

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

HANSARD

OF MEETING

HELD ON 6 MARCH 1975
VOL. I

No. L 9/5(2)

5 March 1976

The Clerk
House of Assembly
Gibraltar

Sir

MEETING OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY COMMENCING ON THE 6 MARCH 1975

I have the following amendments to note to the transcript.

Page 60: line 8:

Delete "which is considered" and substitute "and it is considered".

Line 19:

Delete "could" and substitute "would".

Page 61: line 3:

Delete "before" and substitute "more of interest to".

Line 9:

Delete "tentative or the intestate" and substitute "testator or the intestate".

Page 61: third para: line 10:

Delete "the Probate" and substitute "probate".

Line 14:

Delete "measures granted" and substitute "grants of probate".

Line 17:

Delete "in the procedure" and substitute "to bring the procedure".

Line 69: penultimate para:

Delete "honour to move" and substitute "honour to report".

Page 236: penultimate para:

Delete "legal aid" and substitute "legal assistance".

Page 239: second para:

Delete "legal aid" and substitute "legal assistance".

2.

Page 693: first para: line 4:

Delete "humorous exchanges" and substitute "numerous occasions".

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. K. Havers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end.

J K Havers
Attorney-General

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, possibly reading "Done" or "Dane". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, circular initial and a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end.

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

The Seventeenth Meeting of the First Session of the Second House of Assembly held at the Assembly Chamber on Thursday the 6th March 1975, at the hour of 10.30 o'clock in the forenoon.

PRESENT:

Mr Speaker (In the chair)
(The Honourable A J Vasquez CBE MA)

GOVERNMENT:

The Hon Sir Joshua Hassan, CBE MVO QC JP Chief Minister..

The Hon A W Serfaty OBE JP, Minister for Tourism, Trade and Economic Development.

The Hon M K Featherstone, Minister for Education.

The Hon A J Canepa, Minister for Labour and Social Security.

The Hon I Abecasis, Minister for Housing.

The Hon Lt Col J L Hoare, Minister for Public Works and Municipal Services.

The Hon H J Zammitt, Minister for Information and Sport.

The Hon J K Havers, OBE QC, Attorney General.

The Hon A Mackay, CMG, Financial and Development Secretary.

OPPOSITION:

The Hon M Xiberras, Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon P J Isola OBE

The Hon W M Isola..

The Hon J Bossano.

The Hon J Caruana.

The Hon L Devincenzi.

ABSENT:

The Hon A P Montegriffo, Minister for Medical and Health Services (Indisposed)

The Hon Major R J Peliza, Opposition Member (Away from Gibraltar)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr J L Ballantine, Clerk to the House of Assembly (Ag)

PRAYER.

Mr Speaker recited the prayer.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES.

The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 21st January 1975, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR.

MR SPEAKER:

I think I would like to take this opportunity to remind Members and I think to call their attention to the fact that at long last we have been able to make up the backlog of hansards and that for the first time for many months you are sitting today having in your possession all copies of hansards of all meetings including the last meeting of the House. I think this is no mean task considering the work involved and I would like to express my appreciation to the Clerk of the House and all the staff for the excellent work they have done to achieve this because Members will agree that it is essential that they should have the hansards of meetings to enable them to carry their work out specifically and properly. I am sure the House will join me in thanking the Clerk for an excellent job.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I would like to do so quite expressly since this side of the House raised the matter some time ago at the budget session. We wish to congratulate everybody concerned in the production of the hansard and look forward to the day when the printed version will be available also.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, I would like to say that I am going into the question of the printed version. We are going into costings and since we have all the details in our possession we will certainly look into the matter.

DOCUMENTS LAID.

The Honourable the Chief Minister laid on the table the following document:

The Charities Ordinance - Report for 1974.

Ordered to lie.

The Honourable the Minister for Education laid on the table the following document:

The School Fire Regulations 1975.

Ordered to lie.

The Honourable the Minister for Labour and Social Security laid on the table the following documents:

- (1) The Conditions of Employment (Retail Distributive Trade) (Amendment) Order 1975.
- (2) The Employment Injuries Insurance (Determination of Claims and Questions) (Amendment) Regulations 1975.

Ordered to lie.

The Honourable the Financial and Development Secretary laid on the table the following documents:

- (1) The Pool Betting Duty Regulations 1975.
- (2) The General Betting Duty Regulations 1975.
- (3) The Bingo Card (Form and Stamp) Regulations 1975.
- (4) Supplementary Estimates No.4 of 1974/75.
- (5) Supplementary Estimates No.5 of 1974/75.
- (6) Supplementary Estimates Improvement and Development Fund No.4 of 1974/75.
- (7) Statement of Virements approved by the Financial and Development Secretary.

Ordered to lie.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I have the honour to move the suspension of Standing Order No.43 (5) in order to lay on the table stencilled Draft Estimates of Revenue

and Expenditure for 1975/76. Mr Speaker, Sir, this is the third year now that I have submitted and I hope the House will accept, the Draft Estimates in stencilled form. This saves a significant sum of money but more particularly allows more time and allows the figures to be brought more up to date considering the length of time that a substantial printing job takes in present circumstances.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, we have no objection to the estimates appearing at this stage in stencilled form, but we do hope that the stencilled version has in it all the various appendices including that on Housing - I think it was Appendix I - which was omitted last year. There is, obviously, no objection on our part so long as the estimates are complete.

Mr Speaker then put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and Standing Order No.43(5) was suspended.

The Honourable the Financial and Development Secretary laid on the table the stencilled Draft Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for 1975/76.

Ordered to lie.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

STATEMENT MADE BY THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

SCHOLARSHIP ALLOWANCES

Sir, although I have been reasonably satisfied with the general operation of the Educational Award Regulations which were applied for the first time to students entering universities in October last year, I have been concerned that the sharp rise in the cost of living in the United Kingdom since the Regulations were drafted should not place both these students, and those who started their university studies before that date, in financial difficulties.

Many students made representations to me during the Christmas vacation that they were indeed finding it very difficult to live on their maintenance grants and I investigated the differences between our awards and those made to Commonwealth students under the British

Technical Assistance Programme when I visited the UK in late January. Subsequently, I have sought and obtained the support of my colleagues in up-dating the Awards and I am pleased to be able to inform the House today that, as from the beginning April next, all forms of maintenance to Gibraltar Government Scholars now studying in universities will be raised by 20% and that in addition, the full cost of the air fare granted under the 1974 Award Regulations will be met in future by Government.

Sir, it is not on the statement but I would add that I would like Universities to be interpreted in the wider sense including Polytechnics, etc.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, on this side of the House we were concerned obviously about this matter and we certainly welcome what the Minister has had to say.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will the Minister not agree that this particular increase accentuates the need for his colleague to ensure that Student air fares do not exceed at least the monthly return fares of airways flights because if they do follow this trend even though called student fares, of being higher than normal monthly return air fares, the bill for the Government at the end of the day is going to be a very substantial one.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, my colleague has taken very good account of the need that student fares should be as low as possible. I cannot fully commit him that he should accept the principle that it should be on the monthly fare since basically, the student fare is for a longer period. It is usually on the year ticket basis rather than on the monthly ticket.

