divert some of the income and wealth that is generated in a buoyant economy into looking after the areas of responsibility which it has, particularly for the dispossessed and the poor. The Government has a responsibility, Sir, to look after the most vulnerable of those amongst us.

You will find, Sir, that these Estimates speak in glowing and most eloquent terms to our proposals for moving in the direction of looking after those who are most vulnerable in the society. You will also find in these Estimates a strong emphasis on the provision of social services; a strong emphasis on human resource development; a strong emphasis on poverty alleviation, a strong emphasis on the provision of housing; the provision of health care facilities and other public goods. Because we recognise that not only does our responsibility relate to ensuring that the economy is doing well and we cannot pat ourselves on the back and go home because we have done a fine job so far in bringing the economy to a state where we can boast of sustained growth and where we can boast of having lowered the rate of unemployment substantially over the two year period, we now need to go the next step to ensure that equity and social justice will prevail in an economy which is doing well.

Sir, what do these Estimates have in store for us? These Estimates which are before us as a Schedule to the Appropriation Bill. I hope that Members have noticed that there has been an amended Appropriation Bill circulated based on amendments which have been made in the House of Assembly and that the sum which is being requested to be appropriated by way of this Bill has increased by \$5.2

million. There has been an upward adjustment in the Bill in terms of the sum to be appropriated.

These Estimates which come as a Schedule to the Bill speak to how Government proposes to spend funds during the year. Again, Sir, these Estimates would have been crafted within the context of the fiscal performance during the 1996/97 fiscal year and our projections for 1997/98. I believe, Sir, that I have a responsibility to reflect in the first part of this presentation on the fiscal performance during 1996/97. Last year's Estimates would have been prepared based on a number of assumptions in the same way that this year's Estimates are prepared on a number of assumptions and targets. I would want to say in summary that Government has been extremely successful in reaching the targets set and particularly in being able to contain its expenditure during the period.

We have, Sir, for 1996/97 the current revenue which is projected as \$1.2 billion of which \$1.15 billion would be tax revenue and \$74.6 billion would be non-tax revenue and lending. The total expenditure which we are predicting, Sir, is to be \$1.5 billion of which \$1.3 billion would be current expenditure and \$187.6 million capital expenditure. That basically would account for a deficit of \$261 million which represents on an international financial institution basis, a deficit of 1% of G.D.P.

You will recall, Sir, the formulation for moving the deficit calculation from the general accounting basis to a financial institution basis, I make the point as well, which I always feel constraint to make because last year some made the inelegant point, Sir, that the I.M.F. is still in Barbados because they used the I.M.F. basis for calculating the deficit. A most inelegant point, Sir.

The fact of the matter is that one of the functions which institutions like the I.M.F. perform is to facilitate the sharing of information amongst countries. Every month there is a monthly digest of financial and economic statistics from I.M.F. member countries and this is circulated all around the world and members are required as part of their reporting procedures to provide information for that. In addition, there is an annual aggregated format of that data. Therefore if we are to be able to compare our performance with the performance of other countries then we need to operate on a similar basis. That really is the simple answer to that particular inelegant suggestion.

In terms of the performance during 1996 on the fiscal side, in terms of revenue the highlights of the revenue performance would have been influenced by the introduction of the Value Added Tax. That was implemented during the last quarter of the fiscal year. The Value Added Tax, Sir, if you recall would have replaced 11 indirect

taxes with a single tax. As a result, in terms of the figures which are presented in the Estimates, looking at 1996/97 and the subsections for 1997/98, one will see a difference in the amount of tax revenue on goods and services for example as well as in the section known as other taxes and so on. I will not go into detail at this point in time.

It is important to note that because of the introduction of the Value Added Tax during the course of the financial year that there would have been an impact on the level of the other taxes which would have been changed.
10.55 a.m.

Now, Sir, in terms of taxes on goods and services, they are expected to grow by some 6.8 percent. Taxes, Sir, in relation to the Common External Tariff for customs duty are expected to decline by some \$6 million because of the ongoing change, the reduction of the Common External Tariff in three or four tranches between 1993 and 1998.

In terms, Sir, of taxes on income, they are expected to grow by some \$24 million and that is not as a result of an increase in taxes, Sir. That is really, Sir, one of the import elements of what would have been the benefit of higher employment. Obviously with more persons employed, Sir, there would have been a corresponding increase in the amount of taxes collected, so that the taxes on incomes and profits would have shown some increase there as well. Within that, corporation taxes are also due to show a growth as well during this particular period.

Another one-off situation, Sir, ...I must apologise for my voice, it is not the best today.

There was a windfall, Sir, something in the region of \$17 million accrued to the benefit of Barbados, as the result, Sir, of the revaluation of some special drawing rights which Barbados has in the IMF, Sir. So that there are some subsidiary benefits to Barbados from the IMF even though they are happily behind having an officer stationed in the Ministry of Finance and so on.

Another important feature, Sir, taxes on property. This is set to increase by \$5 million. It is important to note that this is due to a more vigorous collection programme. Also, Sir, during this triennium, the properties in Barbados would have been revalued, but the Government also took a decision to adjust the rates of property tax, so that the yield would remain basically the same.

Remember, Sir, according to the relevant legislation, properties in Barbados are revalued every three years and this Party, Sir, has made a commitment that it would seek to mitigate the impact which the payment of land tax would have on our smaller and poorer property owners.

We would not want to have a situation in which persons are unable to hold on to their properties, because they are unable to afford the high burden of taxation. However, Sir, having made the commitment to keep it low, and having made the adjustment, Sir, to ensure that the increase in valuation would not result in an increased monetary contribution on a person's property, we are also expecting, Sir, that those persons would recognise their responsibility to the rates which have been specially kept low for them.

Now, Sir, property transfer taxes would have shown an increase yield during the 1996-1997 period as well, largely again, Sir, due to one or two special circumstances, for example, the single sale in terms of the transfer of some shares.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Not in Almond Beach, Sir, that is for next year. These were maples and not almonds. A transfer of shares by Maple Leaf, Inc., in terms of shares in the Flour Mill, Sir, has resulted in a substantial contribution.

Basically, Mr. President, Sir, the Property Transfer Taxes would have increased because of those particular circumstances.

In terms of expenditure for 1996-1997, Sir, and I need to make this point very, very clearly...

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order please.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: ...record expenditure for 1996-1997, the year soon ending, is expected to increase by 4.8 percent over the previous year. That increase, Sir, would have brought the total expenditure to \$1.3 billion. I want to make the point, Sir, that at the end of the year, in spite of having introduced a number of supplementary requests for expenditure into the House of Assembly, during the course of the year, that we are still very much within the target which was set and approved for the overall expenditure.

The simple matter is this, Sir, as you will be aware, funds which are voted by the Parliament of Barbados cannot be used for other than the stated purpose in provision of service to the public. During the course of the year, however, other circumstances would arise which would not have been contemplated at the time of the introduction of the Estimates during the last two weeks of March in the given year.

For example, Sir, the prison wall at Glendairy fell, and therefore, Sir, one would need obviously to take immediate steps to repair the wall, rather than waiting until a new financial year to have funds voted before repairing the wall. I could mention several other factors, Sir.

The fact of the matter is that in terms of our approach to managing the finances, what we have basically done, Sir, by continuous monitoring of the projects, programmes and sub-programmes in the ministries, we have been able to identify a number of areas where savings will be realised.

Sir, on the basis of the information available on the dollar value of those savings, we are in a position to substitute supplementary requests for expenditure in such a way that at the end of the year the overall targets, in terms of the deficit which we set would not be reached. That is basically the common sense approach which we have taken to the administration of the public finances of this country.

Sir, expenditure on wages and salaries is expected to rise by some \$31.2 million bringing it up in the region of \$455 million. That increase in expenditure on wages and salaries has three components, Sir. One would have been an increase, Sir, in the personal emoluments as a result of the second part of the salary increase. There would also have been the \$10 million productivity award which was given to the public servants of Barbados. You will recall that under the Prices and Incomes Protocol which was signed by the Government of Barbados and the private sector and the trade unions that it was agreed that every effort would be made towards moving in the direction of a productivity based remuneration fee.

11.05 a.m.

We are pleased to report that we have been able in Protocol 2 to achieve what was not possible, for whatever reason, in Protocol 1. We have been able to make that \$10 million payment to the public servants of Barbados in recognition of the contributions which they would have made to the progress of this country. That is the first time in history that a productivity award would have been made available.

In addition, Sir, there will also have been an expansion in employment in the public sector. You will recall, that as part of the economic rescue efforts in the early 1990s that several thousand persons would have lost their work in the public sector. Assuming that those persons who were working in the public sector were not there out of a focus on welfare or out of a humanitarian gesture, it means that they would have been providing services to the general public and therefore the level of service provided to the public in several agencies was appalling and there are some areas in which we have had

to take on additional personnel in order to provide the level of services which are required.

For example, Sir, the establishment of a drainage unit within the Ministry of Public Works and Transport which has been able to start its work on reducing the possibility of flooding or where flooding does occur mitigating the impact, is important work. One either does it up front or one then has to be involved in using public funds to help out people who have suffered at the hands of natural disasters.

Because of the emphasis on maintaining a clean and healthy environment we have had to hire some people at the NCC. There are many other areas that I could call but the point is that the bulk of employment has been created in the private sector and, obviously, Government will have to ensure that it is able to provide the quality of service which the public of Barbados expects to ensure that the appropriate departments are properly staffed.

Expenditure on goods and services is expected to increase as well by some 11.4% over the 1995-96 provision. Current transfers are expected to show some small increase of \$6 million. Debt service is expected to total some \$383.7 million during 1996-97 and this will represent the interest that we had to pay on our debts.

Sir, capital expenditure. We were able in 1996-97 to put a jump start on our capital works programme. Capital expenditure for 1996-97 is therefore expected to increase by 35.4% over the previous year and there has been an increase of late in all categories of public expenditure and we are pleased to note that.

Capital formation would total \$131 million. That total would be far more than the 35.4% increase if you are talking about \$187 million in total. There have been a number of projects going on. The South Coast Sewerage Project, the solid waste management project, the highway rehabilitation, the completion of the Ministry of Education headquarters after abandonment by the last administration. The start of the St. Thomas Secondary School, after abandonment by the last administration. We will await the availability of funds to do St. John.

Sir, the upturn in this capital expenditure programme is very much to be applauded and we are projecting a further increase in the region of 40% in 1997-98 capital expenditure over 1996-97.

Sir, that brings me into 1997-98 Estimates as contained in the Schedule before us. In terms of the major projections if you were to summarise what we expect at the end of fiscal year 1997-98, current revenue is projected to be in the region of \$1.3 billion. I am rounding my figures for ease of understanding, of which \$1.2 million would be tax revenue and \$86 million would be non-tax revenue.

Total expenditure is expected to be \$1.6 billion and of this amount \$1.4 million would be current expenditure and \$263 million in capital expenditure. This would give us a deficit in the vicinity of \$343 million representing an overall deficit of 3% calculated on the international financing institutions basis.

In terms of how we are going to finance this deficit, this deficit is expected to be financed in a 60:40 ratio – 40% in terms of domestic financing, 60% as foreign financing. This 60% or \$204 million, of that \$204 million the vast majority – \$116 million is direct project financing. For example, \$20 million to be invested in the investment sector loan programme, further inflows on the South Coast Sewerage Project, the solid waste management project and the like. It is expected that if we do go to the market this year we will go to the market for a sum in the region of \$88 million.

While we are on this question of the market, I want to indicate that the credit rating of Barbados has continued to move in all of the right directions like the other economic indicators in Barbados.

11.15 a.m.

For the last two years, Sir, we are into the third year, the credit rating of Barbados has increased in each and every one of those years. In fact, Sir, the current evaluation which is being done, Sir, by Moodie's Investors Service will, I am sure result in a further improvement in that credit rating. The Institution's Investor which is another major rating agency, Sir, would have indicated that for 1996 our rating had improved some 6.7% over 1995. Obviously, Sir, the excellent economic management and the excellent economic performance of this country in recent years would have been a major contributor to that.

Now, Sir, what that does though, Sir, apart from sounding pretty, is to allow us to be able in the first place, to access financing. And you remember, Sir, there was a time in the not too distant past when the former administration had to engage, Sir, in a particular loan transaction which was not on the very best of terms for Barbados. Because, apart from the world market in terms of what finances are available, the terms and conditions which attach to a loan depend largely on the level of risk which the lender perceives and your credit rating, your level of foreign exchange rating, and other economic factors, Sir, are the factors which lenders will consider.

We are pleased to note, Sir, that we are in the position where international financiers of the most reputable sort, are chasing us down to see if we need financing. But of course being prudent managers, we do not borrow simply because the capacity to borrow is there. And when we look for financing, Sir, our approach to

foreign financing is that the financing has to be by and large for projects, and for projects where there is a significant foreign exchange component. Therefore you do not deplete your regular earned flow by way of these particular projects.

Now, Sir, looking at some of the details, taking the revenue side first of all in terms of the projections that we are making on revenue at this stage, it is expected, Sir, that there is going to be an increase take, I should craft the words carefully, Sir, that there should be an increase yield in the category of taxes on goods and services. And the reason for that, Sir, is that in the eleven taxes that the Value Added Tax would have replaced, some of those taxes would have shown up in a category known as "other taxes". So that the corresponding increase in the section in your Estimates, I believe it is around page 5 or so, where it speaks to an increase of \$109 million in taxes on goods and services for 1997-1998 will also show a reduction in the "other taxes" section, primarily because stamp duties would have been in the "other taxes" section and the elimination of the stamp duties would naturally, result in a reduction there, Sir.

Now, taxes on incomes and profits is expected to increase by 6.6% again, Sir, largely due to growth in personal income taxes as a result of increased employment.

Taxes on property are not expected to show any significant growth because the rates having been set, once collection proceeds as planned then there is basically no increase proposed, and we also do not propose to slacken any effort at collection.

Taxes on international trade are expected to show only a modest increase largely because in 1997 there is expected to be a further reduction in the level of the Common External Tariff as agreed amongst the countries in CARICOM and it is projected that this reduction will be from 30% top rate to 25% top rate. Therefore the reduction in the percentage would be in some ways offset by the increase in the level of retained imports, but there will be basically something of a netting off based on the projections which we have so far. Those, Sir, are perhaps the most salient features of the revenue side.

Expenditure is really what we need to focus on in this particular exercise, Sir. Current expenditure is expected to increase by some 5.8% to \$1 377.8 billion for 1997-1998. It is expected, Sir, that one of the key features dominating this increase in expenditure will be an increase in the level of what we call, Sir, current transfers. That increase in current transfers, Sir, in the region of 11% indicates that we are paying more attention, Sir, to helping a number of groups in society.

You will recall, Sir, that a decision was taken that as a result of the implementation of the Value Added Tax that we would provide increased monetary assistance to the recipients of welfare. There is an increase outlay of \$6 million to provide for that. You will recognise, Sir, that what we have decided to do in terms of our approach to income redistribution, to poverty alleviation, and to looking after the disadvantaged, is to use an approach where we would target those persons who need assistance.

This programme, Sir, of targeting has identified 34,000 persons who will benefit from the programmes that we have put in place to mitigate the impact of the Value Added Tax. All too often, Sir, too much of a broad-brushed approach is used in the provision of services and of relief to persons in the economy.

The result usually ends up, Sir, where those persons who do not need the assistance get it. Those persons who need it would also get it but because of the increase in expenditure which is associated with providing that same good or service to a broader and a larger range of people then the capacity of the Government to provide additional support to the most vulnerable is not possible.

Just to take a simple example, Sir, of some of the approaches that have been used. For example, Sir, where things like uniform grants are provided, an across-the-board approach was used there, where every child going into first form at secondary school, his parents were entitled to receive a uniform grant of \$100. The question that the society would have to ask itself is this. Are you really being the most effective when you are providing an across-the-board contribution of \$100 which some may argue may not really outfit a child these days, but you are providing it to the wealthy as well as the poor?

Would not it be better, Sir, in terms of advancing the cause of social justice, to target the most vulnerable groups and give them \$200 instead? The overall cost may end up being less.

Sir, this approach of targeting is really nothing new in terms of approaches to providing social services on a global basis but unfortunately, it has not been utilised in Barbados. So that really, we are taking an existing approach which is used in many places, to targeting those persons who most need various assistance as far as welfare and other social services go to be able to more effectively meet their own needs. This broad-brushed approach, Sir, does not, in many cases, result in the most effective use of the Government's funds.

11.25 a.m.

In addition to this, Sir, we are providing other funds to work in the cause of poverty alleviation. Included as

well in that figure for transfer to individuals is meeting the increased cost which is associated with the provision of scholarships, bursaries and exhibitions to Barbadians who are studying at universities.

We must recognise, Sir, that again this is a matter in which you are making it possible for even the most vulnerable groups in the society to advance and help themselves. For example, Sir, whether the children of certain people in society won scholarships or not, their families could pull their pockets and pay for universities overseas so that as a result of the parents financial position that child is able to pursue his ambitions to the extent of his ability.

The Government also believes that the children of poor people must be able to pursue their ambitions to the extent of their ability. Therefore, we have made increased provisions to cover the cost which is associated with ensuring that persons who have won scholarships, bursaries, exhibitions and whatever are able to pursue their course of study. During the course of the debate, Sir, you will hear more details on the plans for the alleviation of poverty and so on.

It is just as important to note, Sir, that we recognise that social justice is an important component in national development. It is a reality that people do not tend to destroy the things which they own. The best means by which the peace, tranquility and harmony of the Barbadian community can be protected is by means of making sure that each and every individual believes that he has a stake in this country. Therefore, we will, through our various programmes in housing, education, health, rural development and in the soon to be established, Urban Development Commission, provide opportunities for the funding of programmes which will have the result of stronger communities as well as stronger individuals, individuals who are able to proceed through life with a greater sense of confidence knowing that some of their basic needs are taken care of.

Now, Sir, expenditure on goods and services is expected to rise by some 8.5 per cent. Part of that increase, 2.5 per cent, can be attributed to the fact that the Government is also required to pay the Value Added Tax on its transactions, so that will account for part of the increase there.

The expenditure on wages and salaries are expected to rise by some 3 per cent. Overall debt service for the year is projected at approximately \$400 million. We expect to be able to complete the payment of the bullet loan from Bankers' Trust which is due for payment in June 1997.

In terms of the capital side, Sir, that is expected to grow by some 40 per cent over the 1996/97 figure to

reach \$263.4 million. That is due to a number of project activities which are ongoing. For example, the Government in recognising the hardship that has been wrought on persons who have their land acquired by Government in order to do a number of projects, has put aside an increased provision for the acquisition of property for the various projects. In fact, Sir, we believe it is extremely important where projects are being conceived that the cost of the acquisition be included as part of the upfront and overall project cost. This will ensure that the payment for the land can be effected in a timely manner.

You will recall, Sir, that in here we have had to deal with approvals for land acquisition for completing the formal process, so that money could be paid on properties that have been used by the Government for the last 10 years, a piece of land for a road here, for a sidewalk there and so on. We therefore have included some \$13 million for the purpose of the payment for the acquisition of property. Much of this will be related to the Bridgetown Bypass Road which is due to start some time during this financial year.

The Ministry of Housing as well also has some funds allocated to it for the purpose of payment of fees and other associated costs related to acquisition of land for housing purposes. This is going to be one of the major activities which the Government proposes to undertake during the course of the year.

In terms of other projects which are included in the capital expenditure programme for the year, there is a project for the expansion of the Grantley Adams International Airport which is occurring in a number of phases. I believe right now the expansion of the tarmac is being undertaken but there is also a requirement to upgrade the quality of the fencing to ensure that our security is not in any way breached. There is also the need to upgrade and update some of the pieces of equipment which are critical to aviation.

This is all part of the ongoing activity and is not to be confused with the longer term objective of the further redevelopment of the Airport, for which funds are not included in these Estimates, because that is still at an early stage of design and planning. That expansion would see the Grantley Adams International Airport being increased in size and the range of facilities offered to make it compatible with the growth trend in visitors to the island.

In fact, Sir, I believe the planners of the Airport did not envisage that we would so soon reach the maximum passenger threshold which they had projected and we have achieved that several years earlier than was anticipated. Basically for airport planning one needs to ensure that facilities which are provided are able to accommodate the level of passenger flow which is anticipated.

Also, Sir, funds are included in this year's Estimates for the South Coast Sewerage Project. That is an ongoing project which, as you know, Sir, is being undertaken to protect the marine environment along the south coast of Barbados. Protection of the environment does not merely relate to those esoteric benefits which one tends to associate with the environment but it really has a hard core economic purpose as well.

The south coast is one of the most intensely exploited areas of Barbados in terms of the tourism product. It is a very heavy and excellent link of hotel accommodation, night clubs, restaurants and other facilities. It is, in fact, the area of Barbados in which the benefits of tourism are, perhaps, more evenly and widely distributed.
11.35 a.m.

The mix of property ownership and business ownership on the south coast is definitely very much more skewed towards the participation of the small entrepreneurs in the community rather so, than for example, on the west coast where because of the nature of the product which is offered, ownership is skewed towards the larger more affluent owners. Although we need both sets of products in Barbados, we do not need to have a situation where our failure to protect the very environment which has made the south coast an attractive place for persons to visit and enjoy, that we threaten the very economic contribution which it makes.

The South Coast Sewerage Project becomes a major project by means of protecting the water quality of that coast and protecting the reef along the south coast which prevents beach erosion both in the normal scheme of things, as well as the extra problems one would associate with storm or hurricane activity.

Also, Sir, included was the plans by the Ministry of Agriculture to engage in the provision of facilities at Skeete's Bay and Consett Bay, the re-development of the Cheapside Market, the refurbishment of the Fairchild Street Market and several other projects. Included in capital expenditure would be the refurbishment of a number of primary schools many of which are in a terrible state of disrepair for much too long.

Sir, on the matter of capital, I want to clearly make the point that not all of Government's capital programmes will necessarily be financed through this allocation of \$263 million in these Estimates. There are a number of very important and very exciting programmes which are being undertaken off budget. For example, the Barbados Investment Development Corporation is urgently required to provide increased facilities for the manufacturing and informatics sectors. There is a critical shortage of space, particularly for the information services companies. As

a result of that shortage of space, there have been one or two projects that have gone to other destinations where facilities were available.

We have decided, Sir, as a Government, that rather than seeking to burden the central finances of Government, to provide finance for projects which are of a commercial nature and which themselves will yield income over a sustained period, that we could take more innovative approaches to the financing of those projects.

In the case of the I.D.C., we have arranged for the I.D.C. to issue a \$12 million bond issue which together with other resources at its disposal will finance a \$25 million capital works project over the period 1997 to 1999. I am pleased to report, Sir, that this \$12 million bond issue was over-subscribed in about two days. This shows a level of confidence in the economy and the fact that there are funds available to be invested and that investors are looking for avenues to maximise the return on their investments.

Sir, the basic point that I want to make is that Government, in recognising its responsibility to provide these facilities to stimulate industrial development in Barbados, also recognised it did not have to use the route only of the Consolidated Fund to finance these projects.

Going back to the I.D.C. bond issue. Included in the projects which will be undertaken with the proceeds of that issue, Sir, is a new 42,000 square feet facility at the Harbour Industrial Park. One of the key factors in choosing that location is the fact that it has already become a business park as opposed to the traditional industrial park and over a time we have been able as soon as industrial buildings became available, to renovate and reconstruct and create modern offices complete with state-of-the-art wiring and other facilities as required for telecommunications.

In addition we had several years ago, in an arrangement with Bartel and B.E.T. been able to upgrade the quality of the cabling and other facilities in the area in such a way that one is able as a regular client, to obtain high speed telecommunications facilities that one would not be able to obtain typically in Barbados at the Harbour Business Park. This project is expected to start during the course of the financial year 1997/98. This expansion that we are proposing is not based on idle speculation. This expansion is based on our hard evidence, based on the clients that we have spoken to. We know what prospects we have for investment in the pipe line.

Another area in which these funds will be applied is the renovation of the Cluster Blocks at the Harbour Industrial Park and converting that building for use in the informatics sector.

Informatics alone will not be the focus of expenditure for those particular funds, Sir. The small business sector of this country will also benefit from two projects. One being the redevelopment of Pelican Village.

Pelican Village, as you know, Sir, has been for many years the premier shopping location for crafts in Barbados. In its heyday it provided opportunities for job and wealth creation by small working-class people in Barbados. Over the years, however, through no fault of the tenants, the facilities have become run down. It is no longer an attractive place to go. It is no longer on the "must-see" list of visitors to Barbados and it is no longer frequented by locals either.

We recognise that our responsibility to those small working-class entrepreneurs is to provide modern facilities which will provide for them an opportunity to attract customers to their location. We have a responsibility, Sir, to provide an opportunity for them to do their business not only in congenial surroundings, but also in an environment where through the appropriate mix of shops and other attractions, we will be able to encourage customer traffic to come to a new rejuvenated Pelican Village facility.

Sir, the facilities as it is conceived right now will contain as basic facilities a total of 46 shops and even if it is no more than an ATM to service not only international clients but the workers in the Harbour Industrial Park who frequent the area.

11.45 a.m.

Of course there will be restaurant and snack bar facilities which we would hope would be able to attract night time visitors and therefore night time shoppers to the area as well. We will also include display areas for crafts, for artists, where persons are able to have units. Those who need a large unit can have a large unit and so on and so forth. This project, Sir, is one which should be dedicated to the small crafts people in Barbados. I should let you know, Sir, that this project has gone through many twists and loops and turns.

In 1990, Sir, an architectural competition was held to come up with a scheme for the redevelopment of Pelican Village. The competition was won by an architectural firm and things were proceeding. Then, Sir, during the course of the last administration, a decision was taken to turn the facility, not to one for small crafts people, but one for large duty free shopping. Sir, this administration did not support the view that the Government should be involved in the provision of duty free shopping facilities of that magnitude which are already being provided by the private sector. Instead we decided to go the route of providing facilities for those persons who would least be able to afford, that

is to say, the small crafts people in the community. Therefore, Sir, these Estimates speak to those issues and that project, will be starting in July/August 1997.

In addition to that, Sir, there is also a need first to recognise that the Government has a responsibility to promote and stimulate entrepreneurial development in Barbados. That is our responsibility, Sir. Part of the \$12 million in this BIDC bond issue will go towards financing the construction of a new small business centre at Fontabelle. That centre will be on the Fontabelle side of the road adjacent to the Barbados *Advocate* and will provide facilities not only for small business people to produce items, but also, Sir, a display facility for exhibition of work of small business people. It will be the new home of an expanded and much improved small business information and advisory centre which would provide an important missing link in the development of the entrepreneurial class in this country. It would provide information, advice and many forms of assistance to help people, who in many cases do not have a background in business, to move from the stage of idea to practical and viable reality.

Other facilities would include a permanent home for the Small Business Association as well as facilities for training and other developmental activities. But what that project speaks to is the recognition that for the vast majority of persons in Barbados, business is not necessarily a second nature activity in the way that playing cricket happens to be.

It is important, Sir, that we recognise that if we have a situation in which involvement in business is not part of the culture of the majority of the people in the society, that we are going to be assigning the future in terms of the creation of wealth, Sir, to the hands of those few persons. That same class of persons who have not only the money, because money is not all that is required for success in business, but who also have a culture of exposure to business.

So, Sir, we recognise that part of our responsibility, and one of the perfectly good purposes for which Government expenditure can be incurred, would be in having or conducting an acculturation process where we would seek to provide forms of assistance which would help persons whose first exposure has not been a business, to so have that exposure as would render them valuable contributors, to the development of that entrepreneurial class in Barbados.

We basically need to ensure that subsequent generations are able to be inspired by the success which is achieved by today's entrepreneurs based on our collective efforts. So, Sir, those are some of the projects which will be undertaken by the IDC in furtherance of the need of the small business people of this country. I will speak more on those later on in the debate.

Just to mention as well, Mr. President, that the Government again in recognising the need to use the public funds, Sir, for the greatest public good has also been vigorously pursuing the provision of improved and enhanced facilities right across this country, again for that small business class.

Sir, in Oistins for example, it should not be forgotten that it is this administration that has provided opportunities for job and wealth creation through the provision of the fish fry facilities at Oistins. There was nothing there before and this administration created something out of nothing. There were no fish frying facilities at Oistins. I used to frequent Oistins, Sir, in the day and in the night but I remember, Sir, just to illustrate my point, watching the television version of the 1992 Democratic Labour Party Presidential nomination.

Aside.
11.55 a.m.

I believe my year is correct, when Jessie Jackson made his speech endorsing the ultimate candidate, in one of the two rum shops which were functioning in Oistins at that time. Oistins was so far down that there were only two rum shops at the time, the Twilight Tavern and the other one, and I was in the Twilight Tavern.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: I am qualified. Anyway, Sir, only two shops in 1992 were surviving in Oistins. Now, Sir, in 1997, based on the work of this administration, vehicular traffic can hardly pass through Oistins at night. Visitors from around the world are requesting that they be taken to Oistins because they have heard about it, Sir. People from the North, South, East and West are coming to Oistins to get fish, Sir, and other commodities that are sold by small entrepreneurs in this country for whom the opportunity, Sir, was created on the basis of public expenditure by this administration in pursuance of that other objective of providing opportunities for job and wealth creation for the broad masses of people in this country, Sir.

Improvements are being made to the market facilities in Six Men's down at Weston, Sir, where we are providing facilities down there for the Weston fishermen and so on.

The Cheapside Market, Sir, that grand structure in my part of the City. I work in Fontabelle. Public funds are going to be spent in bringing Cheapside back to a state where it becomes the hive of activity, Sir, that it used to be many years ago. Again, who will occupy Cheapside, Sir? The small entrepreneurs of Barbados.

This administration has decided that the small persons in this community, Sir, whether they are small business people, or the impoverished, must not be left to stand on the sidelines and look. They must be given every possible opportunity. It is our submission, Sir, that the use of public funds is fit and proper in the pursuance of that particular objective. So that rather than have the *status quo* remaining, Sir, where at Cheapside people sold on the outside, because the inside was not worth going into.

Asides.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: It is open. The place, Sir, is certainly not in a fit state to be used. Therefore, Sir, we will work on that. Also, Sir, right in the precincts of this august Chamber, the vendor's mall at Palmetto Street is another example, for the use of public funds to improve the quality of life and the income generating opportunities for small business in this country, Sir.

We are satisfied that these Estimates will result, Sir, in provision of greater opportunities for wealth and job creation in this society, and all of the positive benefits that that will bring.

Sir, I want to speak as well, whilst I am on this topic of small business, to put the matter beyond any doubt, and also to use the Floor of this august Chamber, to urge the small business community in Barbados to respond and grasp the opportunities that are being provided by this enlightened approach from this administration.

We have done a number of things to improve conditions. We have, for example, provided, again out of public funds, and included in these Estimates, Sir, funds under current transfers for the provision of funding for the Small Business Association of Barbados.

It is unfortunate, Sir, that in spite of all of our best, and we will continue, Sir, we are not daunted by delays and so on, but of a target market of 10 000, in terms of the possible number of small businesses that there are, that the Association has now been able to handle its affairs in such a manner, that they are able to attract the majority of those persons as members.

The reason, Sir, why we decided to use public funds in these Estimates for the provision of a grant to that Association and we have done that since 1995, Sir, is that we recognise that modern societies, in fact, traditional societies as well, but human societies really function largely on the basis of having symbols and icons and various things to represent other things.

We cannot conceive of a private sector in Barbados where other aspects of the private sector, for example, there

is a specialist agricultural organisation, there is a specialist hotel and tourism association, there is a specialist manufacturers association, there is also a Chamber of Commerce and Industry, but there is no similar institution of any strength and stridency representing the interest of small business people in Barbados.

Therefore, Sir, we decided that we will give support to the efforts of small business persons, Sir. The Small Business Association has been around since 1974. However, it has had a bit of a checkered history, and we have decided that it is necessary for us to plough some resources into that Association, not only financial but we also use our professionals to show them the way, so that they can build an organisation which is strong, which is dynamic and which small business persons in this community can look to of being of their very own. One where they are in the majority. One which they own and they control and therefore be able to develop that additional sense of pride. It is not just enough to do things for the sector, but you must put the sector in a position where it can do things for itself.

We have provided funding out of the public purse to assist them in getting their Secretariat going because you cannot have an effective organisation going without a secretariat to handle the day by day activities.

We have also embarked them on a number of projects to enhance the level of services which are provided. We eagerly look forward to working with them on one or two projects which we are discussing with them to get them involved in the rehabilitation of Bridgetown.

Touching quickly, Sir, on some of the other key project areas which are the subject of these Estimates, Sir, is the area of Housing.

The demand for housing, Sir, has been a major feature of the Barbadian society for many, many years. In fact, if you were to do a priority listing of the things which Barbadians consider to be important you will find that housing is very, very important. It gives a sense of independence and pride. So much so, that you will find a feature of our society is that, growing up in the rural areas, for example, where one would have families living on the same plot of land, the drive towards independent housing is such, that you could have on a one acre or a half acre lot, grandparents, parents, and each of the four children having separate houses on the same lot. That is the Barbadian culture.

12.05 p.m.

Government, therefore, in recognition and in appreciation of that, must respond. It is unfortunate that in spite of this demand for housing over many years that there was only one housing activity conducted in the 8 years

of that administration and that was the provision of the housing units at Church Village in St. Philip. That was not a low income project. It was \$90 a week.

If the demand for housing was high before 1996 and nothing was done between 1986 and 1994 to satisfy that demand you can imagine the pressure, the pent-up demand which exists with respect to the provision of houses. But we have jumped to the task manfully. We have used a creative mix of policies in the provision of housing in this country since 1994. We are doing a number of things. Housing units have been provided at Maynards in St. Peter. Refurbishment work has been done on a number of existing housing developments where nothing had been done for a long time.

We have also recognised that the average Barbadian still sees renting accommodation in terrace units as temporary until he can get his real house. One of the chief components of our strategy which we have used to enfranchise Barbadians and to help them to have that pride and feeling of belonging is by embarking on a vigorous sites and services programme where the Government through the National Housing Corporation will acquire land, put in the necessary infrastructure, roads, agriculture and so on and either make those lots available to persons on a rental basis with option to buy somewhere down the road.

The reality is that private individuals are no longer involved in that and that has been going on on a very aggressive basis. We can point to Haggatt Hall where that is done and, in fact, as I mention Haggatt Hall a further set back in our ability to provide housing for those persons who need it has been the deliberate advice on the part of persons in high places to tell people, they should go there, and there was no problem in going there, to put a house.

As a result of it, Sir, persons have put up structures in zone 1 water areas by the Belle and these places. Persons have gone and put up housing in areas which have been known since there was a Barbados as prone to flooding. The water courses in various places and the various dry ponds and people were told they could put a house there.

At Haggatt Hall, for example, part of the area there is to be used to resite persons from the Belle. There are persons in Sweet Bottom in St. George who were in zone 1 water areas. They will be resited at Groves. It goes on and on. We have done that.

Also Sir, we have recognised that there is some responsiveness developing in the private sector and the National Housing Corporation has embarked in a number of joint ventures with private builders to provide a number of housing developments.

There is a lovely housing development with 2 and 3-bedroom timber houses at Bournes Village in St. George which was done jointly with the private sector. Again, recognising the need to ensure that development has both a social and economic dimension, we have been able to build on the existence of established communities so that by acquiring land on the fringes of established traditional communities we will be able to provide an additional 10 or 20 house spots, maybe, sometimes only 5 or 6, but you are building on an existing infrastructure. You are not disturbing established relationships so that your provision of housing does not in anyway create new social problems that would have to be dealt with by other agencies.

We are satisfied, Sir, that we have been able to satisfy the requirements of persons for housing in Barbados. Even at this early stage and with the aggressive programmes that we have in place we are satisfied that that important component of the country's business will be properly taken care of through the use of public funds as provided in these Estimates.

Again, Sir, another important project which will be occurring this year, the matter of public transportation has been a vexing issue for some time. This is one of the areas where social and economic development collide. We had a situation developing in Barbados where with the deterioration of public transportation over the last 5 years or so, persons have been finding it difficult to get to work. You cannot keep a job if you cannot get to the job. The Government has decided therefore to ensure that funds are provided for the Transport Board. In this case, not by way of burdening the Consolidated Fund but by way of providing guarantees for separate financing for the provision of a new fleet of buses in the Transport Board so that again persons will be able to live wherever they want to live in Barbados and work wherever opportunities present themselves in Barbados.

Again, Sir, these are some of the examples where this administration recognises that social and economic policies are very much intertwined, that we can achieve at one and the same time a development of a strong dynamic economy, that we can provide opportunities for the creation of wealth, for the creation of jobs in the society while at the same time ensuring that we are able to ensure that the social harmony for which we have been known continues. In short, Sir, that social cohesion continues to be a characteristic of Barbados, to ensure that individuals continue to feel that they have a stake in Barbados by recognising that persons like themselves have opportunities and to ensure that the disadvantaged in this society are taken care of without in anyway using approaches which will result in being a disincentive to work.

12.15 p.m.

So they must make the point, very clear, Sir, that the Government is not proposing that people should be rewarded for not making an effort. But certainly that where, there are still needs to be met that the society is in a position where it is able to provide some assistance, Sir.

So indeed, I wish to commend this Appropriation Bill, 1997 to this Honourable Senate, and Sir, present as well the Estimates which form the Schedule to the Appropriation Bill. This Bill, Sir, seeks too within the constraints of fiscal prudence to ensure, that the foundation of wealth, of economic viability and stability that we have so far in these two years become the platform upon which we can address issues of equity and social justice, Sir.

We expect that as a result of the policies which we are implanting and which will be financed by and large by the sums which are indicated in the Appropriation Bill, Sir, and which are spelt out in details in the Estimates that we will be able, Sir, to continue to build a Barbados of which we all will be proud.

I therefore, Sir, beg to move that the Appropriation Bill for 1997 be read a second time.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 1.30 p.m. today.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 1.30 p.m. was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the sitting accordingly. 12.20 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This sitting is resumed.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I sat quietly for some time and listened to the Leader of Government Business exhaust the two hours allocated to him trying to put a case for his Government. As I always say, Mr. President, I view a debate on the Estimates a very serious debate. I believe it is a time when the Government is coming to the people of Barbados to report to the people on its plans for the allocation of the resources in the country. I believe it is a time for the people to determine whether these allocations are really done in their interest. Whether they need to be addressed by way of the allocations under the particular Heads in Government.

The Estimates delivered here in 1997, I find rather interesting, particularly the tone of the Estimates. I do not

believe that I am hearing Members of the same Government who over the past eighteen months or so whenever members of the Opposition party touched on poor people in this country had made all kinds of remarks, mockery at the fact that we found poor people in Barbados and even at times when the members mentioned the word poor they would refer to poor black people. They thought that the Democratic Labour Party was concocting a term and that this was not a reality in Barbados.

As a matter of fact, in a debate on television last year, I heard the Prime Minister of Barbados say that he did not even want to hear the words poor black people used. Then on another occasion I read in the Press where the Prime Minister said: "Show him a poor black man with US\$100 million to invest in the economy." So I really cannot believe that today this Government of Barbados would come to the public of Barbados in a bold fashion to say that it is attempting to address poverty and so that its budget for 1997 is all about poverty alleviation but we will deal with that as we go on.

As I listened to the background of the performance of the economy and I heard the Leader for Government Business say that we have returned to our 1989 state I could not help but say "Well, praise God!" Because when the Democratic Labour Party said to Barbadians that the economic programmes, which we are going to put in place once given time to work would return this economy to its financial state of 1989, people in the Government in the Opposition Barbados Labour Party were saying it is not true.

As a matter of fact when we said there was a light at the end of the tunnel the Barbados Labour Party said it was like an oncoming train. When the Prime Minister of Barbados at the time was saying to the people of Barbados that he could see this growth returning to this economy within a short period of time and that the economy would return to its state as at 1989 the Barbados Labour Party was saying "Never."

So I felt pleased although the Democratic Labour Party is in Opposition today to see that the programmes which we put in place, some of which caused some hardships, – but sometimes we have to make sacrifices to realise gains and today as I sat and I listened to the Members of the Government side gloat and rejoice about the benefits realized in the economy I said "Well, you know something, this is the sacrificial lamb."

Sometimes some have to die for others to live and the Democratic Labour Party has lost and today the Government of the Barbados Labour Party can rejoice about the gains in the economy brought about as a result of the programmes implemented at that time. I am pleased as a Barbadian who intend to live nowhere else but in

Barbados. I am very pleased that our economy is in a healthy state today.

There are some factors present in the economy which concern me and as we look at the contradiction, because on the one hand we are hearing about the growth, the bountiful growth in the economy and on the other hand, there is the poverty and poverty is not a state for me which can be addressed overnight. It is not a state for which a Government can just throw money and get a result. Poverty, in order to be alleviated and eventually eradicated calls for great structural changes, because we are dealing with people. We are dealing with the lives of people and when you are saying that people are experiencing poverty we are saying that they are not able to look after their basic needs, food, clothing, shelter, health care, those things that bring comfort and peace of mind to individuals.

So therefore, as we address these Estimates the question is asked how in these Estimates has the Government of Barbados set out to address the basic needs of these individuals in our country who are experiencing poverty? I have heard of sums of monies, grants to individuals. Is this an overnight feeling? An instant thing? Is it something you can deal with one shot, wave a magic wand and get a result immediately? I say "no."

1.35 p.m.

I say that any Government of Barbados or anywhere in the world that is serious about addressing poverty and has not put women at the forefront of any such programme is making joke. Therefore, I do not see anywhere in these Estimates any attempt by the Government of Barbados to address the plight of women in this country.

We have the evidence here that in Barbados 44 per cent of households are headed by women. The evidence is also here that unemployment is highest among the women in our population. The evidence is also here that our women are responsible for, in addition to looking after our homes and our children, the elderly. They are responsible for moulding the characters of many. Therefore, I believe if Government is serious about addressing poverty it should start with the women. I do not see here any special allocation in the name of women. As a matter of fact, I have heard comments made about women and the Women's Department which disturbed me a bit.

Mr. President, the Bureau of Women's Affairs in Barbados needs strengthening. The Bureau of Women's Affairs in Barbados is in need of proper staffing. I think we must admit that over the years the Bureau of Women's Affairs has positioned the Government of Barbados that it can now boast regularly in the international arena of the gains women in this country have made.

All the research work is done by the Bureau of Women's Affairs in Barbados. It is the Bureau of Women's Affairs which reach out into the rural districts of Barbados and train young women and men in an area which developed in our economic life recently and which is growing significantly, that of preserves, jellies, jams and such. Such a programme was brought about through the efforts of the Bureau of Women's Affairs.

Today, in our economic statistics Barbados can boast of increased exports in jams, jellies and other preserves as a result of the work of the women, all trained on the programmes conducted by the Bureau of Women's Affairs. It is the Bureau of Women's Affairs which took the poor women in this country nobody thought about and introduced them to certain basic skills to enable them to help maintain themselves and their families. They have been addressing poverty at that Bureau for a very long time.

Would you believe that a Government that is embarking on a budget which, as it says is catering to poverty alleviation, a Minister of that Government cannot go today and take a representative of an organisation from overseas to that Bureau and sit in comfort? There is no maid service in there. That Department is dirty week after week. There is no messenger service in the Bureau of Women's Affairs. Sometimes the staff in that Department themselves have to go and prepare things to offer people when they are holding meetings. There is no one. They have to borrow a maid service sometimes from the Government Department in order to make the place tidy to accommodate individuals who may want to visit the Bureau, and we are talking about a poverty alleviation programme and the improvement of the lot of women in Barbados? We cannot be serious.

I sat on the National Advisory Council of Women for four years and we drew up in that Council several projects which we believed could be implemented by Government over time and put them into the mainstream of economic life.

We identified a programme of networking within Government Departments so that through the Ministries of Labour, Health, Community Development, Sports, Education and Culture women could be drafted into the mainstream of things in this country and their contribution could be really felt. I think, Mr. President, that any Government of Barbados that is really serious about poverty alleviation in this country must get down to the drawing table, take the women of this country into its confidence and work out a programme, a medium and long term programme involving the women of Barbados in order for us to not only alleviate it but eradicate poverty.

I think it is very important we understand that community life is a very vital factor in any poverty

alleviation programme. I do not believe we are talking about welfarism when we talk about poverty alleviation. I do not believe this Government wants to take Barbadians back to the days when people came in line, got a cheque and got a little hand-out here and a little hand-out there.

I am going to credit this Government with the confidence I have in myself and my party that this Government intends to empower people that when it is talking about poverty alleviation, it is talking about strengthening people, building their self-esteem and their self-confidence to the extent that they want to improve their lives.

A good example of a programme to alleviate poverty was implemented under the Democratic Labour Party when we gave across-the-board sponsored education. What that did was to empower Barbadians for life.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Just a moment, please, Senator. Each member of the Senate will have an hour to speak. Please allow Senator Thompson to be heard. Please continue.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Thank you, Sir. That is a real programme targeting the alleviation of poverty. I am saying that handing monies out and improving welfare grants and things of this nature, they help. I would never put them down. They are necessary but I want to see a plan, a programme which addresses people because at the end of the day we are talking about alleviating the hardships that people confront each day in their lives. These Estimates, I am afraid, nowhere in here have I seen how such a plan can be developed. The Government of Barbados has to draw up a plan. It has no plan and it must come with a plan.

The other area that concerns me is, if we are serious about addressing poverty, the health service of this country... Poor people cannot afford to pay for health care and the Government has to make sure it puts at the disposal of these individuals the best quality health care. The health budget of this country is the largest budget in these Estimates. I believe it is about \$207 million, an improvement on what we had for last year.

If we are going to manage this \$207 million the way we managed the budget last year, the Government has a lot of questions to answer. Why is it that for the last three months of 1996 not one major piece of diagnostic equipment was working in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital? Why is it that very old patients remained on a bed for weeks to get a cat scan done. Why is it that very ill people remained for weeks to have an ultra sound done. Why is it

that the hospital had to use the equipment of a senior member of staff of that hospital from his private clinic? 1.45 p.m.

I know because I went through six weeks running up and down with my grandmother who was very ill in the hospital. She remained on a bed for two and a half weeks before she could get an ultra-sound because her liver had packed up. I offered to pay to have the X-ray done at the private clinic because it appeared as though she was going to die. I pay so much tax and still could not get the quality service my grandmother needed at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

How long is this going to persist? When is it going to be possible for all the sick people who go to the hospital to get the medication necessary to treat their ailments? I watch poor people taking prescriptions and having to get them filled on the outside at private pharmacies because we do not have the drugs in the Q.E.H. to treat our out-patients.

Is this how we intend to spend a budget of \$207 million? Is this how we intend to alleviate poverty in the lives of the poor people in this country? How much longer will our old people have to wait to get proper bed linen in the Q.E.H.? They have no top sheet to cover their cold feet in the evening. This is the hospital that we are talking about. Doctors say to me that you can no longer come to the Q.E.H. in confidence and expect to go back out well or even to live. This is happening at the Q.E.H. which has gained the reputation for being the best health care institution in this region. There are medical patients scattered all over the hospital, medical patients on surgical wards, medical patients on orthopaedic wards.

There is a case in which a young woman went into the hospital for five days, bleeding internally, until her haemoglobin reached 3 and she had not seen a medical doctor up to that point. She almost died. How much longer are we going to have these types of situations in a primary health care institution in this country which has gained a reputation for being the best health care institution in the region.

If we are serious about addressing poverty and about alleviating the conditions of poor people, these are the areas we have to zero in on. People are getting surgery at the Q.E.H. and no longer can they be expected to recover and come home. Even the common elastic stocking for the legs to ease the circulation are not available. You hear "surgery successful, patient dies."

These are the matters we want to have addressed, Mr. President, as we talk about poverty alleviation in this country. This department has the greatest chunk of

our national budget in these Estimates. If we are talking about poverty in this country, we have to address these issues. It is painful. People who can afford to pay do not have to bother about these things.

We were told that millions of dollars would be available with the closure of the St. Joseph Hospital. This money would be available to improve the health care system at the Q.E.H. I watch food pushed around in trolleys at the Q.E.H. between 7.30 p.m and 8.00 p.m. for sick people in the Q.E.H. The end of visiting hours and food now being pushed into wards to feed sick people. Are we really serious about their recovery? What exercises can they do to have this food digested when they are fed at this late hour? This is an area to which \$207 million is being allocated.

Mr. President, I am saying to the Government of Barbados that poverty alleviation is a buzz word. Worldwide it is being spoken about, but I want to see real action. I want to see the Government of Barbados make serious structural reform. Do things that people can do, feel, and enhance their lives. Changes that are sustainable and for the general improvement of the livelihood of Barbadians.

I have a secret, and it would not be a secret anymore. This talk about poverty alleviation is all about putting the wheels in motion for general election. The Government of Barbados, with the economy bouncing back and growing at the rate at which it is growing, now finds itself in a position to throw some money into the economy to give people some spending power, to have itself re-elected so that by 1998, the Government of Barbados can call a general election, it would not wait until then to throw the money out, so it is starting from now.

I am saying to the people of Barbados that if you get assistance from the Government, take it because you need it but you must be reminded not to allow the Government to feel that you are so foolish that you do not understand an election gimmick. That is what it is – an election gimmick.

We have a White Paper on education – any programme that is addressing the alleviation of poverty has to look at education. No one will deny that our educational system has served us well over the year. A lot of poverty experienced in this country is by people who “fell through the cracks”. A large number of our young people have gone from first to fifth form in secondary school and are still not employable. Some cannot write a proper letter of application and some are not even trainable.