STATEMENT MADE BY THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR & SOCIAL SECURITY

INDUSTRIAL TRAINING

Mr Speaker, it has been my practice to keep the House informed at

intervals of developments in the field of industrial training and to expand on these statements when the House has considered estimates of expenditure in the last two years. I think that it would be timely to fulfil both assignments through a comprehensive statement, covering the activities of the last year, and which also looks into the future.

The first apprenticeship scheme in the Hotel and Catering Industry, involving 8 apprentices, was completed last November, and 21 certificates were obtained in basic cookery, waitering, and bar and cellar. A second similar scheme was started in January 1974, and a further one last September. The possibility of further, and more advanced, training for the successful ex-apprentices is being pursued with the Council for Technical Education and Training for Overseas Countries (TETOC). It is likely that this training will be carried out abroad.

The Industrial Training Officer has just completed a survey on the training needs of this industry in respect of waiters, waitresses, and housemaids with a view to introducing specific training in these disciplines. It is expected that the latter courses will create some jobs in new areas for young people.

Turning to the Retail Trade, a Tutor has now been appointed for a period of one year, under the ODM Technical Assistance Programme, and is already in Gibraltar. He is currently engaged in drawing up programmes and syllabuses for training in this industry and it is expected that basic and introductory courses for shop assistants will commence next month. A local understudy has already been appointed, and attached to the Tutor, whose duties will eventually be to take over from him when his term of office terminates in January 1976.

It is also intended to introduce more advanced courses later on in the year, to be followed by City and Guilds courses, adapted to meet local requirements.

As for the Motor Trade, a survey of the training needs in the repair and servicing of motor vehicles has now been completed and a report submitted to Government. Following this, a request has been made to TETOC for a consultant from the UK Road Transport Industry to visit Gibraltar for a period of 4/6 weeks under their auspices to advise on the possible implementation of a training scheme in this Industry.

The House will recall that the administration of the Construction Industry Training Centre was transferred from the Property Services Agency to the Gibraltar Government last April. The bulk of the training at

present carried out follows the pattern of previous years, but new short modules of training on specific topics, such as safety for sewer men, industrial first aid, mechanical fixing and scaffolding have also been introduced. The facilities at the Centre have been extended and improved, credit being due entirely to the apprentices and trainees who have carried these out as training exercises. An average of 19 apprentices, employed by Government and PSA, are receiving off-the-job training at the Centre and during the year 9 adults have been trained to Craftsman B standard. Also, Craftsman B who were previously trained at the Centre are attending refresher courses of 2 weeks duration.

The Training Centre has also, on behalf of Government and PSA, carried out trade testing to 'A' standard and has recently undertaken the testing of construction craftsmen who have applied for employment in the official sector.

As more land becomes available in the near future, it is proposed to expand the activities at the Centre.

As for the private sector of this important industry, a survey of training needs has been carried out and a report has been submitted to me. The survey recommends that training should principally consist of:

- a. an apprenticeship scheme;
- b. short modular training on specific skills to meet the industry's requirements; and
- c. a technician training programme.

All the facilities of the Training Centre have been offered to the Private Sector and it is hoped that advantage will soon be taken of this. The industry, which has been closely consulted, has accepted in principle the three basic training recommendations and matters of detail will be discussed in the near future with a view to introducing training in this vital sector without delay.

Future plans in other areas include a survey of the training requirements in the repair and maintenance of electro-domestic appliances which the Industrial Training Officer will be looking into over the next few months, and I will keep the House informed of the progress made.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker I thank the Honourable Member for that comprehensive statement. In fact, I asked him for one I believe it was at the last meeting of the House. We are very glad to see that a number of schemes, namely, hotel and catering, the retail trade, construction training, and the repair of domestic appliances which were in mind in the early stages of the Industrial Training Ordinance, are being pushed along by the Minister, and we on this side consider it very important aspect of any labour policy that re-training should take place. We are glad to hear of the progress made which overcomes our concern for the past three years where we thought the Minister was not doing enough, quite frankly, about this.

Mr Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister one specific question first. And that is to what extent is the Gibraltar Technical College going to be used for training which will benefit the private sector? I asked his colleague the Honourable Mr Featherstone this question at the last meeting and he told me that the answer should come from the Honourable Mr Canepa. Perhaps he could give it now.

HON A J CANEPA:

That question at the last meeting was misdirected and it went to the Minister of Education otherwise there would have been no difficulty in my having actually made the statement at the last meeting of the House. But I do recall the point made. I think that the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition is aware of the fact that already the technical college is being used for the benefit of the private sector and that this has been the practice for some years. The introduction of apprenticeship training in the hotel and catering industry meant that the private sector also had some of its own apprentices attending the technical college for the theoretical side of their education. In addition to that, Mr Speaker, ~~we have~~ with the proposals that I have referred to in respect of the private sector of the construction industry, we have also in mind the intention that these young people should also attend the technical college in order to undergo again the theoretical side of the training.

MR SPEAKER:

You cannot make a statement. It is fair enough to give clarification and an undertaking but we mustn't debate the statement now.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I thought I was giving information.

MR SPEAKER:

No, you can give clarification, but not make a further statement. I think the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has asked you for a certain assurance which I think you have given. Are there any other points of clarification?

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, my question was to what extent was this figure in the Minister's calculations, for the use of the technical college for the benefit of the private sector directly? The Minister has said yes, it is being used for hotel and catering

HON A J CANEPA:

And it will be used for ^{the} construction industry.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Sir, can I ask one further question for clarification and that is, is the Minister aware that the expansion of the Technical College and the financial commitment of the Government to it was dependent, certainly in our time in Government, an ample use being made of the College for the purpose which I have mentioned, namely, the private sector?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes Sir, this we have in mind. One thing that, perhaps, I ~~would~~ ^{should} have added was that some of the more advanced training that we envisage for the retail trade will also be undertaken at the Technical College. Once we get over the introductory and the basic courses. I am aware that this has been Government thinking during the previous administration. The Technical College comes directly under my colleague - this is a field where we do work together - but this figures in our plans.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, talking about the financial commitment of the Government to the Technical College, am I to understand, therefore, that the Industrial Training Board in arriving at its recommendations on levies and so forth, will take into account the fact that the Gibraltar Government makes a quite substantial contribution to the upkeep of the running of the Gibraltar Technical College, and that in the United Kingdom some establishments do work on the basis which I have insinuated our local one should work.

HON A J CANEPA:

The policy of the Government has been, particularly in the initial stages of any training course, that Government should by and large bear as much of the cost as possible and aid the private sector, and it is very much in my thinking there may well be areas in the private sector where, perhaps, a levy may not be necessary and where, perhaps, the Government ought to take on the financial commitment.

HON M XIBERRAS:

One final question, Mr Speaker. Is the Minister satisfied, therefore, that that part of the Government's financial contribution to the Gibraltar Technical College which might reasonably be expected to go towards the private sector benefit, is he satisfied that he is taking a return for the investment or not? I say this particularly in view of the increasing costs and, therefore, the increase in contribution which the Government is making to the college.

HON A J CANEPA:

Sir, I am not entirely sure whether I am satisfied. The fact of the matter is that the Government is very concerned about the costs that we are having to undertake as a result of our share in running the college and, in fact, I have instructed the Productivity and Training Manager to prepare a report for me showing the relative cost of the Landport Training Centre and the cost at the technical college, because we are very concerned about the extent of this escalation as can be seen from the estimates of expenditure.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, perhaps I could raise this during the estimates of

expenditure. But am I to take it that the Minister is satisfied then, with the return that the Government gets and the private sector gets, out of its contribution to the running of the Construction Training Centre at Landport?