We have to look seriously at our educational system even after the White Paper has been introduced and make

sure that the system addresses this problem. There were days when our fore parents went from primary to seventh standard and they came out to hold their own in the society. We know of teachers who spent no more than from infants to seventh standard and who are now excellent teachers. There are business people who have not gone further than seventh standard.

How is it that after spending so much on education and building so many schools and introducing so many different subjects on the school curriculum, that such a large percentage of our young citizens are not employable? The question we must ask is “Are we really providing an education that is catering to their needs, that is preparing them for the real world?

1.55 p.m.

If we are really serious about addressing poverty we must make sure that our educational system can put out individuals, creative individuals, individuals who can respond to the changes around them, individuals who feel confident, who can deliver themselves well and who are prepared to take up challenges. Let us not fool ourselves about this.

We criticise the American system of education. Yet if we take a 12-year old in our so-called first grade schools in this country alongside a 12-year old in an American institution and we put each of those children to speak on the same topic the American child would mince up the 12-year old Barbadian child. It is a fact. They can express themselves well. They carry a self-confidence and even though their English language is not the Queen's English that we speak in Barbados all the time, they are much more impressive and can sell themselves better. That is the kind of Barbadian we need to produce. We need to produce Barbadians who can hold their own in any part of the world. You will discover that what I am saying is correct.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Lynch I do not want to hear that word again. It is the fifth time I have heard it.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, I listened to the Leader of Government Business talk about small business. I did not hear him too sweet on manufacturing because I believe he was told on several occasions by members on his side that with trade liberalisation and the reduction in the CET that the challenge to the manufacturing sector of Barbados would be great. Therefore when Government boasted of the \$5 million incentive given to manufacturers, I think it was last year, or the end of the year before, and when manufacturers boasted that they had this great injection in the manufacturing sector and they were going to create this large number of jobs as a result of this incentive, and when the Opposition said it was not true and it would not

work, everybody said we were crazy. It was doom and gloom, we did not want to see things happening. But today, what are we hearing? There is decline in the manufacturing sector. I think 2 or 3 weeks ago I heard of another manufacturing operation that had closed its doors. What is it really that we expect of manufacturing? Do we really expect to compete in the export sector? Is that what you want? Are we into manufacturing because we want to reduce our import bill in the area of manufacturing? Why is the Government of Barbados encouraging its people in manufacturing? I would like to hear a firm policy statement on that. I would like to be very clear on the role of the manufacturing sector in the Barbadian economy in 1997. I need to understand that.

The small business sector is a sector that I have a great interest in because I believe that in order for us to have proper distribution of wealth in this country that a larger percentage of our population must participate in the business sector. I firmly support that view and any Government of Barbados which embarks on a programme which facilitates the small business sector I have no quarrel with that.

The Pelican Village project. I have heard about the changes and all that but the question is, after we have done all those things what are we going to do to make sure that the tourists go there? As I understand it, at present they bypass that area. After we have made it physically attractive what else are we going to do to entice them, to draw them to Pelican Village? I have heard about restaurants. Is this restaurant going to be catering mainly to Barbadian dishes? Are we going to do something that we boast was done at Oistins, Baxters Road? What are you going to do? The Government of Barbados must come out with a creative plan for getting tourists to make their first stop at the Pelican Village. So I do not believe that refurbishment and attractive shops is all that it would take to bring business activity back to Pelican Village. There is a bit more that has to be done. From this side I am not going to give the ideas to Government. When you are in Government you govern and I look forward to the success of that Pelican area.

I think that we are placing a whole lot of emphasis on tourism and we are expecting a lot and maybe too much from tourism. I would like to suggest that we in Barbados throw out alternatives to tourism. We need it, yes. It is a major contributor to our economy but I am not sure that with the present climate, ship-rider and all that, and the mouthings of those Americans, that our tourism product would be as safe in 1997 and 1998 as it has been in the last 2 years.

I remember the year the American Government put out the advisory about its people's safety in Barbados and the projections for tourism for that year. The project is so

fragile. The level of volatility is so high that to take our economic future and to firmly hinge it to a product that is so fragile, is very bothersome for me. I think that if we are really serious about the alleviation of poverty and sustainable growth in the Barbadian economy we need to start and look seriously at alternatives to tourism.

2.05 p.m.

I watched those people on television. Barbados in international terms is just a little drop. We are a proud people and we have conditioned ourselves to feel good about ourselves, to feel great and we really see ourselves as very important powers. We see ourselves as power breakers in the wider world. That is true, that is how Barbadians feel about themselves.

I am sure many of us, as we listened to what we consider to be completely ordinary people on that television station, "Talk about Barbados," it makes you wonder, if it is really possible that a people and Government who treasure their island so dearly that somebody can say "and you better be careful that you are not decertified by 1998 that Barbados is not decent."

What are the implications of decertification for Barbados? How is it that we can be such an important little Nation, such a proud little Nation and one act of decertification by a higher power can push us back into some shell, because once they open their mouths and talk about us it gets into the travel bureaus in all areas and the people are not going to want to come to Barbados.

Americans love their country. We watched them at the Olympics, as soon as their National Anthem is played, the way they stand at attention with the tears in their eyes. So if their Government is not happy about Barbados they are not coming here. Let us not fool ourselves about that. Who are we when America is vexed with us?

The point I want to make is this, we must not hinge the lives of our children and ourselves on that tourism product, and we need to think about that.

Now the climate in Barbados is bothering me and it has bothered many. In recent times we have heard a lot of talk about investor confidence. I heard the Leader of Government Business say, "because of investor confidence a lot of the foreign exchange that is coming into Barbados is going toward projects," not loans, but projects and that has to do with investor confidence.

The question I want to raise is, what happened at Almond Beach? Does that have anything to do with investor confidence? How is it that Barbadians who made the decision that they want to be a part of this tourism sector, that they want to contribute in some way to

the growth of the Tourism Industry, why is it that today they are out there asking these questions? Why has this major company withdrawn its interest from Almond?

A number of ordinary Barbadians, some of whom have never purchased shares before, I encouraged a number of my clients to buy shares in Almond, because, I said to them, "this is your opportunity to participate in an area in which there is projected growth". I said "once you see Shipping and Trading get in there it means there is growth in there. Go in there and buy some shares". That is what I said to my clients. I encouraged them to buy some shares in Almond.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Perhaps, Senator, you can tell us how this is relevant to the Estimates debate.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Now, Mr. President, we are talking about the business sector in Barbados, we are talking about our economy, we are talking about growth in our economy, investor confidence in the economy and all these things hinge on such.

Mr. PRESIDENT: On a wide and liberal interpretation.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: We have sold local interest to foreign buyers so that is an injection of foreign capital into the economy, Mr. President.

Let me say this. This is a question I want to pose on the Supervisor of Insurance in Barbados. Over the years Barbados Shipping and Trading has been considered by the Government of Barbados as a prescribed investment for life insurance companies. As a result all the major life insurance companies in this country have purchased significant numbers of shares in the Barbados Shipping and Trading in the interest of the thousands of policy holders who walk the streets of Barbados.

The question I want to ask the Supervisor of Insurance today, since the Barbados Shipping and Trading has been liquidating its assets, because it got rid of its duty free part of its assets last year and it has now gotten rid of its shares in Almond today, since it is liquidating its assets, does the Barbados Shipping and Trading still qualify as a prime prescribed investment for the policy holders' funds in life insurance companies? I want that question answered by the Supervisor of Insurance.

We have to be serious about these things. There are other companies in this country which are performing well in which insurance companies can invest the policy holders' funds. The monies do not belong to the insurance companies. These monies belong to the ordinary citizens of this country who walk these streets and who have placed

their confidence in insurance companies and have accepted that the companies are going to act in their best interest.

If they are going to invest money in a company which is going to bail out on them, then we have to ask a question. Can we continue with them if they have deserted us, and the notion that this deal has not gone through? Let me share with the members of the Government side some of the implications for this deal not going through.

A Government like Barbados at this stage, with all the goodwill in the world decides to intercede, will send a signal to the same international investors that it would not be able to cope with.

The first question these international investors will ask is this: Is Barbados now embarking on a programme of nationalisation, why is it that you cannot dispose of an investment at will in this country and how is it that a Government can intervene like that? That is a question that an international investor will ask. They will want to find out what is going wrong with the investment climate in Barbados. I know that the Government of Barbados may not want to see this deal go through, as much as I do not want it to go through either. I await its intervention and I hope that in the interest of the ordinary people of this country, some of whom for the first time in their lives have purchased shares in an investment, that this deal will not go through.

I noticed the Leader of Government Business talked about the release of \$6 million in funds. I think he said it was to assist in individual support with the VAT. I am not sure if this is an additional sum in addition to those sums realised during the Prime Minister's address earlier in the year or if this is a new sum of money. The question I want to ask the Government is how soon can we expect Government to address VAT on food, particularly locally produced food, because, that is a major concern to people.

We are talking about the alleviation of poverty, but since the introduction of VAT, the disposable income of a number of Barbadians has been reduced significantly. Although there are some among us who would want us to accept that you lose here, you gain there, you gain there you lose here and at the end something has smoothened out. The fact is that the gains are not being passed on to the consumer.

I have been asking individuals, "have you seen a reduction in this? Have you seen a reduction in that?" "This should go down on the goods that we are told prices should go down on". These gains are not being passed on yet. I fail to believe that somewhere in the stockrooms of business of Barbados there is still this large volume of old stock to be disposed of and that they have not yet gone

into their new stock. That does not sound like the businesses I know in Barbados.

I am hoping that we will see this consumer body. I heard the Leader of Government Business who is the Minister with responsibility for Trade I believe, say that there is going to be this consumer's agency. This watch dog agency of Government which is going to make sure that this particular area is looked into.

I want to see that agency get to work very soon, because on the one hand, while they say they are alleviating poverty, on the other hand we are going to see some people who are becoming poorer, and the numbers of the impoverished will be increasing significantly. So this is an area that I really want to see the Government take a serious look at.
2.15 p.m.

I heard the Leader talk about training for small business people. I want to make an appeal for the beach and street vendors of Barbados who make an honest living in the way they know. Sometimes some of them come over to us as though they are not as polished as they should be. But you go into areas of business in which people are trained and the attitude is no different.

For the sake of the future of these individuals and their families, I would like to appeal to the Government of Barbados to make sure there is a programme of training in human relations, in inter-personal relationships, teaching people how to deal with rejection. Every salesman has to learn to cope with rejection. Rejection is a natural part of the territory of a salesman. I know. That is the life I have lived for the last 18 years and we have to teach people how to cope with rejection.

We have to teach our beach and street vendors to understand that the people who say no to them do not dislike them, they do not intend to be rude. It is just that what they are offering they do not need at the time. They have to learn how to turn away and accept that they did not win this one today but they may win the other one tomorrow or the next half an hour. Some of them really get very rude.

They are a part of our tourism product and sometimes before the tourist gets into a store in Bridgetown to interface with a well made up, smiling female clerk he or she has already encountered a coconut vendor or a nut vendor on the streets. I would like us to make sure that we spend some time grooming these individuals.

I believe also in its attempt to make sure that all the sectors are going to help to alleviate poverty that some attention should be paid to the ZR workers. I had a very

frightening experience last week as I attempted to get from the St. Michael School to Queen's Park. That road back of the Constitution through which the ZR vehicles pass, John Beckles Drive, when those guys get bumper to bumper on that road all traffic is blocked from either direction. No regard whatsoever for the other road users of this country.

I believe that we have to make them understand because we need them and we want them to be able to make a living. We do not want them to be welfare cases. We do not want them to commit crime in order to make a living. We want them to remain in regular economic activity in this country.

We have to try to culture them a bit. We have to get them to understand that you do not have to work in a bank or a big high-rise building to be at work and to display good manners as they interface with the public. That is another area in which I would like to see Government make sure that some training is done.

Mr. President, to me the Estimates with their so-called poverty alleviation thrust has a lot further to go in order to address the real problems of poverty alleviation in this country. The Ministry of Agriculture is an area in which I think the Government must spend some time because food is one of the basic requirements of human wealth. I am very pleased to see that we are improving in our non-sugar agriculture and that Government is very excited about the growth in the sugar industry because this is one of the areas restructured by the former Democratic Labour Party administration and for which we took a lot of blows.

Today, as I sat and listened to Government boast about projections in sugar and how much sugar will contribute to the economy in the future and especially in the next 2 years, I really felt pleased that we took action to ensure that the sugar industry could not only be rescued but could be put on a sustainable path of improvement and growth.

I would like to see us get more of our young people involved in the area of agriculture. I think that we have not done enough in this area. Maybe it has something to do with our pride. As I read some Caribbean writers on Barbados they believe that we have been so proud that we have decided to abandon the land.

I think in order for us to alleviate poverty and for us to grow economically we have to produce more of what we eat at home and, in addition to that, we need to produce food that will allow us to make a greater break through in the export market.
2.25 p.m.

I notice that the women of Barbados have been doing very well in this area, in the production of preserves, gooseberries and other fruit and fruit crops, and I would like to see more emphasis placed on taking out a lot of our waste land, particularly, in rural Barbados and making it available. There are some young people in rural Barbados who would like to get into agriculture but who do not have access to the land. I think that through the Ministry of Community Development, Youth Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture, a proper programme can be developed in order to make sure that our young people, particularly those who have an interest in land, that they can be allowed to get back to agriculture.

I do not believe that they should be kept away from it because they do not own their own land. This is an area in which I would like to see some emphasis placed in Barbados.

The Informatic Sector. We were told that we would create about 10 000 jobs. I heard of 10 000 jobs, I believe, that we would create in the Informatic Sector. I have not heard of any companies coming to Barbados recently in this sector.

Now the Minister is in here, I believe Senator Goddard is going to give us an update and I would really like to find out how we are doing in this area. The other thing I want to find out is the level of wages paid to the people who work in this sector. I would prefer really not to have them sometimes, than to take our young women and put them on buses, sometimes two buses a day, to go to work, to buy lunch, and then at the end of the week they have very little to live on.

We have to be serious about this. I do not believe that we should target those areas of the Informatic Sector which cater to those rock bottom wages. I think we have spent so much money on education in this country that we should be able to attract businesses that look for people who can produce at other levels in the Informatics Industry. I do not want to see us return to the days of the early garment industry and the other electronic industry age paying people minimal wages that all they can say is that they are going to work but they can do very little with what they earn. I would like to hear from the Minister how are we doing in the area of Informatics and what type of businesses are we attracting to Barbados in that area?

I have a lot of discussions with those young women who say to me, what if I had children? They say that they would like to buy insurance. They are not sure what their exposure to all these computers are doing to their health. They are not sure, they are asking questions and if they do not live too long they are not in a position to die and leave anything for their offspring.

We need wages and salaries that people can in addition to buying basic food and clothing, that they cannot only save but provide some form of security for their dependents. That is an area I would like us to address.

Another area that concerns me is the area of information. I heard the substantive Minister say that he is not happy with all that he is getting from CBC. Now we had the debate recently on the state-managed corporation, but I hope the Government would come up with a workable policy for the CBC. I hope that we do not believe that Direct TV is the answer to the way which the CBC ought to play in this country.

I hope and I am going to repeat it today, that we will work out a good local programming plan that will help to enhance the self-image of the Barbadian. When you turn on your television, you see too much of other people. You do not see enough of yourselves. People need to see a lot more of themselves, to have a visual of themselves. We need to reinforce more and more in the minds of our people the type of Barbadian we want to cultivate. I am very serious about this. I want to see CBC television rise to the occasion that on the one hand, while it is allowing people to have access to other channels of the world it would make sure that they can take some time out and tune in to things Barbadian.

We need balance and I do not think we can contribute to the destabilisation of our people. I am appealing to the Minister who is sitting across from me here, smiling, to make sure that very soon he will put in the hands of the staff of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation a well drawn-up Government policy on the role and the responsibility of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation in this independent state.

Mr. President, I have gone through the Estimates. I have gone through this document. You see, the problem we have with some of our young politicians, they do not understand that the Estimates are about people, about their lives and the quality of their lives. The Estimates are about GDP, GNP, and deficits, and percentage growth and all that. That is not what the Estimates are about for me.

When I take this document up and I see one and a half billion dollars allocated to different Heads in Government my responsibility is to make sure that at the end of the day these allocations are going to improve the lot, the lives, of those many Barbadians out there who are looking to the Government to the management of their affairs.

So for those who believe that because I did not take up this book and talk about \$10 million for this and \$15 million for that, that I did not address the Estimates, I say "Sorry for thee." I am in these Chambers here to ensure

that the needy, that the depressed, that the vulnerable and that the disadvantaged in this country, that their concerns are addressed by Government in these Estimates.

Those individuals who have and are well off, they do not need me because at the end of the day they can buy whatever they want, whenever they want it and in as many quantities as they want to have it. So these Estimates which are supposed to be drawn up around a policy of a poverty alleviation programme of the Government of Barbados, I would say have not addressed the alleviation of poverty.

The Estimates have gone down the same course they have taken over the years and with the exception of the close to \$40 million, because it is a \$10 million allocation under the Head of the Prime Minister for poverty alleviation, but I have noticed under different Heads in these Estimates, a \$6 million somewhere yonder, a \$5 million somewhere else, a \$10 million somewhere else, grants to individuals, grants to institutions, this for urban renewal. At the end of the day it is about monies being spent in certain areas and it shows me quite clearly that the Government has embarked on a programme for re-election to the office of Government of Barbados.

So, Mr. President, let me repeat. If this Government is serious about the alleviation of poverty in this country, I expect the Government of Barbados to make sure that a programme for the full integration of women in the economic activity of this country, is drawn up and I expect it very soon.
2.35 p.m.

I will continue to ask questions about it because we cannot alleviate poverty, I repeat, unless we make sure that our women are involved. Therefore I listen and I will continue to listen throughout the evening for Government to put its case and prove to me that it has a plan for the alleviation of poverty in this country.

Thank you.

SENATOR THE HON. Miss O. P. SYMMONDS:
Mr. President, after listening to the last speaker I feel compelled to shed an inborn modesty and to clarify some facts.

Now, over the years, I have taught hundreds and hundreds of children English. I did a post graduate course in Education and one of the subjects I studied intensively was comparative education so I have a pretty good knowledge of American education, and I have visited American schools. Therefore, to say that a 12-year old American child is far more fluent necessarily than a Barbadian child is to generalise dangerously. When it comes to writing, the Barbadian child is far more advanced.

I know because we have had to send transcripts time and again. I am not trying in any way to belittle an American child, far from it. That is one of the first points I want to clear up.

Then as Deputy Chairman of the National Commission on the Status of Women I want to say that the Barbados Labour Party struck a blow for women when it set up the National Commission on the Status of Women in 1976, the service by the Bureau of Women's Affairs. We laid a report in Parliament. There were 212 recommendations. Almost all of them have been implemented. Our report has served as a model throughout many islands in the Caribbean, and that is undeniable.

I would also like to mention that I was the first Chairman of the National Advisory Council on Women which again was set up by a Barbados Labour Party Government. I worked along with the then Director of the Bureau of Women's Affairs and the then President of the National Organisation of Women who clamoured for more consideration for women in agriculture with which we all agreed and there was action and more action.

I want to remind the last speaker that it was a Democratic Labour Party Government who put 14-year olds out of school. I took back some of those 14-year olds. It is very important because these are the women. Education is one of the ways by which poverty is alleviated in any country. Without education there cannot be any progress and that is something one has to note very carefully.

I also want to state that it is this Government that has provided more places in the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and in the Barbados Community College while the destruction of the Skills Training Programme has been caused by the reduction in the length of training periods.

Look around and see the firewomen. Look at the female sanitation workers. I was driven yesterday by a female taxi driver. All this is to point out how the status of women has been improved, and I could go on and on.

I am not forgetting that we are dealing with the Estimates and here I want to congratulate the Minister of Finance on his shrewd, humane and circumspect management. Thanks to this, the economy is strong. The future is bright.

I want to state too that the character of any Government may be measured by the range and quality of its social services so that is where you begin in uplifting women and bettering the whole society. This administration is in the process of revolutionising the concept of the social services. It is evident by the commitment to making the provision of services relevant to the needs of people

in need, as our leader said when he spoke. It is well known that a study of the social services is now being undertaken. This is another instance of determination to raise the study of care.

Then, if you look at the Estimates you will see that allocation of resources to various social service agencies has been increased. This is another example, increases in the Welfare Department, the Child Care Board, the National Training Board, and Youth and Culture in the Ministry of Education.

I want to point out that there are new initiatives in the allocation of the Child Care Board that has been increased by \$250 223. The Child Care Board first of all is introducing a national certification to be launched in May. This is to establish and maintain a high standard of child care in both Government and non Government child care facilities. They are also bent on a programme of stratification and this is important, this question of stratification in the Children's Homes, on the basis of age, status of development and other special needs.

During, and I am sure that some of you might have heard this from the Director of the Child Care Board, the last seven years the Homes have become almost unmanageable at times. Infants and toddlers are being abused by older children, both physically and emotionally. Some members of staff are even intimidated by older children. That is something which it is important to do something about. This stratification will ensure that adolescents are exposed to a programme especially suited to their needs because some of these adolescents come from environments where they are exposed to violent treatment and are also exposed to indiscipline. Obviously, their association with younger children can only be to the detriment of vulnerable younger children. Again, this is one of the ways in which the danger of abuse in women can be minimised.

2.45 p.m.

There is increased allocation for NGOs especially those who have been salvaged during the period 1990-1994. The Thelma Vaughan Home which was in danger of being closed, can now be restored through a subvention of \$120 000 from the Child Care Board. The Minister of Finance has also pledged to meet the deficit of NGOs who are providing services to the public. This should lead to an expansion of social services and the establishment of new services. All these things are important when we are talking about poverty alleviation.

There is the rural development programme which was spoken about before. I will not go into that in great detail. I want, however, to go on to speak about certain areas in connection with education. I could not possibly talk without talking about education. I note the emphasis on training in

fields including industrial arts, music, arts and crafts, home economics, mental retardation. I understand that next year, CXC will be introducing an experimental examination in music. This should do a great deal to give music a greater status. For many years as you know, one of our secondary schools have had some musical programme and this year its sixth form is going to enter for "A" levels. The CXC examinations, like the one in Britain, will require much course work and much instrumental work.

At academic level music is perhaps more difficult than any other subject. I feel strongly that every child for the first three years of secondary school, should be exposed to music. If only based on the aesthetic principle. This should be part of a structured programme, which should include theory, practical performance and composition. Presently there is no national curriculum on music. I am sure that the Minister of Education, with her usual zeal and insight, will deal with this matter since there must be a recognition of the universality of music and the exposure to indigenous music.

I should also like to see us return to having the inter-school music festival biennially or triennially. Although there is a wider interest in musical performance nowadays and fine performances by the National Youth Orchestra and by school bands, there are still many parents who do not take music seriously. Something needs to be done about that.

I am happy to observe that chess is being introduced in primary schools. My colleagues are laughing but I will explain the values of it. It is recognized internationally. The benefits that can accrue are both recreationally and educationally. In some Latin American countries, chess is on the curriculum. I am not advocating that it be placed on our overloaded curriculum in school but there is one school here where it is included in the curriculum and I think this is a good thing.

Again this reveals our concerns for children and their esteem because chess improve communicative skills and logical skills. It combines the virtues of individual and team sports. It teaches logical skills and helps the ability to concentrate. This is very important. One has to make a choice and live with the consequences. This is very important in our community today. Children enjoy playing chess, it is cheap, a set of pieces can last forever. Perhaps most important, it can give a child self-esteem and confidence. There are examples of these incidences in many schools in this island where children who are not academic and who have had problems are encouraged and through success in chess has been given esteem.

I also wish to praise the National Sports Council who has started this programme. The administrative staff of

the National Sports Council can all now pride themselves on being computer literate. They are attending classes at the Barbados Community College where there is an associate degree programme for coaches. They are also spending more time with specialised groups.

I should like, however, to see a more structured programme relating to physical education. There is a need to treat physical education as a curriculum subject with specialised P.E. teachers and equipment. If P.E. were more structured in primary schools, I think that Barbados would produce even better athletes. When children reach secondary school their hand and eye coordination is not developed. They do not understand the importance of exercise and they should be exposed early and become involved in the whole question of health, sickness, family life and injuries. Again, I am sure that these will be done eventually through the Ministry of Education.

Another area which I have been looking at with interest is the continued decline of interest in foreign languages, especially amongst boys. They do not appear to be comfortable with the subject and even if they plan to make a career of something scientific, life should consist of more than just exposure to a limited career.

We are one of the most prominent tourist destinations in the Caribbean. It is our mainstay and Barbadians should be proficient in at least one foreign language. I have mentioned this before and I think it needs repeating. French, Spanish, German, Italian and Portuguese, all these foreign languages must be de-mystified. There should be a wide publicity campaign to make this society aware of its benefits. Even though English is the *Lingua Franca* it is not a majority language in the wider Caribbean. The Caribbean is a community with a multiplicity of languages and I think we need to do something more about that. We need to convince parents and adults of its importance. What is compounding the problems with boys is that they regard good language, including English as being effeminate, not macho, and female foreign language teachers far outnumber the male teachers, so there is no role model.

2.55 p.m.

Boys must become conscious of the fact that the learning of foreign languages broadens horizons. They learn about other countries and gradually they are exposed to the literature of these countries. It is also necessary if trade and freedom of movement are to be effective. So much of our budget is spent on education that I think it is important in considering the Estimates to look at these things.

When it comes to television, again I wish to say that parents need to be more careful about what their children watch. There needs to be parental guidance. We have to accept, as I said before, that there is globalisation. We have

to accept the fact that we now have latch-key children who are not under their parents watchful eye for much of the time and therefore it is important that they place some quality time, however tired they may be. They can tape the programmes that are full of violence and the erotic almost pornographic films and use those as educational tools just as we have to do sometimes in literature and point out the rights and the wrongs. Unfortunately very often in many of these films the villain is made to look like the hero and even the cartoons themselves have become so full of violence that the young children are nonchalant. They see nothing wrong about violence because to them it has become a part of life. I think this is something which adults, teachers, parents, the church, all have to make an extra effort to see that something is done about what has almost reached crisis proportions. I do not think it is any point blaming any one person and I do not think that we can stem the tide of progress but we must have some sort of action akin to what is happening and I do not think that enough is being done and people are just throwing their hands in the air and wondering what to do.

Years ago there were films where people used guns and things like that but somehow the hero was always a good "guy" and the villain always paid the price. The moral law of the universe always prevailed and of course those were the days when children were going to Sunday school. They were taught the Ten Commandments and values were instilled in every possible way. Today that is no longer so. But I still feel that television with a number of programmes that are educational can do a great deal of good but there must be monitoring by parents and adults generally. With those words, Mr. President, I am obliged to you.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Mr. President, it seems that nobody in this Chamber is very interested in the Estimates debate.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I do not think you can say that, Sir.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: That is just my opinion, Sir. It does not carry much weight. I rise in this debate at this time to really try to put a lot of what has been said by the Members in the Chamber who have spoken, particularly the Opposition, in the correct context.

The whole concept of revenues and expenditure is obviously linked to show not only what Government intends to do over the next fiscal year but also how Government intends to implement their programmes and how the hard earned dollars of the taxpayers of Barbados are to be spent.

I wish to begin, Sir, by saying that as Parliament is obviously one of the Heads in this programme it may be

necessary if we also look at the whole concept of how the Estimates debates are carried on within the Chamber.

I, Sir, particularly am convinced that the debates go on and we seemingly lose a lot of what should be discussed under particular Heads in the Senate. I believe, Sir, there is a need to re-look the whole concept, under Parliament, as these Estimates are allotted to the concept of how we deal with the discussion in the Upper Chamber regarding the calling of Heads. I believe, Sir, that there is a lot the Barbadian public needs to know about the Estimates debate and I believe, Sir, the time allotted to the Senate to discuss these issues is not the correct time. I believe we need a lot more time to discuss Head by Head, particular issues and particular Heads as they relate to the productive sectors and to the social sectors. I believe, Sir, we lose a lot by not being able to defend our position on each individual Head as they come up.

The other concept, Sir, that must be addressed and I do note that we are voting money for the Constitutional Review Commission and other committees as such but there must be some concept of reviewing the Constitution as it relates to how Ministers of Government within the Senate actually have the opportunity to defend their own Ministries on the Floor of Parliament in the Lower House.

I think there is a need also for the Constitution Review Commission to look at this because I believe these Ministers of Government need an opportunity to defend their own Ministries on the Floor of Parliament in the Other Place.

Sir, when one looks at how we have dealt with the Estimates this year it is pretty obvious where this Government intends to go and how this Government has carried on its programmes over the past 2½ years. Obviously what needed to happen first was that this Government, whether or not the Opposition claims that there was some wicket prepared, and I have dealt with that already, because they were the ones who messed up the wicket in the first place, they come here every week with this self-righteous concept about preparing a wicket. They destroyed the wicket. If they called in someone to fix it and then we got a chance to bat, that is their business.
3.05 p.m.

The wicket, if it is good or bad, the concept is that the batsman at the wicket at the time, has got to bat, because if he does not bat properly we are going to lose all of our wickets again.

This Government of which I am proud to be a part has suddenly stabilised this economy and did not need any IMF, we simply worked out our own Structural Adjustment Programme. It is home-grown, it is born in Barbados, it is a home-grown programme and who does not want to agree

with it cannot agree with it, but the Structural Adjustment Programme is home-grown.

There are two phases to this programme. The structural adjustment part obviously has been done and born by this Government. But Sir, what is the Government really, really doing?

We have looked at many of the issues concerning how we deal with Barbados and where we need to go. The Government has taken particular pains to look at certain sectors of the economy. Sectors that we understand are the sectors that are indicative and will indicate positive growth in the economy. When you look, Sir, at the productive sectors and look at what has been happening particularly in: 1. The Tourism Sector, 2. International Business and 3. Informatic Sector obviously the Government is committed, has looked outwardly, taken a good macro look at what the world is serving up to us out there, to see where Barbados needs to position itself to take advantage of what the global economy is serving up and then, Sir, look inwardly at how we can best position Barbados to take advantage of what is out there.

One of the major plans of this Government's programme has to do with education. For one thing this Government has taken a serious, serious look at poor secondary education. There is a substantial amount of money that goes into the Ministry of Education and the concept is, Sir, that too many of our people were leaving high school, and leaving school without proper certification.

We have looked at the whole concept of how tertiary education is carried on in Barbados and not only at the UWI but also, Sir, at the BCC, and at the Polytechnic, at the Hospitality Institute and what has been allotted are monies where numbers of students coming out of high school can now go onto some form of post-secondary education that prepares them into the future to be able to take their rightful place. Not only the concept, Sir, I have heard it has been said in here about the jobs and the creation of jobs.

This is a Government that took up a Government that already had 24 percent of unemployment. At the end of 1996, the unemployment rate has been reduced to some 16 percent in Barbados.

It obviously means this, that some virtually 12 thousand or 11 thousand and something jobs have been created since the Barbados Labour Party has been in power.

A lot of people talked about whether people have disappeared off the streets or not. The thing is this, Sir, the ones that have been certified, the ones that can receive

jobs, the people in Barbados who already, Sir, were in a position to work and who have been either sent home or in some other way dislodged from their professional positions are now once again able to acquire some form of a job.

The obvious question is that those people you see liming, and I heard the Opposition made mention of liming on the street corners, obviously there are a lot of people in Barbados and the Minister of Education has expressed this point, that have not been certified, that does not have a marketable skill, that do not have any form of certification, where are they going to be employed? There are just X amounts of menial tasked jobs that can be done.

You cannot send a fellow to the Polytechnic or cannot send somebody to the Hospitality Institute.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Mr. President. I am hearing the Senator refer to the Opposition as saying that we talked about people liming on the street corners, Sir. I listened very carefully to the contribution of my fellow Senator and at no time did she make any reference whatsoever to the group of people whom he is referring to as liming on the street corners, Sir. I wish that you would direct the debate in the correct way, Sir.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: I just want to clarify, I do not know why these people do not let me talk.

The whole concept is that for the longest time whether it has been said in here now, or whether it has been said before, or whether it is said in the public domain, lots of people ask with the job creation that the Barbados Labour Party Government boasts, why are people not off the streets and why have I not seen the guy disappear from my street corner? Sir, I am making the point that many of the people who have been certified and the people who are able to take up jobs have obviously been employed during the time that the economy has started to expand.

There are a lot of other people out there who were dislodged at some time during the whole concept between 1991 and 1994 and whenever it was, and these people are not certified. They have no marketable skill. Who is going to employ anyone who obviously has no skill or education and the concept is getting those people back into the system. That is why you see money has been voted, Sir, for the whole concept of creating better programmes at the Polytechnic, better programmes at the BCC, being able to go in now to study at the Hospitality Institute without having all of the three CXC's or whatever else that you are asking for. To get people once again, integrated back into the system where these people can be certified and then go on to add some value to any organisation, that is the concept. A lot of these people could not, Sir, work anywhere else.

In terms, Sir, of the whole concept of how the Barbados Labour Party went about its programme of expansion, full employment was obviously used as one of the means. This is the whole base, full employment must be, or reducing unemployment to negligible proportions must be one of the plans upon which any economic development is stated.

Obviously, Sir, there was a need to do a lot of things. Substantial labour market reforms were needed. There was a whole concept of productivity and income distribution. The whole concept of creating a better form of social well-being for Barbados was a plank of how the Government wanted to carry on with this program. In that time, Sir, Government had placed its effort in places that needed support: Tourism, International Business and Informatics. But, Sir, there were also other areas.

There is certainly, Sir, the computerisation of the corporate registry and the police department and the foreign ministries. There was, Sir, equipping of schools with computers that fits in again with the frame-work of how you get people back into the system. So there is the whole concept of post secondary education. There is support for local business, there is high value added exportable services that need to be pumped and pushed by Government and the high tech industries. But then, Sir, obviously, what is happening is this.

As you are placed and you are dealing with the whole concept of a trickle down, one knows that if you at any time intend to support a business class with the concept that most of what is going to happen is going to trickle down, we obviously need to correct the imbalances somewhere along the line.

This is where, Sir, the whole concept of the commitment to the social services comes in. Barbados is a country in which, even though there are some people living very, very affluent lives, Sir, Barbados is a place, Sir, that even though people in the business class are living "high on the hog," Barbados is a place, Sir, in which there are many middle class people, but at the same time, Sir, many people have slipped through the cracks.

The cracks were big between 1991 and 1994. The cracks were so big that a lot of people slipped, and a lot of what we were doing to resolve the whole concept of poverty alleviation, a lot of it was created during the years of 1991 to 1994.

Anybody in Barbados who does not want to identify with that is pulling the wool over their eyes. I want them to wake up, to wake up and smell the coffee. That is the reason why you see, Sir, that in this country a lot needs to be fixed and a lot needs to be put in place to resolve the entire issue of those people who have slipped through the cracks.

But how do you bring the people around? The Government talks about voting \$10 million for the alleviation of poverty in some way. I have no qualms with saying that I agree in some measure with Senator Thompson when she talks about the whole concept of how women should be brought into the loops. But at the same time, Sir, look at the commitment that the Government is making under the Estimates to certain areas. \$5.6 million to the Welfare Department in these Estimates right here. \$8.3 million to repair tenantry roads.

3.15 p.m.

Now a stabilised economy, you come back on stream and then you can start to loose your hand. This is not about winning an election. This is dealing with the poor and the destitute and these people who were in before, bankrupt of ideas and bankrupt of the way to govern Barbados and bankrupt of money too, have no concept of ideas of being able to put themselves in any position to deal with the poor and destitute.

\$5 million to the Disability Unit; \$1 million to the National Training Board; \$.85 million for education for children at risk; \$50 million for the management of solid waste; \$45 million to improve coastal areas. All of these things the Government is spending money and the problem is that you have to deal with the people who at some time or the other would have been dislodged from where they were and need a helping hand.

Would you believe that it is easy to come here and to say that this Government is trying to win an election. This Government has been charged with taking care of every Barbadian citizen and this Government is doing the best that it can.

Sir, there are obviously areas that need to be dealt with and areas which cannot easily be dealt with. I heard the talk from the Opposition about the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation and I believe that when you talk about voting monies or backing monies for any Government statutory corporation especially the CBC, I think that one of the things that we need to be careful with is this call for the riddance of the CBC. I have heard calls for people to get rid of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation.

This is the one area in which we can once again have an entity to look at and preserve a lot of the values that we hold dear in Barbados. I have heard a call that is very topical now about kill it and let it die and I know before anybody jumps up there have been calls publicly for killing and getting rid of the CBC.

I want to say rather than privatising the CBC, rather than wholesale getting rid of CBC what we need to do is

take a very long and hard look at the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation.

The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation is an entity that has served us in Barbados well. The Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation is still, in my opinion, the best TV station in the entire region. You only have to travel a little bit throughout the region and you will see very clearly. Watch the CBC evening news one night and go to any of these territories in the English speaking Caribbean and look at television and you will see.

The CBC is not being all that it should be. When I hear people talk about bringing... I have heard people say that we must put more local programmes on the CBC. The CBC is supposed to function as a government statutory corporation. It is also supposed to be a commercial entity, which means that the CBC has to pay its way in the world.

One of the problems that we have is that earning revenues at the CBC for local programming has never been an easy task because the business sector of Barbados has never ever been in vogue with sponsoring anything that is local on the CBC TV and I say that without reservation. The people who control the advertising agencies and the people who control the big businesses in Barbados are not very apt to sponsor anything that is local on television.

Sir, I believe that the CBC can be a little bit more creative in the way in which it goes about acquiring sponsorship, one of the things that is much easier to acquire foreign programming than it is to put together a local programme. The local programming unit at the CBC is a big unit which as far as I am concerned is not meeting all the requirements but at the same time we are still in some way reflecting the pride in what we have.

With the advent of multi-choice TV and the other direct television I cannot understand how anybody in this country would want anybody to privatise totally the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation because we need to look at the whole concept. It was only on Saturday that I had the opportunity to watch two programmes on the Multi-Choice and to see HBO Ole. You see three movies at any one time and one of the first movies had to do with a woman being locked up for embezzling money or doing something or the other, the second one had to do with somebody taking out an insurance policy on somebody and then throwing him off a cliff to get the insurance money. The third programme had to do with 2 brothers killing somebody. All we saw on this thing was violence and killing.

I had a serious experience when I lived in Puerto Rico. During the time I lived there the two major cities in Puerto Rico, San Juan and Ponce, with the advent of cable television in Puerto Rico became two cities with the

most homicides per capita of any cities in North America, more than Chicago, New York or L.A. or anywhere else. Just with the advent of cable television.

I think that Barbadians had better be careful how we walk about talking about ridding ourselves of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation wholesale. There is some progressive programming on Multi-Choice and Knowledge TV but Barbados had better be careful how we deal with the whole concept of getting rid of the CBC.

We need some development programming. We need some indigenous programming but Government has to make itself very clear and articulate a position that if we want to create something along the needs of the public broadcasting system, the PBS in the United States, that we as a government, that we as a people, are prepared to pay for it.

At the same time, be very careful about how we tell people and there have been a lot of people who have been calling for the getting rid of the CBC. I am saying people talk about the model we are following and I have heard this concept of a Singapore model of economy that we have tried to emulate and be part of, but one of the things that they have been able to do even though a lot of people say it is a kind of autocratic government that kills people's rights and everything else, one of the things that they have been able to do is to preserve, even if they force, a lot of the values that we hold dear.

One of the ways in which we can influence the minds and the thoughts and the behaviour of this new generation is by creating a model for the CBC that we pay for, that we underwrite to be able to preserve it, that the people of Barbados can feel proud of. We can underwrite it to the advancement of the people of this country.

If Barbados is to move forward, and there is no doubt in my mind that the Singapore model even though it is an economic model has a lot of social channelling that has been able to create and parallel the whole concept of economic growth. If Barbados is to continue on the same path I am warning and I am pleading with the Government and with the Minister not to be led down any path about wholesale getting rid of the CBC from this country. The CBC has a role to play in our economic future. The CBC has a role to play in our social future. What the CBC needs to do is to come up with a concept for restructuring that puts us on the correct growth path. I will not join anybody. Give the CBC a chance!

The one other point I want to make before I finish with the CBC is the whole concept of MMDS and the service. I was very disappointed that CBC would have started to market the MMDS service not being sure that everybody in Barbados could have received the signal. We

have already frustrated people in Barbados regarding the STV project when it was first started and I know that we need to do something about the whole concept of what I consider to be an outmoded type of system.

I believe we need to correct the whole concept of where the engineers went wrong. If repeaters were supposed to be put into Barbados we should have put the repeaters in before we started to market the service and not run around trying to compete with Barbados Rediffusion Services Ltd. and Direct Television until it was done.

Sir, again I say you must laud the concept that the CBC wants people to have an additional service and wants people to look very carefully at what they are doing.

Sir, I want to move on to what is most topical and I do not think that anybody in this country can say that tourism has not been performing well for Barbados. Obviously, there is not everything right with tourism.
3.25 p.m.

There is never everything right with everything but the tourism sector has been performing credibly to date. One of the problems that we have regarding the tourism sector Sir, is that we have not yet finished a whole policy regarding tourism. I see, Sir, here in the Estimates on page 85 that we are looking at spending \$37 million on the Barbados Tourism Authority again. Last year tourism arrivals escalated even above 1995 and I think we are somehow approaching the best mark that we used in terms of the 1989 top when we received 462 000 long stay visitors to Barbados. The whole thing is that I still do not believe that all we need to do in tourism is being done. There is a lot that has been accomplished but I believe, Sir, that too much emphasis has been placed on the whole concept of marketing Barbados.

We spend an inordinate length of time dealing with the marketing of Barbados and the policy issues regarding what we want out of tourism, where we want to go in tourism, what we need to get out of tourism are not being addressed to the fullest.

Sir, I laud the Minister for having created a concept of a more private sector approach to how the Barbados Tourism Authority is run. The Barbados Tourism Authority needed an injection of private sector blood to be able to get it to work. We need some answer because I am still a little bit peeved and ticked off about the real exit of one of the officers from the infamous dream team at the BTA but at the same time one must laud the Minister about trying to inject some private sector blood.

I do not believe, however, that just by injecting public sector blood into the BTA and not changing the system

under which it operates that we are going to achieve a lot. It is my understanding, the officer that left the BTA left there in a state of frustration regarding how the BTA was run and the whole concept of the decision-making. Obviously, the Minister is well placed in her position to deal with the concept of BTA and dealing with it being a more private sector run agency.

The problem is that tourism is the only industry in this country that competes on its own global competitiveness. Tourism is the only one that nobody is subsidising or creating a playing field for. Therefore the decisions that are made in tourism have got to be swift. They have to be commercial. They have to be decisions that are made on a daily basis with officers having the ability to do what they want to do. We cannot treat the most important industry of this country and put it in this bureaucratic time-wasting delayed system of decision-making and the way in which we deal with it. We are dealing with a business and tourism has got to be treated like a business.

There are some positive developments that have been created. Obviously, Sir, the creation of specialised skills at the BTA. There is an increase in collaboration between the public and private sector which has been fostered by the Government and the Ministry of Tourism in particular. The creation of our think tank which invites both the private sector and the public sector to sit together to create tourism policy is indeed a step in the right direction.

There has also been the concept too, Sir, of creating the long awaited development plan and the tourism development plan for Barbados. There has been some experiments too, Sir, in the private sector to the whole concept of funding because I do not believe, Sir, that enough money is being spent in the whole concept of how we deal with tourism but at the same time the private sector itself has been able to produce some very, very interesting numbers.

I believe, Sir, and I heard the spokesman of the Opposition say today, she did not use these words but I think it is akin unto putting all our eggs in one basket or looking at somewhere in which we can always look for an alternative to this industry which is so fragile.

The potential for tourism performance in Barbados given the competitive environment is limitless. We have not even scratched the surface yet about what we can get out of the tourism industry. If you take time and look at what the World Travel on Tourism Council has said about tourism and travel into the 21st century, the potential for growth is something globally in the region of something like, I think by now and the year 2000, almost 25% and even more in the Caribbean where a lot must be done.

Obviously, the other sectors of the economy were faced with the removal of all these preferential arrangements and the whole concept even in manufacturing, Sir, and the Common External Tariff. There is no way that Barbados can talk about putting its eggs in one basket, about this being as fragile. There are lots of industries that are fragile. The banana industry is just as fragile. If some hurricanes rip through here tomorrow and the canes, we are burning all the canes. This sector is the sector that is going to take Barbados into the 21st century and we can believe that. One thing that we have got to be able to do is to position ourselves in a way that we make optimum use of what we get out of the tourism sector and that we also have alternatives. Because for example, if we put up a lot of hotel plant anywhere on the south coast or west coast or whatever, and anything was to happen, that there is alternate use of that plant and all of the resources that are dedicated to tourism, which can be used in another way.

So obviously, what the tourism sector serves up to us is the concept of foreign exchange, employment, but also the linkages, the demands for goods and services that is provided by the tourism sector in Barbados and it is, Sir, the mainstay of our global competitiveness. But I want to say this about tourism also. Those of us who have been trained in the discipline are very clear that apart from marketing there are some very, very fundamental issues that we need to deal with in tourism in Barbados and which I believe, Sir, that administration after administration has not been paying enough attention to. That is why I believe that a lot of this money that has been voted in these Estimates needs to be voted in the future for the strengthening of the Ministry of Tourism.

The tourism industry in Barbados will go forward on four planks – institutional strengthening, human resource development, marketing research information and Sir, the addressing of linkages that have to deal with the tourism sector. Areas which are natural linkages in themselves are areas which are linked to tourism. We are talking about environmental links, we are talking about agricultural links, we are talking about social and cultural links. These are the areas in which Barbados will go forward but we still spend this time dealing with marketing and we need a clear articulated national policy on where we want to go, what we want to get out of tourism, how much we can put in it, how much the government is willing to deal with, how much the private sector is going to deal with and we need to get into the whole concept of bringing the private and public sector more closely together when we deal with the whole concept of tourism.

Our current marketing position is skewed all over the world. What we need, Sir, is to create a consistent and easily recognisable brand in the market place as it relates to tourism. There is a lack of integrated programming. There is inadequate use of our marketing resources.

There is too much duplication and lack of co-ordination within the tourism sector. There is this antagonism that is constant between the public and the private sector. There is the slow speed of decision-making but, Sir, what we need to do is to bring Barbados together and the constraints of doing business are too much restricted by the financial rules that we have got to deal with in an industry which needs to respond quickly and which needs to depend on a lot more than it is depending on right now.

Sir, I know that the whole concept of the ownership of the industry will come up and I am going to deal with the ownership of the industry as I go along. In recent times Barbados has seen an exit of many of the international chains in tourism. This is not the fault of any government. I think, Sir, that obviously, government can do a lot to help correct the problem but we are seeing the exit of some chains. We have seen the exit of Divi in 1991. We saw Cunard move out in 1993. We saw Heywoods in 1993. We saw Marriotts in 1996 and then we also saw the Fourtail Group move out.

When these entities move out of Barbados what happens is that our branding, our name, the whole concept of international marketing where we are placed, what these people do for the whole name of Barbados obviously goes along with it. One would say that down at Heywoods or Almond what you call it now, down at this hotel that a Barbadian company stepped in to take up the hotel. But I want to say, Sir, here clearly in this Chamber for everyone and for the public of Barbados to know that that chain could not have done anything with that hotel had it not been for the taxpayers of Barbados. They rode on the backs of the taxpayers to be able to acquire the hotel in the first place because what it was purchased for was about a third of what it was even worth.
3.35 p.m.

They turned it around, riding on the backs of the taxpayers because if it had a debt, we obviously had to bear the brunt of the debt, but we then gave them all the hotel aids tax in the world, all the concessions in the world for refurbishment, rebuilding, for whatever it is. When they were going to sell, when they went public and they started to split their shares and the securities that the shares called for, what they have done again is, on the taxpayers back they were able to double these shares now and go to the public.

When we bought shares in that hotel, we bought shares with the understanding that they had made a commitment to moving forward in tourism. The ownership of the industry, the ownership of tourism in Barbados is very important to each and every Barbadian. This is not about any managing director. This is a bigger issue than that. This is an area that relates to the ownership of the

industry that is going to propel us into the 21st century. This is a concept of ownership of industry where we know that tomorrow if Senator Thompson buys the hotel, I know where to find her, that she will not just pick up her bags tomorrow and then the next thing you hear she is in South Africa or somewhere. She lives here, she makes a commitment here and she should be here. This is a bigger issue than that.

I know the Prime Minister has been very clear about his role in this whole issue about how he deals with this issue. I am saying here, Sir, and I want it to be very clear, there is something called ethics and morality. There are a lot of legal implications but something that is legal is not necessarily moral or ethical. We have to deal with the concept of Barbados that keeps the ownership of a lot of what we do in the hands of Barbadians.

I will tell you, Sir. There are 6 000 rooms in this country. Two thousand, five hundred of them are on the west coast of Barbados. There are prime rooms in this country. Of those prime rooms you will allow one entity to control maybe 3/4 of that room stock, an entity that we may not know as they may pull out of Barbados. It has a lot of implications because when you really go down the road they may sell it off tomorrow and put up some petroleum thing or something in the middle of the sea. I do not know what they intend to do. I think it is very necessary for us to be able to keep a handle and to control what we are doing regarding these entities.

Sir, where do we go from here regarding the industry? The Minister has articulated some form of policy and the whole concept of how we deal with the growth of the sector. I still believe we need to be able to continue on a path of sustained growth in the tourism industry. There are still some very glaring holes in the industry regarding, for example, hotel occupancies which are still hovering around the region of 60 per cent which means that 40 per cent of our hotel plant is not occupied during the year. There are a whole series of dealings with ownership but also with the south coast of Barbados and the ownership of the south coast and how we deal with that.

Government, obviously, has to make a commitment and has made a commitment with the GEMS of Barbados project to helping the south coast hotels. I believe the south coast hotels need more than just the concept of creating a GEMS of Barbados project.

In this same Singapore model we seek to emulate, one of the things that has been done by their own Economic Development Board is the whole concept of being able to place vital help in the areas they thought needed economic growth. I believe that helping the south coast hotels of Barbados is not a project just about injecting whatever the amount of money is, for a certain level of hotels.

I believe Barbados needs to raise the level of hotels on the south coast of Barbados and the Government needs to be the one to propel the money into helping these people.

I understand the Barbados Development Bank, and I want to explore this myth in Barbados, this thing about people who have not paid back money to the Barbados Development Bank. Of course, there are people who are worthless – it may not be very parliamentary, but it is true – who have taken money from the development institution and not agreed to pay it back.

At the same time, there are people in Barbados who have borrowed money on that south coast who intended to pay back the money and even though tourism went through its peaks and troughs, those people at some time paid back up to twice the principal they borrowed from the Barbados Development Bank and at the end of the time of the loan still owed the Barbados Development Bank 3/4 of what the principal loan was because the Government lent them money at the time, encouraged them to get involved in tourism but never looked back at lending any technical support, and creating an environment where they could securely thrive in, and at the end of the day you tell me the man has failed.

Somebody who employs people in Barbados and kept all those people employed and alive over the past 15 years, and paid back twice what they borrowed from the Barbados Development Bank, you are going to tell me that man is a failure? It is my opinion if after 300 years of parliamentary rule in this country there is not one single programme in Barbados that is geared to right past wrongs, or any economic incentive programmes that deal with helping people up the ladder, we need to create programmes that help those people to get a leg up. If it means that Government subsidises it that is what we are here for, especially in the most important industry of Barbados.

There is not one affirmative action programme in Barbados almost at the turn of the 21st century and we are people who say we are looking after the welfare of all the disadvantaged people in this country. It is about time we create an environment that all those people who have been dislodged and disadvantaged over a period of time we give them a helping hand.

This new entity that is coming to replace the Barbados Development Bank has to go further than just giving a fellow a cheque. It has to go with the creation of an environment that lends technical support. It has to create an environment that helps people up the ladder, that helps to push them and their children up.

Sir, I have called a long time for the marketing side of the Barbados tourism industry to create a public/private

sector company. I am going to make a call again for the creation of the public/private sector agency for Barbados to manage and market Barbados. I believe it is the best way forward. I believe it has to be created again under some serious Government incentives to help push it forward.

I think the Tourism Development Corporation model is a wonderful example of being able to get the private sector to inject some money into the running of tourism. I do not believe this \$37 million here – I know it does not count in the private sector funds – and which I will vote for, can adequately run and market the tourism industry in this country. There is no way that \$37 million can prop up a \$1.3 or \$1.4 billion industry.

I know it is supplemented by private sector funding but at the same time we need to take a very serious look at how we deal with the whole concept of where we go regarding these monies. I believe we need to spend a lot more but a lot of it has to come from the private sector. We need to create an entity which encourages private sector support, which encourages the private sector putting their money into the tourism sector and putting their money where their mouth is.

We can no longer continue to create an environment where we are the owners who do a lot of the marketing and at the same time these – a lot of them pay their way, yes, but a lot of them are riding on the backs of the BTA. The BTA needs to get them out there and get them involved in what is happening in tourism in Barbados and get them to put some money into this entity.

I believe there is a way it can be done by creating the right kind of public and private agency for Barbados that deals with the marketing of tourism. I believe the TDC model, as I said, is a good model, but the incentive, the whole concept of the money that is paid back needs to be stepped up. Rather than saying 150 per cent, we may need to step up to 200 per cent to be able to get the private sector to invest in a Barbados tourism company, a company that can market Barbados.

We also need a fiscal incentive regime to create the international competitive cost environment for operations and a purpose designed financing window to create interest and plug into the tourism sector.

3.45 p.m.

A lot of these entities need to be absorbed into this Barbados Tourism Company or into the Ministry of Tourism whether it be the B.T.I.C., T.D.C., Barbados Hotel Tourism Association; all of these entities need to come under an umbrella that allows Barbados to get optimal use of its tourism resources. Barbados need to create a model, we have always been the model for the Caribbean to follow, we have always prided ourselves on being

the most educated people in the world and all of us involved in this sector need to be able to create a model that the world can follow.

One of the things that pains me greatly is the serious embracing that we give to the cruise ship sector as opposed to the help that we can give to this our indigenous Barbados on the south coast of the island. It has bothered me for a long time and I will say it again. We foreclose on a person's property on the south coast who is creating employment in Barbados but the cruise ship sector which sails 60,000 into Barbados and out of that they only pay 2% of the taxes to the Caribbean region; they source 2% of goods and services out of the Caribbean region. They turn around and employ 7% of the employment from this region. They sail 60,000 cabins a year and have this playground for themselves for the entire year. How much do you think that Carnival or another cruise line would pay for a franchising agreement that gave them exclusive rights to the Caribbean. What could they pay for that right. The cruise ships that come here only 20% of revenue comes from tickets sold. Of the other 80%, 20% comes from the casinos, 20% from on shore excursions, 20% from duty and 20% from drinks and amenities that are sold on board the ship.

The concept of dumping is also something that we need to deal with. I am calling again on the Minister that we need to look seriously in relation to the cruise industry. These cruise liners are built in Italy and the Government put up 50% of the money to build the ship on the condition that the crew that is employed is the crew of that particular nation. The money is given on loan by the Government and adequate time given for repayment.

I want to know why we cannot see the whole concept of creating the environment for subsidy for our tourism industry. What we need in the Caribbean is a Cruise Commissioner where you pay a fee to come into the Caribbean and all Caribbean Governments need to get together on this. Barbados need to propel this forward so that a franchise fee is paid in order to come into the Caribbean.

We also need to look at royalties from the casinos and duty free shopping. All of these things we need to do. We need to meet on all the issues that concern us at the level of Caribbean Governments because it is the biggest scam that has ever gone on in tourism history. Then we turn round and expand the Port and spend millions of dollars to build it. And we would be loathe to give money to a man on the south coast of Barbados to run a hotel, and people tell me, that the man is a failure if he does not pay back the Barbados Development Bank because the interest rate was changed during the time of the loan from 8% to

13%. We need to re-look at the tourism thing in a very serious way because Barbados needs to move forward on tourism.

Another issue I want to deal with is the whole concept of integration of people into the tourism sector. There is a lot of money voted for tourism expansion. One of the areas that needs to be dealt with is how we integrate more Barbadians into the tourism product. Barbados is now the No. 1 for harassment in the Caribbean, the statistics from Caribbean Tourism Organisation will show this. I believe, however, that in Bridgetown they are a lot of people who can be integrated into the tourism product as long as they are psychologically competent. Make them a part of the product and make them appealing to the visitors rather than putting them out of the system. The gross population, the private sector and the government; all of us have got to come together in some way to make this work. If there is any one that has been left out of the system we should try by all means to bring them into the system.

I am appealing to the Minister again to try and integrate a lot of these people into the whole concept of how we deal with this tourism product, if not we will have a lot of Barbadians outside of tourism.

I again laud the Government for allocating in the Estimates \$2 million for the Cheapside Market and \$1.5 million for the Fairchild Street Market. I think it is necessary for markets at all of the ports to be developed in such a way that gives the common man an opportunity to get involved in being integrated into the tourism sector. There are ways and means of channeling them to the Port. They are channeled to Colombian Emeralds and other places so there should be ways and means of channeling them to the Cheapside Market.

Another area is the public/private sector agency that will be created. One of the things that it will do is strengthen the area of tourism. A lot of the \$37 million that is spent in marketing should come from the private sector. This \$37 million is not enough because the private sector spends a lot of that.

3.55 p.m.

I believe there is a lot more that can come in. But I believe that if we strengthen the institution of the Ministry it creates a greater capacity for achieving our goals in other areas, in terms of the whole infrastructural development of Barbados, the opportunity to realise the best kind of partnership between public and private sector. It eliminates the whole concept of duplication and antagonism between the public and private sector and one thing it does, Sir, it gives a higher level of national support for the tourism industry. If we bring everybody together it integrates

people. The only outcome in this, Sir, is the "windows" situation. I know a lot of this is going to cause problems because the last time it was mouthed people talked about the probability of redundancies. People got all up in arms about what is going to happen to the people. I believe that a lot of these people are going to be utilized in a strengthened Ministry of Tourism and even if one is moved from one place you will still be able to be retained in another. So the whole concept of the industry and the ownership of the industry brings me to my final point and that is where Barbados goes regarding not only the ownership of the industry but the ownership of lands that we have got.

There has been a lot of talk recently about how we deal with the ownership of land especially in the major tourism belt of Barbados, and talks about the privatisation of beaches. I do not want to go into any privatisation of beaches because that is the most ludicrous thing that I have ever heard and it cannot work and it will never work and it will not grow in Barbados. No Government on either side is going to support that and we have heard that.

Sir, I want to be clear. I saw the draft Bill because the Sandy Lane Property Owners Association is part and parcel of the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association where I am employed and I did not see in that draft Bill anything about privatising any beach. How that got into the public domain I would like to know but that is not what is in that Bill. I saw the Bill myself. The thing is though, Sir, that the same way that we do not want the privatisation of beaches in this country the Barbados Tourism Authority in its budget last year spent...

Certain remarks made by SENATOR N. A. LYNCH were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. PRESIDENT.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: I am sorry, Sir. The Barbados Tourism Authority in its budget last year spent an exorbitant amount of money on the whole concept of promoting tourism and promoting golf tourism in particular. The BTA in golf magazines and in other magazines spent a lot of money.

In 1993, I think it was, we set up a golf course in St. James called Royal Westmoreland and I want to bring this thing into this debate very seriously.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator you have 2 minutes in which to do so.

SENATOR N. A. LYNCH: Oh dear, Sir, this gives me pain. I will talk fast on it though. Something is wrong with the concept in this country. If we do not want any

private beaches in Barbados we do not want any private golf courses. I want Barbados and I want the Ministry and the Government to look into what is happening at Royal Westmoreland. Royal Westmoreland was bought at market value but we gave them hotel aids tax, we gave them concessions to set up the properties. I do not know how that could be considered a tourism project because first of all some people buy houses and they may rent them or whatever. But do you know that at Royal Westmoreland that unless you are at certain hotels you cannot play golf at Royal Westmoreland. It is not an open course. There are people who are being turned back daily. I have positive proof that there are people who are being turned back daily from other hotels on the west and south coasts of this country who seek to play golf at Royal Westmoreland and I am saying that if the Government is spending money to promote that place and the Government has given them concessions riding on the backs of the taxpayers, it is wrong and I believe it is something that needs to be dealt with and needs to be dealt with swiftly.

Government needs to look again at what is happening at Royal Westmoreland not only in terms of the playing of golf but the whole organisation at Royal Westmoreland. There is, Sir, to my knowledge, that threats have been made against public officials in this country and people from the Barbados Tourism Authority when going to visit that property. One man was told that he should be shot on that particular golf course and Barbados needs to look at what is happening at Royal Westmoreland. It is not fitting in with the tourism product that we want. People come here and we promote golf in Barbados. If you set the price at \$2 million to play a round and a fellow can pay he should be able to pay and play. But when you tell me that you do not allow people on to your golf course in Barbados, if we do not want any private beaches we do not want any private golf courses, it is wrong and it needs to be dealt with.

Lastly, Sir, I will say this. Because of the whole concept of how the Estimates are carried on in this Chamber I cannot believe that an hour has already gone. I had some things to say about health and about sports in this country.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator you will say that on another occasion.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this Sitting be suspended until 4.35 this afternoon.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the Sitting accordingly.
4.05 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This Sitting is resumed.

SENATOR Mrs. V. J. DAVIS: Mr. President, I must confess that I was prepared to speak for a little while but I somehow did not feel motivated to get up yet.

Anyway, one of the things I observed in looking through the Estimates, and there are so many things I will have to say that I commend the Government on. In looking through the Estimates on Page 3, I had to say to myself one thing this Government has been very good at is very efficiently collecting taxes.

From the very beginning I noted that they have been able to increase the amount of tax revenue for 1995 to 1996 and 1996 to 1997, but I see here 1996 to 1997 according to the approved Estimates, they have gotten over \$56 million over the previous year.

Of course, I imagine that this is a two-edged sword as it were, it is a wonderful thing to collect taxes but there might be some people who are suffering as a result of this.

My main interest in this debate on the Estimates, and I put it under my concerns under two headings,

1. Human Resources Development
2. Welfare and Poverty

I will with some reservation commend the Government on what I consider a great improvement on resources for human resources development.

I was looking under Head 34 under Education. For example if you turn to the actual words Human Resources on page 76 we notice that there is something and I was partly deceived by this, because on page 76 we have Human Resources Project. It is a subprogramme and it turns out to be, if you look at 610, 612, 623, 625, 626 on the explanatory notes, I see, this is a human resources project, World Bank. It includes provision for local training of the education project implementation unit staffed under the GOB IBID Project and that is \$7 million estimated but under 626. "Provision for the payment to consultants for contracts for technical assistance component under this project and that is \$71 000. The whole things comes up to \$7 million. When I looked at the Estimates for 1996 to 1997 it was \$3 million so they have gotten double the amount, but my concern here was that the education project implementation was something that one knew very little about.

But, one can assume, and I am assuming this very generously that if it is for local training and it certainly says that, then yes, it is great, twice as much is given into

this project. In developing our human resources actually we are going to be thinking in terms of alleviating some of the problems which we face by unskilled work labour.

I am looking at what I consider elements of this spending in terms of these resources and I query, education, labour and health. I looked at youth programmes and that is under Head 34 on page 82 and I see here that over \$5 million in the Estimates is allocated for Youth Affairs which is over \$2 million more than last year. So, I think that is an improvement.

Then I looked at Labour, under the heading, Head 39 and again we have this spread in terms of where the money for human resources development is going.

Under Labour, Head 39 page 126, this to me is very interesting, very important under the Social Services Delivery Programme, Subprogramme 01 was their department and among the items I see under one line, item grants to individuals that is 314. This is for Grants \$15 million this year as opposed to \$8 million. This is twice as much, but, where is the Prime Minister's \$10 million going? Is it included in all these or is it something separate? This is something separate, but then this is \$15 million as opposed to \$8 million and Grants to Individuals, Great! That is quite an increase. Of course, this must be directly in terms of increasing grants to individuals. I only hope that these resources are going to reach the people who need them, because, we talked about families, and fortunately, we have the statistics to show how many of these are headed by women.

I said this before, and I will say it again that I wonder how much input by women organisations or by the bureau for women input as to how this money is to be spent, because I find it difficult to understand why in 1997 so many women and I know of some personally, who seem not to know where to go for help. They seemed to be concerned about what we might consider basic needs, bus fare, lunch, books and they do not seem to know where to go. You tell people where to go, but it must have something to do with the beauracacy and the red tape. I have actually called the Welfare Department about problems like these, so, I think we have got to monitor this seriously. If we are going to be putting our resources here for people who are in need, we are probably going to have to look at the delivery of that service. So, we might think we are doing a wonderful thing here, but if there is a poor delivery of service, and if, as I said already and I will say it again, I find it a shameful thing that the members of the public and people who are underprivileged or deprived go into offices or go into organisations where they are seeking help and they are treated so badly, there is no regard to their human dignity from us as human beings. It is the sort of thing that we probably have to be careful about the people we pick to work in organisations where they have to face the public to deliver service.

There are the poor who go, and I think that we are all decent people here and we would not like to think that poor people go for help and then are treated the way in which they are treated. So most of them, I think, in the end probably give up or just feel that they have been given a raw deal. So that whereas I am really happy to see some of these increases, we probably have to be more concerned about the delivery of benefits to people.

I was looking also at Labour again, under Head 39, vocational training on page 127. I am saying all these to say that there are things I cannot help but commend the Government for but I also think we probably have to commend all of the people who sat here, because, you know I was looking forward to the Estimates with great excitement, because I remember a year ago some of my great concerns, concerns about money for education, concerns about human resources development, so I was looking forward to seeing, if there is any progress on some of the things? I think in good conscience I say there is some, but I am going to also say that I think some of it is not as adequate as I think it ought to be.

Let us get to the Vocational Training Board that is on page 127, under Labour, Head 39. What do we see here? There was a slight increase over last year.

Then we came to Health, this is what gave me some pleasure, that under Health and the Disabled there is an attempt because I am not satisfied that that is adequate. This is Health under Head 36 on the same page 127, I see "Disability Unit," I see there is a subprogramme here number 3 and it says, the sum of money allocated to it is about \$10 million "Grants to Public Institutions, Structures."

"Subprogramme 4: Disability Unit, Subprogramme Statement: This Unit has responsibility for:

- (a) Providing resources of documentation, materials, aids, adaptations and technical support relating to persons with disabilities.
- (b) Creating a Register of all persons with disabilities, a Directory of Services and Supports available and, a Care Manual to enhance coping skills of Persons with Disabilities and their Relatives."
- "(c) Developing social welfare profiles and planned programmes for each person with a disability in Barbados."

4.50 p.m.

Wonderful! I am absolutely pleased to see that something is beginning to happen for people with disabilities. I think

there is a lot more that has to be done in terms of accessibility and educational material, but it is a start.

The care of the elderly. I put these together because I am looking to see the total effect it will have on the question of the alleviation of poverty. The care of the elderly is under Head 36, page 104. This is where I was a bit disappointed, because under sub-program 05, if we look at the total it comes up to \$17 million.

Last year, we spent \$17 377 490 which is what I consider a slight increase of just \$500 000. I do not know that that would have made all that much difference. I think we have to think carefully about the funding that we put towards the care of the elderly. It is a great problem. Maintenance of property, transport, all the things that we try to do for the aged from one year to the other this \$500 000 could not be all that much in terms of people who are the poor of Barbados, the elderly, the disabled and the youth. I did not think that was such a good grade in terms of the amount of resources.

I thought about the fact that one in 10, that is, if you had 25 000 people who are allegedly living on \$25 a week that is roughly 1 in 10 in Barbados. I totalled up how much money considering that we are thinking about over \$880 million and you do not expect them to get a tenth of the resources but certainly what they have got is far short of anything like \$88 million.

I thought the Prime Minister said \$10 million towards poverty and that might help but I think that if we look at it that we need to do a lot more. I am going to give it a grade of B for a start just because disability is on the agenda at all. I remember disability seemed not to have been on the agenda 2 or 3 years ago. So let's give it a B+.

The problem is going to be translating what is here in our Estimates into the reality of this money reaching the lives of these people and changing the way they live.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: On a point of order, to enlighten the Senator that Government has undertaken a comprehensive study of all the social service sectors to deal with that same problem.

Mr. PRESIDENT: No point of order.

SENATOR Mrs. V. J. DAVIS: I am pleased to know that Government is going to make this study and I am going to repeat. I think that there is room for non-governmental organisations and I can think of many of them right now for input into how the Government even does things. For example, the care of the elderly. Certainly the Soroptomists can help. In terms of the children and families I would like to see places like the Mothers' Union of Barbados... I do not just want to see government structures. I want to

see people belonging to organisations who have to deal with the day to day care of families having a say in how this money is distributed and the care with which it is distributed among people.

While I am passing out kudos to the Government, because I have seen some improvement over the time I have been here, I have seen some of my concerns met, concerns for the disabled, concerns in terms of education. I also saw some money actually allocated to children in crisis.

Sometimes you ponder about the notion that what we do in Parliament is probably not important or meaningless but I am pleased to say that because issues are raised, and issues must be raised, so that people are going to be sensitised to them, unless issues are raised and people talk about them, there probably is going to be no real movement towards helping, changing and ameliorating circumstances.

I have always felt that the only reason why I think I am here is if there is anything I can say or do that might help alleviate the lot of people who are less fortunate that might be the rationale. Over all, I have to say that I do not have much to say today because I am not having any grouses. Grouses will come some other time but I think over all I would like to say that there is a lot that has been good about the way in which the funds are going to be appropriated and hopefully distributed.

If we allocate funds properly and really try to focus on the people who are in greatest need we would be doing a lot to help the lot of ordinary people in this society. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I just want to remind Honourable Senators that the reading of newspapers during a debate is expressly forbidden under Standing Order 37.

SENATOR THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON J. L. SPRINGER: Mr. President, I would like to begin by making a few comments on the plight of the CBC, having been a friend of the organisation for some 8 years, 5 of which I spent as the Deputy Chairman. And it therefore is unacceptable to me to hear remarks made whether in or out of the Senate or in the Other Place that give the impression that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation is on automatic pilot.

It seems to me that as a statutory corporation it is as close to a Minister at all times as any other corporations and the CBC is not one that would distance itself from Ministers or Ministries. It really means that there is a way to deal with the problems both between the Minister and the people involved, that is to say the people who are on the Board.

When we identify problems at the Corporation that need to be addressed I think it has to be seen as a joint effort and not something that we can blame on the staff members who are there. I know that much was said about the failure to advance the cause of local culture and I think that that is a fair criticism but there are reasons and one reason for example might well be that the Board is not sure or made to be sure or allowed to be sure of where exactly they are heading. If they are not sure then they cannot apply themselves to the task as they ought.

I said that, because along the way we have been hearing stories about completely privatising the Corporation, and that did not come. We have heard of partial privatisation which started during the time I was on the Board and that came to an end at some point.

We heard remarks about the Corporation being government owned entirely, that is to say, reverting to a position where it would be more like the civil service. That is a view that I myself held because I thought that an institution that was identified as one that had to perform the triple task of entertainment, information and education, these three things, would need to be as clear to the people who are responsible for advancing the culture of the country.

5.00 p.m.

I see a picture of an institution that is in touch with the Ministry of Education for example, where it is not allowed to flounder and fail because of inadequate funding but where funds are provided to enhance the culture content of the Corporation. I think that is a way to go.

It is not surprising that when people attempt to carry out coups and so on, the first thing they do is to get hold of a radio station because of its importance to the society. I think that we should be very careful if we fail to treat the Corporation as being unimportant to the country.

There are some other reasons why the cultural component is not advanced in the way it ought to be. One of the reasons is the absence, I think the Honourable Senator referred to this, Sir, the absence of local sponsorship. Local businesses prefer to sponsor overseas programmes. They even go for overseas ads that could well be provided here and could be provided by the CBC. So that my appeal is not just to government but to businesses as well, to recognise that they have a role in advancing the culture of the country.

There are some other snags that the Corporation has. No doubt the Minister responsible will deal with some of these in answer to some of the charges made. But there are some others and one is that the Corporation does a lot of work for a number of other corporations and is not paid

by these institutions for the work that it undertakes, work for the Government Information Service, work for the National Sports Council. They run news and ads and so on for which they are not paid. They also look after obituaries for the general public.

Asides.

SENATOR THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON J. L. SPRINGER: They are now paid for that? All right, okay, sorry that one missed me but I know there was a time when it was a public service. Religious programmes are free. Time to sing has gone on for a long, long time and those of us who are aware of what TV and radio is all about know how important time is. Time given away and not costed is important time and I think that if the institution is required to function in that way the funds must come from elsewhere. Therefore I think it would be government who would have to look for ways and means of taking up the slack in that regard.

A couple years ago, Sir, a very serious thing came to my attention. It was this and I remembered it today because someone in speaking made mention of this. The need to get back to the tapes of important events and cultural events and the remark was made, Sir, that there are certainly in the Archives. But except things have changed in the last two or three years they will not be in the Archives because after three months those tapes are reused. They are erased and I think that something has to be done about it. At that time we tried but we ran up against people saying the budget did not allow for the number of new tapes that were to be provided and so we have lost a lot of culture, a lot of cultural events. Even if we have sponsors for them the material might not be there. Then there was some unsatisfactory way of dealing with those tapes that were kept for a while longer. I think there has to be a policy that says that one must not destroy tapes of a cultural nature for a period of time or not at all. That needs to be looked into.

There are a couple of other things I wish to mention, Sir. The other has to do with the derelict houses in the community. Some attention was focused on them in recent times. I am sure I heard the Deputy Prime Minister referring to the need to do something and I have been hearing other persons speak of the need to remove the ones that are useless. This is a matter that must concern the Ministry of Health as well as the Ministry of Housing, I would think. Some time ago there was a decision taken that the houses would be removed by government and de-bushing and the cleaning up of all of the premises would be undertaken and the persons responsible would be billed. I do not know whatever happened to that project. It might not have been the fairest way of dealing with it but it was a stated policy which seems to have come to nought. And I refer to that because I think something has to be done

because these old houses are hazards in the neighbourhood. They breed rats and mosquitos. They have been known to have started neighbourhood fires and I have been aware in the course of my Ministry of their being hideouts for doubtful characters in the community, particularly men of ill-intentions who would use these houses as bases from which they would operate to lure young school girls. Child prostitution was related to old derelict buildings. They were taking advantage of our little girls and from time to time we would call in the police but no overall effort was made to deal with it as a social problem. I think that one way of dealing with it is to get rid of the houses. If we get rid of those old houses then there would be no hideouts, no haunts.

In fact, there were also the haunts for the "druggies" as well, the pushers who operated from those venues. Also, in connection with housing, some time ago I recall, I think we were debating what should happen. It might have been a supplementary estimate dealing with a vision of hurricanes and things of that nature. I repeat, Sir, that I think that there are many of our elderly people and strange enough, I do not know what happened to the old men because in most of those houses they have old women who live alone, suffer alone and very often are not remembered by the people in the neighbourhood.

Today we have changed to the extent that all the neighbourliness that we were taught and treasured seems to be going down the drain. Somebody has got to be identified as the person or the agency to look after these elderly people. We must not abandon them. We cannot talk about an interest in the poor and budgeting for the poor and neglect our responsibility to these elderly ladies.

It is interesting that I made a note not to forget to challenge government to use the church and its ministry to help in this regard and as Senator Davis made the very point before me, as it were, she stole my thunder. I think that the churches, without naming any particular denomination, I know best the one that I am part of and I know what we do, but the churches have programmes geared towards people in neighbourhoods.

5.10 p.m.

There is no need for Government to come up with completely new programmes dealing with the same things in the same area. Surely they can share the responsibility, provide funds and ask the churches and other organisations to share the responsibility of putting these programmes into effect. Programmes like this obtain in the United States of America where the funding is provided and the social organisations get on with it in the name of progress for themselves and the Governments involved.

I have a comment on Education. It is related to Head 34 on page 72 of the document which deals with assisted

private schools. There are some 10 to 12 private secondary schools still in existence in Barbados. We need to decide whether we think they are still important. I think they are. They continue to perform a useful function.

I am not aware of any move on the part of the Ministry of Education to do away with them but the advances being made in education in Government schools will and can have the effect of frustrating the efforts of these persons who run private schools. Every day you are hearing one closing down, or one phasing out, or one struggling to survive. I think there has to be some statement made or some policy by which these schools are taken into consideration in the overall educational policy in the country.

They need assistance in order to continue. You might argue, Sir, that if Government is providing the service of teaching in all the areas then you might not need schools like this but if people are given bursaries and encouraged therefore to go to these schools it is a way of saying, well they are serving a useful purpose. I think those ones I am more familiar with are seeking to do something that is different from the normal run of schools, that is to say, to get into areas of special education, special needs and to focus on learning disabilities.

In these schools they are able to organise and maintain small groups and small classes rather than running the risk of having children in schools like the Government schools, where from time to time, they find themselves with 35 to 40 children in the same form. So that this is a plus in their favour. Perhaps the Government might wish to use these smaller schools in this way by directing children there and also providing training for some of their teachers to better equip them to be teachers of special needs' education.

We should also remember they perform the useful function of dealing with what we would call mentally challenged children because some of those children who are challenged in that way do excel in other areas as well. We know that the children who tend to go to these schools, the private or the assisted secondary schools, are the children who have the lower grades in the Common Entrance Examinations. That tends to give them an unfortunate start with a stigma. So that you sometimes need to have them laden away carefully and delicately where they can be taught properly and so get rid of that stigma which the society has placed on them at an early age and which could, if it is not handled correctly, destroy them.

Sir, the point I am making is that these schools are still important to the society and they need help. I know of one school which, because of its financial difficulties, could not pay the National Insurance quotas and ended up with a bill of almost half a million dollars owed to the National

Insurance Department. That bill is being reduced by an arrangement with the National Insurance Department which has agreed to hold the interest on the amounts due so that there is no compound interest. When the payment is completed, if it ever is, that school will then have to turn to interest payments.

Now, that was an attempt, as far as the National Insurance Board could go, I believe. I hope it was as far as they could go to try and alleviate a problem. But I think this is a problem that recurs in these schools and Government should have a policy towards it to see what can be done to help schools in this way with those that have unmanageable bank overdrafts.

There are those that cannot maintain their buildings. I cannot see how we can all claim, and Government must claim, the nation's children as belonging to all of us, but, simply because they go to a certain other school it is regarded as the duty of the owner or managers of the school to find all the money to maintain the structure of the school. I think that is a little unfair. Something has to be done to meet them halfway. If money is raised to help with some of the teaching staff then some should be provided to help with the maintenance of buildings as well.

My next point has to do with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Head 25 which is at page 40 of the document. Sir, we go through this exercise every year and we vote significant sums. We expend these funds in the course of the year. We come back and go through the motions again. Although the amounts increase we still find that several things are not done. I wonder if it is because enough is not voted or if it is because there is a loss of interest somewhere along the line. I do not know what the reason is.

Here this section I refer to is dealing with the Scotland District Development Project. I draw attention to the fact that it also figures in another Ministry, the Ministry of Public Works, Transport & Housing on page 142. This is another aspect of the same area, what I regard as the breadbasket, therefore a very important area in this country in terms of its agricultural development. We have to get serious about agriculture. Many acres of land are lying idle in the Scotland District area and elsewhere about the country as well but that is one big significant area on which we focus attention on an annual basis. The orchards that were introduced there over the years are now run down. There are still remnants of the original trees.

There is the old Barbadian cherry which is all over Haggatts, Turner's Hall and the Bawden's area. I am told that we import cherries to produce the cherry drinks that we make here and that we import guavas and the other fruit that have to be processed and yet we have the beginnings there. We have the land and we have

proved over the years that we can produce those very fruits. I think that is a terrible waste and the sooner we get cracking on this Scotland District Development the better it will be for us.

5.20 p.m.

There are, of course, some difficulties that I hope will be dealt with in this period, for example the roads that have been slipping and the need to experiment with some form of road building and reconstruction and some form of gabion that would be better than the ones in the past. The need to experiment with methods of bridge building to come up with bridges that are more lasting.

I do not understand how it can be that in a country like this with small bridges and hardly any rivers, just streams that swell when it rains that we have not yet learn to come up with bridges that are not washed away. I believe the technology exists for us to be able to do this. If St. Andrew, St. John and St. Joseph happen to be the areas through which we want to take our tourist to show them a different terrain from that over on the southern side of the country, then it must be possible for the taxi drivers to pass through the areas. This is important for a number of reasons in the interest of tourism and also in the interest of helping the people who live there to get their crops reaped and get their canes to the factory. I think that this is an urgent matter and I would wish an alternative.

If Government is not really ready or serious about making the best use of this land as agricultural land perhaps it should be handed over to the people in the area so that they could grow whatever they want to grow and help themselves. This is one way of helping the whole poverty situation which we would hope to eradicate.

I happen to be fortunate to have grown up in that area and it is still dear to my heart, I know of the potential. I grew up in an area where the people hardly saw any of the moneys that existed in home and families on the other parts of the island. But they were not poor and did not regard themselves as poor, because each person had a plot of land. Even those of us who went to school through scholarship had to find funds to buy books and uniforms and the land provided for these things. It can do that again for others.

I urge the Government and the Ministry of Agriculture to do whatever has to be done so that by the time we are meeting here a year from now we can report that these matters have been dealt with.

Another matter has to do with Head 30 on page 55 – it deals with the prisoners. Reference is made there to the corrective and rehabilitation services in the Prison Department. I want to comment on this briefly.

There is mention made of the various activities that the inmates are expected to be involved in. Mention is made of gardening and the farm project. I would wish we would move in a direction away from seeing it as a project of farming to where these prisoners are put on a farm and made to farm which, in my view, is a different thing altogether. You pass and see the prisoners on the bit of land in Waterford where they have their new project. There is a lot of land involved and I passed and viewed it enthusiastically when mention was first made of it, but it seems to have slowed down now.

That situation is full of all types of problems. You have prisoners in the open which means that a lot of energy has to be spent in keeping an eye on them because the place is opened. You can only take those ones who are not going to run away and so the whole thing becomes hamstrung because you should be able to take prisoners there who are serving hard labour as part of their punishment and I do not think one would have these types of prisoners sitting around in the open and looking like buddies with the guards.

We need to have an area identified, an area enclosed, an area that would be maximum security so that you would be able to treat all the prisoners in the same way except those who are serving probation or community service – all the others would have to be exposed to work on a farm. They should be required to provide all the meat and vegetables they eat. I do not think that it is right for others to have to provide prisoners with a better life than they had before and a safer environment than they had before and somebody else is paying.

I urge the particular Ministry and Government to look into this because if we are able to make the punishment really real then we can start to discuss what happens to people who have committed murder. Because there are people who are beginning to say that murderers should not hang and yet we are to show that we are serious about punishing anybody who has to be punished. A form of punishment should be put in place which would then allow us to say that people have paid their penalty in this particular way.

With those remarks, I commend the Estimates. I say that what is important is not the figures behind this document but the people who are important and who we are called to serve.

Thank you, Sir.
5.30 p.m.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Sir, if I may ask a question regarding the arrangements for the debate in the Senate.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Each Senator may speak for 1 hour.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: How long does the debate go on?

Mr. PRESIDENT: As long as required. It is possible technically to close the debate at this moment if nobody wishes to speak.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. President, I rise to speak on this debate at this time a little bit concerned about the arrangements for carrying the debate. And indeed I must echo some of the sentiments, if not all, of Senator Lynch when he talked about the arrangements for dealing with these matters and indeed an attempt by Government Senators to try to force the hand of the independent and Opposition Senators in concluding this debate.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I am not sure I understand what you are saying. The rules of the debate are clearly set out in the Standing Orders and I think that every Member was properly advised of the date of this particular session. To say that any particular Member is being forced by other Members is a reflection on the Chair and I would wish you to withdraw that.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Sir, I unreservedly withdraw any comments which would tend to reflect on the Chair. However I do have some reservations, in keeping with the tone on which the last Senator finished, that is, that the things we should be concerned with most in considering the Estimates before us are not so much the statistics as were so beautifully presented this morning by the Leader of the Senate in his presentation but, Sir, the effect that this exercise would have on the Barbadian population.

These Estimates were considered in the Lower House or the Other Place as it is referred to here and there was limited debate on particular Heads. It is true that the DLP Opposition did find some common ground with Government in terms of the overall stated objectives of the Estimates. However, Sir, there were areas of distinct differences. Indeed I was reminded, Sir, of the discussion which is indeed taking place in the Caribbean now as the Indian tourists continue their trip through Barbados, Guyana and Antigua to complete the Cable and Wireless test series. The debate there was one of how do we prepare our cricket wickets so as to take full advantage of the kind of bowlers that we have in the region? The consensus was that as a rule the West Indian wicket curators tended not to go the route of preparing wickets which would bring advantage to our fast bowlers but tried to advocate a more generous approach to the sport. The sport of the game, Sir, was important to them and not necessarily who won or lost.

I feel that in the case of our Minister of Finance this is not at all his approach. His is one of preparing a wicket only for the benefit and for the re-election of the Barbados Labour Party Government in 1999. That is why Honourable Senators can refer constantly to areas of allocation which although significant do not carry with them the required explanation that would give one comfort that the benefits intended were going to end up exactly where they were supposed to be.

Generous allocations under the Head, and I particularly refer to now, the Head of the Prime Minister and I refer to page 33 of the Estimates before us, the broad heading of alleviation of poverty. There is no explanation in this sub-program 8, bar to say that the Minister of Finance would have at his disposal some \$10 million to disburse however he pleases in the cause of the stated alleviation of poverty.

I would have thought that any program based on poverty alleviation is best placed under the Department of Social Welfare or under the Ministry of Community Services or maybe even under the Department of Education where we, as Barbadians, have been accustomed seeing it.

I believe that the conclusion is correct if one says that this has about it... I cannot say sleight of hand, but it certainly appears to be more than meets the eye in terms of the ability of the Ministry of Finance to pass out to any cases which they come across, any assistance which they think suitable.

Remember, Sir, this is against the background too of a recent survey which concluded that there are some 25 000 persons in Barbados who live below the poverty line. A quick calculation would mean that the Minister of Finance is going to, with \$400 per person, cause poverty to be swept from before them forever. That is why, Sir, I am concluding that this is not about the alleviation of poverty as it is as much about electioneering and basic politics, basic Barbados Labour Party re-election politics. That is my conclusion, Sir.

The background too in which this Senate debate is taking place is one in which Barbados approaches the full effect of the removal of special tax allowances under the Common External Tariff arrangements. Indeed we face 1998 still with some concern as to how are we best going to be able to handle the effect of free trade and the effects of an influx of goods from all over the world into the Barbados trading environment. That is why, Sir, I was particularly taken aback that the Honourable Minister of Trade no where in his presentation spent any time on the business of Bridgetown. Of course over the weekend we did see a clipping, I believe it was, in the issue of the *Sunday Sun* where the Honourable Minister was talking about joining hands with the...

Mr. PRESIDENT: You are in breach of the rules. You cannot use any statement from a newspaper in support of what you are saying. You will have to give your own views on the matter.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Thank you, Sir. It is my view that the Minister in opening the department store in Bridgetown was indeed indicating that here was an opportunity for Barbadians to take advantage of reductions because of the new value added tax regime.

We have never argued on this side that the value added tax arrangements as they are set out would not cause items like lawnmowers and radios and televisions and refrigerators to reduce in price. We have made that very clear. We understand that fully. What we have said, Sir, and it bears repeating is that there is need for a basket of food to be identified and that the 15% value added tax now being charged on these goods be removed. We have been as far as to table the appropriate Resolution in the House of Assembly under the name of the leader of this great political organisation. I am sure that the months to come will give us many opportunities to discuss the effects of the VAT. The point, Sir, is to give the impression that because a refrigerator, a television reduces in price we are therefore seeing a cheaper Barbados to live in is false because it is like telling a guy that although you work only 4 weeks a year and you can work for \$400 if you multiply your weeks wages by 52 and divide it by 12 you will come up with a monthly wage which is quite adequate and which you should be able to live on.

5.40 p.m.

You see, Sir, when I go to the supermarket on Friday or Saturday or my wife goes to the supermarket on Friday or Saturday she cannot buy rice and potatoes, some vegetables and then turn around and buy a quarter fridge, so as to reap the benefits of the VAT, Sir. She has to buy food. So that is where the Other Side has got to understand the plight of the working people of Barbados when they talk about about the cost of the VAT.

It is nothing about the overall effect, it is not about whether you rake in more and more taxes. It is about people who are living already at the extremities of their incomes by way of mortgages, car loans etc., who then have got to bear that 15 percent increase in cost and even if it is \$12 a week, as was so graphically illustrated in here, it is too much for a number of Barbadians to bear.

The Estimates, therefore need to bring into focus these kinds of difficulties which we as Barbadians are facing because of the impact of the VAT.

Indeed the Estimates reflect an overall gain in terms of taxable revenue based on the abilities, and indeed the Honourable Leader of the Senate when he made his

introduction was very clear to indicate that because of the broadening of the – and he used the words “the increased yield” – taxes, and because of the broadening of the tax band to include goods and services and indeed it is supported by recent reports of the VAT office where the management of that office is already claiming to be extremely comfortable with the collections to date.

Let it not be ever said that we in the Democratic Labour Party are against the collection of appropriate taxes to run the country. We understand and we have been in Government in more years than the Barbados Labour Party and, since independence. So we understand the challenges of the Government and we understand what is the meaning of collecting taxes.

Of course, there has to be tax collection, but we are saying that the very Estimates indicate, and the almost boasting of the Honourable Senator when he introduced his revenue comments this morning indicated that there is room to make that relief. I do not believe that we have to wait nine months. Nine months is too long and although it might suit the programme of the Minister of Finance, nine months is too long for the poor people of Barbados who continue to suffer at the hands of the VAT.

Sir, the Barbados economy is also revolving around an exercise of empowerment. By empowerment we mean the involvement of a number of small business people and the whole question of economic growth and development in this country. Sir, I think that I can count myself among those who, over the last four years certainly, have been attempting to do my bit in terms of initiating entrepreneurial activity in this country, against tremendous odds.

The empowerment exercise started by the Democratic Labour Party of course, but, in some ways, necessity becomes the mother of invention. Indeed, the whole discussion and the whole reality of developing the programme of empowerment among Barbadians was more or less crystallised during the difficult periods of 1992 to 1994 when, in looking to divest certain entities in Barbados some of the options which were examined were the questions of empowerment of locals.

5.50 p.m.

Up to this day, this has not been a tremendously successful programme and I do not think the Barbados Labour Party can boast of any special record in this regard either. Senator Murray will have to say otherwise when he stands up. Up to this day, the record will show that this empowerment exercise is not embraced by the wider economic society of Barbados. Again we have got Senators in here who will be able to speak to this question of the established business people in Barbados who have got

to appreciate that, if there is going to be empowerment and if the wider mass of Barbadians are going to participate in the economic pie of Barbados and not in a salaried environment, but in an environment where we are putting forward ideas and indeed putting forward what little cash we have and in most cases putting forward our houses and our livelihoods into the economic programme, there has to be some consideration.

I think that it is time that some sort of affirmative action programme be put in place. We heard reference to the affirmative action programme already this morning when Senator Lynch spoke and there is need for that.

We, ordinary Barbadians, do not bring to any table any legacy of money or of financial strength. We are descendants of slaves, because we own nothing. In most cases, we have benefited from a household in which our grandfathers were freed, our fathers were the first free participants in the economy and have probably been able just barely to own their own homes. We are taking off from there.

We have no large reserve on which to lean. So the exercise of empowerment is one that we have to look at very carefully in the whole programme of Estimates of Expenditure and Appropriations in the future of Barbados.

I am heartened by the news again announced by the Prime Minister in the Other Place on Friday evening that the organ that is going to replace the Barbados Development Bank will soon be in place. I would like to beg that the requirements for getting this organisation in place be hastened so that more Barbadians can take advantage.

Indeed, one of the things I would like to see is that body included in a programme of affirmative action. Affirmative action, Sir, is a positive thing. It is not negative. It does not mean discrimination. It means that wherever there is an idea or where there is tremendous difficulty in effecting that project we will go hand in hand with that individual and take him or her to the promised land.

We need programmes of affirmative action in Barbados. There are a lot of people with good ideas who die at the altar of the business sector of Barbados as it stands.

The whole question of empowerment and investment of course came to light last week with the news of the impending sale of Almond, the shares of the Barbados Shipping and Trading. Certainly its relevance to the Estimates is that tourism is our life blood. The ownership of the tourism plant in Barbados is extremely important.

Although I have no special brief for any tourism plant owner in Barbados or anywhere else for that matter, as has been said in here before and, indeed, in the Other Place, there was something special about the Barbados Shipping and Trading's acquisition of shares of the Almond Beach property.

The divestment or the impending divestment has caused shock waves. This is at the core of the Barbados economy today and the result of the outcome of this is going to have a lasting effect on what happens to Barbados over the next 2, 3, 20 years. As a child growing up I have heard stories about Barbados Shipping and Trading owning 70 cents in every dollar. I know it has a large stake in this economy. I am being told it is "had" but I wonder if it has a large stake in this economy.

What they do whether we like it or not sends ripples through the wider economic activities of Barbados. Again, I am waiting with bated breath for the contribution of Senators in this Chamber who have an intimate knowledge of these things. We would certainly like to hear some more debate in this session and over the next couple of weeks as these events unfold.

Sir, the people at Almond Beach, the workers who in a large part became shareholders only recently were hurt by these events and, indeed, it is unfortunate that the Chairman of that company, the Almond Beach company was forced into the public with certain comments he had to make based on the questions put before him.

I know exactly how that gentleman feels. I have, fortunately or unfortunately, been almost on the same road, at the hands of the same people almost to a man.

For 15 years I worked at Banks Breweries and one day for no reason whatsoever... as a matter of fact, I vividly recall the interview, if you can call it an interview. It was the last interview where you look at an employee. At that time I was a director of the company so I was supposed to know what was going on. Certain machinations had already taken place which would have lessened the effect of Banks Barbados Breweries and Banks Breweries now were dealing with the main economic decisions as far as that beverage company was concerned.

For no greater reason whatsoever the owners of that company felt that they should part ways with me. Being of the background that I am, I said, "thank you very much," and I left the people's place. I went along about my business, Sir, and I would like to say publicly that except for the security which a permanent job at Banks Breweries might have offered at the time I am tremendously more comfortable. I do not go to sleep worrying about what other people think about me anymore. I go out there and I ply my way and I forge relationships of my own. So,

in a way, I have been blessed although the full benefits of it I have not yet seen and I still hope to be able to come into this Chamber or somewhere else and relate the other half of this intriguing story.

Sir, I understand very well the feelings of the staff at Almond Beach and, indeed, we certainly hold their hands at this very difficult time in their operation. They have got to cast away all the worries in their minds and go to work over the next couple of days or weeks and give of their best not knowing exactly what is happening in their welfare.

Sir, the Estimates are presented in 1997 against the background of this kind of economic climate in Barbados. The whole question of the stakeholder concept and the whole question of who owns the business starts to come to mind. Indeed, we as policy makers have to liven the discussion so that more Barbadians will get to appreciate not only the sweets of being shareholders but the risks and the difficulties. Because the risks and the difficulties are extremely great too, although the benefits are there.

I want to commend this debate to Barbados over the next couple of weeks and I would like wide participation.

While I was working at Banks Breweries, I had the fortune, like the Honourable Leader of the Senate, to work very closely with the Barbados Chamber of Commerce and I recall being on the council of the Chamber of Commerce. That would have to be way back in 1990. Even there, the challenges that that organisation saw because of the development of alternative business in Barbados were amazing.

I could not believe that 10 or 12 other persons sitting in a room would be so bothered. I recall an application which I think was by the Minibus Association to join the Chamber of Commerce and this caused ripples. Here was a group of business people refusing application by the Minibus Association to join the Chamber of Commerce and having extreme difficulty in saying yes, come aboard.

Are we saying yes, come aboard in this whole programme of economic enfranchisement and empowerment or are we saying come aboard but stay one side while I continue on my journey of tremendous benefit and you can take any crumbs that fall from the table. Nobody in a shareholder/stakeholder arrangement is going to accept that approach.

As I reflect, it might have been the Small Business Association and not the Minibus Association, whichever one, if it is the Small Business Association it was even worse because then there should have been no doubt at all as to where they would lie.

Again, I want to place vividly my economic arguments in the context of Barbadian society. Again, I remember the kinds of animated discussions that took place when the supermarket on Bridge Street rose to its ethereal heights as it did before the one at Haggatt Hall. It would have to be called the second stage development of the supermarket at Bridge Street. This caused tremendous grumblings and people wanted to know where the goods were coming from, how could goods be so cheap.

We are working in Barbados and I am sure Sir, that... I do not want to draw you into this debate and I do not think I can. I know that you are fully aware of what I am talking about because I have read Barbadian history and I lived through the development of an organisation which they now call the Nation Publishing Company and I know the story that goes along with the birth and growth of the *Nation*. Now the *Nation* is existing probably at the zenith of its operation at this time.

The point is that it was not easy. So that we must not preach a gospel to working class people that they can buy shares in Almond Beach or shares in GEMS of Barbados and all of a sudden they can become equal directors or shareholders. It does not work so at all.

I want to go to economic decisions and the allotments in small business appropriations. Indeed, I want to laud the efforts of the Minister of Trade in this regard. I regret that success has been zero or minimal in this regard, but he can rest assured of my unswerving support in terms of the establishment of the Small Business Association and the provision of funding so that we can meaningfully challenge for a stake in this country. I referred to the story of the bread vendor at Warrens a couple of weeks ago and I want to revert to it again because that has not gone out of our minds.

6.00 p.m.

Again, as I wonder about the possibilities I thought, you know, why are we not encouraging the owner of the minimart in the area to stop selling bread and allow this vendor onto his premises on a rental arrangement so that he could then pay a fee, but he then in his operation in the supermarket would not have to bother about bread.

If the bread guy outside is doing so well, instead of closing him out, that is my thesis, Sir, instead of closing out economic opportunities, we need to embrace them. Only today I was glancing through the manifesto of the BLP, I do not read it very often, Sir. Today I was glancing through the manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party and it is here in black and white in terms of their position on vendors. Of course, it is obliquely opposite to the position which they took when they forced out the people of Rockers Alley at what I call the bait of police dogs, Sir, and the lot. This is their new found gospel, and I am

embracing that gospel, Sir. Indeed, in the same Rockers Alley you must admit that they have come full circle because we now get the vendors, though they are not the same vendors, but vendors they still are, who have now been placed back in Rockers Alley.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: On a point of order, Mr. President, the Honourable Member is misleading the Honourable Senate. The Constitution in defining the role of the Attorney General who would be part of the political arm of Government, indicates that while the Attorney General or Minister of Home Affairs has broad policy responsibility for the Police he is not in a position to give any operational instructions. So that one cannot in the same breath speak about a police action some time ago with police dogs to clear a street, and cast it in political terms, because under our constitutional arrangements that is not at all possible. I submit the Honourable Member is misleading the House and he should restructure his statement so as not to do that.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Thank you, Sir, the interruption allowed me, Sir, to consolidate my next point.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Perhaps, there should be more interruptions.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Probably, Sir. It continues along the role of this whole state-owned question. There has been debating this evening again and I valued very much the contribution of the Honourable Senator Springer when he talked about the CBC. It was a very structured contribution. It certainly hit at the core of what the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation is about. When we allocate funds under the Ministry of Information for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation we expect programmes like this to be in place. We expect that down the road we can find tapes of cultural events in Barbados. We expect access for our schools and expect access for our cultural groups on television and we expect to see them demonstrated. Indeed, the sporting events on weekends. I heard somewhere the fact that you will spend all this time to bring one Gold Cup race on the first Saturday in March and all the other days of racing go wasted and the cameras of CBC are idle. We need to develop the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation to that stage. We have to take away the politics of it.