HON A J CANEPA:

As far as Landport is concerned, yes, certainly, I am satisfied.

MOTIONS

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO. 4 of 1974/75

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have the honour to move that this House resolves itself into Committee to consider Supplementary Estimates No 4 of 1974/75 which I do not think require any introductory remarks.

The House resolved itself into Committee.

MR SPEAKER:

I will tell the Clerk to call the number and the Head and the items will be left to the discretion of Members who wish to have any information on them. We will proceed as usual. Each subhead will not be called but we will call the number and the Head.

Head XII - PUBLIC WORKS NON RECURRENT was agreed to and passed.

HEAD XIV - HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, perhaps it is repetition but perhaps here is the appropriate place to say how successful this PBR scheme has apparently been.

As Mr Speaker is aware I had some misgivings about this myself in private and I suggested, perhaps, having a second typist in the House of Assembly. I am always willing to retract or recant when I have been proved wrong. The PBR scheme has proved most effective and I think it is right that in approving the expenditure for this PBR scheme, if I am talking about the right thing, we should again thank all the people involved in doing this work.

HEAD XIV - HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, was agreed to and passed.

HEAD XV - MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH, was agreed to and passed.

HEAD XVI - MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, Miscellaneous services, Item 23, Contribution to GBC to meet cost of essential repairs to roof. I beg your pardon, I see it is £2,000 so I won't ask any questions on that.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker Sir, I would like to mention that representations were made by the Chairman that this was absolutely essential if it was going to be reasonably watertight.

MR SPEAKER:

I would not dare take a vote on the next item - Sugar subsidy - until you have had a good look at the top of page 2.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, on the sugar subsidy would Government either deliver a postmortem on the system, or explain whether they are going to continue with it or not?

HON A J CANEPA:

This is the sum we are asking the House to vote and I do not propose

for the present to ask the House to vote another penny. £19,178 was the total sum made available some months ago the effect of which is still in operation. The subsidy is still at this given point in time in operation, but no more money has been put into it.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Government aware that there has been quite a dramatic fall in the price of sugar very recently?

HON A J CANEPA:

Sir, I am thankful for the fact that there has been but we are not yet over the worst because of course we are about three months behind ^{due to} ~~because~~ of our reserve stocks. Nevertheless a great deal of averaging out is done and the trade I know are very conscious and they get expert advice in London to try and wait for the most opportune moment to ~~try~~ and buy sugar at the lowest possible price. But I am very encouraged by the trends.

HEAD XVI - MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES was agreed to and passed.

HEAD XXIV - SECRETARIAT

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, on the rent of flats can the Government say whether this is because of additional accommodation or because of increases in rents?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, this is additional accommodation. The number of officers from the United Kingdom whom we have to put up has increased.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is it, in fact, as a result of an increasing number of expatriate officers being employed by the Gibraltar Government?

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, perhaps this is not the right moment but there was some debate on the budget about this item last year - as we know thanks to the hansards having been produced - and could I put the Financial and Development Secretary on notice that we do intend to ask the Government for some sort of comprehensive statement about the position in respect of the rents for these flats, and the relative merits of the policies involved.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I would like to take the opportunity of mentioning that only yesterday in Council of Ministers we had a fresh look not because this item was coming here but because of the increasing commitments in connection with the development programme, which though we get technical assistance as Honourable Members opposite know we must provide accommodation. We have pressure from the Housing Minister to some extent, we have pressures on others to provide certain accommodation and we are looking at ways in which it will be cheaper to provide a reasonable accommodation and we will be quite willing to discuss the matter when the estimates come.

HEAD XXIV - SECRETARIAT was agreed to and passed.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, I now have the honour to propose that the votes detailed in Supplementary Estimates No 4 of 1974/75 be approved.

Mr Speaker then put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and Supplementary Estimates No 4 of 1974/75 were agreed to and passed.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO 5 of 197 /7

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, with your leave I propose to bring a motion in regard to Supplementary Estimates No 5 of 1974/75 at a later stage in this meeting.

MR SPEAKER:

I take it that you do not wish to proceed at this stage on this particular motion. What the Honourable Financial and Development Secretary is saying is that he has given notice of the motion which has not been proposed and therefore he does not need the leave of the House to withdraw. He is not withdrawing the motion, he is saying he is not in a position just now to proceed with this particular motion and that he intends to do so at a later stage in the meeting which he is entitled to do.

HON M XIBERRAS:

He intends to proceed with the motion which should have come in the order Paper at this particular point at a later stage. Is that it?

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, he is not now in a position to continue with this motion. He intends to go on with it but not at this particular stage.

HON M XIBERRAS:

He does not need the leave of the House to do this?

MR SPEAKER:

He does not because he is not withdrawing the motion. Even to withdraw the motion he does not need leave because it has not been proposed. It is only when the motion has been proposed that he needs the leave of the House.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, since this matter has been on the Order Paper for some time and it refers, I think, to 'this year's expenditure, could I ask the Honourable the Financial and Development Secretary as to why this is necessary. I think this is something which he might have mentioned.

MR SPEAKER:

He is free to say that he is not in a position to proceed now. If he wants to say anything further that is up to the Honourable Member.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, once we move on to other items on the Order Paper I presume the suspension of Standing Orders will be required to revert to this item.

MR SPEAKER:

Most certainly. In other words if it entails the dislocation of the Order Paper then he needs the suspension of Standing Orders.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Is the Financial and Development Secretary then suggesting he takes this after lunch?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir, I apologise to the House, Sir, if there has been any disruption of the proceeding or if Honourable Members have been put to any inconvenience and I ask now that it be deferred. I shall be better able to give the full explanations that this House will wish to have at a later stage at this meeting by which I mean the stage which begins on the 18th March.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I was angling for that if I may say so. This is, of course, a serious thing bearing in mind that it is by convention that we split up this meeting into two distinct parts and, therefore, something which appears

MR SPEAKER:

No, I must put the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition right on

this one. It is not convention, it is the right of the Government to deal with business and with meetings according to their wishes. There is no convention on it. I must not lay rules otherwise it may be said that I made a ruling. It is the prerogative of Government to decide the way they conduct meetings in accordance with the rules, of course.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Certainly, Mr Speaker, but there must have been some sort of reconsideration by the Financial and Development Secretary of the position since he has put this matter on the Order Paper to be taken at this stage and now he shall have to ask later on for the leave of the House to introduce the motion at a later stage. If this were a normal meeting and if the reasons were ones of practicability then, of course, we would look upon this favourably, whether or not we have a final say or any say at all in the matter, but it is strange that the Honourable Financial and Development Secretary should introduce this in the Order Paper at this particular stage and then without any explanation say that it is going to be taken in the second half of the meeting. This happens to be a matter of considerable expenditure and this is a matter which we would like to debate in this House at this stage so that we can see what relevance this has for the second part of the budget meeting of the House. If estimates are circulated ahead of time for the convenience of members anything which would have any possible reflection on the state of those estimates should be debated at this particular stage.