I have a view, Sir, where political parties should buy their time on radio stations whether it be funded by Government. In other words, the station is free to operate in an economic environment just like any other private station. The Government Information Service, for instance, could buy a certain number of hours and allocate these hours dependent on however is decided by the political ombudsman of the day, for lack of a better term, Sir. The political ombudsman would decide with the Government and the other political parties how they would allocate their

time to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. There are some very strong views, that there should be a government-owned radio service but I do not believe that in this day of scarce finances, we need necessarily to own the entire operation. We can have a shared arrangement of purchase time on any private radio station.

6.10 p.m.

We have seen the allocation, Sir, for the international business sector. It is there. The questions that arise out of this sector, and again we look forward to the answers that will come forth, are (1) the question of the kinds of jobs that are being created because there are boasts every day about the fact that the offshore banking sector is creating jobs but really they are creating two levels of jobs and that is the difficulty I have.

They are creating a job at which I call the professional secretary level who is normally a fairly well qualified accountant or semi-accountant and who works for a reasonably good salary in the region of \$2 000, \$3 000, \$4 000 a month and carries along with it a lot of perks.

It is creating opportunities in terms of directorships for again eminently qualified persons. We have no difficulty with these things whatsoever. Let me put my cards on the table. We have no difficulty with these kinds of arrangements. What is not happening and what we have a difficulty with and we join hands with the labour unions of this country in considering the types of jobs that are being offered to our working-class people, the \$150 a week and that kind of thing, and the long hours usually almost under slavish supervision. I am talking about personal discussion. I am not talking about any written report submitted to any department. I am talking about men and women that I talk to every day and they talk about the stress under which they work. There is nothing wrong with stress under work. We go to work and we have to work.

I had a very stressful day in here working, Sir, listening to the contributions of some of the Senators on the Other Side, so there is nothing wrong with stressful work. I am sure there will be some more stressful days over the next couple of days and in a way I am glad I have been able to get this in now because I would not have to endure it as religiously as I would have had to if Senator Farley had not forced me to speak this evening, Sir.

The difficulty and all the related illnesses, first of all in sight and then, of course the muscular problems – carpal syndrome, I believe, is the correct medical term, where, because of typing all the time, you can get problems with the muscular movements.

Aside.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Senator Goddard is going to elaborate, Sir, when he gets up to speak. We all know what I am talking about. One's wrist hurts and your eyes burn.

The questions for the international business sector emanate around this area. What is being done in terms of the types of jobs being created for the ordinary people of Barbados? Indeed, Sir, the whole question of telephone rates, and do not let any Senator in here believe that the discussion on information lines has just started, or that BET has only now for the first time reduced the rates to people like...

Aside.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: I was on the Board of BET when at least two rate reductions were put in place to bring Barbados in line with the rates being applied to Santo Domingo, Jamaica – I think Jamaica at the stage when I left had dropped out of the arena anyhow, and to bring it in line with other challenges.

The thing that is challenging Barbados, although it can be attributed somewhat to rates too, has a lot to do with the whole movement of technology. Technology is not waiting on us. The whole question of imaging and the contradiction facing a company like American Airlines now is why really should I waste time and money in putting in all this data when at the point of purchase of the ticket all this can be recorded one time and a boarding pass can do the entire job. You can just pass it through the machine, it goes everywhere and out goes everybody. That is the frightening technological challenge that we face in reality.

Whereas, Sir, I commend the efforts of the Minister in terms of trying to force the rates down at BET because if the rates go down at BET, I expect the next time the rates will go down at BARTEL. If the rates go down at BARTEL it means that my telephone calls will be cheaper. I hope that when he brings down the rates at BET he will also bring down the Internet rate because you cannot afford the telephone calls. You have to use the Internet as a bypass mechanism.

These kinds of approaches, and indeed I must reject that too on the fact that again the circumstances as they occurred then forced the then Barbados Government to sell the shares at BET. Given what is happening today...

Aside.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: They had a buy back offer. They never used it. Given what is happening today, one wonders if it was not a brilliant economic decision indeed because the whole question of the value of the shares will soon come into debate. We see how quickly events fall on each other. This weekend, subsequent to the

Almond Beach affair, we get the BARTEL situation being reported. It is not a coincidence. It is how the business communities work.

We in Barbados have to get accustomed to the fact that this is the reality. Certainly the international business sector, now that we know where it is because about three weeks ago nobody knew where the office had moved to. They knew it had moved from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but the Minister of Housing did not know where this office was.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, I rise on a point of order. The Ministry of International Trade and Business has not moved. Its location is still in the Foreign Affairs Ministry building. There is a plan to move but that will not take place for another couple of months as certain tender procedures are in process.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Thank you for the clarification, Sir, but the question still stands. Indeed, it is significant that the...

Certain remarks made by SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE were ordered expunged from the records by Mr. PRESIDENT.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: The Honourable Leader of the Senate had to urge the full disclosure of the Minister that it was intended to be moved. Nobody knew where it was moving to...

Aside.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: ... but he can now comfortably state that it is moving to Kent above the BET building. I am glad that is now public information and I hope the Press will carry that story for the benefit of the others who did not know when I heard them talking about it.

Sir, let us move on to something much nearer home and that is the whole question of health. The Democratic Labour Party has not hidden its discomfort with the way the Ministry of Health is being run. We have made it very clear that the paradigm shift which we were so proud of in terms of health care delivery in this country has been totally reversed. Instead of looking forward to a longer expectancy of life in this country we are actually facing the horrors of years gone by.

It is a stated policy, Sir, that the Ministry is not in favour of what I think was termed "fancy medicine." I think this was in reference to things like hip replacement, open heart surgery and eye surgery. These are not fancy medicines. This is what you have to do to stay alive nowadays. You have to have your heart fixed. You

need to have your hips replaced. You cannot depend anymore on the basic kaolin, poultice and that kind of approach where a fellow hand breaks, you grabble him, you heat some kaolin in a corner and you slap it on the hand and you say when that cools down the hand will be fixed. That is the approach that is being preached when we get Ministries voicing unreservedly the whole question of delving into the field of modern medicine.

Aside.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: We have to face that too and we have to be very careful how we clone.
6.20 p.m.

Sir, my fellow Senator dealt at length with the Health sector. When Honourable Senator Farley dealt with allocation and percentages and this and that, it does not bother him because there is nothing wrong with his foot, hand or mouth so he can talk from a position of percentages and put all kinds of figures in front of the public of Barbados in the Estimates debates. The nitty gritty about health care is what happens when we wheel someone into the hospital in that casualty or the private admitting ward and whether they come out and walk down the stairs themselves or whether they have to go to the mortuary with a sheet over their body. This is the real factor and we have to aim towards the first option. We have to aim towards a health care delivery in this country which increases life expectancy and improves the condition under which the Barbadian people operate and live in.

I have special responsibility for public works as Shadow Minister, Sir, and one burning question is the one of transport. It was touched on very quickly this morning – the fact is that if we have jobs available and the people cannot get to work then we might as well not have jobs. This is very true.

In the case of Enterprise in the Christ Church South area, I cannot for the life of me understand why the Government of Barbados and the Minister of Public Works would not grant a permit for the mini buses to go across Upper & Lower Carters Gap. There is no logical reason under the sun, moon or stars, Sir, why this cannot be done. You could even have the luxury of making it a one way arrangement for buses, where they went up Lower Carters Gap, turn up Enterprise Coast Road and came back down through Upper Carters Gap. That would alleviate the problem of people who have to get to work in the Atlantic Shores area and it would also alleviate the problem of people from Carters Gap and Enterprise who have to go to work in Bridgetown. If you do not think it is a difficulty, Mr. Minister, you can come and check anytime. Give me a call and I will take you up there anytime.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Please address the Chair and not a particular Minister.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: I apologise, Sir.

It is a major transport problem. I have done it, Sir. It takes 20 minutes, walking at my pace, to get across Upper Carters Gap and I walk quickly. Can you imagine those old ladies? Once the transport has left the home, those old people who are retired, have to stay at home. There is a myth going around that everybody living in Atlantic Shores has a lot of money and own three cars etc. This is far from the truth. There are a number of persons who have no opportunity once that vehicle has left in the morning. Parents, aunties and others who live with their children are house bound because there is no chance under the sun that the people from Enterprise can face that walk in the middle of the day across Carters Gap.

I feel extremely sorry for my helper when I think of the time she has to take and the pain she has to endure in going across Carters Gap.

I would beg the Minister or ask one of the other Honourable Ministers to convey the message that something must be done urgently about providing a permit for minibuses to traverse Carters Gap. I understand the mini buses can be dangerous because the gap is not a wide street but then no streets in Barbados are wide and let us provide some sleeping policemen, although there are some people who believe that all the policemen in Barbados are sleeping; but provide real sleeping policemen to allow the traffic to be controlled in these two areas.

I look forward to something positive coming out of this suggestion very soon.

I want also to touch specifically on the question of allocation for vehicles and equipment in the Ministry of Transport. The money that is allocated is about \$3 million for the purchase of vehicles etc. for the Ministry of Transport and knowing the Ministry of Transport, it will probably be about \$3.5 million when they are finished anyhow.

If you look into the workshop at the Ministry of Public Works, you will see what I am talking about. If ever there was a museum of old iron, Sir, that is it. The original museum of old iron, none of it is moveable, it is what you would call a statue. In London they call it Madame Tussaud. Well this is our Madame Tussaud but do not try to punch it, it is not wax, it is iron and it will hurt you if you try to inflict a punch on it.

This is the situation at the Ministry of Transport. Indeed, I have perused the Auditor General's Report and I do not see any comment on the inventory of equipment

but I believe that it is time that we call for a full inventory of equipment used, and to use the Public Board term, "used and usable" equipment and "unused and unusable" equipment, in the Ministry of Transport & Works. It is a large amount and it has caused endless 'sufferation' to the people of Christ Church South because they cannot even raise a traxcavator, I think that is the term, also known as a backhoe to clear the sand and allow the free mixing of the brackish and non-brackish waters at the Worthing point, so that the sludge gate which should be open to allow the free mixing remains shut most of the time. At the early construction of the sewage plant, the sewage project contractor did it for about two weeks but could not collect their money. So they stopped doing it.

The Ministry of Transport needs to put in place a programme to ensure that the money that is spent on plant and equipment is well spent and provides the equipment necessary for this kind of activity which although it might appear mundane to the onlooker has a tremendous effect on economic life in that area. It has effect on the residents in terms of the build up of stench in the lower estuary of the swamp itself, right at the corner of the Stream. It has effect too on the time at which it is emptied out where you find that it can affect locals and tourists who are bathing on the beaches to the hotels. We know, Sir, that the St. Lawrence Gap is probably one of the largest growing areas in Barbados. It is a question which is causing much concern for those who look carefully at our environment and indeed the whole question of how this area is treated. We know as scientists, Sir, that in an arrangement like this there is need for the mixing. I think the opportunity should be taken too to at least get the opinion of the contractors, that is the contractors who are building the plant itself, in terms of probably installing a permanent pipe line with valve control arrangements to achieve this mixing so that we could have this outfall, for lack of a better word, two or three hundred feet out to sea carefully marked like how the "pot" at Black Rock is marked and we could have that mixing occur.

6.30 p.m.

It will cost some money, Sir, but obviously with the boast of the Government they have money so they can afford to set these programmes in place. It is all about our environment. Yesterday I took a trip to St. Peter to observe a few things besides the condition of the roads because I do not know how many of us are aware of the fact that there is now a 24-hour arrangement where about 20 Mack trucks and I am not talking about small Mack trucks, I am talking about big Mack trucks which pound the roads from the proposed site of the dump in the middle of St. Andrew, in the middle of a national park, pound that road right back to the existing site at Mangrove. I drove the route with them and the road is suffering from wear and tear and it will need some attention. It draws to mind what is going to happen down the road when that traffic becomes now, not

project related, but becomes part of life. What is the arrangement for traffic in that area? You are passing through villages like Mile & A Quarter and Benn Hill, these are areas that myself and the Prime Minister know very well, Sir, and they are making these villages unusable to the locals. We need to look at this whole question.

We warned about it when we talked about the location of the site in terms of a dump. It is not only based on basic economics it has to be based on how best it would impact. The environmental impact is not about smell only. It is about how is it going to be put into effect, what is it going to disrupt while it is being constructed and the question of this whole mind-set in Barbados where everybody wants to say not in my backyard.

I think we have got to look at that complete debate and put it in perspective and let people understand that we create our garbage. There are still people in Barbados who carefully take their garbage and are prepared to put it in their cars and then dump it somewhere else. This cannot be fair.

I occupy a little space over there in Roebuck Street opposite Greenfields and there is an area there where the Ministry has up a sign, no dumping. It is as if, I believe they could come back for the sign and use the letters to spell something else, probably sell it to the BCA and let them use it for the Indian cricketers names or something like that over the next couple of days because the garbage that is collected there almost nightly is amazing and it does not come from Greenfields, Sir, because the number of fridges I see nobody in Greenfields could dump fridges weekly like that. So I do not have any brief for the people of Greenfields. I believe the people of Greenfields have their own representative and she is capable, Sir. The point is that the garbage is being deliberately dumped by other people and I believe knowingly too to some of the authorities but as usual we are not dealing with these things in here. The whole question of the environmental impact is going to be of tremendous importance and I am concerned that the Estimates this year does not address this question specifically in terms of recognising that there has to be a new approach to environmental management in Barbados. It is almost like there has to be a new approach to welfare treatment in Barbados and not by giving the Minister of Finance \$10 million to spend and an open cheque book, Sir. It is a question of setting up programmes under the appropriate Ministries that can be scrutinised by the public and persons like us in policy making positions and in a position to influence policy.

6.35 p.m.

The whole question of the environment and welfare has to be joined together as probably the two most

vital and important issues that this country will face over the next couple of years.

The environmental impact is the one which is probably the most vexing about the project on the south coast. We can see in the Estimates where allocation is made for the anticipated capital funding for that project this year.

Sir, I repeat the case of the people who are being affected daily by the construction of this project.

Mr. PRESIDENT: You have two minutes to wind up.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: There has to be a better way of managing the dust, the noise and the related inconvenience of this project. There has to be a better way of managing the traffic regulation and the number of police who, I see allocated under the Attorney General's office and young recruits, etc., can be utilised to give a police presence to this traffic regulation which will bring some meaningful response to the public.

The private arrangement, with the employee of the sewage project doing it, is not getting the attention of the travelling public. They are ignoring the young man. They are treating him like how we Barbadians treat people in these positions. Unless we see a uniform and an outstretched hand we are not going to respond effectively.

The whole question of the environmental impact of this project is going to bear discussion over the next couple of I anticipate, three years. Because I do not expect this project will come to a meaningful completion before well into 1999 despite the best estimates of the Minister of Health at this time.

There is a lot of work to be done. One feature of the people doing the road work is their extreme slowness, Sir, and because of that I am certain my prediction is correct. We will be well into 1999 before that project is completed.

Sir, there are a lot more things about these Estimates that I would like to address, and I am sure though as Bills are presented to the House over the next couple of months I would have an opportunity to revert to some of these questions.

I want to repeat that there are features of the Estimates which the Democratic Labour Party supports fully. We are not so silly as to think that because the Estimates are put forward by the Barbados Labour Party they are thrown out of hand. The questions which I have raised are serious ones. They have been raised in the Other Place. My fellow Senator has raised very serious questions

with regard to the allocation of funds and indeed, most important, the management of funds. We know how well the Auditor General thinks about the management of funds under the administration of the Barbados Labour Party.

Sir, with these few words, I am grateful to you.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 10.00 a.m. tomorrow, March 25, 1997.

I just want to draw Members' attention to the relevant Standing Orders concerning suspensions and to note that we have no time when the sitting is suspended, we need to be here and to start for 10.00 a.m. otherwise the sitting will have to be aborted. So, please note the relevant Standing Orders relating to suspensions are quite different from those relating to adjournments.

The question that the sitting do now suspend until 10.00 a.m. tomorrow was put to the Senate and agreed to. Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the sitting accordingly.
6.40 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: This sitting is resumed.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Deputy President, I wish this morning to add my remarks to the Estimates debate for 1997/98.

To touch on some queries that were made yesterday, first, in particular by Senator Thompson and Senator Springer, I just want to remind the Honourable Senate that the Barbados Labour Party administration in 1976 saw the need for Barbadian women to be properly organised, to be gainfully employed, recognising the fact that most of the households, perhaps 70 per cent of the households in Barbados are managed by females. The Status of Women's Report was laid in the Honourable House in 1978 during the month of May.

As I said, Sir, this task was undertaken in recognition of the contributions women have made to Barbados and to further help them to develop their contributions to this country. We in the Barbados Labour Party in our Manifesto of 1994 recognised that more has to be done for women in light of the fact that the last administration reneged on a number of policies and programmes that were put in place to help to forward our Barbadian women. It added insult to injury when thousands of females in Barbados were sent home unceremoniously to suck salt, hence perhaps leading to the situation of this mendicant society where the

Welfare Department, the National Assistance Board and perhaps the same prostitution of which Honourable Members in here have been mentioning all last week and this week has arisen.

I want to make this abundantly clear. This Barbados Labour Party in its Manifesto of 1994 under page 24 has cited a number of areas in particular to say "We will therefore create self employment opportunities among women. This directly impacts on family income and the welfare of the family. It also allows women the flexibility to undertake their domestic functions simultaneously with their earning roles."

Mr. Deputy President, we need to continue the programme and even though in these Estimates programmes for women have not been singled out, I can speak with authority because I know from out there in the communities it is not that when you want to become a candidate you go and foster a constituency. We have to be out there as the foot soldiers to know what is happening among our people, to listen to their concerns, to point them and guide them to the route they should go to help them for advancement.

Therefore, I am aware of the number of programmes that are being put in place and that have already started to help our women in Barbados as well as our men folk to be able to improve themselves and that of their families because family life is extremely important in this society, as it is in any other. And if our women are unemployed, then the children are going to go helter skelter and there will be all kinds of dislocation.

This Barbados Labour Party administration, Sir, ensured that in 1995 the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic scrapped the entrance examination because we recognised that thousands of our young people were leaving school without certification. Therefore, how can you have entry requirements for persons to do Mathematics and English that they really did not master even though some of them would have had that secondary education. That entrance examination has been scrapped to accommodate young men and women who are interested in pursuing a course of training to help them acquire a skill, or in some instances, help them acquire certification because most of the courses there are certified. But then there are the City & Guilds examinations and so on, that individuals write to help them, as they go on that trail for improving themselves and the plight of their families.

We have extended the Polytechnic from about 1 400 to just over 2 100 this year. Next year we are looking at a target of 2 500 which that Polytechnic can accommodate, hence, bringing in other tutors to be able to fulfil those programmes as well as including subjects into the curriculum that will cater to the needs of young people.

I was heartened at the Graduation to hear of the landscaping course where many females are participating because they like gardening and they see that as a way of making money and moving when they want to move and not necessarily being programmed as to how a manager or somebody else in authority tells them to come for a particular time.

There is a catering class that was heavily subscribed and again this year it is subscribed. There is a course in tourism craft in which we hear members in here talk about things being imported from other countries that are saying "Barbados". The tourism craft course is catering to that kind of need. So Barbadians can go on the street, ply their trade, do it in their own little shops in their neighbourhoods where they live or wheresoever.

Mr. Deputy President, I do not want to make mention of a project that an overseas agency encouraged this Government to work towards, through the Women's Affairs Department, of which there was more than half a million dollars which we lost because of the tardiness of some employees in that institution. I am sure that particular project would have redounded to the benefit of thousands of working-class women as well as other professional women in this society. We lost it because the deadline date went and proper project proposals were not prepared in order to deal with that particular project. We in Barbados lost it and I am sure that another Caribbean country most likely will benefit as a result of the tardiness of some of our officers.

Mr. Deputy President, I want also to make mention of the Barbados Community College Hospitality Unit where individuals in order to attend the courses there were expected to enter with two certificates. This Government decided there are people in the hotel sector who have no certificates but they lack that basic training. Many of those individuals are now benefitting as a result of our scrapping those two certificates for entry and individuals have gone in with none. The courses are for a 9-month period where individuals can participate in areas such as cookery, catering, housekeeping and things of that nature that are connected with the hotel sector.

The Youth Entrepreneurial Scheme which started in 1995, Mr. Deputy President, is also working with young people in the community who have identified specific projects they have interest in and perhaps training in and they need that start-up money to work on their own project. We must not always feel that individuals who have a lump sum of money or who have individuals who can back them can be there. We need to give those young people the guidance and support. Therefore, the Youth Entrepreneurial Scheme is lending, and in some instances offering grants to young people who have business interests so they can start up.

In the department as well, we have not only stopped there but what we have also done is to give them training in marketing because there is no point having the product and not being able to market the particular product. So the marketing is taking place. Many of the young people are aligned to other businesses so that the businessmen can give them a kind of managerial situation. The guidance is there to help point them in the direction where their jobs and businesses can be sustainable.

In the Youth Service, we have expanded the Youth Service. It caters to more females than males. An aspect of that training, because we know we do need discipline in our society, includes job attachment where young people at a particular period of returning are assigned to business houses for a period of time so they can be aligned to what is happening in the business and to help develop certain working attitudes and aptitudes.

In the Youth Development Scheme, women again are benefitting by this where the Youth Commissioners have been out into the communities and have identified...

Mr. Deputy President, I am going to retract a little. We have found that many of our young people, at least 4 out of 10, are connected with community groups. Therefore, 6 out of every 10 young people do not have any connection with any community group, a church, nothing. Therefore, the Youth Development Officers out in the field have started to coordinate programmes where the young people are getting involved in community activities and this was very well displayed during our Independence celebrations last year and Community Independence celebrations during 1995 and more so in 1996. Already the programme for this year has started where over 300 young people are getting involved in agricultural and sporting activities. Some of the activities entail handicraft. As I said, sporting is taking place in volleyball, football, basketball, netball and things of that nature.

The Continuing Education classes still cater to individuals who would have perhaps come out of school with few certificates or none to have that opportunity. At St. Leonard's Secondary School as well as Erdiston Teacher's Training College we are placing emphasis on computerisation because that is the way we in Barbados need to go so that we could be in tune with what is expected of us between now and the year 2000. So the wider population of women are participants in this particular course.

Mr. Deputy President, I shall not close off on this particular issue unless I make mention of the significant role that Youth Commissioners are playing in the various communities. They have been going out and having surveys and appointing not only the young people but also other

individuals, including senior citizens and adults. When they have numerous problems they point them to the agency. They guide them to the Welfare Department, the National Assistance Board, forms on education that they can get for training. So that they too can make a contribution to the development of Barbados.

The NGOs, the non-governmental organisations, and these are not new but they are continuing in this society to make a contribution to the development, not only of men but women as well, while the YMCA continues to have classes, and the Girls' Industrial Union. This Government continues to put money into various organisations as grants to help them with the various projects they are working on because Government cannot do it alone. The non-governmental organisations must be brought into the whole process so that they can assist in the development of Barbados.

Mr. Deputy President, the final comment I want to make regarding the comments raised by Senator Thompson yesterday has to do with rural development and the project that is going on there where in these Estimates there are facilities for individuals who want to set up their little businesses onto their houses, if it is in cosmetology, day care centre, if it has to do with farming or small businesses generally.
10.20 a.m.

They receive a loan or an advance of at least \$5 000 to help them start because most of them do not have collateral since they are unemployed. Therefore this Government has seen it fit to help Barbadians in the business enterprises. The other Government did nothing to help Barbadians to feel confident in themselves.

The allocation of \$10 million into the Ministry of Finance is an effort that I have lauded. Overall it is about \$25 million that will go towards the alleviation of poverty in Barbados for this year 1997 to 1998. The specialised institutions supported by the State will assist with the disbursement of funds. NGOs as well will be involved in this. The National Assistance Board, of course, will benefit and the Welfare Department. The Rural Development Plan, as well as the Urban Development will be coming on stream shortly.

Mr. Deputy President, I am appalled sometimes, I like to be a very honest person and the Democratic Labour Party administration between 1986 and 1994 sat on almost \$20 million in the Housing Credit Fund at the National Housing Corporation, where poor people in Barbados should have benefitted to improve their housing stock. Nothing was done. I am pleased to say, Sir...

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy President. I think that the Honourable Member is misleading the House.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: That is no point of order.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: Mr. Deputy President, how do you know what I am going to say. She has stated that the D.L.P. sat on nearly \$26 million, Sir, in the Housing Credit Fund and did nothing about it. The D.L.P. did nothing so. We make the point in here all the time that officers in the Ministry are not the Government, and that is the point of order.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: That is no point of order. That is a speech which somebody would have to correct.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: Mr. Deputy President, it only goes to show that if Ministers want to have their policies put in place, they have to get up and act. I am not responsible for how the D.L.P's Ministers in those days reneged, I am not responsible for that. I can only speak what I know to be the truth and what has inhibited thousands of Barbadians from pushing themselves forward over a period of eight to nine years.

The final comment is to do with the General Workers' Fund. An amount of \$40 000 is allocated to low income workers so that they can borrow money to improve their housing stock. I say low income workers, because every time individuals in here talk, everybody knows about the poor man except the poor man. If the individual is working for less than \$2 100 per month or less than \$517.00 per week that individual can benefit. So the maid who has a permanent position and the general worker can go to the General Workers' Fund at N.H.C. and have access to those funds to improve their lot. Then we can come up the line until we reach people like teachers who will be working for at least \$1 200 per month, they too can benefit.

I am happy to see that project is on stream and I speak with confidence because I have assisted individuals who wanted guidance on filling out the form. I am happy to say that I have no constituency to serve because I am here to service the people of Barbados.

Mr. Deputy President, our mission in the Ministry of Education is to ensure equitable access to quality education to all citizens in Barbados so that they can function to their full potential.

There are objectives that have been outlined in the White Paper on Education Reform. I will not touch on those objectives since Honourable Members are aware of the role that this Ministry plays in the advancement and delivery of quality education for all. I want to say that programmes that have started will continue.

The Remedial Education Project will continue as planned; this project is going very successfully.

We have also looked at other manifesto pledges. The Flexibility Transfer took place and parents are overjoyed that they children can go forward and take the examination or they can go forward for an extra year to do the Enrichment Programme to prepare them with the basic skill and be able to be literate. Those programmes will continue.

Mr. Deputy President, the Internal Restructuring and Institutional Strengthening which began two years ago will also continue. This project has been funded by Government and the I.A.D.B. It will equip the Ministry of Education to carry out its mandate to make the Ministry more customer friendly. It is our view that every Barbadian should be treated as a human being and in a manner that is acceptable to all. We are looking at a customer friendly relationship in the Ministry of Education. You can call now and the response from the two Receptionists is heartening. Our effort is to give people the necessary training. It is our role in the Ministry of Education to guide and train our officers so that the public of Barbados get the benefits they deserve.

Mr. Deputy President, we also want to strengthen the Ministry's supervisory function. We want to ensure that its support services including its relationship with the unions and the teacher's union will function in a more proactive fashion. This is significant because when working together as groups, we need to have consultation. That seldom happened in the pass. It is our view that it should happen if you want to have good relations with the various stake-holders and we will continue on that consultative route.

Mr. Deputy President, the end result of this is that the Ministry of Education will evolve to be an agency with a role of policy making, supervision and facilitation in preference to that of involvement in the day to day running of the schools.

We want to ensure that things go smoothly and as a result of this we have started to look at the school committee so that they can take some of the load off the shoulder of the Ministry. When children are going on tours, the principal has to send a letter to the Ministry. We feel that the school committee should be given that type of responsibility and the responsibility for simple repairs in the school.

We are also aiming at community involvement to give people in the area where the school is situated some authority to understand that the school belongs to them. This would help to cut down on the vandalism. We want to get this type of community involvement through the school committee and other community groups in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy President, this proposal took effect from February at the same time that the Educational Management Information System was installed in the Ministry. A number of initiatives are imperative and will be undertaken during this year in order to achieve the goal of transforming the Ministry to being more vibrant and more responsive to the needs of national development.

Mr. Deputy President, I want to speak on the matter of Teacher Appraisal. I worked in a school for 25 years and I functioned because at the end of the day the same little black children and some white belong to Barbados, they cannot go anywhere else.
10.30 a.m.

I heard a moderator the other day say, if the VAT get too difficult I will get in a plane and go somewhere else and live. Mr. Deputy President, that is the most disturbing comment that I have ever heard from any leader in this country. Our little black children have nowhere to go, nor the white ones either, except in Barbados and therefore I have seen in the schools where only at the month of December a report will be written on any teacher and that teacher's performance.

Mr. Deputy President this must be changed. At the primary level reports are issued on teachers once a year. At the secondary level I cannot tell you so, Mr. Deputy President. We are working towards teacher appraisal. We have gone the route of consultation again which I think is important, so that people will not be disgruntled and say you have taken something and pushed it down my throat. They were in the process giving their suggestions, throwing out ideas, putting in new ones and sorting out.

Under the Government of Barbados and the IBRD Project, we are looking towards teacher appraisal where human resource development projects, a provision has been made for training in teacher appraisal because we cannot just come and say, teacher appraisal by September 1997. There has to be training of senior teachers, of principals and other stakeholders in the process so that they can assess individuals as they provide quality education for our students. The area that they would be getting that training Mr. Deputy President would be in the clinical supervision of the students.

Discussions, Mr. Deputy President, with the Ministry of Education and the Unions have been completed and the document on teacher appraisal is awaiting negotiations with the Ministry of the Civil Service at the request of the unions. It is hoped to implement the system by way of legislation and regulations and have it operational by September 1997. Teachers will welcome it because teacher appraisal is not about criticising only how a teacher performs, if you make an error to write it on your file. It

is also about letting the teachers know where their strengths are and giving them the necessary praise and the necessary guidance and the necessary incentives to help them to do better. A lot of people see it in a negative way as, they are only targetting me to see if I do not come to school or if I do not produce in the class room. That is not the idea.

In any case, Mr. Deputy President, in any institution that one goes for employment now there is some form of appraisal. In the private sector and in other agencies there is some form of appraisal of that individual, so that at the end of the period the individual knows he did exceptionally well in this area you need to upgrade that and the way that it is done is that people do not feel offended or do not feel that they are being ostracised but to put it over in a professional manner and that is what the teacher appraisal, Mr. Deputy President, is all about.

The next area initiative that we are continuing with is to do with the foreign language in secondary schools and of course we refer to Spanish and French. A recent feasibility study would have been undertaken with funding from the European Union, Mr. Deputy President, and it has indicated that the teaching of foreign languages in schools is in crisis and needs to be addressed urgently.

If Barbados, Mr. Deputy President, is to remain or to retain its edge of tourism and international business then it says that we do have to examine this particular situation and put systems in place to have it upgraded. A first step towards remedying this situation has been made in this year's finances under the Government of Barbados and the IBRD human resources project for the purchase of language materials in the school.

Discussions are underway at present, Sir, with Latin America where we expect to have some kind of relation with them so that at least 4 teachers from Latin America can be brought to Barbados to work on a pilot project in Spanish. And we would want that to be based in our primary schools where the Spanish would be taught at a conversational level so that the children's interest and their awareness can be stimulated. So that when they transfer from primary to secondary at least they have the aspect of doing it orally.

I think that is a good way because what is currently done is that our children are transferred from primary to secondary at 11 or now 12 years old and they are put from first form right into Spanish. It is my view, Mr. Deputy President, that much of it is done in an abstract fashion. Children have to learn a lot of vocabulary and so on and so forth like we did and perhaps that is the reason why I dislike French up to this day. But I think the approach is to let the children get an aspect of conversational Spanish on a daily basis to help them to develop that interest and to be able to master that particular skill.

Provision, Sir, will also be made in this agreement for assistance in methodology at Erdiston College beginning in September 1997. Because there is no point in having the children's interest stimulated at primary and then when they get into secondary it is the rigid old thing, the same abstraction. So methodology is going to be an integral part of the training. Teachers would be exposed to all forms of strategies and skills to help to transfer some of that knowledge to the young people.

Mr. Deputy President, I want to just skip a few things here and to look at testing and measurement. You are aware, Sir, that in Barbados the only major standardised test that was being done is at the common entrance level. We have found that there is a lot of forced learning because it has been the view of many Barbadians that children should be pushed in order to get them at the common entrance examination level to be able to go into what I would put in inverted commas as prestigious schools.

Over the last 2½ years it has been our view that, we would want our very bright children to continue to excel. But at the same time the ones who are slow in picking up certain skills or who are deficient as a result of teaching skills, at least let them master the basics, the maths and so on. Mr. Deputy President, we are looking at testing and measurement where a unit is being set up in the Ministry of Education, since they are the ones who oversee local and regional examinations, and the unit will set for examinations at 7 years old and at 9 years old. This is being done so that at 7 years old when that child leaves Infants B and you recognise at Class 1 that he has certain deficiencies then corrective measures are put there to help him to overcome those problems and to give him an opportunity to master those skills. Then again at 9 years old so that if the situation has not been adequately corrected at least some measure is done that when the child reaches 11 at least we do not have to be harping on remedial education every time. We are doing it in a systematic way so testing and measurement, Mr. Deputy President, is an area that we are looking at to identify with the children's strengths and weaknesses and to be able to give them a better grasp of the quality education that we intend to offer in Barbados. "Special Needs," in particular to do with the children at risk where we have started to test our children for hearing through Dr. Ben Stabler. A project that we have been working on because we recognise that, and I say it all the time, if a child cannot hear then it cannot really speak the language, it cannot really interpret and it has to be doing sign language.

10.40 a.m.

The dyslexia is also included in the project. Some of our teachers in the remedial unit have been to the Dyslexia Center and have been given on the spot training to help

them to be able to improve in that area. About ten of our schools have been already tested over the last year and Dr. Ben Stabler and his team will continue that testing.

The plan is also assisted through another agency to assist us with checking the children for speech impediments and for sight problems. We are working towards that because these are the children who, most likely will lose out on quality education if they are not able to listen or to speak well or to see well in the classroom or in any other area in this Barbados.

Training has been continuing, Mr. Deputy President, at the Erdiston Teachers Training College for teachers in these areas as well as in family life and health and other areas where children experience difficulties.

The establishment of the Accreditation and Certification Board and the Ministry have as one of its functions, responsibility of advising on the value and equivalency of certificates. This task is now done on an *ad hoc* basis. It is now going to be implemented.

With the free movement of the Caribbean nationals, the closer relationship with other educational systems and the proliferation of institutions offering certificates, this task has become more difficult. Because you recognise, Sir, that many institutions are calling in individuals for training and offering a certificate. Or, people are coming from overseas with a certificate and then we need to know if it is accredited to a certificate of that standard that we think that the person needs to be merited. Therefore, the establishment of the Accreditation and Certification Board is on stream.

An Accreditation Board will therefore be set up within the Ministry to perform this role. It has already been established that a large percentage of our students leave school without certificates. Therefore when they are ready for the employment area, there are tremendous difficulties in ascertaining whether they have reached some required levels of education to be potential employees.

Certification, which is modular based and which can be undertaken at any age will be instituted by this Ministry of Education.

The Board will be responsible for this Certification, and the Accreditation and Certification Board will be responsible for accreditation and certification.

Provision, Mr. Deputy President, has been made in the Human Resource Development Project for a study to be carried out to advise the Ministry on the composition and functions of the Board.

Curriculum development, Mr. Deputy President, is another continuous process that we are working towards and this will be going on for some time. As time changes, as the needs of the society changes, then we need to have that curriculum to be able to prepare our students for those changes in the society and in the world as a whole.

During the period three new modules will be prepared and be introduced in September 1997. Namely, Citizenry, Black Studies and Family Life Education.

Mr. Deputy President, also I know that Senator Davis will be happy about that but it is interesting to note that wise men are thinking alike. Therefore, these subjects are integral aspects of our lives and our development.

With the infiltration, Mr. Deputy President, of certain cultures and certain norms from otherwise, there is a serious breakdown of family life in Barbados. It is significant that these subjects will be included in the schools' curriculum so that we can teach our young people. Perhaps some of them have never really been involved in a particular family before to get a feel of what family life is like. They are our citizens of the future and therefore they are the ones who have to develop those various skills and competencies in order for them to be able to look after their families.

Of course, Mr. Deputy President, we are aware of a lot of history concerning other people and we need now to also zero into history concerning us as a black community and a black set of people in this society and therefore the Black Studies subject will also be introduced.

The other one to do with citizenry where many of our Barbadians are not aware as to where they have come from, where they are and where they are going. We feel that if we train our children to understand who they are and, what their contribution can be to this society, I think that is very significant. So we need to do this citizenry. As well, subjects of Mathematics and English at both primary and secondary levels will be reviewed during this period.

The "Scholarships" and the "Exhibitions" at present are being offered at the "A" level. We recognise that many students are taking opportunities to do the Associate Degree course and therefore, it is a proposal to award Scholarships and Exhibitions to students who are pursuing Associate Degrees at the Barbados Community College. This, Mr. Deputy President, will take effect from June 1998.

In the light of this ever increasing achievement of young Barbadians, it is proposed to raise the present requirements of the Barbados Scholarship to include an "A" grade in the general paper and the Education Act, Mr. Deputy President, will be amended to accommodate this change.

Mr. Deputy President, we are also aware at this moment that the Cambridge Examinations may cease. We do not have the final word, but it is our understanding that that may be happening. We are overseas candidates and therefore we are aware that the "CXC" would be introducing syllabi to a similar programme for 1997. We have to be prepared so that if such occurs we will be ready for those developments. We will continue to monitor them and to deal with them in good time.

Another comment I would like to make, Mr. Deputy President, is to do with the Out of School Suspension Programme which will offer counselling and correctional services for our young people who are suspended from school.

I would have stood here late last year, Mr. Deputy President, and made a number of comments concerning the suspension of children out of school. Where children go home, there is nobody to monitor them in the society where they are and in the communities where they are. They go home and nobody knows what happens. They do not see a psychologist. They do not see anyone.

It is our view that we can tap into those children and give them a better deal and therefore, the Out of School Suspension Programme is put in place. A location has been identified and it will include working with agencies, for example, the Juvenile Liaison Scheme, the Welfare Department, the Probation Office, the Child Care Board and with parents and people in the community as well, because there is no point in the child not having that support system.

It is necessary if the counseling and the various activities are to be put in place at the Centre, they are accommodated as well when the children return home. It is to be noted, Mr. Deputy President, that an effort such as this will accord the child the opportunity to continue to study. When they are out of school for ten days, or an extension of fifteen days, or whatever, they do not really get the school work so that they may continue to do any actual learning. This will take care of that particular situation and the individuals will have opportunities for counselling and opportunities of their self-esteem. I think in most instances that is the reason why they pull the pranks and become deviant because the self-esteem is very low, as well as training in how to resolve conflicts.

Many of our young people just do not understand. They are not taught or trained how to deal with situations as they arise. They become very angry. They become very violent and after that, recognise that "this is the route I should have gone only if I had known." The conflict resolution will be an important component in that particular programme.

Mr. Deputy President, we started the Parent Volunteer Programme in the nursery schools in Barbados. You are aware, Sir, that in our 84 primary schools we have Nursery Units attached to them. Over the years, we have had a few faithful, interested parents who have been coming to the schools to offer their services for free.

We felt that it is important that if parents are going to continue to be stakeholders, or if they are to feel comfortable in the school's environment and then to see themselves as developing a particular skill or particular competence in dealing with their own children as well as those in the nursery schools, that we will give them that kind of formal training.

In last year's Estimates, Sir, we accommodated a \$50 000 amount which was allocated to the National Council of Parent Teachers' Association to be disbursed on a weekly basis, not as a salary but as a stipend so that parents will be able to get to and from the schools without feeling it as hard.
10.50 a.m.

I must inform the Honourable Senate that some of the same parents live 2 stone throws away from the school. The ones who have to travel we felt we would give them something to let them see we appreciate them. So come and get the training. Dr. Megan Goodridge has been on secondment from the Erdiston Teachers Training College and she is overseeing the project for the Ministry. It is my distinct pleasure to say that I have been given monthly reports, through Dr. Goodridge and the organisation that is assisting, of the status of the parent volunteer programme and I am pleased to say that we would want from the school year, beginning in September, to proceed rather than for 10 nursery schools to touch 40 schools where parents can get that training.

I honestly felt that those parents who were carrying out instructions in the classroom for the children were teaching. Their language was excellent and I can see the confidence with which they spoke and I could see a warmth with the children around them as they participated. To tell the truth, Mr. Deputy President, it made me feel really jealous because that was my role before, but I am happy to know that our parents are not out there on the periphery looking on but are actually involved in our schools. That is the way that we should go if we want Barbados to continue to go from strength to strength.

Mr. Deputy President, as all of us know, there is need for us to have a new Education Act. We have been making amendments over the years and in the light of the changing environment and the awareness of citizens of their rights I think it is significant that we work towards that change.

Last year we had the direction and the guidance of Dr. Kenny Anthony who had already prepared an Act for the Caribbean. We have started the process of making input into a new Education Act. A draft of the new Act is expected to be completed, Mr. Deputy President, by March, 1998.

Mr. Deputy President, I am speaking as I do because I know the other Honourable Members of this Senate would have been aware of some of the initiatives that would have been expressed over the last 2 years. And perhaps I am not as full in my presentation for Senator Boyce as I should be, but I would only be too happy to share with him a document that gives some of the insights as to what the Ministry of Education is doing so that I can help to allay his fears because things are looking great for Barbados.

Mr. Deputy President, we started with the remedial education unit in October 1994. We recognised that the children who wrote the 1995 Common Entrance exam, many of them, were lacking in their mastery of basic skills and as a result we tried to set up a parent education programme to teach the parents of those 1100 or so students who would have scored very low in the examination about parenting skills. That has been guided by the PAREDOS organisation under Mrs. Martha Springer and it has been well accepted. The reports are there for all to see.

This year we are expanding to accommodate other parents in other communities because parenting is a very significant aspect of anyone's development. As I said before, it does not call for any parent, man or woman, because people seem to think that parenting is only for women, to have a certificate in order to raise children or give birth to children or whatever.

I think it is a very significant part of our development that parents are given the training so that they can go home and guide and point their children. They can assist them with their homework. They can help them to correct their language. They can help them to see life as something that you would want to hold dear to you and to see other people and to respect them and their belief because at the end of the day all of us are one large family in Barbados. We have to live together.

Therefore, PAREDOS is going to be overseeing the parent education programme which is going to be extended and funding is in these Estimates to accommodate that need. Mr. Deputy President, we all are aware of that situation where we now have two schools, St. George Senior School, and the St. Lawrence Composite School of which there are junior children in the composite school. We know that some of those children are disadvantaged.

Some of the programmes are not really catering to their needs because these are mainly children who would not have scored well in the Common Entrance or perhaps did not write it or some of them might have scored well but because of parents' financial problems they could not accommodate a bursary or allocation into another school.

This September we are looking to start up another secondary school for alternative curriculum because the Democratic Labour Party gave a blind eye to those children. As a matter of fact, they are the ones who amalgamated schools to make them composite schools, and kept children in their schools for many years with no proper programmes to look after their educational needs, hence the fighting, the cutting up, the truancy, everything that you can think of. We have come, we have inherited this problem and it is not our duty to let it stay. We have to look after Barbadian children, in particular, the boys.

Therefore, a school similar to that set up at Alma Parris Memorial School will be set up to accommodate the students of those two schools, St. George Senior and the St. Lawrence Composite School from September 1997.

I speak again, Mr. Deputy President with authority because we keep contact with the Alma Parris School. There are officers who have come from universities all over the place and they have expressed their delight at seeing children who have only gone into there from September 1995 sitting in the school and working doing computing. They are doing boat building. They are on attachments at hotels and other businesses in the community. They are into sport activities. Never mind they might not have gained many points at the Inter-school sports, the fact is some of them are into boxing. They are into tennis and doing it well. I speak because I know and if I thought it was not working I am bold enough to get up and say we need to re-examine. But the interesting thing about that school and I know that this would happen in this particular one, is that the teachers specifically chose to transfer from the schools they were at to the ones they were going to because they knew that they were dealing with children with special needs and they have the basic training to deal with those children and the teachers as well as the parents are happy.

Any institution that one sets up you are going to find somebody with a little grouse. It is in your own household but, Mr. Deputy President, that does not mean that the show must not go on. The children of Barbados are our interests and therefore whatever things are put there that would confuse the whole flow, the individuals will have to go because the children's needs must be met and therefore a second school of that kind will be opened come September 1997.

11.00 a.m.

Mr. Deputy President, Honourable Members in this Senate are also aware that the St. Thomas Secondary School will be completed to accommodate the students of the St. Leonard's Girls' School which has for all the years been a single-sex school. Now, the students who will be accommodated in that school will be...

Aside.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: The St. Thomas Secondary School, Mr. Deputy President, will accommodate a co-educational set up where both boys and girls will now be going there and the boys' school will be exclusively for boys as the Springer Memorial School is exclusively for girls. There will also be two primary schools to be built during this year. Operations have already started – the St. Christopher's Primary School will be amalgamated to accommodate the boys and the girls and the All Saints School will accommodate the All Saints Boys', the All Saints Girls' and the Indian Ground School.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss C. Y. FORDE: You do not identify with it so you are ashamed. Mr. Deputy President, my humblest apology, Sir. Literacy programme – Mr. Deputy President, in order to continue the promotion of literacy in Barbados a grant has been given through the Association of Reading. That is non-governmental in a way because it comprises teachers of all schools, primary, private and secondary and therefore private and public schools. Therefore that organisation has come forward with a proposal to go into the various communities and work on literacy programmes to help individuals to be able to upgrade their skills. That is being accommodated.

At present there are about three hundred teachers who are untrained. They are into the school system and there is no point in keeping them there for eight years, ten years without giving them the training. It is important that they get that specific two-year training programme at Erdiston College. Yes, some of them are attending the Easter vacation classes or other evening classes on their own but they need to get that basic training at Erdiston College. We have been meeting with the various unions BUT, the BSTU and the Conference of Primary School Principals in an effort to start to examine because we would like to have that training to start in September. Again, we are not going to force anything at anyone, but a concentrated approach is being used in order to be able to achieve that particular goal and to make our schools more qualitative in approach.

The thirty-four clerical officers that we were working towards will be in the primary schools from September 1997 where they will assist principals and teachers with

the clerical work at the school because that is always a very heavy task. Principals have to sit and write letters and so on, and they are not in the actual classrooms observing.

If they are to be a part of the teacher appraisal then they need to be released from the office to be able to move around the compound and to help to function at that administrative level. So the thirty-four clerical officers will be attached to the schools from September. Of course we have some small schools and some very large schools but where there are small schools then that officer will be able to serve two or perhaps three small schools together.

Funds are available in these Estimates, Mr. Deputy President to accommodate that need. Mr. Deputy President, finally I want to touch on some other comments made by Senator Springer and his queries were to do with what role government is playing to assist the private secondary schools. We understand that they have large deficits and so on and so forth, but not only this government, but I know that successive governments have been offering assistance to the secondary schools in the form of bursaries. The private secondary schools – these are the ones I am referring to, Sir.

At present, grants are given for qualified teachers in a ratio of 1:40 up to a maximum of six teachers and thereafter 80 or the greater part thereof. There are other incentives, Mr. Deputy President. Last year we recognised that many parents who had children in those private secondary schools have been coming to say that the school fees have gone up, we are unemployed, our demands cannot be met financially because of the small amount we are pulling in weekly and we need some really urgent help.

I know of many children who were out of school for four or five weeks as a result of the parents not being able to pay the school fees. This government took the initiative of putting the school attendance officers to investigate such requests and accommodation has been given for bursaries for those people with genuine needs. Many of those children are now in school as a result of that particular initiative. The private secondary schools will also benefit. In the past a grant of \$1,000 was given yearly for the promotion of remedial education resources – things to buy equipment and so on.

We have decided this time that we will pay the salary for the teacher who will teach the remedial subject areas and will put in a grant instead for information technology which is now catching on. So that is a little extra plus what has happened there.

We have been working towards waiver, Mr. Deputy President, for students who cannot pay the fees for the textbooks. The final thing in that area, Mr. Deputy

President is to do with subventions for specific areas where the private secondary schools, if they are pursuing programmes in Science, Home Economics, Art and so on subventions are being given to help in those particular areas.

The final thing on private schools Mr. Deputy President, is to state that the Challenor School and the Learning Centre, are schools where in the past parents had to pay for the students. We recognised that those students are over 11 anyhow. The government is now giving them bursaries because in most instances the parents of those children cannot really afford to meet those financial demands. Therefore they will be given bursaries to accommodate their needs.

We have put in the budget, Sir, for these two schools a grant of just over \$1 million to help them with the running because you would appreciate that if these children are slower in learning and picking up skills then they need a smaller teacher-pupil ratio of perhaps 1:4. And where the school for the deaf and dumb is concerned 1:8, one teacher to eight children. We have put that amount into the budget in order to be able to accommodate those needs.

Mr. Deputy President, these policies and programmes that this Government is examining, because I do not want to get into the other areas now since I recognise that my time is almost closing. It has gone? Thank you, Sir.

I want to say, Mr. Deputy President, that I am happy to be associated with this particular government and the policies and programmes that are being put in place to help the citizens of Barbados to see themselves, to see self worth and to see that their contribution, however small is recognised. That when they have problems there is a listening ear or there is some avenue or there is some group through which they can go to help them to ease the problems and the tension which they are experiencing.

It is our role in the Barbados Labour Party, according to our motto, to give a better life for all Barbadian people. Therefore Mr. Deputy President, I am happy about the programmes and the policies that are being put in place to help our people to advance as we approach the year 2 000.

I want to commend this government for these initiatives and I wish to commend the comments that I made to this Honourable House and solicit the support of every Honourable Senator in here to give the support to the government. Where there are queries they know that a listening ear is given. Where they are certain amendments that are necessary we try to accommodate because at the end of the day we can go nowhere. We cannot even go to Pelican Island because there is no Pelican Island now. We have to live in Barbados and the more comfortable we

make people feel, the more confidence we give them in wanting to be citizens who can make a worthwhile contribution, the better it is for all of us as we go through the years. Thank you very much Mr. Deputy President.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator Murray.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Deputy President, Sir I want to commend very highly the last Senator who just spoke for her very uplifting presentation. A presentation in which she, in the traditional manner in which Estimates have been debated in this Chamber and in the Lower House for years gave an account of the stewardship of her Ministry and other Ministries. And quite apart from the impression that has been attempted to be created by the Opposition Senators, but we should not be surprised at that because obviously, being aware of the tremendous amount of work that is being done in every government Ministry, in every government department, they chose to stay away from going through the Estimates in a very exhaustive and a very meaningful manner and in scrutinising the various individual performances of the Ministries and departments. But instead chose to go off on a one-legged tangent and speak quite a roll on poverty.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy President. I was in the Senate. The Honourable Member is misleading the Chamber. The contributions of the Opposition were based on a thorough and detailed study of the Estimates before us, and research. It is improper for the Honourable Member to impute that the Senators on this side, the Opposition Senators did other than scrutinise these Estimates in coming to their conclusion.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: No point of order.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Mr. Deputy President, I am not denying they might have very well scrutinised them. But obviously this scrutiny did not bear evidence in the level in accordance with the presentation. There were not able to translate the alleged scrutiny into verbalising it and therefore they fell very short. Sir, as I said they tried to focus their attention on poverty and we in the Barbados Labour Party Government make no apology in seeking to tackle poverty.

As a matter of fact, I was reading and I came across a document called The Human Development Report 1995 put out by the UNDP in which it says this. This is the foreword to the report and I would like to quote that foreword, Sir.

"History is likely to join the progress in the 21st century by one major yardstick. Is there a growing equality of opportunity between people and among nations?"

11.10 a.m.

Mr. President, by seeking to alleviate and hopefully eradicate poverty, we are seeking to eliminate and eradicate this disparity that exists within this nation of Barbados. We did not depend on the UNDP to tell us that in the foreword of the document. In our 1994 Manifesto, on page 29, we said explicitly and quite determinedly that our policies, that is the Barbados Labour Party's policies, in this Manifesto will ensure that there is always one Barbados.

We, in the Barbados Labour Party, as Senator Boyce knows, take our Manifesto seriously. We regard the comments and the commitments made in them as binding between ourselves as a social contract, between ourselves and the people of Barbados and we do not regard them as a frivolous waste of time concocted to catch their fancy at a particular point in history.

Sir, the whole question of poverty was brought to the fore by the Prime Minister during the recent by-election campaign in St. Michael North West when as a result of his experiences, and the experiences of other members of the party, pledged to devote \$100 million over the next four years to the eradication of poverty, not only in that constituency but all over Barbados. Anyone who traversed that constituency during that by-election would have been shocked, shamed and embarrassed at some of the conditions found there. Conditions which it is widely acknowledged were largely as a result of a gross state of neglect heaped upon that constituency by the longstanding representing party, the Democratic Labour Party. Therefore, Sir, we sought not only to talk about it but to do something about it.

The Prime Minister during that by-election challenged the two Opposition parties to a conference in February last month at Sherbourne to talk about the whole question of poverty to try to come up with a commonality of approach and perception of poverty. That challenge is yet to be answered. I believe it is because they were embarrassed, particularly the Democratic Labour Party which had stewardship for that constituency for so long, that this had been unearthed from under their nose when for some nearly 20 years they operated as though it never existed in that constituency particularly, hence the overall thrust of this year's 1997/98 Estimates.

Sir, it was acknowledged from quite early in this year's Estimates we would be shifting greater emphasis, focus and resources to the social sectors and the delivery of social services to the people of Barbados. If Senator Boyce talks about \$10 million in the Ministry of Economic Affairs which will go to a poverty alleviation programme, but just in case in his scrutiny of the Estimates he was not able to recall all the areas where resources were being placed for the alleviation of poverty, I would like to read an exhaustive list of some of these areas and some of

the monies allocated to them, if only to give the lie to the imputation that \$10 million in the Ministry of Economic Affairs was some kind of pork barrel or some great hand-out agency out of which people can dip liberally in the coming months for some election campaign.

Sir, here is the list: -

1. The new poverty alleviation programme under the Ministry of Economic Affairs gets \$10 million.
2. Five million dollars for an Urban Development Programme and a further \$5.2 million for a Rural Development Commission.
3. An increase of \$6 million for the Welfare Department to allow it to continue to provide relief for the needy.

I know that must really hurt the heart of Senator Boyce when he recalls, having his scrutiny of the Estimates for 1997/98...

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The Honourable Member must address the Chair otherwise you are going to draw cross-talk which will interfere with the debate.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Deputy President.

Sir, it will well be recalled that the Democratic Labour Party over the last three or four years before the change of Government systematically cut and chopped those same social sector areas which we now are seeking to rebuild. Having rebuilt the economy we now have resources which we can devote to those agencies. Might I go on, Sir:

4. Eight million dollars for tenantry roads.
5. Thirty-four point one million dollars will be spent on capital projects in the Ministry of Education including the work at the St. Thomas Secondary School which the Democratic Labour Party had started and which Senator Boyce knows was unable to be finished because they had no money to do so. Another project being finished by the Barbados Labour Party.
6. Fifteen million dollars in health for solid waste disposal and management including Greenland and the transfer station.

"Management" is a very sensitive and operative word there, Sir, because what Mangrove had lacked over the years before the Barbados Labour Party came to power,

was management. Greenland will replace Mangrove. Mangrove lacked the management and the much criticised Minister of Health has demonstrated that, given the right policies and the requisite amount of resources, management can be brought to Mangrove. It is no longer known as Mount Stinkeroo. The residents have now been compensated in some small measure for what was inflicted on them over the years of neglect and lack of management under the Democratic Labour Party.

7. Forty point three million dollars for the South Coast Sewerage Project.
8. An increase of \$90 million will be made available to the University of the West Indies.
9. Five hundred thousand dollars for the Disability Unit.
10. Eight hundred and fifty thousand dollars for Children at Risk Programme and an additional \$45 million for the Challenor School and Learning Centre to which Senator Forde made some reference.
11. An additional \$2 million over the original provision in the 1996 Estimates for the Youth Service Programme plus an additional \$1 million for the Vocational Training Board.

Sir, that is a comprehensive range and therefore it is unfair and incorrect to try to establish that all the Barbados Labour Party and this Government's programme on the alleviation of poverty seeks to do is to put \$10 million into one programme, out of which the whole question of poverty has to be tackled.

The reason why the question of poverty is on the front burner of public discussion is because all Governments in Barbados from the beginning of time, ever since the social and political changes that came to Barbados as a result of the 1937 riots, all Governments since then have consistently sought to eradicate poverty in various ways.

It might not have been given the concerted focus and comprehensive effort which is now being done under this Government but all parties, including the Democratic Labour Party, have, like I said, step by step attacked the whole question of poverty. This time we are giving it a more concentrated and a more deliberate effort.

Mr. Deputy President, in case there are some young Senators who might not know what I mean by the early beginning of this attack on poverty, I would like to talk about, for example, the health centres that came

to Barbados in 1953. I think the first one, as Senator Rickinson would know, was in Speightstown and then these were eclipsed by what we have now as the polyclinics.

There was improved housing in the Pine, Goodland, Cave Hill and the only housing area in St. John. All these are beneficiaries of this programme of attacking poverty, among other things, providing better housing and better roads. There is holiday with pay, like I said and better education. It ran the gamut of all the social services and the infrastructural development that has come to Barbados over the years.

Sir, the Democratic Labour Party has quarrelled with the Rural Development Programme. We pledged we would have a Rural Development Programme and a Rural Development Commission in our Manifesto. We also plan to have an Urban Development Commission which we anticipate will come to fruition very early in the new financial year. We expect them to quarrel with it because they are good programmes about which they never thought and therefore if they do not find it in their heart of hearts to praise us we expect they will nit-pick at them, but that will not stop the march of time and will not stop the mark of progress as we implement these programmes.
11.20 a.m.

I wish, Sir, in dealing with the whole question of poverty to indicate that some Honourable Senators were concerned about the quality and the time and effectiveness of delivery of any future social services that might come out of the poverty alleviation programme. They need to pay attention to the fact that there is a comprehensive study being undertaken of the whole social sector in Barbados. A study which is meant to look to see whether the moneys which are being spent on the social sectors is being well spent, being effectively delivered, and efficiently provided and that is not being done through an overseas agency. It is being done by using local Barbadian expertise and using the skills and experience of people who have worked in the social sector of Barbados and who act as consultants for agencies within Barbados and in the region.

We expect that this report will be presented and ready within another month or so. We are conscious of the fact that while millions of dollars are being spent every year, ostensibly to the provision of social services to the public, we want to examine the role of the NGOs to see if there is any duplication in their role and the services provided by the Government agencies which might in themselves be better delivered through the NGOs.

We are looking at this in a very comprehensive and scientific manner because we do not want to operate on gut feeling based on individual experience. But we want to do this to attack poverty and deliver a service across the board.

It is interesting that Senator Thompson seems to be quite at odds and takes a different track from what the leadership is saying on different issues. We saw it with the Minor Offences Bill, we saw it in reference to Almond in yesterday's debate and again in the issue on the Bureau of Women. Senator Thompson said that the Estimates had not dealt with the alleviation of poverty. My belief is that she has not addressed the Estimates. If she had, she would have made more contact with the facts and figures and programmes indicated in the Estimates.

Sir, the question of the Women's Bureau also came in for comment from the Opposition Senators. All three parties in the Lower House were unanimous in their...

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: It is not customary to refer to debates in the other House.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Deputy President for bringing me back on track. What it does is to align the fact that there is a virtually unanimous opinion in the Chamber and other Chamber that the Women's Bureau is woefully lacking in its approach.

Let me indicate some of the things that the Women's Bureau has taken pride now in this day and age in Barbados. They are taking great pride that some programmes in the making last year that 29 persons were trained in jewelry; 9 persons were trained in dried herbs and syrup; 6 persons were trained in making flours from breadfruit and sweet potato; 7 persons were trained in hair accessories, novelty and souvenirs; they concentrated heavily on jams, jellies and crochet doilies. Sir, the needs of the women in Barbados have gone way, way beyond that.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: On a point of order. From the same document that the Minister is quoting, maybe he would like to tell us the contribution in terms of foreign exchange earnings of these same products made by the women of Barbados.

Mr. DEPUTY PRESIDENT: No point of order.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Sir, I gave those details to show that the women of Barbados have passed that stage long ago and for the Bureau to try to restrict the women of Barbados to that area of operation is patronising and condescending. We must recognise that Barbadian women have more skills and more abilities and they need greater opportunities. I have not met a woman in Barbados, who, if she wanted advice could walk into the Bureau and get that advice and guidance. There is a considerable failure on the part of the Women's Bureau and this is why there has been wide spread admonition of its operation and the expression of the need for it to come into the 20th century and take women further ahead. I felt

I needed to put the record straight regarding women and their future in Barbados.

Mr. Deputy President, I turn to the issues as debated by the Honourable Senators.

First of all I raise the question of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. The CBC, in the eyes of Barbadians should be all things to all people and all things to itself. While this is so, people are still being victimised and there is mismanagement. To put the history of the CBC in context, it is interesting to note the statistics which gives you an indication of the heavy burden that the CBC has had to operate under during the last 34 years or so.

The Corporation has had 7 Ministers, 14 Chairmen, 16 Board of Directors involving some 93 individuals and 11 General Managers, all with different ways and outlooks, styles, management and overall agendas seeking to put their own particular stamp on the CBC. This has affected both its operations and how it fulfilled its mandate to the general public.

The widespread comments indicate that over the last 34 years it has become an institution that has become part and parcel of the lives of Barbadians. It is regarded as an important institution to which Barbadians look up to and of which they expect to provide a great service for them. Some comments and concerns were made about the increase of local programming, particularly in television.

I have mentioned before in a previous debate the new thrust that the CBC will be going into as a result of Multichoice T.V. when it is widely recognised that Barbadians will still have the need to see and hear about themselves and know what is happening in the community and to reflect and demonstrate their skills, talent and culture not just in singing, dancing and music but through culture in the widest possible sense; with the awareness that culture is everything we do, see and hear and believe in as a people.

The CBC is seeking to provide such programming as indicated. Some of these programmes have already come on line but I think the public will get a greater appreciation of how the CBC is handicapped in this regard if an indication of the cost were given of local programming.

It costs US\$11 000 to produce one hour of local programming as against US\$275 to import an hour long programme. This puts the production of local programming at a considerable disadvantage and demonstrates the need for greater resources to be pushed into it.

11.30 a.m.

I am happy to report, Sir, that with the advent of the multi-choice T.V. and the other system the advertising agencies have demonstrated a clear commitment to the CBC and a clear commitment to Barbados, if only because they recognise that for them to get their products and to advertise the products of their clients into Barbadian houses it would need the CBC Channel 8 to do so. Therefore there is a greater indication that greater support would come from the advertising and the business community in Barbados. In addition in order to fulfil the desire to increase local programming the CBC as I mentioned earlier, is also dealing with a number of independent local producers to produce a number of programmes of various types, for the Barbadian audience.

They are seeking to encourage independent producers and the CBC will do the broadcasting of the programme and it is intended not only for the local consumption but also for export purposes.

As a matter of fact the CBC and the Prime Minister's Office in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Culture have begun to put together a team of people looking at various ways of trying to make this possible, and to make it more attractive and more feasible for local producers and writers, to become involved in producing local programmes and also looking at how we can set about to fulfil another Barbados Labour Party Manifesto pledge to create a local film industry. So that is very much on the way.

There was also some concern, Sir, about the loss of invaluable historical material at the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation through the lack of proper storage and proper archiving methods. And it is suspected in some instances that very important historical cultural material has gone abegging and has been destroyed because of the lack of such facilities. Along with the provision of facilities and room for the Multi-Choice television operation, an area has been devoted and is being made ready to house a properly constructed archival department where the work that has begun to catalogue and archive material, could be done on a more systematic and scientific basis. So there is an appreciation of the need to preserve that part of our heritage and remedial steps are already being taken.

The work of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation also has gone beyond entertainment, has gone beyond sports, Sir. It has had to undergo a tremendous amount of revenue. It has had to spend a tremendous amount of money on the area of public service announcements. Last year, for example, it was estimated that there was some \$135 000 spent on public service announcements alone with \$127 000 being spent on the broadcast of parliamentary debates. All this in 1996 alone.

On this score of parliamentary broadcasts there is a committee which is doing some work, and which hopefully will conclude its work very shortly, which has taken a fresh look at the whole question of parliamentary broadcasts seeking to use the equipment which will no longer be used by the CBC with the advent of multi-choice television which will be using the UHF transmitters and repeaters. This will be devoted to providing a channel for parliamentary broadcasts and also for public service broadcasts, for community broadcasts where not only Parliament, but other material coming from the Ministry of Education and Culture, coming from community groups will be broadcast without having to call on the general public of channel 8 to forego their television fare as they have been called upon to do from time to time over the past few years.

Therefore, Sir, there is a challenge out there to local writers and producers to accept the offer being made by the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation as regards to television. There is also a similar thrust being made where radio is concerned whereby Liberty radio has been a success and has been making profit and making bigger profit with each passing year. There are some changes being planned for Radio 900, the AM Station, which as a result when the cricketing broadcast is finished in May, the new programming will come into being in full force and persons will see a greater emphasis being placed on information as against music, both from Barbados and from the region.

The CBC has also made its contribution by giving technical assistance to the countries of the Eastern Caribbean, places like St. Kitts, Antigua, Dominica, St. Lucia and Grenada among others in training their personnel to acquire greater skills in television broadcasting. It is something that was alluded to by Senator Lynch yesterday and I can verify that it has taken place and that a great deal has been spent on that area and the CBC stands ready to do the same in the future.

If I may switch areas again, Sir, and try to give some account of the operations of some of the other areas over which I have responsibility. I would like to turn my attention to the Prime Minister's Office where, Sir, a great deal of work has been done over the past year and I might just take a quick look and mention some of the major areas of activities and some of the achievements that have been accomplished in that area.

One of the areas of pride of achievement has been the whole question of community independence celebrations. Starting in 1995 it grew to even greater strengths last year in 1996 and every indication is that in 1997 it will be even bigger and better.

One of the particular highlights was the whole question of the lighting of Bridgetown. The lighting of the roundabouts has been a tremendous success and there are plans already to have discussions with the business houses in Bridgetown about how this whole thrust can be improved and bettered next year. They have thrown their full weight behind it and I can assure the public of Barbados that in 1997 for the community independence, Bridgetown would be even brighter. More emphasis would be placed on Government buildings and Bridgetown will be cleaned up once again. This approach will extend not only to Bridgetown but will also include parts of Speightstown, Holetown and Oistins to an even greater degree. As far as the roundabouts are concerned there are 3 or 4 which were not sponsored last year and already there are businesses lining up to get the opportunity to sponsor roundabouts and light them up, a project which has brought so much pride and satisfaction.

The mini-parks competition has been a success. There are 5 mini parks which took part in 1995. There were 12 last year and in April we will be beginning to allow people to get the parks ready for competition so they have a greater lead time in order to prepare the areas. Barclays Bank has agreed again, has committed itself, to sponsoring the 1997 competition and we are expecting greater and better things from them. The same thing can be said of the community choirs competition which was revived and which was a great success.

11.40 a.m.

Now we have not just been spending money, Sir, this whole community thrust has also been able to make revenue. We have sought to commercialise the use of the logo and this year, I think we would have raised some \$21 000 at the last count, by allowing various businesses to use the logo for various products, T-shirts especially and things of that nature.

The community independence was such a success last year that we spent much less money in 1996 than we did in 1997. I think in 1996 we had a budget of \$300 000 and we ended up spending some \$169 170 only because the general public, especially the business community was so enthused by the concept and was so ready to respond to the whole question of showing their love and affection and their appreciation for the country that the Government did not have to spend as much money this time to promote the idea.

The business community put their resources, not just their mouth, but their money. So it ended up that we had to spend less. They contributed to the community groups all over Barbados. We expect that again this year it will be done even better to all concerned. We are very proud of the effort and we are very proud of the small unit in the Prime Minister's Office that has been able to manage this

affair. We are very proud and thankful of Barbadians for appreciating that what we have been seeking to do is not to steal anybody's association with the achievement of Independence.

We felt that it was unsatisfactory that the celebration of Independence should only be associated with one day of the year through a few limited programmes, at the Garrison and Ilaro Court in St. Michael, but that the whole community should be involved in it.

We had the pleasure, Sir, and we are proud that we were able to attract Barbadians from abroad. Two groups from London and one group from New York came last year and wanted to take part in the celebrations. Already we have had inquiries from other groups who want to be part and parcel of this programme for this year.

We have paved the way and we know that the Barbadian public will take it on board and that they will be quite happy and quite appreciative about all that is being done.

Another area, Sir, I would like to look at, is the whole question of the Government Information Service. The Government Information Service has continued to make steady progress. It has continued to expand its operations and it has continued to enjoy better facilities through the Government.

We have been able to rewire and air condition the main building, ending a trend where for two or three years had seen the money being devoted to it having lapsed. The Government Information Service now has better conditions. The staff now operate in air condition comfort, not only for their own comfort but also for the protection and preservation of the very sensitive equipment that it operates there.

In addition, the staff has enjoyed training, they are now completing the refurbishment of a radio studio. When we went into office we found that the radio station at the Government Information Service was non functional and the Government Information Service had to spend thousands of dollars every year paying CANA for a basic service of going there to record their programmes.

The studio has now been refurbished. It will be ready to be used in another two weeks. It has been sound proofed. It is air conditioned and the equipment is being installed. It means that the radio studio will, therefore, save the Government Information Service and the Government the expense of having to expend large sums of money to provide a service which it should and have been providing for itself.

In addition, Sir, the Government Information Service has gone ahead and improved its position where cost recovery is concerned. It is no secret that we sought to allow the Government Information Service not only to provide a service but also to make money in doing so wherever possible. For a long time lots of materials and services which had been provided by the Government Information Service at the expense of the tax payers used to be given away to the public. Photographs and so on which the tax payers would have spent their money in buying material and paying the labour of the photographer, etc. were being just given away. They have now begun to charge for some of these services but even above that, they are beginning to provide services to the Government departments, videos and promotional material.

In 1995 to 1996 they earned some \$18 000 and at the last count this would rise to some \$50 000 for 1996 to 1997. They have risen to the challenge, Sir, and they are seeking to earn some revenue for the Government Information Service wherever possible.

We are also looking at acquiring the services of an officer who can not only write, but also will have marketing skills who can go out actively, and market the services of the Government Information Service among the other Government departments. Therefore, this will allow the earning of additional revenue and at the same time allow the Government Information Service and its officers to enhance their skills to provide a better service and become more professional in their whole approach and do not seem to be second rate to those who operate at any of the other persons in the electronic media.

Hence, that is why there is no surprise that the staff was able to win a number of Awards in the Barbados Association of Journalist competition and I want to take this opportunity to congratulate them publicly. I have already written to them to congratulate them privately, but they now see themselves as virtually part of the main stream media in Barbados, which, while working for the Government is still engaged, nevertheless, in servicing the Barbadian community. This is something that we intend to enhance and intensify in the coming year and in the years to come.

Sir, I also want to turn my attention to the Data Processing Department. The Data Processing Department has continued to play its role in the provision of computer skills for the Government. We know that it is the Government's intention that in the shortest possible time all public servants would become computer literate. Some of that training was provided by the Data Processing Department and also some by BIMAP. We recently have been having talks with BIMAP to see how they can expand the programme and see what services they can provide and what services the Data Processing Department can provide.

The Data Processing Department has started to ready itself for the large influx that is anticipated and it is intended to be programmed for this thrust. A contract has just been awarded for the provision of more computer equipment so that a dedicated computer laboratory can be established within that Department which can cater to the training of public servants, not using generalised programmes but using tailor made, specific programmes that will be functional and practical and have practical applications for public officers when they go back to the departments.

It is anticipated that because of the laboratory being on the site that you can have staggered programmes where people at various times of the day, late evening or even on weekends can go and enjoy computer training. That will therefore accelerate the programme and speed up the effort of providing the computerised training to the public service.

The Training and Appreciation Division, Sir, which is working on this same computerisation training with the Data Processing Department is also improving its conditions at the Training Division. In this year's Estimates, there is a sum of \$260 000 which will be used for the provision of structures to construct two new class rooms and a Resource Centre for the Training Division.

In addition, the Training Division will be completely rewired. The Training Division occupies a building which was acquired in 1970 and because of the poor wiring of it, it means that at certain times of the day the electric typewriters cannot even be used. In those conditions they cannot install computer equipment. So, the whole building is going to be rewired in order to let them be more properly equipped and to be in a more efficient organisation.

In addition, they have just enjoyed the services of a consultant who have looked at the administration of training and also the content of training. These consultants would have come through the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: These are overseas consultants. Not everything is in Barbados. Even the Barbados Agricultural Society has had subventions and employed some overseas consultants.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: Not only agriculture is known in Barbados, Sir, neither is everything about training known in Barbados. This is training which is being provided by the Commonwealth Secretariat. We are a member of the Commonwealth.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: We are also using the lower consultants in other areas of the public sector reform programme and therefore this is something that is ongoing.

Sir, regarding the public sector reform programme, I know that some mention has been made about public sector reform. It is very fashionable at times to attack the bureaucracy of the public service for example, as if bureaucracies do not exist in the private sector. Bureaucracies exist wherever there are organisations and institutions and there must be ways and means to service these organisations and institutions. So bureaucracy which has become a bad word for the public sector is also existent within the private and other sectors. Even the non government organisations have a bureaucracy.

We are mindful of our philosophy and we have made a commitment to improve and enhance the public sector in Barbados. Over the last year and a half we have been spending time putting a great deal of programmes together.

There are programmes which were largely devoting the early stages to building a consensus to get people familiar and acquainted and supportive of what we are seeking to do, by spending time going into various Government Departments and talking to persons. We are not seeking to impose a public sector reform programme from on high on every department. While there is an overall and over arching philosophy and an over arching programme and approach, still there are officers and persons within each Government Department and within each Ministry who have been trained and who are being trained.

11.50 a.m.

We have developed a slogan: Making Barbados Work Better. We have developed a logo. These are all part of the oral and visual efforts that give meaning, substance, identification and symbolism to the whole question of public sector reform.

Public sector reform Sir, does not only mean dealing with the so-called bureaucracy. It also means the reform of the financial system, getting into a programme of performance budgeting. It also means getting value for money auditing by the Auditor General, even the VAT is part of the reform of the tax system.

I already made mention of the computer literacy programme that is very much underway. We will also be spending some time putting in place the means whereby we can give meaning and start to deliver the public

service reform programme to the man in the street, the person who walks off the street and goes in an office to get service. We want the public sector to be lean, mean and efficient. We want it to be responsive to the public because if Barbados is going to take its rightful place as a competitive and efficient nation it has to have a competitive and efficient private sector and a competitive and efficient public sector to make this possible.

In addition, it means that the public sector is being made to be more customer focussed and more customer sensitive and that people will not be seen in this programme as being nuisances but that we will be there doing what we are being paid to do, providing service to Barbados.

Part of this service has to do with the question of developing a customer centred programme which will have each department pledge to the public certain standards that it will operate by in the delivery of service.

The Ministry of the Civil Service will shortly be leading the way in the launching of the first customer charter programme at Government Headquarters in the Ministry of the Civil Service dealing with its housekeeping services. Before that, we felt that charity had to begin at home and therefore it was incumbent upon us to start to set the theme, the mood, the pace.

As a matter of fact, anybody who has been into Government Headquarters in the last few days will notice that even the lobby itself looks bare. It is being readied for a very short period of time. When people walk through the lobby of Government Headquarters they will see a brand new, more customer friendly look. The whole physical set-up and even the colour scheme will be geared towards being more friendly and acceptable to the public to let the people know they are there to serve and not there to prohibit.

This is not being restricted to Government Headquarters. There are a number of charter programmes being readied in a number of Government departments, particularly Government departments that impact very directly in a real and definitive way on the lives and well-being of the public on a day to day basis. These programmes include such departments as the Immigration Department, the Coastal Zone and Management, Town and Country Planning, the Licensing Authority, the Registration Department and the General Post Office.

If I might give some details of some of the things that are being looked at some have already been done in some departments and some are being contemplated.

Let us look at some of the things that are being contemplated in the Immigration Department, some of the approvals which are being recommended and will be implemented over a period of time, and some which have already been actioned.

At the Immigration Department we are simplifying the signs on the doors. Something as basic as that, because old people have great difficulty in reading the signs and following the signs. We are enlarging the existing size in the waiting area. We are upgrading the number of cards and providing a sign to explain how the system works. We have positioned signs downstairs to direct customers up to the proper department and what they should do. It is recommended that we install a telephone for the use of the public. Right now the general public goes in there and if they want to make a phone call to check on another document or they want to check on somebody they have to ask the receptionist for the use of a phone. Something as basic as that, the public will have a dedicated phone that they can use to conduct their business with in the very same department.

We are going to carry indicators which will tell customers which booth is vacant when you can go so that there is not a big long line up in that area. So work has started. We are going to replace the tiles, provide queuing ropes. We are going to have a panic button at the cashier's desk because there are large sums of money being held there every day and people can just pull a little wicker door and get into the money. So these are some of the qualitative things that we are seeking to do.

The Immigration Department's staff has rallied to the call and they themselves have made a number of recommendations and their own observations as to how they can improve things.

At the Licensing Authority, Sir, there has already been a step to update conditions there. If you go to pay a road tax you now have a box where you can put your cheques and documents rather than waiting in a long line, just like at the telephone company or the Light and Power. You can deposit it and it will be taken care of.

The office is going to be painted. We are going to install potted plants, the room is going to be air conditioned. We are going to have samples of the registration forms on the walls so that people can follow them more carefully. We are going to be introducing a queuing system so that there are no people jumping in and out of the line all of the time and causing confusion. As a matter of fact, the queuing system has already been introduced and it is working fairly well but we are going to be putting some cords and ropes and stands so as to bring more order and discipline to the whole process.

At the Registration Department there are a number of recommendations being made to improve lighting, upgrade signs, provide wooden benches for members of the public to sit and wait when they have to wait on the preparation of documents.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. G. S. H. MURRAY: ... things that will last long that will not be easily taken away and can be safeguarded. Now people have to sit where the cases are called in the courtyard and jostle the other people for sitting positions. These are all part of the improvement.

The post office is another area being looked at for improvement, the GPO, at Worthing and St. James. The post office itself is going through its own internal reform, its own review of its operation in order to be more commercially oriented etc. and that suggests a number of programmes where servicing the public is concerned.

12.00 noon

Sir, that helps to give you a brief idea of things that are being done that will very shortly make an important impact on the way the public service services the public.

On the question of the much dreaded bureaucracy to which I alluded earlier, we know that the whole question of the length of time it takes to get decisions effected or decisions to be made or to be communicated is one of the greatest sore points when dealing with the public service. We are planning for next month to host a seminar that will bring together various people involved in the whole decision making process, that will review the various bureaucratic procedures that are now in existence and which we believe frequently lead to delays to see how we can fast-track that without doing injustice to the system. At the same time while preserving the checks and balances, we want to be sure that we are more responsive and that it will seek to serve the public in a more meaningful way.

Sir, these methods are only some of the things being undertaken under public sector reform. The public sector reform also involves the publication of a document called "Going Public" which allows public servants to write on a fairly academic and scholastic level, on various topics. The second edition of that should be coming out next month. This one is going to be devoted again to the social sector examining probably other issues. The first issue was devoted to economics and economic matters. This one is looking at the whole social sector with various people providing pieces on the social sector. As I said, that is going to be published very, very shortly.

I have no need to mention, Sir, some of the other things that we have done to improve the lot of public servants over the last year through the Ministry of the Civil

Service, whether it be a productivity bonus to an improvement in travel allowances, uniform allowances, entertainment, travelling, whatever. We have been seeking to end a prolong regime of acting appointments whether it be for maids, messengers, right up the hierarchy to permanent secretaries.

We are looking at the whole question of performance appraisal to provide a more objective and professional manner of evaluating people for recruitment for hire and promotion. So that there is a more professional manner being done to it and a more transparent system being implemented. We are receiving assistance for this from the Commonwealth Secretariat as well as from the Caribbean Centre for the Developed Administration and from the Government of Grenada who has gone ahead and implemented their system. We are learning from people and there are various experiences both far and near in order to help us with this performance appraisal system.

Like I said, we have done a number of qualitative things to improve the terms and conditions of the public sector and we are seeking to target whatever we do at specific departments and specific places in the public service. Sir, apart from our overall thrust at the public service, we see this as a question of making Barbados a better place to live, to enjoy, to do business, to work, to visit, to whatever because we believe that Barbados, while it has done well over the years and while it is doing relatively well now can do even better.

We believe that the sky is the limit for Barbados and we believe that if we prepare the right climate and the right conditions that Barbadians will fall in line. I believe that this year's Estimates helps provide the framework for the realisation of such overall goals. I think if you go through the Estimates carefully you will see no Ministry is being neglected. There are no massive cuts in any particular sector, but there is a concerted effort to ensure that the whole governmental machinery works along even pace to provide services wherever possible at the most effective and the most efficient manner to the satisfaction of the public.

It is against that environment, Sir, and with those conditions in mind that I commend these Estimates and appreciate those Senators who have been bold enough and honest enough and fair enough to acknowledge the improvements that are being made. While these are not always to the extent that they would wish and that even a government would wish, that even though the Government's resources have improved, even though Government's revenue has improved, these are all finite factors which must be taken in allocating resources to the various sectors.

We do not have an unlimited amount of money but we believe that properly managed and by effecting

saving in areas wherever possible, that some money can be devoted to other areas to bring about an improvement in the living and working conditions of Barbadians. And in keeping with our overall slogan, Sir, of providing a better life for all Barbadians. I thank you, Mr. Deputy President.

SUSPENSION

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. Deputy President, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 1.15 p.m. today.

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

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: The sitting is resumed.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, in my contribution to the Estimates I would like to acknowledge that I realize there is only a limited amount of funds to be divided between competing Heads and competing Ministries and therefore we have to make sure that these scarce resources are allocated as efficiently as possible. I am glad to see that the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Civil Service are making progress. It might not be as fast as we would like but at least we can see a light under the tunnel.

I am also glad that the last speaker mentioned that arrangements would be made for broadcasts of the debates in both the Lower House and the Upper House because that is one of the areas I wanted to speak about. I hope this will be done as soon as possible, in particular, in an age where we are discussing amendments to the Constitution. I feel very strongly that the public should be given the opportunity to both listen and, if possible, see the debates and the contributions of both Chambers on the development of Barbados. Then they would be in a position to make intelligent choices about whether or not they would like to see the Senate abolished or not.

Mr. President, as far as the preparation of the budget is concerned, it is my view that if one is going to continue to give productivity payments, one will have to take the Estimates and subdivide them into different Heads a bit more. In other words, one would have to more or less decentralize the Estimates a bit more so that the various Heads could see how much they have increased productivity in economic terms, if anything else. I would therefore like the persons who compile the Estimates to start thinking in those terms.

Mr. President, there are one or two things I would like to mention about education in that some months ago I did call for nurses to be attached to schools. I was heartened very much by the call from one or two Heads of schools who have also made that call for nurses to be attached to schools.

I note that 34 clerical officers will be attached to primary schools. But I also feel that attempts should be made to have some posts created for nurses who could examine the children from head to toe and pick up any deficiencies in health and ensure that the children get early treatment. Nurses themselves could test hearing, in particular public health nurses, and the eyes as well. With the nurses firmly placed in schools, one would be able to have a continuous assessment of the children through primary school right up to secondary school.

Mr. President, I was concerned about the information on black studies, maybe in ignorance because I am not so sure that I know what this means in the context of Barbados. What I do know is that when I did go to school in America and some of the black students were opting to do black studies, I said: "No. I am black and I think I know about myself. I want to do Health, Economics and Epidemiology and those things which would make me more analytical than black studies. I am not so sure what that is all about. What I do know, Mr. President, that what I would like to see in the schools is health education because little bits and pieces have been introduced in the schools.

One hears that there is an Aids Programme. They are teaching children about AIDS. We hear about family life education. I am not so sure from which aspect family life education would be taught. But if a topic known as Health and Family Life, or Healthy Lifestyles, or whatever one cares to call it, could be introduced into the schools and therefore AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases and drug abuse were all under that heading, it would make more sense towards healthy lifestyles than having the various bits and pieces introduced and the various lectures because the curriculum is very heavily packed. One would need to have a structural programme on health education or health and family life education developed from the primary schools right up to the secondary schools.

Mr. President, I would like to spend some time on health not only because that is my area of specialty, but also because it has been allocated the largest amount of funds for the year 1997/98. In my last contribution to the Estimates last year, I recall cautioning that health is a bottomless pit. You can never get enough money to spend on health but what one has to do in health is to make sure that funds allocated are allocated in the most efficient way.

I am going to make some suggestions about the allocation of these funds because I must say, Mr. President, I am very jealous about the Ministry of Education and

the Ministry of the Civil Service. I do not think that Health is making the gains it should be making given the amount of funds that are poured into Health year after year.

I did say, Mr. President, that Health had reached a point of diminishing returns and at increasing costs and this year proves that that statement I made last year was correct. So what does one have to do? I think one has to look at a reorganisation of health and some serious health sector reform. I know we have heard quite a lot about it but we do not seem to be making the progress in keeping with the funds allocated.

Mr. President, one of the contributions I would like to make to this debate is for the establishment of a council of health advisers based on the Ministry of Health and staffed by manageable persons. They could be representatives from the Ministry of Health and allied health professionals from the University of the West Indies, BIMAP, the Community College, the social partners and from other non-governmental agencies. I think the time has come for a council of health advisers to look seriously at the indices of health and at the plans we have for health. I will get back to some of the plans at a later point in my presentation.

Mr. President, this council of health advisers would need to be fed with different kinds of research so we need a proper research centre to do basic research on health. There is the foundation there for Economic Studies, the studies that are done to look at the levels of living. There is no reason why some of the questions on health could not be introduced into these studies that are done so we can have an idea about the conditions arising in our country and plan appropriately to see how we can reduce some of these conditions, if not eliminate some of them.
1.25 p.m.

Another contribution I would like to make, Mr. President, is to expand the system of polyclinics that have been established. I heard a little about them this morning but at least two or three of them really need to be open on a 24 hour basis in order to free up the Accident and Emergency Department of the Q.E.H.

Mr. President, when one gets sick at night, be it real or imaginary, there is no place to go unless you have a doctor friend. So therefore one has to resort to Accidents and Emergency and this extends the waiting time for those conditions that are real, real emergencies.

Mr. President it would be an advantage to the health care system if they were alternative places at 3 points in our island where persons could go to get care at the weekend, bank holidays and after hours at night. These polyclinics could open 24 hours and medical students and

some interns could staff these polyclinics to deal with some of these accidents and emergencies.

In addition, Mr. President, I will not spend too much time on this, polyclinics themselves need to become more community oriented and less expensive staff like staff nurses should be assigned to weigh babies etc. and those highly qualified public health nurses need to be out in the community coordinating community health care.

Research has shown that it is much cheaper to nurse people in their home and in the community than in any of our institutions. To do this, Mr. President, one would need to have a careful analysis of the skill requirements of our health workers so that one could take some of the tasks and responsibility of the doctors and reassign them to nurses; take some of the tasks and responsibility of nurses and reassign them to nursing assistants; take some of the tasks and responsibility of nursing assistants and reassign them to aides. We would then have a coordinated health care service.

In addition, Mr. President the money that we are pouring into health would go a long way if persons accept responsibility for their own health.

Mr. President, for years the Government has been accepting responsibility for people's health and people have been looking for the Government to do this and do that. The time has come for each and every individual, every group and community to try and accept responsibility for individual health, group health and community health.

As I said, the funds are limited and Government does not have the amount of funds to accept responsibility for everyone's health. To do this, Mr. President, one would need to have a proper health education unit. I must accept that somebody has been appointed to the post of Health Education Officer and is functioning, but that is not enough. One need staff, you also need persons who could make simple booklets and audio visual aids that can be used for health education in the community to teach people to get back to basics and to start looking after their own health and stop relying on the Government to do virtually everything for them.

By the same token, Mr. President, I must accept that a group of agencies are spearheading healthy life styles. This is commendable, it is needed and we are very grateful, but we need more of this. This is only but one example that can be done throughout Barbados 365 days per year.

I know that we are all looking forward to Healthy Life Styles in Queens Park, to the lectures etc., etc. but these are things that we should be geared to and that should go on throughout the year, so that people

could learn about the various conditions and sicknesses and know how to identify them. So that when they get sick they know what to look for and what to do and what measures to seek to alleviate the conditions. In this way, Mr. President, we will be able to reduce the health expenditure which is increasing at an alarming rate. We cannot afford to give much more to health.

Mr. President, in connection with education I would like to see a school health service established throughout the island. I mentioned briefly nurses being appointed to the schools. We need a proper school health service. These could be established through each and every polyclinic. If a child gets sick in a school they should know who to go to in the polyclinic rather than tripping up to the Q.E.H. unless it is something very urgent.

Last but not least, in the scheme of things to get people to accept responsibility for their health is the freeing up of the information system, Mr. President. We need to give people their health records as is done in some countries. They can take them with them, including their X-rays, look at their notes and read what the doctor writes and they know what is wrong with them. It is not left to chance. We have to teach them that when a doctor orders a drug or do an operation, you have to start asking the doctor questions – what is this drug going to do to me, what are the side effects? These are questions that we have to get our people to ask in an attempt to get them to accept responsibility for their own health. I sincerely hope that we will be able to free up the health records. It is done for children. When a baby is born, a little card is developed by Dr. Ramsey and they keep this card up to when they go to University in the U.S.A. The card must be shown to see how the child has been immunised. If we can do it for little children, why can't we do it for adults.

1.35 p.m.

Mr. President, I would like to say a word or two about mental health because modern day research has shown that mental health is going to be one of the leading causes of sickness and disability, not in Barbados, but worldwide. Research done by a group of persons, the Global Burden of Disease edited by Christopher L. Murray and Alan B. Lopez. It was done for the World Health Organisation and for the World Bank by Harvard School of Public Health and it was published by Harvard School of Public Health and I was very fortunate to receive a copy and I am just referring to it. I only have one copy, Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT: There is no obligation to make it a document of the Senate.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Thank you, Mr. President. I would like to share this information with this Honourable Senate and it says that psychiatric diseases

emerge as highly significant components of global diseases burden and disability. That means that it takes into consideration not only death but also the disability from the condition as well as death when it is taken into account.

The projection shows that psychiatric and neurological conditions will increase their toll from 10.5% to 15% in 2020 and it said that this is a bigger proportionate increase than that for cardiovascular diseases. When that is said, one would realise the enormity of this statement. Because we know that cardiovascular disease is one of our leading causes of sickness and death and nearly everyone of us has been touched by some member of our family, who has had an untimely death due to cardiovascular disease. That is why the life style is so important and requires so much support.

Mr. President, while I would like to say a word or two about mental health, it is not because the Government is not aware of what it means to development, but it is because of what is not happening. This is the Development Plan 1988 to 1993 of the Ministry of Health. This was laid in the House. A pre-feasibility study was done in 1986 and a feasibility study was done in 1987 on psychiatric services in Barbados and it focussed on development of an integrated and coordinated service. In other words the Government knows which direction it should be going in.

The programme calls for development of integrated mental health systems at 3 levels, the psychiatric hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the residential level half-way houses, care nursing and group homes and the community and home care level using the primary health care system, the polyclinic. In other words what I am saying is not new. The Government really knows exactly what direction it should go in. However, Mr. President what has happened is that the rationalisation study had to be stopped because the consultants were not performing to the satisfaction of the Ministry of Health. And it says here that the rationalisation study on which a loan from the IADB would have been based and which was funded by the IADB, had to be suspended because the work executed by the consultants, did not reach the standard expected by the Government.

It was hoped, Mr. President that they would refund some \$26 million to build a new psychiatric 300-bed hospital and I am going back to 1988, this is almost 10 years ago. So it is not that the Government or the Ministry does not realise the seriousness of the situation in mental health because they know that they need a new hospital. They know that the study has to be done if we are going to get funds from the IADB and it is hoped it would be done by the year 2000. However, Mr. President, I think that is too long to wait. It cannot wait any longer.

Mr. President, the psychiatric hospital is in a very sad state of disrepair. It needs urgent attention and I am calling for something to be done because in the Estimates this year moneys have not been allocated for the building of the hospital or enough funds for the repair of the hospital. The conditions are deplorable. The bathrooms are dirty. They are made of concrete and the nurses get wet when they go to bathe patients. The roofs are leaking. Some patients get wet even within their rooms. The building, Mr. President, where the mentally and physically challenged are housed needs to be condemned and I would like, if possible, for all of the Senators to take a visit to the psychiatric hospital and get at first hand what the conditions are as a patient. Upstairs where there are wooden floors they are termite eaten. Only one ward has been repaired. The place where it is termite eaten the wooden floors need replacing and the nurses cannot walk there.

Mr. President, I was in the psychiatric hospital last Sunday and I saw these conditions first hand and I am reporting them first hand. Some repairs were started but very few repairs have been done. They do not have the funds. They need funds.
1.45 p.m.

Regarding the electricity, the whole place needs rewiring because if one turns on one light one place, the light goes off the other place. The electrical system needs to be replaced and they need to rewire the building with 220 current in order to use sterilisers.

Mr. President, in order to get dressings they have to wait to get them from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and it is not always convenient to get dressings from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. They have to return some of the forceps, etc. and it is very inconvenient.

Some of the walls and the doors in some of the single rooms are in need of repair and they cannot even be used for the patients. In other words, there is need to rehouse some of the patients from that hospital.

NAAAB has made a suggestion to the Ministry of Health and to the Psychiatric Hospital. NAAAB is the Nurses' Assistant Aids Association of Barbados, the most recent professional organisation formed in Barbados of which I have the Honour to be the President. It made the recommendation that the St. Joseph Hospital be used to house the acute care patients at the Psychiatric Hospital because it is readily suited. It has a square with the buildings around it that is very well suited for mental health patients.

Some of the other parts which are in disrepair at the Psychiatric Hospital could be repaired to house some of the chronic patients. Some of those buildings, Mr. President, at

the Psychiatric Hospital really need bulldozing. They are unfit for human habitation and they are health hazards both to the patients and nursing and other staff alike. Attention needs to be given to that institution in particular, and, unfortunately enough funds have not been voted. I am not sure why, I do not know why, but the funds have not been voted for either the repairs or the \$26 million for the building of the new hospital.

Mr. President, in addition to that we need to pursue the idea of community mental health services. It has been estimated that it is very much cheaper to nurse the persons in the community than within the hospital.

There is a small Community Health Service but it needs to be expanded and one needs much more Nurses to work in the community assisted by some Aides.

Mr. President, I would like to say a word or so about the Nurses at the Psychiatric Hospital. It is really not within anyone's interest to have one nurse to look after 69 patients at night and that is what happens at the Psychiatric Hospital.

Mr. President, however one looks at it no one nurse should be working on her own, be it ten, 12 or 14 patients at night, where people have access to an opened hospital like the Psychiatric Hospital. If necessary, aides should be employed to work alongside the nurses because, if anything happens to that nurse, what does one do?

It is not satisfactory in 1997 to have a nurse on her own. We have read about death occurring at that hospital at night. You cannot stop it, but at least if there is a second person there with the nurse, at least the Government protects itself from the relatives feeling that the person has been neglected. It is in the interest of the occupational health of those nurses to put a second person there at all times with the nurses. I am not asking for two highly qualified nurses. I am asking for at least a nurses aide to work alongside the nurses in that open place at the Psychiatric Hospital.

It is a different situation from when you are in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and you are in a Ward. You are enclosed and at least one could open the doors to the other Ward and they are not 60 beds on a Ward anyway. There are only about 30 beds on the Ward in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

These patients are mentally ill. They are sick. They need help. So therefore, they should not be left with only one nurse and that is not an exaggeration. In fact, sometimes one nurse has to look after two Wards at night. This is very unsatisfactory.

Another comment I would like to make in the area of mental health is the Mental Health Act. I know that the Attorney General has made statements that he is reviewing the legislation and I hope that the time will soon come when he could look at that Mental Health Act because there are quite a few problems.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, I am reluctant to interrupt you. I have given a fair amount of latitude in this debate but I am not convinced that you are now dealing with the Appropriation Bill.
1.55 p.m.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Mr. President, I would like to turn to another area of the Appropriation Bill. I would like to turn to the Judiciary.

Not very much money has been allocated to the Judiciary. Page 55. I would like to talk about the Registry. \$272 150 has been allocated. It has been demonstrated that the Registry is a sick building. I am aware that we have been notified that action has been taken about the Registry and it is being transferred temporarily to Roebuck Street.

Before it was transferred, Mr. President, the filing system needed to be upgraded and it is hoped that with this temporary transfer attempts will be made to upgrade the filing system so that one could locate the files easily and that persons do not turn up for cases to find that the files cannot be found simply because it is difficult to find them.

I notice, Mr. President, on page 56, that Object 626 provides for project design of Six Roads Complex, the police station, the magistrates' court and the proposed Supreme Court complex. We have been hearing quite a lot about the new court for some time and I remember that there were plans to build a court in front of the police station but the land was not enough because of certain treasures that need not be removed.

Mr. President, the judiciary system is very important to any country and therefore I personally feel that top priority should be given to the Supreme Court complex and to the building of a new court so that the cases can be heard.

I would also like to make a call for the daily family courts to be held to prevent the irreversible trauma to spouses, children, etc. and to have enough judges or lawyers or whoever they are to make the judgment so that people could get the judgment within about 6 months.

Mr. President, why I am saying this as well is that rightly or wrongly we have heard that some persons who were on death row could not be hanged, whether or not one

believes in hanging, because of the administrative process of the justice. I sincerely hope that after the new complex has been built that one would be able to appoint an administrator to speed up the course of justice so that we do not have people sitting on death row not knowing what their fate may or may not be.

If someone appeals, it does not matter that the appeal may or may not be upheld. What I am saying is that we need to get some form of a final decision so that the relatives on both sides can face the future.

Parliament, Mr. President. On page 3. I am not going to talk so much about salaries today. I am going to talk a little about having research assistants appointed so that they will be available to go to persons in the Senate and in the House of Assembly to assist us with our research.
2.05 p.m.

I am also asking for the constituency offices to be housed in a government building and, this is my opinion, you do not have to agree with me.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I hope you are not addressing the Chair, Senator.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: No, Mr. President. Sir, I am asking for provision to be made for constituency offices, fully furnished and maintained and if possible, housed in government buildings and staffed by personal assistants, a secretary and a public relations officer so that people from the constituency can have access to the various offices.