MR SPEAKER:

Let me get the sequence right. The Supplementary Estimates in accordance with Standing Orders have been laid on the table otherwise they could not be debated. Now, once this has been done it is completely and utterly at the discretion of the Government how they go about it. Of course, the way they go about this is open to question, in so far as the Opposition is concerned, and to comment. But it must be their prerogative to do it the way they feel it should be done.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I don't recall a precedent for this since the House has been dividing the budget meeting into two distinct parts and I must,

therefore, ask the Financial and Development Secretary directly for a reason because this particular motion will certainly come into our consideration of the estimates which are before us now. And if the Financial and Development Secretary is not able to give me a reason for this then then I shall have to draw my own conclusions.

MR SPEAKER:

We must not debate the reasons but you have asked if the Financial and Development Secretary is prepared to give a reason. If he is not, well, the matter must rest.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would dearly like to be able to think of the nature of the conclusions that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition would draw if I did not give a fuller explanation than I already have to do something which I have understood it is perfectly within my right to do. But I will. I said earlier that at a later stage I would give a better and fuller explanation of these estimates ^{than} has been given to the House now. And that is to say that there will be a fuller statement

MR SPEAKER:

May I perhaps ask a question which might put everyone's minds at rest. Whilst it is proposed to take these Supplementary Estimate when we resume the meeting on the 18th, is it proposed to take it before or after the budget?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Before, Sir, and also if I may add, of course, the estimates as presented to the House have the full revised estimated costs for 1974/75.

HON J BOSSANO:

Precisely, Mr Speaker, I am very glad the Honourable the Financial and Development Secretary has made that point. Because one of the

problems we have is that in debating the estimate we have a division of one year and another and we have had this difficulty in the past, Mr Speaker, where we have only been able to question figures because of your leniency in allowing that this should take place, although strictly speaking we are talking about expenditure in 1975/76. There is often a lot about the revised figures one wishes to question. The relevance of this is that we have the figures for 1975/76 in our possession, Mr Speaker, and in order to look at those figures in a meaningful way, it helps to be able to know how accurate the revised estimates for this year are. If the Opposition has had the chance to question that accuracy on the same day or the day before then the opportunity afforded by being given this information so much in advance is virtually lost because there is little that one can do with the information now in our possession unless one either takes this at face value or assumes that there is nothing controversial or wrong about this and if there isn't it is very, very peculiar that the Financial & Development Secretary should suddenly wish to change tactics in the middle of the session.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I would like to make a statement. The reasons for the Financial and Development Secretary not proceeding with it are his own. I know them and they are not of great importance as far as I am concerned, but if it is a matter of dealing with the question raised by the Honourable Mr Bossano we can have a day next week in which we can meet to deal with these estimates and then we can adjourn for the full debate on the estimate on the following Tuesday. No difficulty about that.

MR SPEAKER:

May I say that I intend to be away from Gibraltar for the whole of next week.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

What better can we do but to offer to do it before. The Honourable the Leader of the Opposition cannot have it all his own way.

MR SPEAKER:

I would be prepared, of course, to fly back on the Thursday to meet

on the Friday if need be in order to enable this to be done.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

If it helps the Opposition I don't mind.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I am most grateful for the courtesy of the Chief Minister in allowing us to meet some day during the week. I am also most grateful for the courtesy that was extended to me in delaying the present meeting by three or four days to enable me to go to the United Kingdom, which I don't visit with as much frequency as he does. I would certainly not like to put you to the inconvenience of returning to Gibraltar for one particular day. But we do see the way which the Chief Minister extends his courtesy to Members of the Opposition, and, of course, we are most grateful for those courtesies which he does extend. Mr Speaker, but this is a more fundamental matter than all that. This is a rather large sum of money which has everything to do with the estimates which, again, through the courtesy of the Chief Minister and through Standing Orders, Members of the Opposition get well in advance. Now, the figure of some £900,000 in expenditure for this present year must be very relevant to the Opposition's consideration of the draft Estimates. We have no power at all in delaying or seeing that these estimates are taken now but I do think the ordinary courtesy which is exemplified by the Honourable Chief Minister could extend to other members of the Government in order that they should offer some explanation to Honourable Members on this side as to why they should want to change the Order Paper, because I am sure the Opposition can be just as obstructive as the Government when it comes to handling the business of the House and there are things which the Opposition can have resort to and the Financial and Development Secretary should know this and it might take him ten days to get through his Estimates. Mr Speaker, I have said that I will draw my own conclusions about this and I can say that on the surface of it that document is certainly not acceptable to Members of the Opposition such as it is written and, therefore, I am entitled to have some suspicion as to why the Honourable the Financial and Development Secretary wants to delay consideration of it until just before the estimates are taken.

MR SPEAKER:

I think I have been as liberal as I can on this one since it is an

important issue and comments will be made I am sure in due course in the different debates as you are entitled to do but there is no debate allowed on this matter. The Government is in their right to do what they are doing and we must leave it at that. The consequences and the comments which this will give rise to is another matter as is the right of the Opposition to raise this at a different time, but we mustn't debate this ad nauseam because there is specifically no rule which enables us to debate whether the Financial and Development Secretary has to give a reason for doing what he wants to do.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, the Financial and Development Secretary is breaking with a pattern that has been established here for some time and this is, I stress, a most important matter. Here is a draft supplementary Estimate which is simply dealing with the Interim Review and involves a simple calculation and is about £500,000 out as it would appear.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but we are not going to debate the Supplementary Estimates now. We must leave it at that.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could I just ask the Financial and Development Secretary whether he anticipates that when he re-introduces this motion to the House it will be amended in any way or does he expect to introduce it in its present form?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, in its present form. I would propose to do it in whatever form seems to me most likely to bring full clarity to the House. The purport of what I think I said earlier is that there will be fuller explanation in the remarks column than there is here.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, it would have been a better thing if the Honourable

Member had said that to begin with. But I must insist, Mr Speaker, that this £500,000 that I am talking about forms a part of the balance for last year and this obviously affects our consideration of the estimates for this coming year. So if into a substantial budget we enter the consideration of £500,000 more or less then, surely, the Opposition should be given as much time as is given for the consideration of the Estimates itself to consider this particular proposition.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, we must leave it at that now.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The amended Supplementary Estimates will be circulated not necessarily just before the next meeting, they will be circulated in the course of the next few days, so that gives more information to the other side.

The House recessed at 1.00 pm.

The House resumed at 3.30 pm.

MR SPEAKER:

I understand it is the Honourable Mr Lloyd Devincenzi's birthday today and I think all Members will join me in wishing him many happy returns of the day.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT FUND NO 4 OF 1974/75

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker Sir, In this schedule of Supplementary Estimates Improvement and Development Fund which comes to a total of £604,395 I should, perhaps, at the outset explain that £575,025 fall to be met from UK Aid Funds. The balance of £29,370 falls to be met from local funds.

If Honourable Members bear with me I would like just to point out now which items comprise the £29,370 which fall on Gibraltar funds. They are, if we may look down the third column of figures, the second item £8,050, the fourth item, £8,933, the next two small items on the same page and on the following page all of the individual items except the first one, which is, £6,620. I apologise Sir, since I promised before that whenever I produced estimates in the Improvement and Development Fund I would show which were a charge on Gibraltar funds.

Thank you, Sir.