This is nothing outrageous, Mr. President. It does exist in some places and if one is a Member of Parliament one is not there to represent just the members of a party, one is there to represent the whole constituency. So therefore people need to have access to the constituency offices which need to be well furnished, well financed and well staffed in order to do the work of the persons.

Mr. President, on the question of water. The Barbados Water Authority. The Water Works Act of 1895, February 20 made provision for a system of standpipes and we are having problems about water and these standpipes which were placed in 1895 one hundred years ago, need replacement. It is recognised that attempts are being made to replace some of them but we need to try and replace all of them to prevent the leaking of water. I have said it already and I will say it again. I am of the view that one should make standpipes available for people to have access to water and when that has been done then one can turn off the people's water if they do not pay their water bills. But they need to have access to water because of the diarrhea diseases and various conditions.

Mr. President, in the area of prisons I would again like to make a plea in these Estimates for psychiatric trained nurses to be placed on the staff of the prison, because visiting the prison once a month is not enough in order to pick up the psychiatric problems of the prisoners, and they need rehabilitation since a lot of them are in the prison for drug related offences.

Aside.

SENATOR Mrs. P. E. RICKINSON: Fortnight? I would like to correct that Mr. President. It is visited fortnightly but they need to be there continuously on the spot. Mr. President, I would like to bring to this Senate just a short paragraph that was submitted to the Ministry of Health by myself in 1976. That is several years ago and I am going to repeat it simply because yesterday it was touched upon by one of my colleagues. This is: Health Policy, Social Goals and the Dynamics of Health Development as a basis for Health Education. In it I wrote that it is also necessary, Mr. President, of course, to provide incentives to help increase agricultural output and to use the educational system to help develop values and attitudes favourable to increase agriculture and industrial productions as well as savings. The importance and the necessity to work hard, regularly to be punctual, to be aware that future material benefits and other benefits can come from present sacrifices.

Mr. President, I am reading that simply because it was said and I can only paraphrase it. I cannot remember the exact words about small businesses in order to train them to be businessmen etc. but I think when I wrote this I meant that this should be introduced into primary schools. One should not wait until people are adults in order to teach them how to save. It needs to be introduced at the primary school level so that we can instil the values that we want to see in them as adults when they are children. Because after they reach about nine or ten it is really very difficult to control some of them and if we do not get to them very early it is a lost cause.

So I would like to make a plea for the speeding up of the educational reform where they propose to teach value clarification to our young children so that they will be able to make wise choices and not have to resort to violence for the sake of argument.

Mr. President, I will just like to sum up by saying it was a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to make contributions to these Estimates and I sincerely hope that some of my suggestions will be accepted and an attempt made to implement some of them. I support these Estimates.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: Mr. President, I rise to make my contribution to this annual exercise outlining the policies and the expenses of the ensuing year, given the economic framework and bearing in mind that the economy, as we are told, is coming out of recession. By and large, Sir, it is an annual exercise for us in this forum to get an opportunity to speak on various headings all at once.

Aside.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: One at a time.

I see, Sir, now that I stand that all of a sudden here is full up with other Senators and it certainly is a compliment.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Attributed to your popularity, Senator.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: Sir, before I get into the nitty-gritty I just want to say that people meet me in all different parts of the island and they ask me various questions about the Senate. Are you enjoying the Senate? What is the experience like? Questions like that, and they come down to the final question. How effective is the Senate? And I am very reluctant to answer that because...

Mr. PRESIDENT: I do not think it is relevant today.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: No, Sir. I am just going to speak on this under the Attorney General's Head and it is just a little introduction. It sort of sticks in with the wide and liberal interpretation which was so humorously given by yourself yesterday, Sir.

I just want to say that I usually tell these people that it serves a purpose, of course. It is basically a talk shop where we have lots of bark but no bite. I try to tell them in a nice way it is not really a rubber stamp but sometimes it goes against the grain of my conscience. That is why I will call on the Constitutional Review Committee to seriously have a look at increasing the Opposition members from two to four.

Aside.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: I am referring, Sir, to the Opposition members of the day because the next set of Opposition members may be different. Increase the Independents from 7 - 10. The reason being that true democracy will then will come out in terms of having the Government of the day bringing laws and legislation in here whereby they will have to lobby at least two Independents to pass a law.

Aside.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: The Independents, Sir, would be fair-minded, with high morals and good standing.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, you have made your point. Could you now proceed to deal with the Estimates, please?

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: Sir, just one point before I go into the Shops Act, which I want to dwell on a little bit, and that is, the Minor Offences Bill which was just sent back recently to the Attorney General's Office. I just want to say it was a kind gesture by the Leader of Government Business of the day to send it back to the Attorney General but we must all remember that the Government did not have the numbers to pass it on that occasion. That is by the way, Sir.

Now, Sir, I want to deal here with the Shops Act.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator, you are out of order and I refer you to Standing Order 34(2) that it should be out of order to attempt to reconsider any specific question upon which the Senate has come to a conclusion. You are out of order and I will not entertain any discussion on the Shops Act today.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: I want to deal, Sir, with the Estimates pertaining to the Ministry of Labour, Sports and Community Development. Under that heading there was recently some legislation passed. There is an arrangement whereby Sunday shopping has been introduced. I just want to say that in some cases where they have the rotation of five working days in seven, you have a situation where a husband can have his days off on a Monday and Thursday and a wife can have her days off, say on a Sunday and Wednesday. The truth of the matter is they do not even have one day in the week to spend with each other.

Senator Forde this morning was very serious when she said that there was a breakdown in family values in Barbados. Surely the Sunday shopping has affected a number of employees in this country. A piece of legislation without the consultation of the Barbados Employers' Confederation and without consultation with the Chamber of Commerce, and that has been made law and is causing a lot of controversy by employers and employees.

One area that comes to mind, Sir, is a simple day like bank holidays. The interpretation of the bank holiday when we work a five-day week in seven, when there is a bank holiday on the day that the employee is supposed to be off,

the big question is whether or not that person is entitled to another day off or not. The Labour Officer has said one thing, the unions have interpreted another thing. The long and short of it is that questions have to be answered and we are not sure what is happening.

2.15 p.m.

The Barbados Employers' Confederation had requested a meeting with the Minister and it took three months before the Minister met. Fortunately he has met with them. There are a number of questions being asked and these are some of them.

There is a situation in this same 5-day week where people are taking on workers on a part-time basis by the hour and they may work 4 hours in 5 days, which is only 20 hours, and on Saturday they are asked to pay out time and a half when they have not even fulfilled their 40-hour week. It just does not add up. What it is doing, Sir, is sending a message to employers to swing away from giving full-time employment and giving only part-time employment at a time when we are trying to reduce unemployment and have people on full-time employment. That has been drawn to the Minister's attention and I am sure he will be looking at that.

Then there is the rotation, Sir, and you have to look at the social implications by way of sports. Many people play cricket and they have to work on Saturdays. Surely you cannot roster an employee on a Saturday, every Saturday. It is not fair to the others because everybody wants to be rotated. Therefore, that becomes a sacrifice and the longer hours of the shops opening also take away that idea of sports. Fortunately the Minister of Sports is the Minister of Labour and again he will be hopefully looking at that. We have to look seriously at the breakdown in the society as Senator Forde was referring to, the serious breakdown in family life. I think the Minister will really have to consider all these things.

One other added point before I go on to something else is the 5-day work week. Take a small business of 12 - 15 employees and bearing in mind that in November and December no one wants to give vacation, it appears that one or two people are on vacation and then one or two people are on their rotational leave because of the 5-day week and you get one on sick leave. It can run anyway from 30 per cent to 40 per cent of your staff not attending work on regular days.

That is the effect with 12 or 15 employees and the same percentage goes through for 30, 40, 60 employees. A number of large stores like Mannings, Courts, Cave Shepherd, Collins and a number of medium-sized businesses are suffering from this. I think it surely has to be remedied.

One Government official, Sir, has even been heard to say that he really did not particularly mind if a store employed the person for one day because it would just bring down the statistics of employment. This is not what we really want in 1997. We really want to get sound employment. We want to get full-time employment. We do not want this partial part of the hour and all that sort of thing.

The shop assistants, Sir, are looking now for a new raise in pay because this meagre \$150 a week is not going to carry them too far or \$3.75 an hour. It is long overdue and they are looking for a raise. What is happening is that with business not increasing, it is difficult with this rotational work week to have additional staff and that is creating a problem.

I hope the Minister will resolve this with the best interest of the workers and employers which, I may add, should have been done in the first place and not introducing the law like a thief in the night without consultation and then having to go to the Minister to sort it out. It should have been sorted out before.

Now, Sir, you know my stance on the Value Added Tax. I supported the VAT. I was always of the view that businesses were too highly taxed by way of consumption tax and stamp duties but I am on record as saying in here that VAT on food was a mistake. I am again calling on Government to remove VAT on food. I hear the talk about whether it should be a basket of food but work out a system where poor people in the society will be eased from paying VAT on food. However that system is worked out it is a matter for the authorities but it is really unfair to pay VAT on food.

The way how business is going here with the garment manufacturers slowly disappearing it seems like they cannot compete with the outside competition. A good example recently is one of the first places I worked at, Barbados Knitting and Spinning. They are in receivership today. What is happening is that a lot of these manufacturers are going out of business because they cannot compete with this open market world. What we can do to offset that in a different way is to remove the VAT from locally produced food and help farmers and consumers. Help the farmers to get a better price for their goods and help consumers to get cheaper food.

While I am on that, Sir, I want to call on Government, which I have said in here before, to look seriously at reducing corporation tax from 40 per cent to 25 per cent on any business that makes \$50 000 or less. I keep making that call and I just hope one day someone would listen because, as we said in here yesterday, Estimates is about figures and how it relates to people.

When we come in here with all kinds of appropriation grants for \$185 000 and \$200 000, I believe that if all the Ministries took a serious effort and had a serious look at how money is being spent and stop wastage in various Ministries, we will have enough money perhaps to refurbish the hospital in one year or you might be able to lift the tax bands back to \$15 000. It calls for prudent management. We have to be more prudent.

We heard the Government Leader yesterday talk about innovation. He says it is Government Business and we must have innovation. I support him. I think he is right. We need to be prudent and we must come with new ideas. A simple example comes to mind. The bicycle licences have been abolished. TV licences have been abolished. It is time to abolish dog licences. It is a nuisance. It is time to take away the .10¢ on a bill that is \$20 or more.

I have a little innovative one I want to recommend to this Chamber, Sir, that is the removal of motor vehicle road tax. Remove it. That revenue could be achieved easily by just adding .25¢ at the pump per litre. Just figure it out, Sir. An average car uses, let us say, 100 litres a month? It would be \$25 a month. So you are paying \$300. You are getting back your revenue. It all relates to how often you use your car. There are some cars that would use more petrol. The higher priced cars pay more road tax but they would use more petrol and in turn the Government would not lose any revenue if road tax was removed and put .25¢ or .30¢ a litre on to the pump.
2.25 p.m.

A number of people in this country do not pay motor vehicle tax and time and time again police are checking. Police are wasting their time checking people on the road to see if people have road tax. I think it is fair to abolish it, it is innovative. It is what the Leader of Government Business has called for. We would get rid of all the red tape of having to line up to pay road tax. All those resources and people can be used in something more productive and in departments which are far more productive. These people can be utilised in other areas to make Government people more efficient.

I want to turn, Sir, to Health. This is my major beef today.

\$207 million is voted for Health. An increase on health and all we can hear from the citizens of Barbados who attend the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is that it is a frustration in there and something is wrong.

Let me say that this is the third successive year that I have had the opportunity to address Estimates in this Senate. I have said it the first year, I have said it in the second year and I am committing a hat trick today. The

Lions Eye Care Centre remains a white elephant in this country and why, is beyond my imagination. I do not understand how a beautiful building like that could lie idle. A building like that in Grenada would be a beautiful building. When you compare the hospital in the small islands, the Lions Eye Centre is a beautiful building.

I made recommendations before and I repeat these recommendations. That the Eye Care Centre could be the best Eye Care Centre in the Southern Caribbean. We can introduce it, Sir, into primary, secondary and tertiary level training, if developed properly. Now there is a paper that comes before the Minister and they say that the building is not the right building and it should be used for something else. If that is the case, pay the Lions out completely and use the building to expand the facilities for other health care services. It is a shame and a slap in the face to the members of the Lions Club and Lions International. We cannot afford to be slapping people right, left and centre and snobbing people and treating them bad. That is exactly the situation. I would like something done about that.

I want to recommend that they get some proper management in these health areas – successful, honest and fair-minded people to see how the money is spent. I give an example that pertains to my business.

I walked into the Q.E.H. on a health matter and I am approached by someone who says "You are the person, I want to see you, come in this ward." I go into the ward and he says that we need to have drapes to put around these beds. The patients need privacy which I could identify with and understand. I told him on a rough rule of thumb and taking a quick measurement, how many yards of fabric would be needed for each one of these beds and gave him an idea. To do one little unit would take about \$5 000 give or take. Then in the course of the conversation he said, "Come up stairs to the "C" ward and let me show what we did recently." I went up to the "C" ward and I had a shock. They had professional drapes done for \$26 000, for one ward. That could have serviced 5 wards in my estimation. Granted it was done professionally with puckered pleats, but for a hospital we do not need proper pleats, that is for a hotel. You need privacy and this could be nicely joined on the top and just slide it across.

I think it is a shame that one ward could spend \$26 000 and then you go down to the "B" ward and I see wards with no drapes whatsoever. When I look at that I say to myself "something is radically wrong." Let us look at it because I am not here to talk politics. I am an independent and I see things are wrong.

We are Barbadians and we should put Barbados first because at the end of the day all of us will end up in the Q.E.H. because it is the only health institution in the island and it should be handled right.

For example, a year ago, I stood up and said that the hospital needed a Catscan and my good friend Senator Murray got up on a point of order and showed in the Estimates that we would definitely have a Catscan and I was very happy.

One year later I can tell you that they bought a Catscan and it is my understanding that it is now being installed. It is not functioning, 12 months and no Catscan. What is worst is that sick patients have to leave the Q.E.H., public patients and private patients, to go to a private radiology clinic in Belleville, owned by a company in which the Radiologist has shares. That should not take place because if a relative falls ill he should not be put in a stretcher in an ambulance and tripping him up to Belleville.

We are talking \$270 million, let us get 1 or 2 Catscans. Worst than that the Catscan that was bought is a sophisticated Catscan and I understand you need persons who are computer literate and who require certain skills. So I believe that we might have to send people to train to use this Catscan.

Sir, I touched on a topic that a lot of people will not be happy about. There are a number of business places that have called me and told me "Paul when you are talking in the Senate, put in a word for me." I said "what do you mean." He said "the hospital payments are too slow. They pay food well but the pharmaceuticals and the equipment to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars they owe for more than a year and are not paid, see what can be done." It is not this Government nor the last Government, this has been going on for a long, long time. So we should look at this and see what we can do about it.

This leads me to a point. I am going to talk about a little department called the Department of Invasive Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery. This was set up about a little over two years in Barbados with a record equal to any first world country and as Barbadians we can all be proud.

The doctors at North Shore and the Government in the United States said clearly that they would not be entertaining any reduction in payment for sending patients to North Shore and said to Barbados that they will train our local doctors. This they did. The Cardiac Unit was set up and it is saving the country a lot of foreign exchange. Compared to Mount Hope in Trinidad where surgeons and anesthetists have to come from the United Kingdom periodically to do surgery down there, and after a week or two of surgery they leave, we are fortunate that we have people here on board.

2.35 p.m.

The Government, Sir, brought in a team from Boston to go through the Hospital to see where they could make recommendations. And recommendations came in clearly saying that the Department of Invasive Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery came in for high praise. It said all the departments should be run like that and be profitable like that.

We had recently, Sir, a local chapter of the Variety Club gave \$200 000 and the International Chapter of the Variety Club gave \$100 000 to the development of paediatric intensive care unit in this country. The purpose, Sir, was to provide a service for Barbadian children, to save foreign exchange and it would also save the parents from having to travel with their children into another country and all the expenses that go with it.

Sir, the Minister was invited to discuss the opening of this unit, Sir, when a team of cardiovascular specialists from North Shore came down because it was paediatrics they were doing. The Minister, Sir, had a rare opportunity to make a heyday and to get positive press out of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital but she never came. I know, Sir, that if any one of my 3 colleagues in there, Sir, Senators Farley, Goddard and Murray were the Minister they would have taken that opportunity, used the press and get all the mileage possible. Why for the love of me I do not understand why the Minister snubbed those people.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: On a point of order, Mr. President. The Honourable Member is imputing improper motives to a Member of the Other Place and that is in breach of the Standing Orders, I would ask that he withdraw that statement.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: Sir, I realised after saying it that the Honourable Minister is right. I will withdraw that but the Minister never turned up and it was very disappointing both by the local doctors and the foreign doctors and the Variety Club. I think, Sir, that is a shame. Be that as it may, I just want to finally wrap it up now by saying ...

Aside.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: Unlike some Senators I am not going to use up all my time.

Sir, we have heard of the tremendous personal sacrifices that Members of Parliament have made over the years and for some reason when they are Members of Parliament, particularly in the Lower House, they are respected. They are looked upon as people to look up to because they have been elected and that sort of thing. Yet when the time comes and they leave Parliament for some reason, they are not appreciated. It is a shame that people make the contributions that they make in the House of

Assembly and in the Senate and after serving for 2 terms sometimes they are not qualified to get a pension. A case in point was the last session.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: On a point of order. The Honourable Member has his facts wrong. The moment he says served two terms he cannot then go ahead and say they do not qualify. The Honourable Member should get that position straight.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: Sir, they served 2 terms less 3 or 4 weeks before the last Parliament was dissolved. I think, Sir, it goes beyond ...

Mr. PRESIDENT: What is this to do with the Estimates, Senator?

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: Sir, it is just a wide and liberal interpretation and a plea. Anyhow I am wrapping it up now, Sir. I just want to say that if the Government would look at giving ...

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Your colleagues are trying to help you. If you find an appropriate Head you may speak.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: The Senator has advised me that under Head 12 - Parliament, the case in point, Sir, is just a plea particularly for those parliamentarians. I do not really want to call names but if you would allow me to call names, there are some parliamentarians who have reached the stage in their lives where they are approaching 70. One in particular has had some serious drawbacks with his family due to ill health, a child at university abroad and that sort of thing. There is another one I know who can do with a little pension who served in the Lower House and in the Senate and there are a number of them.

Sir, if for whatever reason this Government does not get back in, there is a guy opposite me who would fall in the same category. Sir, I am just making a plea that I think the Government should go beyond politics. We meet here as a Commonwealth Parliamentary Group from time to time, the Barbados Chapter, and everybody rubs shoulders together and I would like to make a plea that the people in the last session who did not qualify for the full second term, the Government would look at it, especially now that the economy is recovering. With that, Sir, I thank you. 2.45 p.m.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. President, I want to start where the Honourable Senator has left off and it raises serious implications for the country as a whole as to how they regard ex-parliamentarians.

Before I get into that I would like to tell the Honourable Senator who just sat down, he must not blame the plight of those parliamentarians who have not been able to complete the two terms in order to fulfil the terms of the law and draw a pension, on Parliament or on the Barbados Labour Party. He must put it wholly and squarely upon the Democratic Labour Party and the then Leader and Prime Minister.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: On a point of order, Sir. I was not putting the blame on anyone, Sir. I was just saying that they go beyond Parliament to see what can be done that they might get their parliamentary pay.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I will treat that as a point of elucidation. Continue Senator Bolden.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Even so, Sir, the Honourable Senator must remember something, that do not matter what you say in Barbados, politics is an adversary. It is adversary politics. Those who are out of it try to get those who are in, out, so that they get in, and when they get in, they stay in as long and do whatever they care to do, to stay in as long as they could, so that those who are out do not get them out.

If you came to a situation that the then Leader of the Government chose to call an election at a time without considering the plight of his Members and how they would fall within the law, then you are asking this Government to take on a massive burden.

The public out there thinks that the politicians are worth nothing. It gives me a chance to raise a point which I wanted to make for a long time and a lot of people will not like. I am going to make it now because you started it.

You see, the Honourable Senator is talking about parliamentarians who have fallen on bad waters. I know several parliamentarians throughout the history of politics in Barbados, who have fallen on bad waters, died in what you must now call the "almshouse" and in poverty.

You do not look at the civil servants functionaries, because people always walk around and say that politicians are thieves. I have never heard in my 65 years of any civil servant who died in the "almshouse." When you go and ask who are those civil servants that own two and three houses in Sandy Lane and four and five businesses and all this sort of thing, and still do not die in the almshouse. But, the politician who they say steals and carries away all these things, dies in the almshouse.

Now you are asking this Government to make a provision for ex-politicians because they are in bad waters.

I do recall a situation in the 1970s when I was a Minister, when salaries were like \$2 200 a month, when we made an outcry because many of us had left practices outside and came into the Government. The late Tom Adams decided to raise salaries, I was in Landsing one Sunday evening a man came up to me and said look, "I vex, I vex that they are going to pay you all money because I see that they put a salary to the Prime Minister which will bring him close to me and I do not want that." He was a longshore man down in the Deep Water Harbour and I can tell you now, if you check, those are the kinds of people who detest anything being done for parliamentarians.

The public out there would eat you raw when you begin to say you are going to put politicians on a proper financial footing.

In Canada when you win a seat in the House, you are a full time politician and you get paid a decent salary. It is not done in Caribbean circles. I would be glad if they are going to look at ex-parliamentarian's salaries, to tell the truth, because I know I bound to get a little piece. I know the public would not like it.

Political parties would have to come together and sell it to the public that if you want proper representation you have to pay for it. Nothing goes cheap these days so I would like to put that to rest.

Mr. President, I want to attack the Estimates in a little different format than I have heard today. I want to go Head by Head down through the Estimates.

The first thing I want to say, I do not believe Senator Bernstein when he said the Senate is only a talk shop. I believe the Senate has a better role to play.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: On a point of order. I never said that, Sir.

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Tell us what you said, Sir.

SENATOR S. P. BERNSTEIN: I would have to check my notes. Yes, I did say it was a talk shop. I am sorry. I thought he meant that it is seen as a rubber stamp.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Bolden, please continue.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: It might be a talk shop in a certain way, but if it is a talk shop it is a talk shop because we do not really put forward our arguments sufficiently well and because, as you said, the Ministers probably have too much to do in order to recognise any contributions made from the Senate.

I am going to start in the Prime Minister's Office where the money comes from. There is a programme called Public Sector Reform. I would like to say this, yes, we are in need of public sector reform but I would like to see an immediate stance taken in respect of telephone operators throughout the public service. It is the most horrifying thing to use the telephone in 90 percent to get through to 90 percent of the Government offices in this country.

I am not criticising any Minister. I want to make it absolutely clear. Before I go further and I will say why. I think, and I have asked the Chairman of the Constitution Review Committee to give me an opportunity to appear in private before that Committee. I believe we have reached the stage in this country where we must have a sort of a republican form of Constitution.

I believe that the election date must be known well in advance and you call an election at least three months before the Government changes. I believe Ministers must carry with them a body of people to their particular Ministry to make sure that what they have to do is done. Let us take the blame or take this load off the public service because it is not working. No matter what you tell me it is not working. Senator Laurie will agree with me.

When you go to the Ministry of Agriculture there is a gentleman who they just had to move. When he moved he had 165 files in his office and the clerk says, "well you do not see what is in the car they put out about 85 out of the boot of the car." These are files belonging to farmers in this country who have applied over four or five years ago asking for rebates of money they have spent. The law provides for it, the Ministers provided for it but the functionaries refused to do it.

If we want to get something done we have to get somebody appearing before the Constitution Review Committee.

You talk about recall of a Minister. How are you going to recall a Minister when the poor Minister has no control whatsoever over the civil service?

For example, there is a Minister in the Other Place who would tell you, during the 1976 to 1986 regime when we were looking at Polyclinics in this country she was working with an architect an evening and she said to the maid, "go across the road and buy me a ham cutter and a drink." The maid said, "who? You mean me? Not me." 2.55 p.m.

She reported it to the Permanent Secretary the next day and he said, "You are not in charge of the maid. So don't worry." It came to Cabinet and when the Prime Minister was saying to the Cabinet Secretary, "Report this

person to the Public Service Commission!" The Cabinet Secretary said, "No, Prime Minister. Ministers have no control over the staff. You cannot do it."

The public must know these things. A maid can tell a Minister, "You cannot ask me to go and buy anything for you." You cannot call a maid and tell the maid to sweep around your desk for you. You cannot do it.

I want the first act of the Public Sector Reform to be that every telephone operator must answer the phone within a given number of rings and be courteous. I can name departments. You see at half past 3 in half of Government departments you will not get an answer on the telephone. If they call and get through and ask for somebody they say he is at lunch. They are at lunch from 11.30 to 4 o'clock. Then they do not answer the phone anymore. If anybody challenges me I can tell you which departments to go to. They do not answer the phone after 40 or 50 rings. That is the first thing I want them to do.

The second thing I want them to do is to acknowledge correspondence from the general public to Government departments. You write a letter to a Government department nowadays and you do not know if they got it or not. They do not answer. These are the little fine things that would make this country begin to move.

The civil servant must understand that he does not do anything. It is business outside that pays their salaries and if you frustrate business you are going no place and no Minister can correct this. As I said, the Minister has no control. We come in here week after week, month after month and year after year and you point the finger at the Minister.

I heard Senator Boyce get up and say in here today when I was sitting in the Chair, and I told him that was not a point of order when a member on this side raised the question of \$24 million in the housing project, that nothing was done to it he said not us but the functionaries who will work it. So he is in agreement with me too. If the Minister does his work and the functionaries do not do theirs, something must be done.

Mr. President, I want to move quickly because I know there are other people to talk. I want to talk about the law courts. It is pathetic and I am choosing my words carefully that in 1997 the whole building out there is closed and literally out of bounds to people because they say the building has what the Americans call a sick syndrome. People are sick just going in the building.

It shows now how politics works. In 1977 when I was Minister of Transport and Works I put 2 architects for a whole year to design a complete complex for the

Supreme Court and all its associated offices. The Government acquired all that land in James Street and we redesigned the building around the Synagogue and we were ready to build when the public thought they did not want the Barbados Labour Party anymore.

We even acquired the building along the bottom of Roebuck Street and they were put on notice that from Roebuck Street right through would be swept out and you would have had the superb buildings out there.

The Democratic Labour Party came into power and they decided they would buy a piece of land from one of their members and friends at the corner of Passage Road and they went ahead and had a building designed without taking into consideration that you have to have the police station, holding cells and the logistics of moving people from District "A" police station up to Country Road and nothing was done. So, look at this and see what happens.

During the time we were told that they were just refurbishing the building because they are going to build this new building. Nothing has been done in the last 10-12 years on the court buildings around this island. All are falling down. Go to Oistins. A new court was built at Oistins and they put the air conditioning unit over the head of the magistrate. They designed these buildings and they do not call the lawyers who operate or the police who operate in there to ask what they want to see done. The architects come in and they want to show off their architectural skills and they build these beautiful looking buildings. Most inconvenient.

When you go at Oistins there is a big hole over the magistrate's head because the air conditioning unit nearly came through there one day. District "D" collapsed. You had to take the social centre and lend the court, and the building at the back fell down.

District "F" on the hill, I do not know what to call that. Belleplaine. I do not go to Belleplaine anymore.

No maintenance was done to those buildings for all the years so now everything is collapsing. What I am worried about is that even when we start back in another month or two from now what is going to happen to the back log of cases you have building up and what could happen to those that are coming forward. You are going to have more adjournments than anything else.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: Night court cannot work. I hear people talk about night court. If they ever start to think about the administrative cost of night court the policeman who works in the day will have

to come at court and give evidence at night and tomorrow morning will not be there. Take the courts and look at December.

From the time you see 15th of November nothing is done in the courts because every policeman is on Broad Street and he cannot be in Broad Street in the day and in the court giving evidence and be back on Broad Street at night. Those who talk about night courts do not understand a thing about the legal system or legal administration in this country. They only talk for the sake of talking because, as Senator Symmonds says, they watch too much television.

It has reached the point now with this television watching that somebody has an accident and they come to you suing for a million. That is how it goes nowadays. The television syndrome.

Going down the courts we have to look at the process servers, the people who serve writs and what not. Do not talk about the Marshal's Office. I think that should be closed immediately. You have marshals that come to court on mornings. There is one in Holetown.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: He comes in every morning and sits down, spends half an hour and leaves. He said, "I applied for a transfer and I am not doing anything until I get a transfer." There are some who sit down in the little office and they get the telephone directory and they write out names and addresses from the telephone directory put the document aside, post it and put on the back of it, Sworn that it was personally served. I have the evidence so I can afford to talk.

I said already and the policemen out there have been asking me to repeat it that there should be a commission of enquiry into the police force and into the whole operation of the marshal service. Up to last week the police said, "I hope you can talk about it in the Senate." I promised them I would talk about it in the Senate, because those people are worried.

There is a complete breakdown and do not ask the Minister. It is not the Minister's fault. Somebody told me there was a meeting quite recently and junior officers were saying to senior officers in Government you all have to spend more time with us and teach us what to do. Because as I said, lunch time is a big factor in the civil service today. Everybody is at lunch from 11.00 - 4.00. All the time you call he is at lunch. One o'clock he is at lunch, 2.00 o'clock he is at lunch, 3.00 o'clock he has just gone to lunch, 4.00 o'clock he is at lunch. As you say, 3.00 o'clock he has gone to collect his children. He goes home and does not come back.
3.05 p.m.

We negotiated with the Government to increase the number of judges in this country because litigation is increasing but what did they do? I am afraid, as I said in here before if anybody ever shouts "Fire!" out there in the law courts the judges cannot get out of their rooms. It is amazing, little cubby holes and things around corners and that is what we have to put up with in this country and do you know why? Because if the Minister says I want so and so done somebody always has a different answer. This is why I say that we need a republican form of government where ministers can carry their functionaries with them and if they do not do that pay the penalty with a recall or whatever happens at the end of a period. But you cannot blame Ministers when those who must carry out the work would not carry it out and the Ministers have no control over them. It is about time that somebody talks the truth about what is happening.

Now, I am going to the Government Printery but I go back to the Courts. For years I have been asking that we abolish this system of making people turn up at court once a year, two, three times a year to apply for liquor licences. I have always said you apply for a gun licence, the police come and interview you and the next thing you get a letter saying you have permission to carry a firearm. You apply for a liquor licence, or you apply for renewal of a liquor licence, and four times, five times a year you see a courtyard full of people to go in court to stand up and swear to get a liquor licence. What is big in applying for a liquor licence? The police have to inspect. The health people have to inspect and once those people have inspected and said it is alright, you go and swear and get your liquor licence. Why wait a whole morning to stand up in a courtyard in the hot sun because none of these courtyards have any where for people who are doing business there to shelter from the sun then to pile into a court. You put back the business of the court for the hearing of cases *et cetera*, for somebody to sit down next to a magistrate to say "licence granted", I cannot understand why. I hope we can get past that this time.

Now I come back to the Government Printing Office. I move down to Head 13 or 30? Mr. President you know and I know that there is non-availability of certain Acts of Parliament in Barbados. The Government Printery is the only legal authority to print Acts of Parliament. I think they print a sufficient amount that people can buy them and they should keep Acts on hand that people can acquire at all times.

There are several Acts you want, you call up there and they do not have any. If they do not have it, where must you get it from? Somebody will tell me, go into the Law library and copy it or go up at the University and photocopy it but why should I have to do that if I can go to the Government Printery and buy Acts of so and so date.

The Government Printery has to put itself on a commercial basis. They are like the Magistrates' Court Procedural Rules, one printing was done. There is no more. Something should be done about that. I've heard it said a Minister cannot make the Printery print but he can say "we want them". The Printery will tell you "we do not have time to produce them". So this is why I say we have to look at what is really happening in this country. Stop blaming Ministers all the time.

Mr. President, I move to Head 19 - Town and Country Planning. Now this is another one that gives me headaches. You apply for a subdivision or something in the Ministry and the Town and Country Planning Department but you can wait a year, two years, three years with no response whatsoever. You know what they tell you? If you are dissatisfied appeal for it to go before the Minister or the Minister has to set up a committee and then you have just as long to wait. Something has to be done.

There is no reason why a man has to wait 16, 18 months to know if he can get off 10,000 sq. ft. of land from somewhere. You can make a decision in two months or three months. What is wrong with that? Now, sometimes the excuse is that they have to send it to Agriculture. I understand Agriculture is holding well over 200 applications for over two years and they cannot get back. Then they have to go to Health. They got to do something about this. We cannot go on this way. It is a modern progressive Barbados and we are not getting anywhere if this is how we react.

I go now to Head 25 and this is Agriculture. I am sending a message to the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Finance. There is an institution called the Barbados Agricultural Management Company that manages the sugar industry in this country. That body has just brought two non-nationals into Barbados within a year or so and those two gentlemen have been using the most indecent language to members of the staff in this country. I just had to send a message to them that if I did not have a written apology for one of my members that the crop would not have started and I want to send the message loud and clear now. Tell them if they are accustomed to cursing black people elsewhere stop it in Barbados. You have trouble at Bulkeley that is why Bulkeley is not producing because the one up there every time he opens his mouth he is using all kinds of filthy language to the staff at Bulkeley.

I am the advisor to the Sugar Industry Supervisors Association. I am trying to keep the people at rest because I know the sugar industry is important to Barbados. I am trying to keep those members quiet but if they continue with this foolishness, using indecent language to people who have worked with the sugar industry all their life,

I will call them out and they would not go back to work for a long time. It is about time it stopped. If they do not know how to respect people whether they are black, white, pink, or yellow, tell them when they come to Barbados we have a certain decorum in this country that must be followed.

You bring a man from France who is a chemist. You make him manager of a factory and because he cannot run the factory he is cursing everybody. But tell him those days are finished. I have told the members of the Sugar Industry Supervisors Association, we have to bear with it and there is nobody who is more tolerant than I am, because I know what the sugar industry is worth to this country. But if I lose my temper I will tell them what to do. The last time I told them when I call out my members I am not hurting anybody else. They will have to pay everybody else but my members will be out. My members work by the month, most of them. They will have to pay them for a month too because I am sending a warning to them. The thoughts that are running through their heads, tell them drop it.

Aside.

HIS HONOUR SENATOR C. L. BOLDEN: I am not in the hotel industry so I do not know a thing about Almond Beach.

Mr. President, I come now to one that is very problematic. I saw in the papers the other day that the Minister sent a note to members of the Licensing Authority asking certain of them to put in their resignation or beg for transfers and the Union told them not to. Well I want to send a message to the Minister telling him to talk to me privately and I am going to tell him what is going on up there. All should be moved. The Licensing Authority is trying to take all sorts of law unto itself making their own laws, and all should be moved.

Let me tell you what is happening now. The minibuses will go in the bus stand and they are getting reported for anything over seven. They have policemen and they have inspectors from the Ministry of Transport and Public Works. They are stuffing school children in these minibuses and when they leave the bus stand and get down the road the special constables down the road are reporting them for overloading. If they do not get report because they say the children must get to school, by the time they are coming back up and they have eight passengers they are getting reported. If they do not do certain things they are sending you back to the Transport Board every two days for inspection. You come out today, they send you back next time for inspection. I say now, the Minister was right when he asked them to resign or be transferred. I am asking him to move every one of them from top to bottom out of the licensing Authority. I know what I know.
3.15 p.m.

I am asking him to move every one of them from top to bottom out of the Licensing Authority. I know what I know and if they vex me I am going to talk it because I know what I know. I have evidence. I have paper work. This is why I say that the Minister cannot be responsible. It is the functionaries. There are functionaries who would walk about and say they are going to bring down the Labour Party, they only have one term. If the Ministers do not look out and watch their backs, they will get stab in the back every morning, but I have the evidence.

I am saying at Public Works they need a full investigation into that Licensing Authority. When I was saying that those at the top had ZR licences out on the road and only certain people were getting reported they said it was not true. But ask who resigned over night? That is why I say you need an enquiry. The enquiry with Tudor is not the real, real one. There is a real, real one that has to be.

When I said certain policemen had minibuses and ZR vans they said it was not true. Well ask the policemen. That is why the policemen are asking for an enquiry too because certain policemen had ZR vans and minibuses and other policemen could not touch them. There are no little boys. They are the big ones. If the little boys miss and touch them they would transfer them the next day. I am saying there is need for a careful investigation and looking at what is happening.

Senator Bernstein asked that we remove the cost of registration of vehicles. I would like to see us adopt the principle of drivers' licences where you issue a driver's licence for life because our laws now are drafted in that fashion and a lot of people are coming before the courts because they buy 3-year licences and they forget to renew them.

There is nothing wrong in having a lifetime licence because it can be suspended, revoked, you can do anything. You do it once and remove the work from up there. It can be issued on birthdays, all sorts of things. I think you should still have registration of vehicles but I think the drivers' licences can be reviewed.

Another thing. I think there is room for rationality in drivers' licences. I only just discovered if you are a visitor you can come in here and go and buy a visitor driver's permit for \$10 for a year but if you are a Barbadian you have to pay \$30 for your licence. There must be room that we can look at this.

Mr. President, that is my contribution to the Estimates. I hope I have not ruffled any feathers. I want to make it absolutely clear. I am not attacking any Ministry. I am out there with the people on the street every day.

I want the Government to know what the people are saying. I want the functionaries in Government to understand that if they hold back what is being done it is unfair then for the blame to fall on Ministers.

I join with Senator Bernstein. I hope that the party would have a commission of enquiry into pensions and salaries for Parliamentarians so that those of us who have laboured so hard would be able to appear before the Commission and put a case. It is then left to the Commission to determine what should be done.

I do recall the late Errol Barrow in the Other Place when there was a Bill about parliamentary salaries he got up and said, "I am saying nothing in this today. Whatever you all do, you do" and sat back down. It is left to the Commission to determine whether those persons who serve for a period near to two years but did not qualify, because the Act says you have to serve two terms of not less than a specific period. So therefore if the Leader of the party rung the bell at the wrong time it is not anybody to blame. It is only the bell ringer who is to blame.

I would hope that you do not blame the present Government for what has happened, but that is what I would suggest to have a commission which would look at the entire structure of Parliament. If you do that for one or two you are going to constantly do it. You remember the history we have in here. Since then we have had to amend it. That is why the Act in respect of payment of the Senate has been amended for that reason and it caused a lot of controversy outside. I think it is better that it goes before a commission and let everybody give evidence, the public *et cetera*. You have to educate the public on the sacrifices that are made.

Up to this day I get people calling me 2.00 and 3.00 o'clock in the morning asking me about politics. I say I am only in the Senate and Senators really and truly have no power. We have talking power and nothing else. So people have to understand what we go through.

I thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Mr. President, I would like to just touch on a few things before I get onto my subject of agriculture. There was a brief reference to the use of consultants by Government. Throughout the Estimates there are places for professional services. Over the last year we spent nearly \$1 million and I think we have certainly close to \$1 million to spend on professional services again this year.

There is no indication of how much of that went to local professionals and how much went to overseas professionals but I know, having been in the consultancy

business myself since 1974, that I worked many times on joint ventures with overseas consultants. The local consultants do most of the work and the overseas consultants get most of the pay. I have also worked in other countries in the Caribbean and in Central & South America. In Central and South America, if you go in there as an overseas consultant you have by law to work with local consultants and they get at least 25 per cent of the fees and they have to produce. There is no question they do not produce but we have in Barbados people who are recognised as consultants. In other countries they are sought after. They have very high reputations. They have produced exceedingly good results and yet they are not considered locally. I guess it is a natural thing.

I remember one time I was at a cocktail party with the sugar industry and somebody said to one of the directors of what was BSIL at that time, "Why would you bring me here to do this work when this man, pointing to me, is just as qualified? He has more experience than I have." The guy said: "I have known Keith since he was a little boy in short pants." That was the answer. He did not think I could tell him anything. That is the problem that exists here. I would appeal to Government to look and see whether we should pass a law saying it but they should give first preference to local consultants. They should encourage the overseas consultants to use the services of the local people.

Now I know for sure the local people are worth their weight in gold because I see overseas consultants come here and have to do simple little things like finding an office, a secretary, a car to rent in the middle of the tourist season and all those sorts of things, it could waste a lot of valuable time. Some of these people work for horrendous amounts of money like \$800 an hour. They are not giving you the Government a good deal if they are spending a lot of time doing menial kinds of jobs that can be best handled by local consultants who know their way around. We must encourage the use of local consultants to the maximum. 3.25 p.m.

I would like to touch a little on tourism and something that Senator Lynch said yesterday where he was talking about the amount of money to be spent on advertising the tourist industry overseas. It is a figure of \$56 million. To me this is mind boggling to spend \$56 million on advertising. It seems to me to be completely out of touch with reality.

I remember at the beginning of the problem of structural adjustment that we set up a foreign exchange committee and Mr. Maurice Foster appeared before that committee at one of our meetings and made a suggestion which I thought was excellent. He suggested that we should get the name and addresses of tourist arriving in Barbados. These would be then given to schools and the schools

would then write these people a letter saying how glad we were that they had visited Barbados and inviting them to come again. A little postcard could then be enclosed giving the letter a personal touch. This would go from Barbados directly to the person hence encouraging visitors to return which after all are probably the bread and butter of the tourist industry.

We are talking about \$56 million but this could be done for \$5 600. The schools are now being equipped with computers and given some access to E-mail. We could E-mail special messages and send this off. What would this cost? A fraction of this budget of \$56 million. We have to be more innovative in looking at these things.

I heard some talk by Senator Davis and Senator Symmonds on women in Barbados. Women in Barbados have made terrific strides, this is true, but for 11 years we have heard that women would be given equal status in terms of people getting citizenship in Barbados. My wife is not a Barbadian but when I came to Barbados she became a citizen within months, automatically, no problem. All four of my children were born outside of Barbados, all of them are citizens of Barbados within months because I am a man and I am a citizen. Now, if a woman who is Barbadian marries a foreigner and she has children outside of Barbados, they cannot get citizenship. There are all kinds of problems. This is totally unfair. On the other hand if she did not marry him, if she lived with him and have children, those children will have Barbadian citizenship. It is crazy, it is wrong and fundamentally so. Since 1976 the Barbados Labour Party is saying that they are going to remove that. I remember Mr. Henry Forde saying clearly that this should be removed, we must do something about it. I think that it is time that it was done.

The alleviation of poverty has become the major issue of these Estimates. I am concerned about the approach being used. I feel that people out there are uncomfortable with charity. It will be demeaning to some people and affect their pride. We have to be careful of this. We have to come up with programmes whereby people are entitled rather than given handouts. I do not think Barbadians like handouts. I am worried too about the possibility of political patronage. There have to be concerned about this thing.

On this subject, when you look at the emoluments in the various Ministries, particularly the productive Ministry, Agriculture and so on, the statutory wages are considerably less than the non-statutory wages. We have headings like unestablished staff, substitutes, temporary staff and casual staff. We have all these huge amounts of monies being paid to casual staff.

In the Scotland District alone in the Ministry of Agriculture, we have \$3 million for casual labour. This is crazy. The permanent established staff are paid less than \$1 million. What is this money for and why should it be there.

It is rather amusing that in the Scotland District the equipment they need is a microwave, a coffee maker, a juicer and a paper shredder. It is mind boggling that the Scotland District office would need a paper shredder when they should be using the paper to make compost.

I would like to just have a look at what is the true agricultural picture in Barbados. Where is agriculture in the economy of Barbados? Is it a small thing? Is it a little poor relation of the tourist industry? I do not think so. Let us look at the facts that we have. The statistics on agricultural production in Barbados are very, very suspect. They are based primarily on what is produced in the formal sector of agriculture and we know that the informal sector is many, many times larger than the formal sector. Unfortunately, the statistics and the gross domestic product of agriculture as put out by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Central Bank of Barbados are very suspect.

When I raised this point last year, the Minister of Agriculture in the Lower House said that there was 150% increase in non-sugar agriculture. The Central Bank of Barbados called me and said "what do you think of that figure." I said "we are just trying to catch up with the statistics." If there was a 150% increase in non-sugar agriculture, prices would have fallen because supply and demand would have indicated it. No price has fallen, the price of agriculture is still relatively static. It has been perhaps 1% increase. Honestly, the Ministry is now trying to catch up with what the model really looks like, but they are still way behind.

If you take the 260 000 people in the population, and there are 365 days a year and we import \$250 million in food. These statistics are a little behind hand right now because of VAT and the push towards giving imports a better competitive position over local. Import of food has gone up and I am sure that it is going to continue to rise with this situation in place. However, it means that if you take the \$250 million, divide it by 260 000 by 365 you get \$2.63.
3.35 p.m.

When I hear people telling me in Barbados that the majority of food we eat is imported that is absolute rubbish. When I go to the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association and try to get a figure what do they think is the consumption by tourists they are saying of the \$250 million, \$200 million is consumed by tourists. That means when you take that off that local consumption of imported food is 53 cents per person per day. Right away that indicates that imported food is not a big deal in terms of somebody's pocket.

Aside.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I made the same mistake, Senator Barker. I heard your voice so I presumed you were making a point of order. Please continue.

SENATOR C. K. LAURIE: Let us assume we consume \$10 a day. I am sure the basic lunch we get in the Senate is about \$25 to \$30 including beverages. But let us say the average would be \$10 per day. You go to one of these fast food restaurants and get a snack it is \$9.95. So I do not think it can be much less than \$10 a day. If you take \$10 a day by the same 260 000 people by the 365 you get \$949 million as consumption, nearly \$1 billion in food. It is mind boggling. When I did it, I did it over and over again because I could not believe it. How else would you explain it? If you add on what the tourist consume then you are going to about \$1.1 billion and if you take off what you import the count of \$250 million, which he says is a little high, you get a production of \$900 million. Now that puts agriculture production at \$900 million up there with tourism and the important thing is that this is produced with not very much import input as against tourism earning over \$1 billion but a large portion of that has to go out to pay for the support of that same industry.

One of the things that you also have to look at, is if we have such a huge domestic market why are we so concerned about exports? The big drive of Governments from all time has been to say export more. What I am saying is, if we can replace imports, this is just as important as creating exports and it is more difficult to go out there and compete in the export market than it is in the local market because we should have some control over the local market.

That brings me to VAT on food. I spoke against it as so many other Senators and people all over Barbados but let us look at it in relation to those figures that we used. \$10 a day consumption. If the imports cost 53 cents and they are now approximately 10% less, because they were 20% to 25% before, they are now 15% on the imports so we are going to save money. So the 53 cents goes down to 47.7 cents. The local cost of food was, let us say, \$9.47 out of the \$10, 53 cents imports. Let us take a figure of \$1, something that cost \$1 before it was imported and you add 25 cents so it is at \$1.25. The local would sell for \$1.20 and was competitive. After VAT the imports went from \$1.25 down to \$1.15 but the local went from \$1.20 to \$1.38, totally uncompetitive. It is a crazy thing we are doing. We are saying to the local farmer we are going to subsidize the imports at your expense. This does not make sense at all. If you look at the \$10 a day per person the huge amount of money there and the VAT on that, if every piece of local food was taxed at 15% the VAT would be \$130 million, not \$30 million that was being bandied about. Thank God that does not happen because a vast amount of food in this island is not going to be vatable. A lot of it

does not get into the formal marketplace whatsoever but it is their consumption and I can only again ask Government please look at this thing, look at these figures, they are shocking figures. Every time I look at them, I would like somebody to show me how they are wrong because the facts are based on figures published by the Central Bank, the population of the island, the 365 days a year, I do not know if any of these things can be wrong but to me it is really a very shocking thing and if these facts are right then we must do something about it. Thank you.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, I want to focus the attention of this Senate to the macro ...

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 4.45 p.m. this afternoon.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Senator Barker will continue after the break.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT suspended the sitting accordingly.
3.45 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Mr. PRESIDENT: This sitting is resumed.

SENATOR T. E. BARKER: Mr. President, as I said before the break, I want to look at the macro aspects of the Estimates. I want to preface my comments, Sir, by saying that this is the third Estimates that this present Government has produced. We are now beginning to see the programme of this Government coming to the fore. As you would appreciate the first Estimates that were in 1995/1996 came so soon after the general elections that the Government was obviously not in a position to put its programmes into place. A lot of them, Sir, would have required intensive preparatory work in order to reach the stage where they can be presented to this Chamber.

Sir, after two years they are now in a position to gauge the performance and philosophy of this Government because, Sir, we are now seeing the full effect of the Government's programme.

Sir, we want to look at the whole question of expenditure and relate it to revenue in order to get an idea of the thinking behind the programme of this Government.

Sir, first of all we note that this Government has signaled its intention to be mindful of economic

fundamentals. Sir, we remember very well the days of the late 1980s when there were runaway Government expenditures which were pursued by increasing level of taxation. We note, Sir, that even with the high level of taxation the revenue yields could not keep pace with the galloping expenditure.

The results, Sir, were that we had massive deficits which gave rise to the harsh conditions of the early 1990s when many people were sent home from work. People had their hopes dashed and the frustration in this country reached unprecedented levels.

Sir, the increase in mental cases which were so well highlighted by a former Speaker, a lot of it could be traced to the fiascoes during the late 1980s. This Government, Sir, has no intentions of following that path of economic management. We know its effects and we are guided by precedents because we know, Sir, that you cannot ignore the laws of economics in the same way that you cannot ignore the laws of gravity. If you jump too high you are going to fall down. It is as simple as that. An athlete may soar six feet, but there is a limit because the law of gravity is going to pull him down and it is going to be said that he cannot jump eight feet.