Sir, I now have the honour to move that this House resolves itself into committee to consider Supplementary Estimates Improvement and Development Fund No 4 of 1974/75.

(A) HOUSING

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, we are voting supplementary provision now required of just over a £ $\frac{1}{2}$ m in respect of the Viaduct Reclamation Development Aid Scheme. Would the Minister for Public Works give an indication of the progress to date and the possible dates of completion on the various blocks of flats and possible dates of allocation?

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

Mr Speaker, I can only repeat what I have been told by the contractors that whereas Phase III which consists of two of the large blocks will be handed over to us at the end of April, that the project itself will be finished this financial year. There is a little delay, it is progressively shorter and in the seventh phase I think they are only about two or three weeks behind. They had been behind but they are beginning to catch up and providing they don't get many more interruptions they hope to be fairly within their original target. Certainly, they hope to finish by March 1976 at the very latest.

HON M XIBERRAS:

There appears to be something of a misnomer in the remarks column - and, perhaps, Mr Speaker, may I just say in an aside that some members in

the Strangers Gallery have complained that they cannot hear the proceedings properly. Perhaps the microphones could be turned up a little bit. As I was saying there appears to be a little bit of a misnomer in the remarks column as regards the words acceleration of programme and because of the acceleration of programme we imagine it is necessary to vote extra funds now in this financial year. Is this a fact? The other question is, apart from these two blocks which will hopefully be finished in April, when is the rest of the development due to be finished?

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

This is a fact. Of course when one gave the figure at the beginning of the estimate time which would be the previous November one worked on the information one had at the time as given to us by the consultants. Now then, there are slowing down and picking ups. There is spillage from one year to the next and this includes it. This really means acceleration of the programme this year, by either picking up on what was not done last year or by being able to do more. If you are asking me how you can divide this, I am sorry, that kind of detail one doesn't carry in ones head, on a project of this size. I have, however, been pressing the contractors and the consultants that I would like the next phase by June. Phase three by April, phase four by June.

HON M XIBERRAS:

And that completes it?

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

No, no, there are seven phases.

HON M XIBERRAS:

How many blocks before June?

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

Before June I expect it will be three small ones.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, if the word acceleration is used, is it that there has been an acceleration in respect of the work that should have been done this year and, if so, what is this acceleration? Because the Honourable and Gallant Member will be aware that there were dates set for the various stages of completion for this development, therefore what has been accelerated?

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

I must correct this. This has been one of the impediments that we have had in putting pressure, that there are no dates whatever specified in the contract for any particular phase and we are completely in the hands of the contractors and consultant. There was a great deal of spillage from the previous year because, it is well known, there were two quick disasters in this project. First of all a ship going on the reef with all its stores, which obviously put the project back, and immediately afterwards the ship bringing the replacements which had been obtained at a great deal of trouble also had to jettison all its deck cargo during a storm. It is this kind of acceleration which is, in fact, taking place. They are catching up on what was behind.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I don't think that the Honourable and Gallant Member is taking about the running aground of a ship as acceleration. My question is aimed at elucidating whether the money which the House is being asked to vote now is needed in this financial year and, therefore, in what way the general state of the fund would be affected. Could the Honourable Member say that there has been an acceleration or does he mean by this that work which was not done last year is being done this year? If this is what he says then I would suggest that the word acceleration is very much a misnomer.

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

I will confirm that a great deal of this is catching up on what was not done last year for a multitude of reasons. Whether the acceleration terms used cover everything well, this is a matter of opinion. But this is what has happened, we are catching up on what was not done last year.

HON M XIBERRAS;

There is always the temptation to allow certain works to drag on a little bit in order to allow the contractor to start work on other sites. Is the Government satisfied both on its own account and on behalf of its own quantity surveyors that the work is proceeding apace? In other words that there have not been any undue delays in the construction of the Varyl Begg Estate?

HON LT COL J L HOARE;

There are many technical facets to that but I will take the last statement and I will certainly confirm that there has been no undue delay in continuing with the programme. There may have been a slipping here *and* there but I judge this by the end of the programme. *And* phase 7 at the moment is I think between two and four weeks behind, and every statement given to us by the contractors is that they hope to catch up. I have already said even at the worst I am allowing for six months which in a project of that size is not unreasonable. I hope to be finished long before the end of the next financial year.

HON M XIBERRAS;

Thank you. Honourable Members on the other side have from time to time referred to the building costs. We are voting over £¹/₂m for this acceleration of programme and I would ask the Honourable and Gallant Member to inform the House as to the main reason if any, for inflated costs in the construction of the Varyl Begg Estate.

HON LT COL J L HOARE;

I am sorry. This is the kind of detail that are dealt with by the Consultants. That is why one employs consultants. They check the bills, not only in detail but in matters of principle that it conforms to the programme. To the best of my recollection this is a contract which because of its length has a fluctuating clause.

HON M XIBERRAS;

I am glad to hear this one has a fluctuating clause. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members on the other side have from time to time referred to the inflationary costs in building, generally, and the House does not

often have an opportunity of debating specifically in respect of one particular project what the actual inflationary effect has been. I am surprised to hear the Honourable and Gallant Member say that this is a matter for the quantity surveyors because, obviously, the quantity surveyors are responsible to him as Minister for Public Works. Therefore, I would not consider this to be a matter of detail, I would expect the Honourable and Gallant Member who is a Minister in a Government who is claiming that there are inflationary costs in building to be able to give me an explanation at this particular stage.

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

To start off I didn't say surveyors. These are the consultants whose job it is and who were, in fact, appointed as our representatives to administer this contract on our behalf. We didn't ~~administer~~ then, we took them over. The conditions involving the contract were already there. Now, whether cement has gone up by 5% or 2% I don't know, this is up to the consultants. Every bill goes through their hands and they certify it. That is why they are getting a jolly good fat fee. It is not my function to do that at all.

HON M XIBERRAS:

The consultants or surveyors are not given a handsome fee for being allowed to do what they like, they are responsible obviously to the Government. Now, the Minister for Labour at the last budget meeting I believe it was in discussing the Improvement and Development Fund and the Financial and Development Secretary in speaking on the budget, both mentioned as a reason for limiting the development programme the inflationary costs in building. Here is the biggest of the Government projects and I am asking the Minister for Public Works whose direct responsibility it is, I would imagine, to keep tabs on building there, what, if any, are the main inflationary causes in this project and he is telling me that he does not know. He is telling me that he does not know and I think this is not a satisfactory state of affairs. If statements are going to be made by the Government in respect of inflationary costs for

MR SPEAKER:

I have been very liberal because we are now discussing under one particular item the inflationary effect on the cost of building as a principle and not how it has affected exclusively the Varyl Begg Estate.

I think you will agree that I have been liberal but we mustn't go beyond that.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

May I just say a word. The original cost of this scheme was £6,080,000. In our estimate last year the revised estimate was £6,722,000. It is relevant that we are voting the money. It is, however, also relevant that this is UK funds and I can assure the House that we do have to account to the Overseas Development Ministry for the expenditure of their aid and I can say one further thing that it would not have made any difference to the amount of new aid that we got this year had that project not been rising because the British Government is very good to us in this sense if I may say so

MR SPEAKER:

That is what I am afraid of. We are now debating the policy of the British Government in so far as aid is concerned.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, only if I may suggest inasmuch as this is by far the largest project in the improvement and Development programme and I think it is relevant, if I may say so with respect, it is relevant to raise it under this particular heading because these are the costs incurred after the project has been agreed and, therefore these are the extra costs in which inflation, if any, would be reflected.

MR. SPEAKER:

There has been no statement in the House that this vote that we are now discussing are extra costs due to inflation.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, in this House there has been at a previous stage.

MR SPEAKER:

No, I must direct my mind exclusively to the item that we are voting.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, can I ask the Minister does this supplementary expenditure reflect an inflationary trend in the construction of the Varyl Begg Estate specifically?

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

I can't give a definite answer to that but I think it would be totally unrealistic for anybody to think that in a contract with a fluctuating clause in this day and age that that is immune from inflation, any more immune than any other project be it large, small or medium. But if the Honourable Questioner wants to know the breakdown of this then if he asks me I will certainly give him a written answer, but I can't possibly be expected to know that a labourer is getting another 2½p a day because he is working something extra. These are checked by the quantity surveyor and approved by the consultants to whom we pay a great deal of money. And then provided that it is within the overall cost they are accepted. After all the consultants were appointed after a great deal of research as being responsible people. It is as simple as that.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I am not for a moment suggesting that the Government should not accept it. I am just trying to find out the reasons why the Government has accepted these extra costs of course because this is the next stage in the programme. I am trying to find out also what element of inflation there is in these particular £530,000. I am also interested in establishing to what extent the views of the Government expressed by Honourable Members on the other side including the Financial and Development Secretary and the Minister for Labour are true of this particular vote and this particular vote is quite a sizeable one. As Honourable Members will recall the Honourable Mr Canepa and the Honourable Mr Mackay made it clear that inflationary costs were quite substantial and I am asking the Minister for Public Works to tell me, in view of the statements made in respect of buildings generally, in what way he agrees

or disagrees with his colleague in respect of this particular development which happens to be the biggest development in the Government programme at the moment.

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

I will have to repeat it at the risk of your displeasure, Mr Speaker, but I don't carry that kind of figures in my head.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Does the Honourable Member carry any sort of figures in respect of this £ $\frac{1}{2}$ m?

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

Of course not. It is, as I said, a very big project.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Is the Honourable Member therefore telling then that he trusts his surveyors implicitly in this and he has not bothered to estimate how much is due to labour, how much is for materials and so forth?

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

These are not my problems. This is why we have consultants for and this is why we have finance staff, both in my own office and in the Treasury and in the FCO. It is not the Minister's job to check wages bill.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Then I will direct my question to the Honourable Financial and Development Secretary.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, would it help if I say that the increase in price in this on-going

project which has been going on in the past two years - last year and the previous one - that this has not reflected the full amount of inflation that we would find in going from one completed project to another. For example, we completed the smaller housing project at Catalan Bay and we had costed again what it would in this coming year cost and the increase in price there would be much larger. There are certain variations allowed in the ongoing contract for Varyl Begg Estate, particularly wage costs. A large amount of the materials had already imported earlier on and as I say you won't find the same degree of inflation in that but there is provision for a rising cost within the agreement.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I am very glad to hear that. I am very glad to hear that because the Honourable the Minister for Labour and Social Security cast aspersions on the handling of the labour situation in respect of Varyl Begg Estate at one particular time saying this has upset wage patterns throughout the building industry. Now, if I understand the Honourable Financial and Development Secretary correctly, he is now saying that Varyl Begg Estate is doing rather well as regards inflation, that inflationary trends are not reflected to as great a degree in this building project as in others. We are all very thankful for Her Majesty's Government supply of money for this project, of course, but we are equally resentful of unmerited criticism in respect of a labour policy in the Varyl Begg Estate, therefore, Mr Speaker, I have established, in fact, that there is not a great inflationary effect in the Varyl Begg project and I am very glad to hear this which is in direct contradiction to what Honourable Members had to say at the last budget session and on which the Financial and Development Secretary based a great part on his budget arguments. Mr Speaker, there has been criticism also of the cost plus contract

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but we are not going to go into that at this stage. We are now at one particular item. The whole estimates will be subject to a motion and then if you want to make a speech on that one you are free to do so.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I shall make the point later on when the House comes out of committee,

Mr Speaker. I will just say that this is £ $\frac{1}{2}$ m and I thought that the size of the amount involved made it appropriate for me to comment on these things.

HON J BOSSANO;

If you will allow me Mr Speaker, there are a number of points which have been raised in connection with this item on the Varyl Begg Estate on which I would like to have clarification. The Minister said that it was not his job to check wages as regards this particular project. Is this the case?

HON LT COL J L HOARE;

That is the job of the Wages Clerk.

HON J BOSSANO;

Can the Minister explain how it is that there has been a strike in this particular site because apparently the Government has vetoed any wage increase? Can he say whether he was involved in this?

MR SPEAKER:

Order. I am not allowing that question under this item, I am sorry.

HON J. BOSSANO;

Well, Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Public Works say what control, if any, the Government is exercising over wages on this particular project?

HON LT COL J L HOARE;

The Government itself none at all. This is a special kind of contract which is wages plus on costs with a fluctuating clause in it. In the same way that we can't tell the contractor that he mustn't pay bonuses to people doing extra work or producing his own productivity bonuses.

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect - and I am not going to put my foot down completely and utterly now - we are not going to discuss under the guise of the vote of one particular item the contractual relationship between the Government and any one particular contractor. We cannot do that and that is what we are doing now.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I think my Honourable Colleague is trying to find out whether as part of these £1¹/₂m which do include some element of inflation, which this element is in any way affected by the Government's policy or lack of policy on wages in the Varyl Begg Estate.

MR SPEAKER:

No, you cannot do that.

HON J BOSSANO:

Could I seek your guidance, Mr Speaker, on this matter?

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, certainly. You must realise, Mr Bossano, that we must not repeat ourselves. You have intervened recently but we have been discussing this item for a very long time now and there has been repetition. But please continue.

HON J BOSSANO:

What I would like to seek your guidance on, Mr Speaker, is that in view of the fact that the House is considering the amount of money that is required to supplement the sums already voted and in view of the fact that according to the information that I have the Government has informed the contractors that they will not be allowed to recover any increased costs due to increased wages, I would like to know whether it is because there is a limit to the amount of money that is available for the scheme, whether in fact, this

represents the limit that can be allocated to this project and that therefore there is no more money available.

MR SPEAKER:

That does not in itself affect this particular item. We are in Committee Stage now. Once we have gone through the whole item and the House resumes then in the debate on the general principles you can refer to whatever policy the Government is following which might affect the vote.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Our voting on this particular item depends on the explanations given by the Government on the other side.

MR SPEAKER:

It may depend on the breakdown of the figure that you are voting but not on the policy followed.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, the Minister, Mr Speaker, has not offered any breakdown.

MR SPEAKER:

And it appears that you are not going to get it, unfortunately.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, I don't know about this but I think the public is entitled to some sort of a breakdown in view of Government statements about the Varyl Begg Estate in the past. For instance, Mr Chairman, the Honourable Mr Canepa strongly insinuated that the Varyl Begg workers were upsetting the whole pattern of wages in the building industry. He intimated that they were poaching that they had set a very high level of wages and this had caused inflation. Honourable Members on this side would like to determine, amongst other things, whether the level of inflation

MR SPEAKER:

Surely, that is the subject matter of the debate when you come to it.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, only that it is within the power of the Opposition to vote against it and before we exercise that power we would like to know whether there are any explanations for this particular vote.