Economics is no different. You cannot ignore economic fundamentals unless you do so at your peril. That is why it is interesting to note that this Government has not resorted to the sort of financial measures that the last Government undertook which saw high limits in the ways and means account, which saw existent borrowing in the domestic markets, which saw the Government having to turn to a British bank, to a broker, a deal of which, Sir, we spoke about in here a few weeks ago.

This has left the country in a situation where it has to pay exorbitantly high rates of interest for the next 25 years. It might be 20 years by now. We are linked into a high interest rate loan with no prospect of even redeeming the loan before the due time. All of that is the result of bad fiscal management.

This Government in its three budgets so far has made sure that expenditure and revenue go hand in hand to the extent, Sir, that when we found that the solid waste was creating a problem for Barbados, this Government in the face of opposition from the Democratic Labour Party and the National Democratic Party, introduced an environmental levy, because the thinking was that you cannot build on new streams of expenditure without at the same time bringing on new strings of revenue. If you are going to increase the expenditure you have to find revenue from some source or the other in order to pay for the revenue. You cannot ignore that fundamental.

This is why, Sir, I fully appreciate the concerns of people on both sides of the political divide about VAT on food. It is a legitimate concern. A lot of people hold the view that you have to go easy on taxation for food. It is not an unreasonable position for people to take and we honestly appreciate the concerns of people. They are on both sides of the political fence. It is an emulative issue and one that this Government has said on many occasions, that it is prepared to look at when the figures for VAT are known. We are still in a position, Sir, where VAT has only been instituted for less than three months. We are not yet seeing a stabilization in the revenue yields from VAT so that we can make sensible and logical conclusions as to what the level of revenue is going to be from VAT.

I heard, Sir, from the other side, a member is saying that we are going to get \$100 million more than we thought from VAT. Sir, there is a difference between forecasting and prediction. One, Sir, is based on empty thought and the other one is based on fact. So, we have not got enough facts yet to make a judgement.

To the best of our ability, Sir, as found in the Revenue Estimates, we expect VAT to bring in \$329 million. That is the best estimate we have for VAT. As found in Roman numeral five in the Revenue Estimates, \$329 million is what we expect from VAT. Sir, when somebody can say and expect to be taken seriously, that in a figure of \$329 million we underestimated by \$102 million, on what is such a figure based? Sir, we on this side are going to stand by the forecasts of the people whom we put in place to make these forecasts. If they forecasted \$329 million, we are not going to say that we are going to get \$400 million. They are the ones who went through all the models and all the figures and they have come to a conclusion based on how they see things. We are not technocrats. We are policy makers. We are going to accept the figures of the technocrats and if in the long run they have underestimated, so be it, we will know what to do.

At present I want to stress, Sir, that according to the studies that were done, removing VAT on food would cost \$55 million. We all know what that will mean to the fiscal deficit. That is about one and a half percent of GDP. We cannot, Sir, take a gamble with this economy. We have seen the effects of gambling with this economy and none of us want to live through the early 1990s again. We are not going to gamble with the Barbados economy.

When we get a better handle on the figures we will see if adjustments can be made and the Prime Minister has promised this country that he would review it after nine months. I, Sir, would advise all Members and the Barbadian public, those who can get on the radio call-in programmes and use their position to pass judgement on the Government, to accept the Prime Minister at his word.

In the two years or so that he has been Prime Minister, he has not broken his word to the people of Barbados. It is not in his make up to break a covenant with the people. He said, in nine months time we are going to look at it again, so stop the foolish talking. Let us now go forward and accept it for what it is worth and when the time comes, let him hear the people's word and we will go from there.

Sir, people are worried about the Prime Minister's word about jobs. Sir, we are happy to report, Sir, that he went all the way to achieve his target on jobs. The latest figures show, these are not my figures, these are the Government's figures, that from September 1994 over 9 000 people have got jobs. It means that we are not there yet. There are still about 20 000 people in Barbados still out of jobs, but the figure is going down. By the time elections come, we are looking for another significant drop. We are happy to report progress on that score. I want to say that, to show that we can take the Prime Minister at his word. Just as he delivered on the jobs issue, he is going to deliver on the VAT issue.
4.25 p.m.

Sir, I want to look at the expenditure first of all and see the direction in which the Government is going. I refer you to page 4 of this document which forms the Schedule to the Bill. We notice that expenditure on Table 7 of page 4 is projected to increase by 10% because these are all projections for the coming year.

In moving from \$1.49 billion to \$1.61 billion, that is a 10% increase and note that the rate of inflation is about 5% or 6% for this year so that this is a little above the rate of inflation.

Sir, it is interesting to note where the increase is found and the first thing to note is the increase in the general public service, the cost of running the country is less than the overall increase. In other words, what is happening is that Government is containing the growth in the bureaucracy. For example, the figures show that in 1995-96 we spent \$224 million on the general public service and this year we are projecting to spend \$211 million. So that in the last 2 years we are seeing a decrease from \$224 million in 1995-96 to an estimated \$211 million in the fiscal year to come.

We are containing the growth in the bureaucracy. That is why it is important because it means that we are able to transform resources from the bureaucracy into areas of need. That is why it is important to know that the biggest increases in expenditure over the last year are found in the housing and community and social service section and note, Sir, economic services. Those are the 3 items of expenditure which have shown the most increase,

which shows that you must get the economic activity going and secondly you must have the safety net going so that those who for whatever reason need help from the State will get it.

We have to note that in any society there is always going to be a significant number of persons who will need special help from the State.

Right away, Sir, we see the philosophy of this Government, get economic services going because it is better to increase the pie before you can share out the pie. We are going to get economic services going, we are going to put money in economic services and at the same time we are going to ensure that the social and welfare aspects of the whole operation get their fair share of activity.

Therefore, we note that the money spent on economic services which include, as it says in the note, trade, industry, agriculture, roads, civil aviation, tourism, land and surveys and labour. Those items make up economic services and they show an increase in this year of 22%, way above the overall increase in expenditure.

To me, that makes all sorts of sense. We are putting the nation in a position that it can take off because we are spending money on infrastructure, on the trade mission, in the industrial sector and in agriculture in order to position Barbados to take off.

It is interesting to note that the second largest increase is economic services. The largest increase is in housing and community amenities. That is the largest increase. It shows that this Government understands the problems facing this country because the greatest problem facing the people of this country is the fact that housing is, in my view, substandard in most cases, especially since Barbados is now at the top of the developing countries. Housing has not kept pace with the other developments in this country.

This Government is putting money into housing and other amenities to upgrade the standard of living of people. The largest increase in expenditure for this year is in the area of housing and community development.

Sir, those who are doubting my word can look at page 4 of the Estimates that all of us have. This item on housing and community amenities includes cooperatives, town planning, environmental sanitation and all that. That is taking up a large sum of Government's budget and we recognise the importance of these areas to the quality of life and while we are restraining the growth in the general public service we are allowing for growth in expenditure in the areas that matter most to the people of this country. That is why we are seeing the philosophy that guides the budget of this country.

Another item is community and social services and according to the note this includes information services, libraries, parks and beaches, sports and culture. Not only are we providing people with housing but we are looking to uplift them spiritually by spending money on libraries and cultural activities. I am sure that Senator Davis would applaud the Government in this regard.

Sir, education and health show an increase of 11.6% and health 12.8% which again reflects Government's commitment to the people. Government has become people centred.

Sir, I will go through in more detail and show where the money is actually being spent. The overall philosophy is about people, doing things that matter for the people of this country, understanding the need and trying to address the needs. That is why I can say that we are now seeing after 2 years the Estimates reflecting the priorities of this Government, the Estimates reflecting the thinking of this Government.

We are not going to build any more Sherbournes. People cannot live in Sherbourne. Our job is to find uses for what is already there. We are not going to spend another \$40 million to finish Sherbourne when the people cannot get housing, when the roads are in bad condition. Our priorities must be people centred. That is why I am proud to be part of this Government and I feel proud when I go everywhere and people talk about Barbados because we have our priorities right, as reflected by the Estimates.

Sir, we all know that Defence and Security has an increase of 15.6% but we also note that over the last 2 years the spending in that area has been more or less constant. By looking at the Estimates of Expenditure we see where the country is going.
4.35 p.m.

We cannot ignore the fact that we have to get the productive sectors going because that is of vital importance. Agriculture must be given another boost. We have shown in our two years that we are committed because the sugar crop upon which all of our agricultural activity depends to a large extent, we have made sure that every year we put support for the small farmers to get them back into sugar. This year it is about \$1.8 million in subsidy and we also have incentives for the small farmers and so on.

So the point I want to make, Sir, is that it is all right to talk about social and welfare items. Yes, we have increased those substantially but we have also paid attention to the economic services the growth of which area can then feed into the other areas of activity – education, health and so on. Because we would love to do more for

education but of course we are constrained by two things, one – the state of neglect of the area between 1976 and 1994 where no attention was paid to our school plant, and right now, as Senator Forde would tell you, the plant has been so run down that we now have to look for all sorts of money to get the school plant back to where it was.

We will see in a minute that we are actually focusing on those areas. Sir, it is also interesting to note that as far as the debt services go, that we are now again in a position to see some of the effects of Government's policy. Because, as a result of our handling of the economy, I refer you, Sir to the Economic and Financial Statistics, the latest one which came out yesterday was February. It is showing, Sir, that as a result of our prudent management of the economy interest rates especially on treasury bills have come down significantly. That is important, Sir, because treasury bills remain a large source of Government financing and when the rate could have declined from 8% in 1995 to now under 5.3% which – that 3% difference in interest rates on treasury bills alone translates to maybe \$6 million or more in interest savings alone, because we have quite a lot of treasury bills outstanding. It is like \$600 million in treasury bills outstanding and the 3% difference there is very significant. It is about \$18 million in savings alone. So that our handling of the economy has resulted in the lowering of the treasury bill interest rate, translates into \$80 million savings to the Government, all as a result of the fact that we have stabilised the economy and that we are now in a position where by paying attention to economic detail the country is now reaping the benefits. Because we note, Sir, that debt service has increased by only 3.8% and the interest part of it has declined by something like 2.9% and this is a result of, in my view Sir, prudent management of the economy and it has given rise to these benefits to the people of this country. There is no substitute, Sir, for good management. There is no substitute for good management whether it is of your household affairs or the country. It is of tremendous importance.

Sir, when it comes to the revenue side, as I said before, Sir, the VAT is expected to bring \$329 million. \$329 million is the figure we expect to get from VAT for the coming year and from all reports we should get our figure because this figure, Sir, has been revised in the light of January's and February's experience. The figures are not cast in stone, we revise them according to information. Sir, if I was in another place I might call it a full information method rather than limiting the information. We are constantly updating it in the light of experiences.

Sir, it is also interesting to note, Sir, that when we look at the Revenue Estimates we note that taxes on income and property we expect that to show an increase which reflects, Sir, the fact that more people are working now than were working a year ago. So even without an increase in the rate of income tax we are going to get

an increase in the tax take as a result of the increase in employment which has come about as a result of the imaginative measures this Government took.

For example, one of the first things we did when we came into power was to remove the owners' taxes on manufacture and the agricultural sector which allowed them to expand and to provide jobs for people. As a result we notice that there is an increase in income tax take and so on.

Not only did we get an increase in tax but we also got an increase in exports which have resulted in the fact that our reserves are now over \$600 million. The sound economic management has translated itself into positive benefits for the people of Barbados. With our level of reserves now it means that we are in a position to do what the Prime Minister is now doing, expanding the economy a little bit. The fear of running out of foreign reserves is not really with us because of the management of the economy, the fact that we have put emphasis on the productive sectors – tourism, the offshore sector, agricultural sector and manufacturing sector. Those have been the target of Government's thinking and philosophy over the past two years and we have seen the effects of that.

Whereas, Sir, two or three years ago the threat of devaluation was still hanging over us to some extent, now nobody out there even bothers his head about it because he knows that the economy is in good hands and they are seeing the positive benefits of the measures that were taken in the last couple of years of the economy.

My only regret, Sir, is that four or five years ago when I was on the Other Side making these sorts of comments that the then Government had not even the inclination nor the wisdom to accept the advice that they were getting not only from me, Sir, I would not be arrogant in this regard, but also from other people in the community. Even the independent Senators were making sure that Government was getting the right sort of advice but they were not taking it.

The people of Barbados now know that they have a Prime Minister who will listen. That is one thing about this Prime Minister, he would listen and he has demonstrated it in the two and a half years that he is in fact a good listener.

Sir, I just want briefly to note and a warning has come about in this Chamber here to note the importance of the Government sector to the economy of Barbados. It is very important that we understand, Sir, the role of the Government sector to this economy because in 1995 the Government sector employed 21.6% of the people in this country. It is by far the largest single employer of this

country and not only that, Sir, its contribution to GDP is surpassed only by the wholesale retail sector, the general services sector and the tourism sector. Therefore, Sir, any difficulty in the government sector is going to have a snowball effect on the other sectors of the economy. That is why it is so important that the Government gets its sums right because any time the Government messes up in the Government sector, all the sectors of the economy are going to have serious problems, as was shown in the early part of this decade. It is very important that the Government gets its sums right, very, very important.

Sir, in talking in a general way about the Government's philosophy as evidenced by the Bill that we are now discussing, I just want to as a way of expanding what I say to note that this Government is serious about the small people in this country. That is why, Sir, the highlight of this exercise is the fact that for the first time a government is taking the whole issue of poverty seriously in Barbados, and not now as the DLP has done by just mouthing off words without a programme. We are putting a programme which calls for poverty alleviation, a comprehensive and a well-thought out programme and \$10 million is in the budget for this programme. Members must know that a programme of this magnitude must be properly conceptualised and instituted otherwise you would be just throwing away the people's money.
4.45 p.m.

The point members must know is that a programme of this magnitude must be properly conceptualised and instituted otherwise you would just be throwing away the people's money. Sir, we have a \$10 million programme. It is not the end all but we know the programme has to be structured in such a way that those who are in need are identified. We must identify those who are in the greatest need and devise proper programmes. We want to do it in such a way that the dignity of the person would not be compromised. The dignity of the person must at all times be maintained. The State must help but it must help in such a way that the person or persons whom they are intending to help still, at the end of the day, walk with their heads high and their dignity and pride intact.

This \$10 million is but the start of the poverty alleviation programme. It is the start and as the Chinese proverb says: "the journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step." This, Sir, is the first step and it is not a feeble step. It is a great step because \$10 million in Barbados is nothing to be laughed at but properly handled and properly managed can bring significant benefits to thousands of people in this country of Barbados.

Sir, that is not all. The Government is undertaking a programme of urban renewal where \$5 million is earmarked in this year's Estimates for the start of

this programme. Sir, the tragedy is that the Democratic Labour Party is all talk, all bluster and no action. They have taken the people in urban Barbados for a ride for many years. History will show that the Democratic Labour Party had, on most occasions, held most of the seats in the urban corridor. That is a historical fact. But what have they given to the people of urban Barbados who have stuck with them over the years? They have given them unemployment, degradation, lack of facilities, lack of amenities, lack of hope, 8 per cent cut. That is what they have given them.

Sir, we have shown on this side we are willing and able to put our money where our mouths are. We are starting the Urban Renewal Programme. We have the Poverty Alleviation Programme and do not forget, Sir, that a year or so ago we started the Rural Development Programme. In other words, we are touching the lives of people. As I said, Sir, the Estimates are people centred, the things that matter to people.

Sir, not only that. We have increased the expenditure on tenantry roads. That is very important because a lot of our people still have substandard roads to use. Whereas two years ago we were spending just half a million dollars on tenantry roads, in this budget we are putting \$8 million on tenantry roads.

I want to say, Sir, that tenantry roads are the ones that are used by the small black man that people in here so conveniently like to raise when it suits their interest. But we are being positive because the Tenantry Roads Programme is basically for the small man in rural Barbados and some parts of urban Barbados who have for years been suffering neglect by the Dems, who by their thoughtlessness and callousness have done nothing for the people of this country. We have put \$8 million this year alone for a vibrant Tenantry Roads Programme under the Ministry of Public Works.

Notice, Sir. We also did some under the Rural Development Programme, now that we have found a situation where the Scotland District has been neglected by the last administration. I remember, Sir, I was on the Other Side when I looked across at the ones who were then sitting here and I told them that because St. Andrew and St. Joseph do not usually vote for the Dems they ignore them. I remember saying similar words.

Sir, we have tremendously increased the spending in the Scotland area. We have increased the spending on the Scotland special work to \$4.3 million. We are resiting people who live in White Hill at the Government's expense because of the problem they have with land slippage.

Sir, the Estimates are people centred, the small things that help people to lift them up out of the quagmire of

despair into a land of hope. Sir, not only are we building roads for our people, not only are we spending more money on housing, but we are also making sure that we meet all their needs.

Sir, for those of us who are worried about the small businessman, Senator Farley will tell you that this year his business development section is spending \$0.69 million where two years ago it was only spending \$100 000, a 6:4 increase in two years in the amount of money we are spending on business development in Barbados.

Sir, I am sure that those who even import beer might benefit from the money spent on business development. It is part of the development because we intend to develop every segment of the community. We are aware of the fact that we need to increase the entrepreneurial skills in this country. That is why one of the first things we did on assuming office was to have a Ministry of Business Development to put in place programmes to develop the entrepreneurial skills of our people which for years were ignored by the last Government, which did not have a clue how to manage besides empty promises and empty rhetoric. But note now that we are putting money into business development.

Sir, not only that. We have made sure that the Small Business Association, and you will find it in this year's Estimates, again we are giving them \$150 000 a year to help them run their secretariat and help them improve their own image and themselves. Those are positive acts to develop the people of this country. Note, Sir, one of the first things we did was to make sure we had a Ministry which focussed on developing the small businessman and the whole country is seeing the effect of all this.

Not only that, Sir. To further highlight the people centredness of these Estimates, we note that increased money is given to the Vocational Training Board. All Barbadians can with pride go up to Eden Lodge and those who do not know it, when you turn into Eden Lodge on Green Hill Road before you get to Island Beverages on the right, after you pass the Resurrection Church, there is a road on the left. Down there is a beautiful house built by the trainees at the Barbados Vocational Training Board. It is a lovely house.

I had the privilege, Sir, of going through the house. The house compares favourably with any house I have seen built. That house was built obviously under supervision, by the 18 and 19-year olds. A lot of girls worked on that one, trainee steel benders, trainee masons, trainee carpenters. Our people have the ability and this Government is bringing this ability to the fore. We are increasing the money to the Vocational Training Board because for our country to develop the young people must have skills. I am encouraging all Members to go into Eden Lodge and

look at the house that has been built by our young boys and young girls. It is a house that anybody would be proud to own. It stands as a testimony not only to the ingenuity of our young people but to the creativity of a Government which put the people at the centre of its activity.
4.55 p.m.

Again, this year, Sir, we have made sure that the Vocational Training Board gets more money. In the past year we have put over \$1 million in the Vocational Training Board and we are seeing the results of this.

Again, in the Estimates for the first time we have a Disability Unit in this country. There are people out there who have some measure of disability. They are Barbadians and they deserve the consideration of the State even in a more fundamental way than those who have all of their faculties.

This Government that has been maligned on the Other Side and yet we spend \$0.5 million dollars looking after the infirmed and the handicapped people of this country because we want to improve their life to make them more productive. Even although they have disabilities a lot of them can be made productive and this Government is setting the way by setting up a Disability Unit.

A unit that is there to specially create programmes for the disabled within our community. We are making sure that some disabled persons are even on the staff because once you are disabled, the possibility of getting a job decreases. We are saying, you are disabled, nobody knows better than you, what you need. You know the problem you suffer, you go and run your own unit. We have \$0.5 million this year in the Estimates for this. The Dems in their 23 years of running the country never thought of doing anything like that. The creativity of this administration comes to the fore. I could go on and on.

Sir, I am conscious of the fact that the Members of the Opposition do not understand progress when they see it because they have been made to think, in their arrogance, that only they could institute programmes. The history of Barbados will show that any significant progress in this country came under the Barbados Labour Party. For example, Sir, the Honourable Member on the Other Side is proud to say that she came from St. George. We know that the best thing that ever happened to the people in rural St. George is the Freehold Tenantry Act. It made an improvement in their whole outlook.

The point I want to make, Sir, is that this year's Estimates show that the Government is committed to the people of Barbados. It reinforces the view that if you want anything done in this country, you have got to put the Barbados Labour Party in power. It is clear. The last Government was into crash programmes with no economic imagination and nothing of long-term sustainability.

This Government is not engaged in crash programmes. We are engaged in thoughtful programmes to uplift the people in this country. The Dems and their bedfellows were engaged in black and white talk and did nothing for the small black man but we are showing in this year's Estimates that we are improving his lot. Talk is cheap and any fool can talk and the fools do talk. We have the vision and we have translated the vision into action.

The same way that we took the young boys and young girls off the street and turned them into creative artisans, the same people that the Dems were putting out of school at 14 years old, we took them and through the Skills Training Programme at the Vocational Training Board and turned them into productive citizens where they can build houses for all. I recommend even you, Mr. President to go and look at the property. I was proud to be invited to the opening. It shows what can be done when a Government and its people work hand in hand. Partnership, Government linking the hand of the people and carrying this country forward.

I will commend the Estimates to this Honourable Chamber. It is full of creativity. It is what we call social engineering and building up of people. Sir, the Estimates are only figures but when we go beyond the figures, we see people. We see people and Government in partnership moving together. The governed and the Government, moving together and the result is that Barbadians are benefitting.

Barbados holds great esteem in the international community after the fiasco of the early 1990s. I feel good to be a Bajan. I feel proud to see what a country of 250 000 people can achieve in this hostile world and I want to say, Sir, that the people have put their trust in this Barbados Labour Party Administration and we are delivering and the people are benefitting, all of them. The only ones who are still not benefitting are the ones to whom the Barbados Labour Party can do no good. I refer to the ones on the Opposition benches. Even those engaged in commerce and in insurance are benefitting, their income is moving up.

Sir, I commend to this Honourable Chamber these Estimates, the result of creativity and brilliance and paying attention to the economic fundamentals.

Thank you very much.
5.05 p.m.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, I too rise to make my contribution to this debate today and to respond to a couple of comments made in the Chamber yesterday.

Mr. President, I would want to start by saying that I am intending to speak under Head 36 dealing with the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health as we all know has as one of its responsibilities the provision of health care.

Mr. President, a lot of time has been spent over the last 2½ years trying to correct a lot of wrongs and it would be unreasonable of me to begin by reminding those who seem to have forgotten that a lot of the problems that still exist and which bit by bit we are whittling away, taking away cash that could really be spent to do other developmental things but have had to go to take care of a lot of misdeeds.

Mr. President, a lot of the problems that are existing have been around for a very, very long time, as far back as 1988.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Mr. President, I hate to interrupt the Senator but the Senator is misleading the Chamber. She is imputing misdeeds on the part of the previous administration. I think those comments should be struck from the record.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I did not interpret her statement to be specific in relation to any particular identifiable person. In my view this is no point of order.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: If it would please the Senator I would use mismanagement perhaps.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: It dates back as early as 1988 and I am speaking specifically to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital because as far back as 1988 Senator Rickinson can attest to this, the nurses went on a sick out over shortage of staff and poor working conditions. That was long before this Barbados Labour Party administration came to office.

In 1988 there were problems with the ambulances. In 1988 again the Casualty was experiencing problems and it goes on, Mr. President. In 1990 at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital the theatres, three out of six theatres were open because of something called nimbles, insects, vermin, in a place where health care was supposed to be delivered. So, Mr. President it is unreasonable for persons to want to walk about and talk and give the impression that a lot of the problems that are in existence are new. So just to remind those who may have forgotten, those are just one or two points, Mr. President.

Yesterday, Senator Thompson made a reference to late feeding of patients at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Just to briefly touch on that to say that maybe the case

because at this point the Queen Elizabeth Hospital under this administration is struggling to come into this century and I refer to the replacement of a lot of the old equipment used to prepare food. There are beautiful containers now but back in those days some folk had to go on strike because they had one single pot in the kitchen at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. But, Mr. President, the equipment is state of the art to do the plate service. Obviously when you introduce new things it takes time for things to work and for people to become used to it because there was some opposition to the use of this new equipment. I have been advised that this new system is very relevant because it ensures that you get less wastage and therefore food should go to those who require it there in the hospital.

Talking about equipment, Mr. President, there was a comment made and it is perhaps true in part. One of the other Senators mentioned about the 'catscan' equipment not working. This is true. However equipment has been ordered at a cost of \$1.2 million which has worked out far cheaper than to maintain the old equipment which is over ten years old at a cost to the Government of some \$400 000 per year to keep functioning. So that new equipment will soon be in place and as with any equipment, of course, training of staff will have to take place. Everyone of us in here who knows how to drive a car had to be taught how to drive a car. There are many of us in here who had to be taught to do things. I had to be taught to be a cosmetologist. Senators had to learn how to be engineers and to be insurance agents and to be shop assistants and store clerks and attorneys and so on. So in any area that one would want to excel at, he would have to have training and it is no different for this piece of equipment. There was also mention about patients being pushed here and pushed there because there were not enough beds.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, on a point of order. I never said they were pushed here and pushed there because there were not enough beds. I said there was a new policy, scatter them all around the hospital. They had beds but they were scattered around the hospital. They were on beds.

Mr. PRESIDENT: That is a point of elucidation.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, when that hospital was built there was not as much need for care of certain chronic diseases that currently exist for one reason or other. Perhaps our lifestyle in Barbados has changed so significantly that we are now faced with many more chronic illnesses. The stress is causing a lot more strokes. A lot more patients succumb to cancer, to AIDS and to diabetes and to just plain old aging. At that time surgical wards may have required more beds etc. but

now 70% of the care delivered at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is going to treat those chronic illnesses and so if you did not have enough beds in one department, where you can put somebody to lie down to give them necessary care they are put wherever there is a bed. The important thing is that they are in a health care institution where they would be better cared for than if they were left at home hoping that somebody would come by to take care of their needs. So it is really not fair to say that they are just put anywhere. There is a reason behind it.

Mr. President, I am not going to go on too long about the sorts of things we have had to go in and clear up. But I had to make those points to clear up particular points and since we are trying to clear up one or two things one of the other Senators also stated yesterday that this Administration did not have time for fancy medicine. Now I wonder what is referred to as fancy medicine because the speaker went on to talk about cardiac surgery. I do not know that is fancy medicine but in today's day and age that is necessary medicine and so Mr. President ...

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Mr. President, in my presentation I made the point that the present Minister is on record as saying that she is nothing to do with fancy medicine as medicine meaning the treatment of ailments.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, that new cardiac unit was developed under a former administration. However the equipment was never paid for and I would want to quote from the Budget of May 1996 where if we did not care about quality we would never have pursued and paid this debt.
5.15 p.m.

The debt of \$2.1 million to the Ministry of Health to permit the purchase of an Angiographic Unit in an earlier financial period. Mr. President, enough said about that.

In reference to Senator Rickinson, she made some good points and I want to acknowledge some of those points.

Mr. President, under Mental Health Care, there are some points that may be valid but there are others, perhaps, that I would want to shed some light on. The vote for Medical Help has indeed increased last year from \$16 761 686 to this year \$17 510 689 to be spent on the Psychiatric Facility, \$412 000 of that alone towards the maintenance of the property.

Mr. President, that property is well over 100 years old and it would be unreal and unreasonable to expect all of the problems that have been going on for so long to be rectified in such a very short period as in two years.

Mr. President, efforts are being made on an incremental basis and so far, parts of the roof have been repaired. There are some 10 to 12 acres of roof space at the Psychiatric Hospital. We cannot take off the whole roof at once because we have patients still there, and so it is being done on an incremental basis, bit by bit, part by part and gradually all will be completed.

The kitchen has already been revamped. What used to be the polyclinic down there has also been upgraded and it is now incorporated into the general use of the Psychiatric Hospital. We are having the floors repaired. There is a comment that the toilets were not clean. The baths were not clean and, Mr. President, earlier in the Chamber today the point was made that Ministers and policy makers are not in a position to tell staff, for example the maids, etc., where to clean. Indeed one Senator made the point that where a Minister was working late and had asked the maid to give some assistance for sustenance, the maid refused to do so. Even in case of sweeping around the desk the maid refused to do so. If the baths are not in a position that the patients may want to use them, I do not think we can lay blame on the policy makers in that regard.

To go further, Mr. President, Health Promotion, again, I have utmost respect for Senator Rickinson. She has been in this business of nursing care for a very, very long time. I think a lot of us in here have learned a lot about Nursing through Senator Rickinson.

Within the Ministry of Health they have already appointed a Health Education and Environmental Education Officer. We all believe, and I think again in this Chamber on many an occasion we look at preventive measures rather than curative. If you can cure it at the source, then you do not have to worry about curing it.

One of the initiatives also started by the Ministry of Health was the Healthfest. The *Nation* has expanded this tremendously and I think they need to be commended for this and I recommend that all Senators get actively involved in the Healthfest that is coming up in a few weeks. The media generally seeks to support the healthy lifestyle programme.

Mr. President, one last point I would want to make under Head 36, under Health and that is the part that deals with senior citizens, geriatric and the district hospitals. A major interest is being undertaken by the Ministry in the programme for the elderly.

We all know that there is insufficient bed space at the Geriatric Hospital. Only today I was on the telephone trying to get a place organised for a very senior person who is not in a position to afford private nursing home care. However, the Ministry of Health is looking at

an initiative of working with NGOs and private nursing homes to try and create more bed space for the seniors in our communities.

In addition to which, Mr. President, again this may not be new but it is something that I feel needs to be done as well, and other Senators may have touched on it, maybe not in this Sitting, but former Sitzings, and that is the whole question of community centres for seniors.

I do not like to call it a "day care", because it makes them sound unable to cope or to manage. Many may not be able to, but a provision where they can learn skills. Throughout the Island there are one or two places such as these where seniors can go, but it is worthy of some expansion. Most of us, Mr. President, would have senior members of our family who you would not want to leave at home. In our daily Newspapers you can see instances where there are house fires, seniors may have left the stove on when they went out to the back to take care of something else and this is not good.

It is not good for their safety or for their security because we are also living in days where you cannot afford to leave your seniors completely on their own. Some of us may not want to admit that there are problems in the society, but I know for sure that my mother is by no means decrepit, she is a senior citizen and every night that I am out I have to pass through and double check. I have to be my own night watchman because it is not safe to leave your senior citizens alone.

I think it is worthy of some consideration and sooner rather than later, for funds to go toward this area to look at community day care for our seniors. Particularly, Mr. President, the women in our society, because undoubtedly we are living much, much longer than the men. Many senior gentlemen have gone along and left their other halves. In the evening of our years many of our women need to have that relationship, being with those who are of a similar age with whom they can share experiences of the past, rather than being at home alone and lonely and in many instances abandoned. Depressed, I hear coming from one of the Senators, and through all of this, many of them succumb to dementia, earlier rather than later and Alzheimer's, which I think is a terrible, terrible disease. As far as our seniors are concerned, particularly our women because I think it is fair to say that we women perhaps go under a lot more stress than some others, and this stress can manifest itself in breaking down the body that much sooner.

Mr. President, under the National Conservation Commission.

Asides.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Order, please.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: These asides are too much. Mr. President, thank you, if you would please.

There has been a lot of extensive work at the National Conservation Commission. The call came and we answered the call and it was necessary because under a former administration, let us not forget, that most of the workers at the National Conservation Commission were put on three days. They are all now back to a five-day week, some one thousand of them.

Mr. President, with the return to those large numbers and with the increase in the expansion of Project Three at the National Conservation Commission we can fully well see that even more jobs are going to be created. I would expect in very short time that the unemployment rate will drop further than the 14.6% that was recorded yesterday. 5.25 p.m.

Let me just touch a little bit on some of the programmes that the NCC is doing. Let me start with the work at Queen's College. The Dame Elsie Payne Complex, a wonderful complex, which has been neglected for more years than I can even remember. The National Conservation Commission is doing a tremendous job there. I would like to give compliments at this stage to Mrs. Ena Forde whom I have seen up there supervising it.

Mr. President, when one looks at the sort of work that they are doing there and at many other places, one would want to have this sort of team work on your private residence. I have no doubt in the future that that will be an expanded area as well, the area of dealing with private homes. Then more jobs.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: The aside says that is nothing new, but it is new now under this administration because jobs were uncommon in the days of the former administration. So let us talk now about reducing... Tell me about the 27% unemployment under that former administration.

Mr. PRESIDENT: Do not be distracted, Senator.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, apologies. I did not mean to get sidetracked. I just want to make my few little points and sit down quietly and let the others do their thing.

Mr. President, for those who have not had the opportunity yet to visit the Pomarine Hotel in Hastings, go up there and have a look. Beautiful, well maintained by

the NCC. Once again, since we are in Christ Church, let us talk about Accra. There are at least 4 kiosks now to be opened at Accra Beach. Pass there and have a look. What is that going to manifest itself into once again? Jobs, Mr. President. Entrepreneurship. Senator Barker mentioned it before.

A lot of young people need to have this sort of avenue to be able to express their skills and their talents so that they too can feel they are a part of this economy. I have a particular passion for entrepreneurship because 20 years ago when I started my business I too was out there looking for work and I was not very successful and, fortunately, I had somebody to tell me you can do it, go ahead. I started my own business some 20 years ago. I am looking to retire from that now.

Having made my contribution in that arena, and through that arena being able to reach many others, particularly young people, it goes on. Having made it in that arena, it leaves me a lot freer now to deal with the real issues at hand to try and build some self-esteem and some confidence into all the young people, particularly a lot of the young girls who find themselves at Sterling Children's Home through no fault of their own, or as I have said in this Chamber already, at the Summervale Home. Those young people are stigmatised and I do not want to get off track so let me stay on what I was talking about because I am going to have plenty of time to discuss that on another occasion.

Mr. President, Batts Rock was just recently opened, another NCC project. Batts Rock is a beach where most of us as children and a lot of us as adults now still go and bathe. We are taking all the credit but the point must be made that we cannot continuously expect Government to do everything in a country. And so this Administration is very much into the business of drawing people into working with them to create equal opportunities, to create more opportunities for employment, for the beautification of Barbados, for all sorts of various things.

Mr. President, those are the beautification things but let us talk about some of the other things that are ongoing under this administration. The whole question of debushing. A year and a half ago we had a problem with mosquitoes and this is why it was necessary to continue the debushing programme. It has abated simply because of the ongoing plans within the Ministry of Health through the National Conservation Commission to keep Barbados clean. We are keeping it beautiful, making it beautiful where it was not beautiful in some areas before, and certainly keeping it clean.

Aside.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: Mr. President, I am glad somebody said talk about the Ivy. I of all people, well know that that particular area suffered a lot of neglect even though that particular part of Barbados had as its representative a Minister who dealt with drainage, transport etc. I am not making any accusation at this point. But the point I would want to make in this regard is that the drainage and the wells in that area were sadly neglected and it is only now that we are beginning to make a difference in that area.

Mr. President, up to yesterday, as I passed through the Ivy Road I could still see one of the wells giving a problem. I wonder how long that has been like that. Long before 2½ years. The Drainage Unit is going to continue to help.

Mr. President, I am no engineer and there are qualified engineers in here but I certainly know enough that if water sits for too long in an area you are going to find that the land underneath is going to get "loosy-loosy" – if that is parliamentary.

MR. PRESIDENT: It may be parliamentary but I do not think it is English and the debates must be conducted in English.

SENATOR Miss J. C. ODLE: In these days of ebonics in certain places, Mr. President, that may get through.

Mr. President, we can ill afford any slippage of land anywhere in Barbados. Barbados is small and we can ill afford to have slippage. The whole question of debushing, the whole question of wells, the whole question of drainage, is one that is going to receive the attention of this administration as long as the people of Barbados feel that we can manage their affairs adequately. It will be long after 1999 because already with the changes that we are beginning to see already – Senator Barker went by the figures and I leave him to deal with the economics but we already know where we are headed.

Confidence is instilled. Already, Mr. President, when the administration first came to office 20 and 24 phone calls a day were by people looking for jobs, masons and artisans. Today, many people are able to find work in those areas.

Senator Lynch yesterday made the point that those who have the skills can get the jobs. It is up to us. As Senator Forde in her presentation made the point we are definitely in our Ministry of Education seeking to create opportunities by these skills and alternative curricula at schools to empower those young people.

Mr. President, this is of particular interest to me because just last week, Wednesday, I went up to St. George Secondary School to be involved in part of the alternative curriculum programme. The person in charge called and said that a lot of these young girls wanted to spend a lot of time in front the mirror and they are too concerned with vanity and he invited me to come.

I took the opportunity but I said there is no way that I am coming just to talk about lipstick, nail polish and hairdos. That is icing. I started by saying to the girls and I am going back to deal with the boys on another occasion at the beginning of next term – that opportunities in this life come if you are able to get your foot in the door; if you are offensive looking or have an offensive attitude, doors will close in your face. I started by sharing that with the girls. It is important, in that it will get your face in the place, but if the icing cracks all below will be revealed. 5.35 p.m.

So that presentation talked about the icing, the superficiality of the dressing, superficial because you are going to have some foundation. Like any house, any cake, any whatever, if you do not have a solid foundation you are going to slip through the cracks. So the whole question of the alternative curriculum where you can address what initially would appear to be something slight, I was able to use to get to the core of the matter. Sir, a lot of those young girls who previously, some wanted to be there, but some of them you could see when they stand up that they have an attitude, they did not want to be there in the first place. But by the time they left all were sitting on the end of their chairs.

As a matter of fact they went through break and did not even realise it because they were getting something back from it. Mr. President, those are the sort of things that the Ministry of Health is doing in their alternative curriculum programme, not forcing it on anybody. But the children who want to have an opportunity who may not necessarily be academically inclined, will have an opportunity too.

Mr. President, we have to realise that everybody cannot be an academic but we also have to realise that societies are built not only on academia, but also on people of skills, talents and artisans who help to keep countries alive and to keep revenue coming to our country.

I was reading in a document quite recently that the Caribbean and Barbados is no exception, is able to, in terms of spreading our wings and sharing what talent we have. Nurses are going to work in other parts of the world. Teachers are going to work in other parts of the world. So Mr. President, opportunities will be therefore there as long as we continue on the track that we are now creating the

opportunity, sensitising our young people, going to them in a vein where they will open to you and you can get through to impart your message, whatever message that may be. I am talking about positive messages because we all know that the dark side of the society is getting through simply because the esteem is low and when your esteem is low you will fall to any little drop in the bucket that may seem to enhance you, to make you feel better just for that one brief moment and through the programmes that the Ministry of Education has allowed for in these Estimates is going to make that an improvement.

Mr. President, somebody said that we would not reap benefits until the year 2000. Well, Mr. President, we have to start now. Rome was not built in a day. The race is not always for the swift but if you lay a foundation, Mr. President, when you do get to the finishing line you are not going to be burnt out but you will sail on pass as we watched our Obadele do. When he comes through the race he paces himself and you get to the finishing line you have more left to run another day. Mr. President, with those few comments how can I not but recommend these Estimates to the Honourable Senators for their approval? Thank you Mr. President.

Mr. PRESIDENT. Senator Goddard.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD. Mr. President, it has been an interesting debate thus far and I must confess that at on one hand I have been told that Honourable Members have not been interested in specific figures and on the other hand there are quite precise about the quantum being spent on our poverty alleviation programme and so on.

It sends to me a message, Mr. President that the excellence of these Estimates, the excellence of the economic management that has preceded these Estimates over the past two and a half years and the vision that is portrayed in these Estimates is something that others would like to emulate but clearly did not have the capacity to do eight years before.

At the same time I have noticed a liberal reinterpretation of recent Barbadian history. The liberal interpretation of history places every bit of progressive social legislation after 1962 and ignores the reality of the history of the Barbados Labour Party and its progressive activity in the country since the late thirties, through the forties and into the fifties and all that it has done to make the most remarkable transformation in this country in the most peaceful way, in a way that has caused the least disruption and created the least tension.

There has been tension. There has been disruption but it has been minimized. There has been a transformation in this society and that transformation is continuing in

these Estimates. The concept of poverty alleviation is very, very real. It is a positive programme to address the issue of poverty. Not by giving handouts and not by giving packages of money to people but by addressing the basic needs of people and providing education and training and delivery of services and the environment which will help people to help themselves. This is the long-term programme of the Barbados Labour Party, Mr. President.

The importance of this cannot be over stressed. We all know the saying that it is better to teach a man to fish than to provide him with a fish, and this is what we are doing for the poorest in our society. The reason they are poor is because they do not have the education. They do not have the skills. They do not have the opportunity and they live in environments which make it difficult for them to lift themselves up and to move forward, for them and for their family.

We in this room recognise that basic fact and we must recognise that we must do something about it if we are to maintain the stability of our society and we are to move forward as a total country, as a total unity, as a people together.

This is at the heart of our poverty alleviation programme and it would have been impossible if we were not economically strong, if we did not have the resources and if the proper management had not been put in place and the proper policies put in place to ensure the economic strength of Barbados to then deliver to the poorest in our society.

Mr. President, I now turn to the Ministry of International Trade and Business and there were several questions asked about the Ministry and its performance. First let me say, Mr. President, that the Ministry's performance is in concert with several other Ministries. It is in concert with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it is in concert with the Ministry of Industry through the BDC and it is in concert with the Ministry of Tourism. They all interact with the Ministry of International Trade and Business to provide a framework and an environment for the offshore financial services to flourish in Barbados.

In 1996 we saw a rapid formation of offshore companies in Barbados with 437 IBCs being formed, 393 foreign sales corporations, 23 exempt insurance companies and 14 societies with restricted liabilities. In the past two and a half years as many foreign sales corporations have been formed in Barbados as were formed in the previous ten years.

One third of the international business companies were formed in the past two and a half years since the international business companies came into being in the

late 1960s. That is only the tip of the iceberg. The real proof of the pudding is that the international business companies are doing real business with mind and management in Barbados. They are employing people in Barbados and they are creating jobs in Barbados. Real activities are taking place, not in the way that in many other destinations which just have pigeon-hole operations. It is real business being done in Barbados.

Barbados is being put on the map as a solid, first-class, offshore business destination which has a large pool of indigenous professional support from the accounting and legal professions and is not so heavily dependent upon the expatriates support systems that we need. They are in place in many other areas.
5.45 p.m.

It has seen the growth of the accounting firm and the emergence of new legal firms in Barbados which are addressing the needs of the international business community. Let me say here now that when we speak of the offshore financial services and the offshore business environment or the international business environment, we are increasingly seeing that there will be a convergence with that business and business being done in Barbados down the line.

When it comes to jobs being created in this area, we see jobs in the legal, accounting, engineering and design, computer support services, construction workers, supervisors and managers, and that includes the usual masonry, steel bending, carpentry, electricians, plumbers, the whole area of that activity and the hospitality industry workers.

We must have at least 10 000 to 15 000 people visit Barbados a year specifically to engage in the offshore business activities, taxi drivers, telephone company workers, administrative and secretarial staff to manage the operations within these activities, banking and insurance executives, software developers, graphic artists, English language experts, trust fund administrators, traders in securities and commodities, medical laboratory technicians, landscape artists and gardeners. You can see there is a wide sweep and range of people being employed directly by the activities of the offshore financial services in Barbados. This area is a dynamic and growing area. We will see further development in this area.

The Ministry is also deeply involved in the development of an IT strategy for Barbados. A consultancy is currently underway to develop this strategy and put systems in place that will increase the productivity and efficiency not only of this Ministry but of the key Ministries in Government relating to the investment

process which includes the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Industry & Commerce, Foreign Affairs and Tourism, the Ministry of International Trade and Business and the Attorney General's Office. This is a major development that is ongoing and taking place as we speak.

Note that I say we are developing a national information technology policy. It is a policy that outreaches into the private sector. It means that we expect the private sector to interface with these Government Ministries to be part of the process of developing this strategy. We are also outreaching to private citizens and creating systems whereby the private citizen will be able to access Government information directly on line.

Very much part of this whole process is our dependence on the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Education's response to the business needs of Barbados and, quite frankly, Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. This process means that we have to develop a computer literate society with a broad range of skills. We need to improve the ability of Barbadians to use the communications and computer skills of today for the businesses of tomorrow. This will increase the productivity of Barbadians and increase their per capita income dramatically. This is one of the engines of growth. It will touch every aspect of business activity in this country from newspapers, the media, the television services to business activities in town, to the tourism industry, to manufacturing and to the hospitality industries.

Key to this will be to establish a robust, efficient cost effective telecommunications service in this country, Mr. President. Negotiations are underway to bring this about. We expect to report on this area within a very short couple of weeks. In this we are working very closely with the Public Utilities Board Chairman and the Public Utilities Board which comes under the Ministry of Industry. It is generally recognised that a lot has to be done in this area.

Mr. President, I will now turn to the area of data processing. While data processing is usually created under the umbrella of international business companies, it is serviced very largely by the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation which is under the Ministry of Industry so it is the two of us that have to work together in this area and the concerns about the rates of high speed data length offshore.

Let me say that this industry is being transformed day by day. Some comment was made about it and some comment was made regarding the lower wages and the possible obsolescence of this industry. Let me say that the operators of these industries are well aware of technological changes. They recognise there are going to be areas of activity that will cease but for every one that ceases, there are five more areas opening up.

In this regard it is not largely known that the American operation here, CDS, has the majority of their business out-sourced from companies other than American Airlines so they have transformed their business just from dealing with tickets to providing services for other companies.

As we get into the future we will see that imaging and the use of images rather than paper transfers will be largely developed. We will see that the back office functions will be enhanced. We have seen the emergence of companies developing software at the high end of the marketplace. We see that many of those skills are going to be transferred to our own people here in Barbados.

The Ministry of Education has responded remarkably in upgrading the course content, expanding the number of computers available at the Community College and has done so very rapidly. The throughput through the IT section in the Community College has been dramatically increased. Quite frankly, I think the product has also come out very much better.
5.55 p.m.

At the same time we have had some discussions with U.W.I. and as recently as last week I had a meeting with Dr. Lawrence Nurse and a panel of people discussing the issue of a services oriented school to address the needs of the commercial community and the Government in the decades to come.

Mr. President, I come now to the Ministry of Labour because the issue of the development of women in this community was raised. I must say that it was raised in a particularly disappointing way because the debate was focussed on the development of women in the context of making jams and jellies. While that is an extremely useful area of economic activity and I know several people who I personally helped to do this kind of activity, that is not what we are talking about in the development of women in this day and age.

We are talking about women who are entrepreneurs in their own right, who are starting their own businesses through the use of computers and modern day communication devices, who are providing services to people on the web, whose marketplace is not Barbados, is not the Caribbean, it's the globe. It is women who start small operations and grow them up to the point where they are employing as many as 100 people. It is women who have an intellectual thirst and need to produce things with their creativity, their artistic talents, their graphic skills. It is taking women to a different plane, it is knocking the glass ceiling apart.

SENATOR Mrs. A. P. THOMPSON: Mr. President, on a point of elucidation. The Senator is making the reference to jams and jellies and this does not seem to be very clear since it is the second person I have heard mention it. I was giving a record of some programmes pursued by the Bureau of Women's Affairs and I went on to emphasise that there is a significant number of other programmes in that department made available through the National Advisory Council, many of which Senator Goddard is now referring to. I just want to say that for the record, Sir.

SENATOR THE HON. P. C. GODDARD: Mr. President, the point that I am making is that the Opposition Members and the party to which they belong have seen development in a very narrow sense and have almost been captured in a time warp. It was very evident when they arrived on the scene in 1986 and within a very short space of time had run out of air speed and ideas, all at the same time. They keep applying solutions of the past to the problems of the future and thereby lies the sorry tale that we have lived through.

This party, Mr. President, applies the solutions of the future to the problems of the future with prudence and good management. I am sure that the Minister of Industry will account himself when he wraps up, Mr. President, but as reference was made to the Minister of Trade, which I am, when they were talking about imports and exports, I will have to state here that the exports from manufactured products in Barbados have risen to an all time high in this decade. From a low of \$253 000 in 1990 to a high of \$428 million in 1996. I think that this shows the success of the Ministry of Finance's policy when this Government came to office in removing the duties and taxes on the inputs and the raw materials for manufacturing processes. As much as people would like to say that was a 'nay nay' operation, I think that the proof of the pudding has been in the eating and I would not be surprised, Mr. President, if our exports this year will not exceed \$500 million.

Mr. President, I return to the Ministry of International Trade and Business and to outline some of the other activities of this Ministry in negotiating some international treaties through the bilateral investment treaties with other nations and double taxation treaties.

This is one of the main planks that our offshore financial services business is based on but it is also very important for Barbadian businesses who have courage, the drive and the foresight to go overseas and establish themselves as international companies. We are creating the framework for Barbadian entrepreneurs who are interested in business to go overseas and establish activities in the region and the wider arena of the Caribbean basin.

We are also deeply involved in the preparation of legislation regarding intellectual property which would strengthen our capacity to trade, not only in the terms of the tangible products that we are developing but also in the areas of intellectual products. Products such as software and the products produced by our artisans, our musicians and our artists who I might add, Mr. President, under this flourishing renaissance in Barbados, have achieved some remarkable international successes, with most recently a Barbadian team winning a gold medal in the Dominican Republic for the Caribbean area with painting. These are the sort of things that are going to be a major part of the economy of the future. These are the important areas of economic activity.

I note with great interest some new art galleries springing up around this country. I note that they are providing an operation which would enhance the sale and trade in art from Barbados and the region. This is going to be a major foreign exchange earner for Barbados in the future. You can also see how this is going to impact on bringing Barbados into the international arena.
6.05 p.m.