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, there comes a moment when I as Chairman must come to a definite decision whether we are going to progress or not and I am positive and I think most Members of the House are now positive that the information you require is not forthcoming.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Not from the Minister for Public Works but I have not heard the Minister for Labour, for instance, comment on his previous statement.

HON A J CANEPA:

are asked to vote funds
Mr Speaker, why should I? The next thing I am going to do, Mr Speaker, is that the next time we ~~get a vote~~ for a PBR for the production of hansards I will vote against it. Why should I comment on a statement that I made last year at budget time?

HON M XIBERRAS:

Perhaps one particular reason was that he had spoken about the matter

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but we are not going to argue now. I am putting this item to the vote and Members can decide how they vote.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well Mr Speaker then in that case we shall abstain on this particular item and then when the House comes out of Committee we shall make our points there.

MR SPEAKER:

Precisely, Yes.

On a vote being taken the following Honourable Members voted in favour:

GOVERNMENT:

The Honourable Sir Joshua Hassan, CBE MVO QC JP Chief Minister
 The Honourable A W Serfaty OBE JP, Minister for Tourism, Trade and Economic Development.
 The Honourable M K Featherstone, Minister for Education.
 The Honourable A J Canepa, Minister for Labour and Social Security.
 The Honourable I Abecasis, Minister for Housing.
 The Honourable Lt Col J L Hoare, Minister for Public Works and Municipal Services.
 The Honourable H J Zammit, Minister for Information and Sport.
 The Honourable J K Havers, OBE QC, Attorney General.
 The Honourable A Mackay, CMG, Financial and Development Secretary.

The following Honourable Members abstained:

OPPOSITION:

The Honourable M Xiberras, Leader of the Opposition.
 The Honourable P J Isola OBE
 The Honourable W M Isola
 The Honourable J Bossano
 The Honourable J Caruana
 The Honourable L Devincenzi

(A) HOUSING was passed.

(B) SCHOOLS

HON M XIBERRAS:

On the additional costs, Mr Chairman, are these because of inflation in building or are these additional amenities provided?

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

I don't think this is from the public works side at all. I think most of this is equipment and books and items like that. I wouldn't know. I certainly don't consider that that is due to further construction.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, when the Government decides what it is will they kindly explain to the Opposition what £30,000 are going to be spent on?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, I think I heard a remark by the Honourable Mr Bossano which I would like him to say a little louder in case there is an innuendo which is a serious one. I think he said something like "for all we know it may go to a Swiss Bank". Now, if that is so I would like him to say what exactly it is that he meant by that?

HON J BOSSANO:

If the Chief Minister wants any explanations I will see him outside, Mr Speaker.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, no, you have to give it here.

MR SPEAKER:

If the Member would repeat the statement if he has made it and if he gives an explanation then that is the end of the matter, or, if the Member wishes to withdraw anything that he has said then that is the end of the matter.

HON J BOSSANO:

Well, Mr Speaker, I normally stand up when I want to say something that has to be recorded and I have not stood up on this occasion, although my offer to say what I have to say whenever the Chief Minister wants to hear it still stands outside where there will be no record.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No. It is here that he said it. I am not interested in what he says outside.

MR SPEAKER:

A remark has been made in this House, whether you were standing or not, which has been audible and, therefore, anything that happens in the House in those circumstances are under my jurisdiction and it is a simple matter. If you say you withdraw the remark you have said, well, that is the end of the matter. If you wish to stand on your remark you are entitled to do so. You can explain your reasons and it is up to me then to judge whether it should be withdrawn or not. It is as simple as that.

HON J BOSSANO:

I do not wish to withdraw any remarks, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, I will then have to ask you what you said.

HON J BOSSANO:

Well, I was commenting, Mr Speaker, on the fact that it is impossible to decide where the money is going if one is not told. That is what I was commenting about.

MR SPEAKER:

May I ask then whether you meant any personal imputation against any Member of this House?

HON J BOSSANO:

I don't see why that should be assumed, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

I am not assuming anything. I am asking you whether it was a direct personal im^utation against any Member of this House.

HON J BOSSANO:

No, Mr Speaker, it was not directed as a personal imputation against anybody in this House.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Chairman, the £30,000 in this item refers to the scheme for the Boys Comprehensive School which has been completed sometime ago, of course. But there was residual expenditure on it which Her Majesty's Government was prepared to provide and that is mainly in respect - I am confident I can recall this - of final finishings in furniture and the like.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Thank you. We are very grateful to the Government for the clarification of the Financial and Development Secretary but we think is a sorry state of affairs when £30,000 whoever they belong to or belonged to originally, cannot be explained by Honourable Members opposite in this House when the House is being asked to vote this money. Mr Speaker, we will vote in favour of this particular item because the explanation has been forthcoming.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the Financial and Development Secretary said this was finishing touches to the school. Can he say whether any part of it is construction work?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I will not speak with complete certainty but I am confident that it is not.

The Minister for Education may know this as well as I, that this is additional expenditure that we got for items of equipment and furniture in the school that has not been provided for.

(B) SCHOOLS was agreed to and passed.

(D) TOURIST & DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

HON W M ISOLA:

May I ask the Minister for Public Works under item 2 - £950 in respect of the extension of the Bathing Pier, that I see has been outstanding for nearly three years, is that in respect of the pier down at Camp Bay and will this be ready by the time the summer season comes?

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

Mr Speaker, the remarks column shows that this is a revote from 1972/73 because no work at all was done in 1972/73. This was a project initiated by the last administration and the money was voted but no work at all was done on the project. We thought we might start on it last year but we deferred it for other reasons. We are getting on with it in conjunction with the PSA. We are going to get a much bigger pier than was originally intended because it is being combined with the salt water intake to the Glen Rocky Distillers and it is providing a shield for that and as a result of that we are going to get a bigger pier than we would have got ourselves for the £4000. I am pressing the PSA daily to assure me that this will be finished before the beginning of the bathing season. There have been a lot of delays particularly in design and hitting rock when they did not expect to, but the promise by the PSA is still there that they are trying their best to get this finished before the beginning of the bathing season.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I think this might be one occasion in which the Government should be complimented for the delay in this project. Perhaps I should also compliment the Honourable and Gallant Member for not being aware why he should be complimented for the delay. But, Mr Speaker, I believe that

this is being done together with the PSA, as the Minister has said, and that the Department has stood firm against pressures from the PSA to extend this pier because the PSA was in greater need of the extension of the pier than was the Gibraltar Government and as a result by very skilful negotiations in which the Minister for Public Works may or may not be aware, it has been possible to reduce the cost to the Gibraltar Government quite substantially. Therefore, I have pleasure in congratulating the Honourable and Gallant Member for reducing the cost in this particular vote even though he may not be aware of it.

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

Thank you. A compliment from the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition is a compliment indeed. But some of the glory must reflect on him because this was started when they were in Government. I took the initiative in resisting the PSA on this, and I got them to do a lot more work for us than we could have done with this money.

(D) TOURIST AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS was agreed to and passed.