Everything that we sell overseas, every activity that touches on the international media, everything that we do heightens Barbados' main recognition in the international market and everything has a level of excellence, a measure of quality, a degree of being first class and world class.

It is not just our cricket that we can be proud of today, it is our economy, it is our products, it is the structure that we have, it is our country and that is what the Barbados Labour Party has brought to the Barbadian psyche in a very, very short 2½ years, Mr. President.

I think that these Estimates point the way to that development. I think that we are finding ourselves now in a position where someone says that we are in a position to take off. I say, Mr. President, we have taken off, we have put the nose up, we are going to go into aster burner and we are going to climb. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

SENATOR N. P. WELCH: I rise, Mr. President, to make my contribution to this Appropriation Bill 1997 against a background in which I want to reflect on what the Government of this day inherited in 1994 because I think that sets the tone for what I am going to say.

Sir, it is clear to everyone in here that when the Barbados Labour Party took the reins of Government in 1994 that the civil servants of this country had become so demoralised they had a problem with self-esteem but,

Sir, we know too well why this was. You cannot expect a man who had a cut in his salary at the same time that he had a reduction in the rate of severance and added to that he was asked to pay for his own severance against all ILO conventions.

I am setting the tone, Sir, for what I have to say. There was massive retrenchment and we had situations where within the civil service for a number of years people said it became a theatre. People were in a lot of acting positions and anyone would know what it is like when you are in an acting position you cannot be appointed to the position in which you are actually functioning for a number of years.

The problem goes further than that, Sir, it goes to the fact that this has implications for what you will take home as a pensioner when you reach retirement age. Sir, it was also against this background that we had our export earnings reaching \$253 million in 1990. But all credit to the present Minister of Industry, the Honourable Leader of the Senate, I am very happy that in 1996 the provisional figures show that we are up to the \$428 million mark.

Sir, I am extremely pleased too when I look at the performance in the Venezuelan market because I had an opportunity when I was employed at the Other Place to go to the BIDC office and do some research on the Venezuelan Free Trade Agreement with the Caribbean and how our company as a producer of flour could get into that market. It was a very virgin market at that time and would you believe that between 1990 when exports only totalled \$4 million that by 1996 this Honourable Member, with the sound Government policies was able to push exports to Venezuela to a record level of \$48 million. I think that is something worthy of commendation. A 685% increase in a market that is a very unfamiliar market for CARICOM countries because our main markets are within the OECS region, particularly St. Lucia.

Sir, we have a situation where our major foreign exchange earners in Tourism had the misfortune of having two Ministers of Tourism. There was confusion and you cannot have mass confusion in an area of earnings which in 1996 earned something like \$1.4 billion. Sir, this was a situation where devaluation was a constant threat to this country, our foreign reserves were low. Today they are in excess of \$600 million.

I do not know how many people remember but there was an economic concept called jobless growth which was taken by the Democratic Labour Party and they boasted about it. I can see the newspaper in front me now with people happy that they were able to achieve this concept of jobless growth. That saddened me.

I set this background, Sir, because we had a situation where a Prime Minister who cared about the country, who had the guts and who did not fear the future, believed that job creation was something that could be challenged head on and I am pleased today that after 27% unemployment in 1993 we are in a position now where we can boast of 14.5% unemployment. I say this because I am one from the Barbados Labour Party who is not ashamed of the talk about 30 000 jobs creation because if in 2½ years a Government could do so well to reduce unemployment the added implications of this is that the more people are working the more tax revenue they will get. We have seen the effect of this on the economy of Barbados already.

Sir, while all these things were happening we would have thought that the social sector at least would have been spared the same savagery that the entire economy was going under. Note, Sir, subventions to NGOs in the social sector like the home in Black Rock were cut dramatically. It was something like \$5 000 a year. I am pleased to say that the last 2 years the subventions have been up to \$10 000. I am happy too that this Government is committed to meeting the deficit that these organisations have at the end of the year because I believe that there must be a shift away from a situation where the Government is the provider of all the social services to a situation where the private sector play a greater role because I believe basically that they can do a better job of managing it. However, Sir, I must caution that there must be some monitoring organisation to ensure that standards of care and standards of diet are maintained and once that is done I am sure that is the direction in which we will go.

Sir, housing was another concern. I remember this morning reference being made to the fact that people had the uncertainty around them. Firstly interest rates and mortgage rates were extremely high and there was a lot of uncertainty as to whether they would be working tomorrow. So people were reluctant to invest in housing and at a time like this you would have expected that any caring Government would have built a couple of low income houses to take care of the needs of these people at least temporarily. Nothing so was done and something like \$20 million was wrapped up in a fund that was just there sitting that could have been put to good use for the housing needs of this country, to the extent that today, we have fallen right back in a backlog of housing for the people in this country. I am pleased today, Sir, that the Government has a pretty good record to report as it relates to the National Housing Corporation, a statutory corporation which gets a subsidy of \$1 million. It had a million dollars last year and a million dollars this year from central Government.

6.15 p.m.

I am pleased because, Sir, during 1996 to 1997 the National Housing Corporation, in what I consider being in a very sensible move where Barbadians are more

interested in owning their homes than acquiring resident units, have in my opinion, shifted a bit away from providing rental units to providing sites and services where people can draw on the help of their relatives and friends who are artisans and whoever else, to help them to own their own houses.

We have a situation where, only during the course of the last financial year, some 181 pieces of sites and services were provided by the National Housing Corporation. We had 40 in Husbands Heights, St. James, four in Pilgrim Road and generally scattered throughout St. James, St. Michael, Christ Church, etc.

I am also pleased to report, Sir, that in addition to those, that work was also being prepared to be executed in Phase 3A at Parish Land and a number of other areas. There were almost one thousand pieces of sites and services between 1996 and 1997 going right up to about 1998, proposed in different stages of execution which I think is a wonderful record of the National Housing Corporation.

We have heard expressed in this Honourable Senate on more than one occasion concerns about the asbestos on the roofs of Government houses throughout this country.

I also heard today, Sir, that it was said that a lot of what we see in here does not filter back to Ministers. I am pleased to report, Sir, that some 250 units had the asbestos roofs replaced last year. A very good record.

Sir, I suppose everyone in here already knows about the achievement in housing at Maynards. We have some 20 units down there which people have moved into now.

Pondside is on stream for development. I like the whole idea of Pondside, you have provisions for eight shops for bed-sitting units, for two bedrooms and three bedrooms units.

Sir, we had interestingly a situation where the private sector again, is having renewed interest in Housing Development. Particularly, because I believe the confidence has returned to the economy. At Bourne's Land in St. George, there is a situation where the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company in providing the finance in association and partnership with a private sector company has built a number of low income houses. I understand that this project will continue into St. Thomas at Shop Hill and Hopewell where low income houses costing about \$64,000, land and houses, would be made available to people who have been on the backlog for a number of years. I think also, that is a housing initiative that needs to be commended.

Sir, even within the National Housing Corporation, there is a General Workers Loans Regulations of 1980 which provided some \$20 000 in loans to individuals who work for \$510 or so a week, to be able to access funds for house building. This Government made a decision and have doubled actually the amount you can borrow through this facility for house building to \$40,000.

I am particularly pleased to report this to this Honourable Chamber because I have heard on more than one occasion a lot of talk about Government's non performance in housing. But people must recognise that the shift is toward sites and services and that Government is committed to continue to provide sites and services for a number of reasons.

There are some people who have been disadvantaged under the Tenantry Freehold Purchase (Amendment) Act. You have people who have been sited in the Belle and Groves area who have been resited to Codrington, and for these reasons the Government needs to continue to provide these services.

Sir, the Joint Venture Project at Cane Garden on which a number of houses were at a certain stage of completion, I am happy to report that some 50 of these structures have been completed, and that 47 new houses have been completed from the ground to completion. This is another of the initiatives which have lagged over a period of time because these houses were abandoned in 1991/1992 after the former administration obviously dropped out of the skies or ran out of steam or however you want to put it.

Sir, another issue I want to address in these Estimates is the fact that in two and one half years, this Government has strived very successfully, in my opinion and rightfully so, to bring back the public service to a position where they were prior to 1991.

I remember one of the first Acts of this Government was to adjust the duty structure on motor vehicles, because the Yen was high, and we were of the opinion that purchasing even the basic motor car was becoming a second mortgage for a number of people. A lot of people do not remember that, but I want to reiterate this, because I think that the Barbados Labour Party has a record that it can be proud of.

In addition to that, Sir, a number of people having had their salaries cut and having problems meeting mortgage commitments as a result of that, having their partners on retrenchment had serious problems getting cars and owning motor vehicles. This Government, in order to build back the morale of the civil service and to put

them in a sound financial position again, have carried up the amount of money that a civil servant can borrow to buy a motor car from \$20 000 to some \$35 000 for the first loan and from \$16 000 to the same \$35 000 for the second loan and from some \$3 000 for a motorcycle to some \$5 000 now.

For the first time in the history of this country the postal workers can now get their motor cycles duty free. I think this is part of the ongoing policy of empowerment and care for the people who have contributed to the obvious success that has brought this from 1994 when we were down in the dumps, when our credit rating was as bad as it was to a situation now where the Government can give back to these people who may be sacrificing something, because that is why I opened up by saying I must set the framework, because a lot of people believe and a lot of people feel that a Prime Minister of a country should have been bullied into a position of thoughtless job creation, crash programmes rather than using a methodology of consolidating the foreign exchange earnings, expanding economic activity and then the proceeds of that plan growth to use to alleviate things like poverty and to get back the civil servants morale high and get the country functioning again. I think that this was important.

Sir, in addition to this, some 23 new posts have been placed on the first schedule of the POLTA Regulations. I was told that POLTA Regulations is a public officer's loan for travel allowances, which means that there are a large number of people within the civil service that can benefit from these generous concessions that the Government has provided.

I am saying this because I want to make it clear that this Government has nothing to be ashamed of. It has performed well, but the public must be told, and my role is to tell the public and remind them of what has happened in the last two and one half years.

We come to the issue of pensions, Sir. The Sports Council and the National Assistance Board, under provisions of the Pensions Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1996 are two statutory corporations where casual labourers can now become eligible for enhanced retirement benefits. This is another important social action to help these people who have been disadvantaged over the years.

Previously, persons who had joined these corporations prior to 1975 were not eligible for pension and I think it is part of the empowering process that allows these people to get their pensions.
6.25 p.m.

It has implications also for transfers between the civil service and the statutory corporations, where a guy in the

civil service may have the skill where it is needed in a statutory corporation but, because of the pension arrangements was reluctant to go. And the country as a whole suffered because his services could not be provided there because he would lose his years and he would not have any pension advantage. I think that these anomalies needed to be corrected for the benefit of the country and for the benefit of the individuals too.

Sir, there was also the situation that I referred to earlier, acting appointments. You know that when you act in a position, even if the position is a higher position, your pension would be calculated on the lower post. I am pleased to report that this situation has changed and in the computation of retiring benefits the emoluments earned in temporary posts are a period of 36 months during the last 5 years of employment immediately prior to retirement, would be used as the basis for calculating the retirement benefit and I think that this is all again part of the empowering process and a process of rebuilding the self-esteem and morale within the civil service. I am pleased to be part of an administration that is happy to extend the benefits of economic growth to the public service in this sort of a way.

Things like washing allowances for policemen of all ranks has been increased for station officers from the fire department to the plain clothes custom officer, court clerks, marshals and detectives. Travel allowance has also been increased under this administration for these categories of workers. For those people who do not get travel allowance the rate at which travel is paid went from \$1.30 per kilometre up to 320 kilometres to an additional 52 cents for over the 320 kilometres. This is all part of the process of empowering and bringing back morale to the public service. I am particularly pleased with that.

Sir, I want to dwell a little bit on the Ministry of Public Works. I am very pleased to see that within the Estimates there is provision made again for construction and road improvements from Six Roads to Searles in Christ Church. I think that this is extremely important. I know that there were some technical problems, but that is one of the worst pieces of road existing between Christ Church and St. Philip at this time and it takes traffic off the ABC Highway around the Newton Junction right into the heart of St. Philip and I am extremely pleased that provision has been made in the Estimates for the improvement of this road because it has tremendous implications for filtering people out of the heart of St. Philip into the industrial estates at Newton and the other commercial activities in Oistins. I am happy that provision has been made for this also.

Sir, I also want to touch a little bit on the way how the Government has sensibly integrated a lot of the work that is going on in the South and the South Coast Sewerage Project. My understanding is that there are 8 technical

persons from Barbados Water Authority who have been working in close association with the sewerage project because when the project is completed these people are expected to take over and manage it.

While all of this is going on, the opportunity is going to be taken to meter some 40 000 residences in the area of the South Coast Sewerage Project because we must recognise that water is perhaps the most precious human resource. You can have all the gold in the world, you can have all of everything else and you do not have any water, you are nobody. As a matter of fact, one of the reasons for the occupation of the Golan Heights in the West Bank in 1967 where war was started was water rights. We only have a finite amount of underground water. We have had studies done on the run-off water in Barbados because we do not have any large bodies of surface water. We must look at alternatives like desalination which we have looked at but which is expensive and has implications for pollution in terms of how you get rid of the sludge which is of a very high sour content.

We must develop some form of crisis management and also look at the conservation methods like metering. I think it is an excellent idea to take this opportunity to meter some 40 000 houses and businesses in that area.

Sir, I do not know how many people are aware that parallel to the South Coast Sewerage Project provision is made for the resurfacing also of the roads and Highway 7 and all the roads as the project comes along. If you look at the Estimates, you will see an allocation for the South Coast Project but you must be cognisant of the fact that it is not just for building a sewerage treatment plant and for laying pipes but it is also to provide for the resurfacing of roads. Sometimes you have to look beyond the figures to see how the numbers affect the lives of people.

Sir, we must not lose sight of the fact that even if you had the most abundant supply of water and water was not a problem and you did not put in place methods of environmental management to ensure that your water supply is clean, potable and free from contaminants and pollutants you would be doing nothing. I am happy that provision has also been made within the Estimates within the Ministry of Agriculture for the testing of the pollutant content of the sea water because, obviously, Barbados is a fairly flat place and there is surface run-off. We know that we have a lot of agriculture and there are fertilisers and pesticides to worry about and also leakage from pit toilets that still exist. We must face reality. There are still some 24% of the households that use pit toilets and we must be very careful to ensure that we manage the environmental aspect of our water supply that we do not end up like a lot of places in Latin America, in Africa and perhaps India where water-borne diseases are a common occurrence.

This is even more important in Barbados because of the fact that we depend largely on tourism and nothing has to happen. You only get a person who do not like others to come here as somebody did a couple of months ago and said there was a rodent outbreak in Barbados and it has implications for you. You are much better off if you know you do not have a problem and you can defend that position through public relations.

It is these sorts of ideas and integration of government policy that has resulted in the upliftment of people, the improvement in the economy that leaves me without any doubt that I should commend these Estimates to this Honourable Chamber. Thank you.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: Mr. President, Sir, I rise to support the Resolution before us this evening. Sir, I am ashamed and I am going to get straight to the point to see the myopic view which both of the Opposition Senators hold of these Estimates. By extension, Sir, one would tend to have the same view of the underprivileged, the unfortunate, the challenged, the marginalised.

Why I say this, Sir, is that the comments which were attached to these Estimates yesterday evening implied that the only reason why this group of the proletariat is getting any sort of assistance or recognition is because elections are in the air.

6.35 p.m.

Two and a half years, Sir, into an administration elections to be held? But, Sir, this half and half approach, I call it the tobacco approach, which we have been regaled with by the Opposition Senators to this session of Parliament has to be addressed, Sir, particularly when we have members of the media and we must dispel any of those now.

Sir, when you are not hearing them say well, we agree philosophically with the VAT tax but we would have gone for a seven and half percent, we are philosophically not at variance with but we would have exempted or we would have zero-rated.

Sir I had a professor who said you are either pregnant or you are not pregnant. You are not half pregnant.

Aside.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: That statement could only come from an Opposition Senator when talking about VAT. Sir, at one time they are philosophically agreeing with targeting the marginalised and the poor. Another time they say target or do not target, speaking about VAT. We prefer the across-the board method rather than targeting. What do they want Sir? Do not bring this Chamber down to that level.

The \$10 million, Sir, which has been identified to be held in the Ministry of Finance, had you given it to the Welfare Department you would have heard that agency is not sharp enough to deal with it. Sir, when all is said and done all roads lead to the Ministry of Finance, whether you like it or not. They are not in favour of the national social study. We would not have gone that way. It is not effective. What is effective? Sir, the VAT impact study, they say they do not want that. It is not relevant. It is not well put together, but, Sir, lining it up I am going to state what I heard yesterday, now that he has come back into the Chamber, Sir, the Senator, Senator Boyce said yesterday. He did not use the word "groundsman" He used the word "curator".

Senator Boyce likened these Estimates, Sir, unto a cricket curator getting ready a pitch to bowl on or to bat on and, Sir, I am going to use that simile right through. I am not going to move away from it. Those were his words. What his colleague should have told him and sat him down, Sir, and gone through the 1995, 1996, 1997 Estimates, but I know why she did not do it, Sir. A little knowledge. She does not want to enlighten him too much, Sir. Year one I liken unto straight rolling the pitch, year two, cross rolling, year three spin roll around the crease. He used the simile so I am going to use the simile but years four and five which are to come, Sir, it is going to be stiff bowling down which we will call the corridor of uncertainty. It was the corridor of certainty for us and the corridor of uncertainty for them. I am using his simile, Sir, and then later in the evening – 2.15 to be exact, I turned to Senator Odle and I said "Jessica, it is only 2.15". The Senator could not talk because she does not have anything to speak about. She threw her arms up into the air as if she were appealing. Sir, she continued in her usual style to mandrasise a litany of woes which they themselves self-inflicted upon themselves, and as a result almost wiped out those who are at the brink, the ones who I call the most vulnerable.

What happened, Sir, is that in 1991 to 1994 this economy went into rewind and as a result what Senator Thompson is saying now is really and truly where we should have been two years ago through no fault of ours. The inertia which set in has kept back this country in certain areas notwithstanding the amount of jump-starting and the amount of injection and the amount of assistance rendered by Government.

To use her clinical term, Sir, it is partially in certain areas still in paralysis through no fault of ours. Mr. President, Sir, I do not speak for the Press. I speak to enlighten those who have been misled. These Estimates can be viewed as a trilogy, part one. It is a strong economy. The main trestle upon which it rests is one of a strong economy. It cannot be gainsaid that the economy of Barbados is now in a strong position.

Sir, the next thing it does is to speak to the social sector and the third thing which has been the nemesis of the Opposition Senators, is the helping to alleviate poverty. Nobody said eradicate – alleviate. Sir, the ugly spectre of devaluation no longer raises its head. We can say that and can say that without being ashamed, but with confidence. The reserves stand at \$600 million. The banking system – excess liquidity. These Estimates have been addressed without crowding out the private sector as was in the case in the early 90s. Sir, there are no signs that these Estimates would be inflationary or in any way cause an overheating of the economy.

Sir, inasmuch as they have gone back, I will have to go back. I have heard mention made, but I would not dwell on it. In the 90s, the cuts in 1994, which a colleague referred to as the holocaust cuts whether they call them layoffs, downsizing, retrenching, divesting, selling out, selling off, the Children's homes, NAB, you name it, Sir, but inasmuch as they talk, Sir, no matter how long you talk and you do not give a figure or a graph or a diagram it does not have the same meaning.

Welfare Department – grants to NGOs, 1990 – \$10,000, 1991 – \$10,000, 1992 – \$10,000, 1993 – \$10,000, 1994 – \$10,000. Come 1995-1996, new administration \$35,000. In other words, you almost quadrupled them giving them ten for each year that they had given ten. 1996-1997 you have gone up, Sir by another ten, \$45,000. So in real terms that is four times what it was in 1992. Sir, if that is what you call priming the pump for election, I will tell the Minister of Finance, prime up the pump, prime it up. Sir, they said in 1991 they were batting the economy.

It was batting like Sobers? Somehow they like to draw these cricketing similes. Getting back to what Senator Thompson said with respect to the hospital because I cannot allow that one to go unchallenged. In 1994 when the Barbados Labour Party took over the reins of government items such as panadol, to use the trade name, were not present in the QEH and the polyclinic pharmacies. Therefore they had to go out into the private sector. If you had met an accident, where you would need clotting factors etc., nothing so.

How is it that your basic stuff you are out of stock of and you are putting so much emphasis and this is what I think one of the Opposition Senators called fancy medicine. It is not fancy, it is just part of improvement but you forsook one and you looked after the other at the expense of home.

The Eye Clinic – I am not saying that you should not go that route, but do not lead us into false belief and at the same time \$30 million going to whom? St. Joseph Hospital. 6.45 p.m.

Sir, the Barbados Drug Service at that time was heavily indebted. I know it. The private sector said they were not honouring any purchase orders. They first had to settle their debts with them. They had the private pharmacies reeling. Talk what they would like, one of the first things the Minister of Health addressed was earlier and more prompt payments.

Sir, you know the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was set to be taken over by the Barbados Drug Service? I have great respect for the Drug Service but it is an entity...

Aside.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: Yes, it was set to be run by a tertiary institution. A teaching institution was to be managed by the Barbados Drug Service.

Aside.

SENATOR D. T. GILL: You hear what the nurse is saying? It cannot happen. All systems were ready for the hospital to have been taken over by the Barbados Drug Service, a service that is 95 per cent involved in primary health care. You go with a little tonsillitis, you get fixed up. Sir, when it comes to stabilising hypertension and diabetes and the same cardiac illnesses they have to be done in a tertiary institution.

Superimposed on that, Sir, is the fact that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is a teaching institution. Then we hear silly statements like they are on a surgical ward when there should have been on a medical ward. Sir, if you go to a hospital with a medical condition or for surgery and it is seen that you have an underlying medical condition where you have to stabilise the patient you have to go on the medical ward. If it so happens that one ward is over-populated when the other one is under-populated, there is no problem. It is the same hospital. As far as I know, Sir, and if I am wrong I am sure Senator Rickinson would not be slow to correct me, I do not know if we really have any exclusive surgical nursing staff or any exclusive medical nurses.

Sir, there is a fact we have to tackle. Senator Odle dwelled on it for quite some time and that is the fact of aging. I am sorry the underwriter is not in her place. It is a real fact. The actuaries are over-occupied with the fact that aging is one of those problems we have to tackle head on. What I can tell them is that this administration has carried out a study on aging and how best to deal with the aged. It is not a matter of just dropping them off here or dropping them off there. It is a total problem. It is an entire package. That has put a lot of pressure on our main institution, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and it is a penalty

we have to pay. I am sure some of us in here still have, maybe one at the most, of our parents still alive who are well into their 80s. So what are you going to do? Tell them lie down and die? No way.

Sir, these Estimates can be best described as systematic, focussed, progressive and sequenced. I am asking the Opposition Senator who is in his place to arm himself before he leaves. Ask the Clerk of Parliament or someone to furnish him with the 1995/96 and 1996/97 Estimates and read them. Read, mark, learn and inwardly digest.

Sir, if you would go back to year one of this administration, \$80 million prepayment of overseas debt inherited by Government but it had to be done because the Minister of Finance knew then, as well as he does now, where he was going, compass and chart, well set. Marketing consultants overseas who were not paid to promote Barbados their bills were settled and people were saying: "But are we taking the right course?" The Minister of Finance made sure that Barbados regained the respectability which it had in the late 1970s and the early 80s where we were quoted in the *Miami Herald*, the *Times*, London, and brought us back. First of all he knew what he was doing. He was starting on the outside and coming in, an impressive Barbados. He wanted to rebuild that image externally.

Then he came a little closer home and settled the debts with the UWI. Lots of the other islands failed to settle their debts with the UWI and people were asking if that was the right way. They thought he would have implemented the plan where university students would have had to pay for their education at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic. He said: "None of that. No way."

Attention would be seen to be given in these Estimates earlier to those planters who had experienced drought. It was a relief to the farmers, the cane replanting, so that now we can speak of reaping in excess of 65 000 tonnes of sugar. When the other party demitted power they were at a paltry 36 000 tonnes. There was the productivity bonus, \$360 000 paid out. I am showing you it forms part of a continuum so if you just come in and you are shocked by the figures it does not mean that an election is going to be called this year or next year. It seems unreal.

Sir, there is the redevelopment of markets and fishing bays. You can check those Estimates, last year's as well as these and you will see the provision for markets.

Rural and urban development – again they were looked after then and they are still being looked after. It is not that you drop one at the expense of the other.

The manufacturers got their piece. The agriculturists got their piece and they are still being addressed. As I said earlier on, seeing is believing. You are either going to get a graph or something pictorial. You are going to get figures and I am not going to hesitate to bring these figures before this Chamber.

A comparative analysis, Sir, would illustrate to us, and this is grants to public institutions. This is not anything that started this year. In 1994/95, not/or; it was \$169 million. Obviously the new Government 1995/96 could not address everything and they dipped by \$30 million in 1995/96. I would never sweep those figures under the carpet. Come 1996/97 they doubled them, in other words, to make up for the loss in 1995/96, so they gave a double dose in 1996/97 of \$181 811 000. Now come 1997/98 they have gone up by another \$10 million to \$191 582 276. Sir, you cannot say the intention of the administration is purely one of regaining power when next elections are called.

Sir, if that is not enough, take capital expenditure. In 1994/95 the words "capital expenditure" really did not really mean anything then. Far from that, there were selling off the family silver including Heywoods for \$115 million. 6.55 p.m.

In 1995/96, Sir, capital expenditure had a shock in the arm by \$50 million. In 1996/97 it went up by another \$22 million and now in 1997/98 it is more than double what it was left at in 1994/95. It was \$263 415 509. Sir, if this is priming up the pump, then prime it up!

Sir, stop lights and drainage. I have to make mention of this fact. I am heartened to see that provision is being made for the erection of traffic lights at Pine East West junction. I know of those plans. I know that people of the Pine Garden area were very concerned about this junction. It is a very dangerous area when you leave the M.T.W. and you come to the intersection.

Last year most of what I said was centered around the environment and I remember making a plea for public building and making them healthy buildings, if you are speaking in terms of public sector reform. All the talk about "sick building syndrome" etc. would be alleviated.

I am glad to read here under the electrical engineering department plans for this year, it says that the department will be involved also in the following three major projects. The one that is of particular interest is "refurbishment of the air-conditioning plant at the National Insurance building". For so long we have heard those poor people crying out. That is not all, Sir, the drainage unit is unheard of, prior to this new administration. I am glad to report of

the advances made of the drainage at Halls Road, which is still fairly flood prone but those of us on this side know the amount of work and the amount of money catered for the drainage unit and the improvement that we have seen in terms of the flooding over the past year.

In terms of agriculture, we see almost an increase of \$3 million in structures for the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; \$3 million over and above what it was last year, whether it is strictly rural or strictly agricultural, it is for a specific service. This is what it says – it provides for renovation of Cheapside market and construction of fishing facilities at Consett Bay, Skeetes Bay, Paynes Bay, Tent Bay and Weston Project.

Again under Head 25 an increase of almost \$1 million is going to structures. What does this do? It includes provision for subsurface drainage, the protection and strengthening of water courses, land stabilisation, the construction of irrigation development, refurbishment of buildings and a new block. Mr. President, I would hope that this sort of back of the arm tactics where they know full well that these Estimates were well conceived, well targeted and will bear fruit in due season just as how they have borne in year 1 and year 2.

Sir, it gives me great confidence, and I am indebted and pleased to the success that has taken place so far and what we hope to see in the future. Mr. President, I know it is late in the evening and I could go on to say more but what I say would have been said already.

Therefore, Sir, it gives me great pleasure to be associated with this resolution, the Estimates which will lead this country forward in 1998.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise somewhat reluctantly at the conclusion of this debate on the Appropriation Bill 1997. To use the critical analogy of the last speaker, Senator Gill, I am coming out seeking to bat my hand after an excellent batting display and the fact that Senator Gill came low down in the order, only goes to show the depth of the batting on this side. There are definitely no rabbits with the bat on this side of the table, Mr. President.

I want to thank all the Honourable Senators for their very full contribution to this debate, Sir.

SENATOR J. D. E. BOYCE: On a point of order, Mr. President. The Honourable Senator is misleading the Chamber. Indeed, I do not know if he is not bringing the Chamber into some kind of disrepute by referring to some Members, not on that side, as "rabbits". I beg that those words be struck from the records, Sir.

Mr. PRESIDENT: A rabbit is generally a fairly inoffensive creature. I think the Honourable Senator was merely using a cricketing analogy. I do not think it was offensive or unparliamentary.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Thank you Mr. President.

In leading off the debate in this year's Appropriation Bill, Mr. President, I outlined the basic facts which surround these Estimates. I indicated that these Estimates were set against the background of a robust performance by the Barbados economy during 1996 and projections for continued growth during 1997.

I also indicated that these Estimates were part of the Government's plan to build on the solid foundation which was born out of the careful management of the economy and we are now at the stage where we will be seeking to transform economic consolidation, through to its natural extension, that of economic distribution.

I noted at that time, Sir, that the total expenditure as planned for these Estimates were in the region of some \$1.6 billion of which \$1.37 billion approximately was current expenditure and some \$263 million were capital expenditure.
7.05 p.m.

An examination of the Estimates that we are proposing this year, Sir, over the revised figures for the current financial year ending over the weekend, Sir, would indicate that there have been significant increases in the areas of current transfers particularly in the areas of grants to individuals, subsidies and grants to non profit agencies. That, Sir, is also complemented by increases in the area of capital formation particularly in terms of capital works projects in the public works area, in education and in health. That, Sir, is offset by significant reduction in our external debt service requirements, domestic financing requirements and so on.

Sir, these Estimates will be able to put more money towards the Government's efforts, towards poverty alleviation and generally improving the conditions of the average Barbadian.

Also, Sir, if you were to look at the Government's efforts in raising the quality of life for all people in Barbados we could look, Sir, at these Estimates in two very broad categories. We could look, Sir, at the Government's responsibility for economic development and these Estimates would speak, Sir, to sums which are allocated for programmes in industrial development, in tourism marketing and promotion, Sir, in the development of

international business, the development of small business, in agriculture, manufacturing, cooperatives and we could go on and on, Sir.

Under the caption of the social development section of the Government's responsibility and as embodied in the funds provided in these Estimates, Sir, we have the provision of health facilities to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, polyclinics, geriatric facilities and the like. There is education and training, Sir, as well as the provision of direct social services in terms of welfare, community development, youth development and we could go on, Sir.

It is important to note, Sir, that these Estimates have struck a proper balance between the need to continue our prudent management of the economy, Sir, and to ensure that the gains that we have made in our effort to rebuild this economy and to return it to a sustainable growth will not be eroded whilst at the same time, Sir, satisfying our imperative for the development in a holistic manner of all of our people.

In closing this debate, Sir, I would just want to quickly focus on a few areas where that social imperative moves quite nicely with the economic imperative especially as they relate, Sir, to the smaller members of our community, the working class.

In these Estimates, for example, Sir, funds would be included under economic development activities for activities like development of cooperatives. The cooperative sector in Barbados has been working along steadily with the guidance and assistance of the Government and indeed, Sir, I am pleased to indicate that the responsibility for our cooperative development falls within the Ministry which I have the honour at this time to lead, Sir, the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Business Development. I want, Sir, to just quickly use an example to show how an economic development area, Sir, also has very wide social implications of which we are very much aware and which we propose to utilise.

The cooperative movement, Sir, in this year 1997 which has been designated by the international cooperative body as the year of the cooperative and again I have had the honour of launching both the Caribbean celebrations and the local celebrations.

This year, Sir, my Ministry proposes to work closely with the cooperatives in Barbados, particularly in the credit unions, to ensure that we will be able to capitalise on the substantial growth that we have made. In fact, Sir, if we look at the modern history of Barbados and we look at the period after the 1930s you will note that most of our modern institutions which we take for granted today, were born out of the struggles of the post-1930 period.

Political parties as we know them, and I have the honour and pleasure to be a member of the oldest political party in the Caribbean, Sir, and nobody knows more about those struggles than this great party. This party, Sir, was also responsible for laying the foundation in Barbados in the 1950s of much of the modern structures including this cooperative movement.

Sir, this movement represents one of the few areas in which the smaller members of the community are able to pool their limited resources in such a manner as to be able to achieve substantial wealth. For example, Sir, just to take another sector, no amount of insurance would be able to provide the same level of involvement of the small man as the cooperative can, Sir. I am not knocking insurance, Sir, but I am just drawing a basic analogy to the difference between the cooperative movement and other components of the financial sector all of which are important. But the key thing about the cooperative is that it provides an opportunity for persons not only to be able to gain wealth but to be able to learn how to manage it.

If you functioned within the context of banks and other financial institutions as a mere customer and you are not involved in the management, even though your funds are secure, even though you have gained some interest and so on on your funds you never ever quite learn how to manage those funds. You never learn anything about what happens inside. The cooperative movement, being a movement which is run by the members for the benefit of the members and so on provides opportunities for those persons who are so inclined to themselves to develop proficiency in the management of these financial institutions and we are pleased, Sir, to note the growth of the movement.

The two concerns that I have, Sir, and which I will be working on addressing during the course of this year is the fact that at present there is a split at the secondary level of the credit union movement, Sir, where a few of the larger credit unions have broken away from the Barbados Cooperative Credit Union League to form another association, the National Association of Credit Unions. I think all sides at this point recognise that having a split at that level will not work in the interest, either of the institutions or of the working class people that these institutions have been established to serve. We therefore in the Ministry will continue our efforts with the parties to bring an end to that split.

The other point, Sir, which we would be concentrating on, Sir, is that we would want as part of our business development strategy to encourage the growth and development of the cooperative model as a means of business organisation amongst working class persons. Spectacular success which has been experienced in the

credit union movement has not been mirrored in the non-credit union cooperatives. There are a number of farming cooperatives, there are a few transport cooperatives and so on but the success has not been there. This is unfortunate because in other parts of the world that level of success has been achieved and certainly as part of both the economic development strategy as well as social development we in the Ministry and in the Government will continue to work on making improvements there. And this, Sir, is one of the tangible ways in which this Government does not spill out all the rhetoric about the small man and leave it at that. We work there, we are down in the trenches working day in and day out seeking to not only provide food for him for a day, because he would eat that and then what? But we teach him how to fish, how to farm, how to cook, how to bake, so that he is fed for life, Sir. Through movements like the cooperative movement, we are able to help small people in this country to so equip themselves with necessary skills and management of their resources, Sir, that not only will they build wealth, but will be able to retain it, by being able to manage it, Sir.

7.15 p.m.

Now, Sir, also touching on some areas in the Ministry which will impact on both the social development and economic development of our people, there is tremendous assistance that is provided to both the local manufacturing sectors as well as the small business sector, Sir, because again, setting the fiscal framework and so on, while that is important it is not the only thing that has to be done.

Senator Boyce made mention of the need for various types of affirmative action programmes which are required, and that recognises the fact that business is not necessarily first nature to the average Barbadian. It is not part of the culture of the average household and we are setting about to change that, Sir.

For example, we are providing various forms of assistance which I will quickly give an illustration of, Sir, just to indicate that this Government is not just about rhetoric, Sir. Speaking about poverty alleviation and helping the small man are not buzz words that we throw around, Sir. It is not about simply throwing money into institutions, but I am giving examples of the programmes, Sir, which are ongoing and which impact, Sir, on the livelihood of small people day in and day out, and what we are doing in terms of our poverty alleviation programme is adding to this base which we already have, to accelerate the pace, Sir.

Local industry, for example, Sir, in 1996, 65 small local manufacturers were given assistance under the Export Grant Incentive Scheme where firms had some potential, but were not financially strong enough to be able to afford marketing efforts in the United States, Canada,

CARICOM and Europe and 65 of those companies were provided with assistance, the bulk of them, in food manufacturing, Sir, but also in garments, in printing, in the solar water heating, industry and handicraft and so on.

In addition, Sir, Canada, where we have identified a number of opportunities, there is a special programme going for food manufacturers and some 15 new small firms have been able to consolidate some of their shipments and begin exporting to Canada.

We have been able, Sir, to organise three trade shows in CARICOM during 1996 in which 32 firms participated and were able to gain an addition one million in new orders.

We have been able to provide training grant support, Sir, for new local companies where on the start up, they are able to obtain some financial assistance with the training of workers.

Sir, the area of product and package design is very critical, in developing the indigenous manufacturing sector. But again, companies lack either the sophistication or the financial means to be able to do that, Sir. I am pleased to report that through the IDC's Design Centre we have been able to do a number of things, Sir.

We have been able through a project with the European Union to train some nine Designers over a period of time. Those Designers, not all of whom are with the IDC, they are diffused throughout the private sector, but they have been able to raise the standards of product and package designs with everything from furniture, guava cheeses, tamarind balls, fruit juices and packaging generally as well as enhancement of products.

Sir, on an annual basis, we take at least ten firms. In 1996 we selected 12 firms, whose products we believe have the potential with further development to hit the export markets. Out of last year's 12 projects, Sir, six of those firms are already exporting. The package of assistance which was given, to those firms were the preparation of new business plans and budgets, assistance with product and package design, and assistance with a new corporate identity packet. We redesigned their letterheads, calling cards and other forms of corporate identity, so that it has the appropriate impact, Sir. We also provide them with promotional material and colour brochures for their literature.

I was pleased, Sir, to be at a meeting about two weeks ago, with a buyer from a United States chain of restaurants who was looking to see what products could be sourced from Barbados. One of the small indigenous pottery operations, Sir, a young chap who is into pottery,

he was telling her about the name of his company and what he was doing. He says that he makes lamp shades, jars and monkeys and she looked kind of puzzled. Monkeys, what's that? He was trying to explain to her that it is a cooling jar for holding water, but he was able to back up his words with a colour brochure that he pulled out which contained information on the company, and photographs of the main product lines that he offers which was part of what was done through this project through the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation, which happens to fall under my Ministry.

I am just making the point, Sir, that all of what we are saying here in these Estimates, about poverty alleviation, about lifting the small man, about helping the working class to become the new business class, about promoting entrepreneur development is not just hairy-fairy macro level stuff, Sir. This is hitting at the livelihood of individuals, Sir. So that most Honourable Members sometimes to support a point, can indicate that they have talked to two farmers, to illustrate the extent of their consultation, Sir, on matters.

I am just, Sir, identifying that I can also identify, and being modest I have identified one potter. The point is that these are real people who are being touched in real ways, Sir, where it hits and impacts the most, in the pocket book, by being given assistance with the improvement in how they earn their money, Sir. So no cash grant would have survived, Sir. By having the tools of the trade, Sir, the business plans, the improved product and package design, the brochures, he is now able to hit the road himself and promote his business, Sir. That is better than assistance, Sir, that is helping the working class.

Sir, in terms of a number of sectoral things, for example, Sir, again we focussed on trying to work with the indigenous manufacturing sector to help them move with the changing times and so on. So we did a special project with the furniture industry, where the timber drying kiln that had been idle for many, many years was rehabilitated, Sir. In fact, we used solar drying technology, Sir, developed by a local consultant here and that wood drying kiln is now in operation.

7.25 p.m.

We also have been able to identify seven furniture firms for a special furniture project where again we get into product and package design streamlining production facilities. Rather than simply throwing up our hands at the competition from places like Trinidad we recognise that we have more skills in actually making furniture than they do. What they have is that they have a wide availability of timber. All kinds of interesting wood is available in Trinidad. Trinidad does not know how to use it.

What we have done is that we recognise that we have to use appropriate business strategies and we are looking at more joint venture arrangements whether they be in the form of sourcing our timber, sourcing cheaper components for assembly here in Barbados or buying into operations there.

Beer is not the only product in which appropriate strategic alliances can be made across the Caribbean to overcome a particular business difficulty and I would want to salute local manufacturers whether of beer or furniture or other products who are able to recognise that one can use appropriate business strategy to overcome what was seen to be obstacles and where one person would throw his hands up other persons are able to work around. One way of avoiding fighting with a man is to bring him into your camp.

Sir, we have been working with the local furniture industry on ways in which they could enhance their competitive edge through strategic alliances within the Caribbean region.

Similarly, Sir, in the garment industry we have been working with that sector recognising the tremendous pressure that the cut and stitch assembly type operation are under from low cost destinations like Haiti and the Dominican Republic but recognising that because of the wealth of talents, particularly the design and the high quality manufacturing that there is a need to be satisfied and could be exploited in terms of the lower volume, higher quality garment.

We have been working with the local garment community in assisting with training. Some of the 9 designers I mentioned would have been fashion designers. In addition, last year we organised a training workshop on apparel manufacturing management which was conducted by a professor from the Fashion Institute of Technology out of New York. That was attended by over 40 persons out of the garment industry.

We also have organised with local resource personnel such as Maxine Mclean from the University of the West Indies to do export marketing management to train the folks in the industry. Again, examples of how these Estimates and the funds provided from the public purse are able to be used to help real people do real things. We are not just throwing money at them and saying take this and prop your business up but by enhancing their skills we are able to develop that entrepreneurial class which is so vital.

Sir, in the area of small business other than manufacturing whether they be barbers or persons who are selling stuff we have been able within the broad framework of the Small Enterprise Development Initiative which as

you know, Sir, is a multi-faceted approach to small business development in Barbados which aims at having an enhanced and fiscal framework for small business. It aims to have improved education and networking, to increase the availability of capital for fledgling and aspiring entrepreneurs in this country and also aims to provide easy access to business and technology information. It is enabled through the IDC Small Business Centre to provide assistance to 46 new small business start-ups in 1996 and that does not take into account some of the small business that would have been started in the informal sector. So these are the folks who are coming for assistance of one sort or another.

We have been able to provide over 350 consultations to small businesses, over 100 of those being in the preparation of business plans and financial proposals for the submission to commercial banks and other financial institutions as well as advice on marketing and so on.

Over a thousand cases of assistance in providing photocopying, fax services or use of meeting room facilities as well as almost 400 cases of limited secretarial assistance. When people are starting up they very often do not have their own secretaries, their own meeting rooms. Again, real assistance to real small people.

Aside.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Big companies do not need this. These are for small people who previously did not have these opportunities.

We also maintain an extensive library and resource facility which is used by these folks. In addition, as part of that ongoing development where we recognise that not only do we want to get you started but we want to give you opportunities to succeed.

At BIMEX 1996, for example, the BIDC paid for an entire pavilion within BIMEX, probably the size of these Senate Chambers into which we placed our small manufacturers and other producers so that in that pavilion you were able to explore the possibility of sourcing everything from gentlemen's ties to ladies' lingerie, from jams to pepper sauce, from toys to whatever. There is a lot of innovation out there, Sir.

Also, Sir, we have been working on a number of strategies to enhance some of the services that we do not ourselves provide. For example, we have worked with the Central Bank of Barbados in getting the small business loan guarantee scheme restructured in such a way that it is now more easily accessible, more attractive to the commercial banks and therefore it will be used a bit more often and also that the ceiling has been lifted.

In essence, what that programme will do is to allow the small business person to go through these banks where he is known already once he has a viable project. Obviously people do not lend money for projects that are not viable. Of course, BDC would have assisted him in identifying the viability of the project by the preparation of the business plan. Then if the only hindrance is the lack of collateral that small business loan guarantee scheme provides that collateral cover.

What it does as well by virtue of going through an institution of the borrower's choice is that it allows him to build a relationship with that institution in a way that when he himself is able to muster sufficient funds that he is already known.

Part of the difficulty that small business persons have faced in some countries is that where there are only special institutions that deal with that when you graduate from there and you attempt to move over nobody knows you and you get into the issue of whether people can trust your credit and so on.

In addition, Sir, mention has already been made of the funds which have been earmarked for venture capital activity. When I talk about small business financing I believe I have to say two quick words on BDB. As you know, the BDB has by the time of its closure in 1995 become insolvent. The BDB had \$70 million in loan assets and \$76 million in liabilities. It was not in a position to source any additional funds from anywhere or from anybody and basically had to be wound up. It was broke to use the colloquial expression.

What we have done, Sir, is that we have divided the bank's portfolio into 3 separate companies. The \$30.8 million which was the performing component of that BDB asset base is being managed and continues to make a profit and will probably earn about \$1 million in this year.

7.35 p.m.

Also, Sir, there was a \$35.6 million component of bad debts, unsalvageable loans, Sir. That has been transferred to a recoveries company for working out, Sir. Then there is the South Coast Hotels Loans, Sir, some \$13.6 million which has been worked into the GEMS of Barbados Project to provide for not only salvaging the hotel operations but also for recovering those outstanding sums through the availability of finance, Sir.

Of course I mentioned earlier, Sir, in terms of the assistance that we provide to real small working-class people in this country, Sir, to help them build wealth and to participate as full members of the society, in terms of the business of the society. I have already mentioned in my presentation our plans for Pelican Village in terms of its redevelopment. Our plans for Oistins and for Fairchild

Street and Palmetto and so on, Sir, and Cheapside. So that is tangible Sir, real works, Sir. This is not the area of theory or the macro. Sir, just to ensure, that no one leaves this presentation tonight in terms of my conclusion of the debate, Sir, with the thinking that because the last thing that I mentioned was economic and we have abandoned the social sector, even though we spoke about it previously.

Sir, I would just want to remind the Honourable Members, of the work which is being done in the social services, of the current study which is being done on the rationalisation of the social services sector because it is not enough to simply provide services but you want to get a value for money. You want to ensure that the money you are spending actually ends up where it is supposed to go and that the services that you are providing are not only efficient, but effective because to use a simple analogy, Sir. If I am able, Sir, to put money into social services, do our audits and the Auditor General reports that the money has been probably accounted for and so on but it is not going in the direction targeted, we are wasting time. If ten men are to dig a trench going down Broad Street, Sir, for \$1 000 but instead they save money that would only cost you \$900 by going up towards the Cathedral, Sir, have you achieved anything? What this study will do, Sir, is to look at the services of the Welfare Department, National Assistance Board, Child Care Board, Community Development and those institutions, to make sure that the institutional structures, that the programmes and the methodology, Sir, are consonant with our objectives, and that there is efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public funds, Sir.

Sir, there is a Health Rationalisation Study which is going on, to look at how our institutions are positioned to tackle the new health issues. Aging for example, Sir, the need for chronic care facilities, as well as the need for a primary care facility. Sir, the matter of prevention, versus cure. The matter of the integration of public sector facilities and private sector facilities, Sir, and that work will inform decisions in terms of what we do with the institutional structure, polyclinics, QEH, geriatric care and so on.

On education, Sir, lots of work is happening there. Sir, recognising that human resource development is a pillar in the development of a future Barbados, we need to ensure, Sir, that the curriculum, for example, which we pursue within the education system speaks not to yesterday's convenience, Sir, in terms of the areas in which teachers happen to be already trained. But rather, that they speak to the moral imperatives that they identify, Sir, the type of citizen which we want to have in this country, as well as the type of skills which will be required for effective participation in tomorrow's economy so that economic re-development will not only draw on the norms, values and cultures which have made Barbados what it is, but it will also draw, on a knowledge from the private

sector, from the international communities, from Barbadians that are throughout the diaspora, Sir and who are in key positions to know where the world is moving in the future to let them provide some guidance as to what our curriculum should look like.

To draw another simple example, Sir, if we have automotive students or students in an automotive mechanics class at the Polytechnic, and for their practical work we use a Morris Minor 1300 engine, Sir, which is I believe from the 1970s, when they leave they will not be able to fix Senator Bernstein's car, Sir, a flashy Mercedes E or whatever it is, because the modern vehicle, is basically driven by computers and you know, the systems are different, front-wheel drive as opposed to back-wheel drive. They are just different principles.

We need therefore, to ensure that if Barbados is going to be competitive, if our people are going to be a resource rather than a constraint, Sir, that we take steps to reform our education curriculum. That we provide opportunities for not only education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels but recognising, Sir, that the reality is that in the future one will not be trained for one's job at age 18 or any other year but rather that one has to be prepared to be retrained for a number of professions throughout a lifetime. That facilities will have to be made available for what I have dubbed "just in time" training where you have a rapid response where you are able to put the training in place which is required.

I would applaud projects such as the Hospitality Institute, Sir, which puts you in a position to train your hospitality industry workers on whatever may be the current techniques in that area, and the list goes on, Sir.

The focus on children at risk, the Children at Risk Programme, Sir, which has been outlined, again also recognises that not all students, will participate effectively, in the school programme and therefore an alternative programme has to be developed. Sir, I can go on and on but I will not.

I just thought, that it was important for me to draw a few examples from both the economic development aspects of the Government's operations, Sir, as well as the social

development area to indicate, that there are many areas on the front line where social development and economic development go hand in hand, and that the programmes that we have enunciated and which are captured by the Government expenditure in these Estimates are no dreams in the sky, Sir.

These, Sir, are real activities, some of which have already taken place, others that we are seeking to introduce now to build on the solid base, and that the actions of this Government, are designed to touch the small black man in this society, on an individual basis, to help to raise him up. So Sir, I am pleased to commend these Estimates. I beg to move that the Appropriation Bill, 1997 be read a second time.

The question was put to the Senate and agreed to.

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr President, I beg to move that this Bill be read a third time and I certify that this is a money Bill.

On the motion of SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY, the Bill was passed and cited as the Appropriation Act, 1997.

ADJOURNMENT

SENATOR THE HON. R. R. FARLEY: Mr. President, I rise to move the adjournment but I would just want to take the opportunity to remind Senators that their vigorous participation in this debate has been rewarded by dinner and drinks downstairs. I would urge the fullest participation of members, in that, after a long hard day we should give thanks by imbibing at the Shrine of Bacchus and other appropriate heavenly names.

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

The question that the Senate do now adjourn sine die was put to the Senate and agreed to and Mr. PRESIDENT adjourned the Senate accordingly.
7.45 p.m.

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