(E) OTHER DEVELOPMENT

HON M XIBERRAS:

This is obviously a very good project, Mr Speaker, not least because my Honourable Friend Mr Caruana submitted the application to ODA before. Well, we had the money for the stadium itself which has made a vast difference I can assure the Honourable Minister for Hockey, amongst other things. This is a very laudable effort, I think, and I would like to hear the Minister for Sports comment as I hope this item signifies the completion of the Sports Centre and, perhaps, the House could afford him the opportunity of saying a few words about the Sports Centre.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the money that we are asking for here is purely the extra money required this year for the purchasing of sports equipment which has shot up in price over the last two years quite substantially.

Other than that I think I will be making a statement later on about the Sports Centre and its completion or hopeful completion, in the near future.

HON M XIBERRAS:

To steal the Honourable Member's thunder, Mr Chairman, perhaps, he might assure us even at this early date that he will have the courtesy of inviting the Opposition to view the Sports Centre, a courtesy which was not extended in respect of the Varyl Begg Estate even now.

(E) OTHER DEVELOPMENT was agreed to and passed.

(F) MUNICIPAL SERVICES was agreed to and passed.

(G) CAR PARKS

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, on the question of car parks - my Honourable Friend Mr Caruana is not here - there is £275 only but, perhaps, the Honourable and Gallant Member might give an indication as to what they are going to be used for? This will give the House an indication of what is the latest car park to be built by the Government.

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

Mr Chairman, a slippage of £275 in the year out of a sum of £45,000 is something I don't think is worth commenting at all. We promised to do £45,000 worth of work last year and we were able to do all of it except £275.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Not even a few words of wisdom from the Minister. He prices himself, very, very highly, Mr Speaker. I just wanted an indication, perhaps an opportunity, for the Minister to let us know what was the last car park the Government had constructed. Apparently he cannot remember, it happened so long ago he cannot remember.

MR SPEAKER:

I am sure there will be plenty of opportunities for the Leader of the Opposition when we come to the Estimates.

(F) CAR PARKS was agreed to and passed.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I now have the honour to propose that the votes detailed in Supplementary Estimates Improvement and Development Fund No.4 of 1974/75 be approved and that the sum of £604,395 be appropriated to meet the expenditure detailed therein.

Mr Speaker proposed the question in the terms of the Honourable Financial and Development Secretary's motion.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, during the course of a number of questions raised in connection with the vote in respect of the Viaduct, certain statements were made by the Minister for Public Works and the Financial and Development Secretary which make somewhat confusing the situation as it affects the construction industry which is a major factor in the expenditure of funds from the Improvement and Development Fund. The construction industry at the moment, Mr Speaker, is involved in a major dispute over wages and clearly any disruption of the construction industry will have a very noticeable impact on the acceleration or otherwise of the development programme. So that if, in fact, the House is hoping to be able to vote sums because the programme is accelerated, for that to be realised would require that there should be industrial peace. Now, the situation that has come about in the last few weeks in the building industry has developed because the Union negotiating for construction workers has been told that Government would not approve the increase in wages that the Union was requesting. That situation, that policy which might be right or wrong but is one which the Government is entitled to follow, appears nevertheless to conflict with what has been said today in respect for example, of a major chunk of the construction industry - the Varyl Begg Estate - where on the one hand the Honourable Financial and Development Secretary has said that it would not make any difference to the sums available to Government for development what sums had to be

allocated in respect of cost increases due to the fluctuating clauses in the contract in which the Varyl Begg Estate and, indeed, other development projects had been negotiated with contractors. Therefore, this would not appear to be the reason why Government seeks to keep down the wage costs in the construction industry since it would not make any difference to the amount of money available from ODA for other projects. On the other hand, the Minister for Public Works has told the House that he does not know to what extent increased costs are due to increased wages, indeed, he has no idea whether increased wages are being approved or disapproved. This is done by the consultants and it is left up to the consultants, as the experts, to take these decisions. Now, if this is indeed the case and if indeed the House is concerned that the building programme should be accelerated and that the projects funded from the Improvement and Development Fund should proceed smoothly, then the House would no doubt wish to know whether it is the consultants who are putting the spanner in the works or the ODA who are putting the spanner in the works or, indeed, the Government putting the spanner in the works outside the House of Assembly whilst disclaiming all responsibility for it in the House.

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

Mr Speaker, I want to make it perfectly clear that I take no part whatsoever in negotiations about wages either about my own staff or the staff who are working for any contractor of ours, so I cannot be aware of what they are doing. What I have said is that our consultants are responsible to us for checking that the bills that they get, whether they be for material or labour or services or anything else, are correct in accordance with the contract. This is why they are appointed. If they were not appointed then we would have to increase our own staff to do those very jobs. I personally do not take any part in the negotiations and, therefore, it defeats me how I am expected to be aware of what goes on.

HON A J CANEPA:

Sir, I very much wonder to what extent it is proper for the Honourable Mr Bossano to bring to this House in a motion on the Improvement and Development Fund the problems which his union and he himself is facing in the private sector of the construction industry. I would hope that he would keep those problems outside this House and deal with them outside the House. He has said that there is a dispute over wages in the industry and that the Government is not approving an increase

in wages. The Government, Mr Speaker, in the last three or four months is being made the scapegoat by a number of people in Gibraltar for the problems that they are facing as a result of certain wage demands and this we have said repeatedly we are not prepared to put up with. Let people go and settle wage settlements in whatever industry they may be such as in this case the construction industry, on their merits. And let them for God's sake stop pointing the pistol at Government because it is politically convenient and politically popular to do that in order to use that as a stick for hitting at the Government. In December, 1974, Mr Speaker, an agreement was reached in the private sector of the construction industry with the union ~~and~~ that was adjudged to have the negotiating rights in that industry. The agreement was, and to my mind is, a perfectly valid agreement and it is to continue in force for two years unless it is ~~to be~~ reviewed after the results of the enquiry into wages in the public sector, is known. What we have now ~~had~~ is not a mere dispute of wages, Mr Speaker, but ~~is~~ a situation in which one union is vying with another in an area where the degree of representation is apparently unknown and is apparently confused. One union is vying with another to see which of the two can attract most members. And we have got a leap-frogging situation, one union offering so and so if the members join them and no doubt, sir, if that were to happen and the union were to get the negotiating rights ~~of~~ the industry and a new agreement were to be reached ~~rescinding~~ the valid one of December, 1974, then the other union, the first party, in this case the Gibraltar Workers Unions that signed the agreement in December 1974, would then offer the Moroccan workers who are in the majority in that industry not £60 but £90 or £100 and then we would have a drift towards the Gibraltar Workers Union. In other words, Mr Speaker, an utterly farcical situation going against all the best established principles of trade unionism and that, Mr Speaker, is what Mr Bossano is attempting and has brought to ~~the~~ *light* here this afternoon.

MR SPEAKER:

I have been very liberal because there have been certain allegations which I think I have allowed you to answer. I think it is perfectly proper for you to have said what you have said, but we must leave it at that.

HON A J CANEPA:

Well, Sir, he said the House would wish to know what is the Government's policy. It is not the House it is the Transport & General Workers Union

that wants to know, and Mr Bossano.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

There is only one point I would like to make, Sir, of the things that have been said about this matter, a point of fact of which we should be aware and that is that it is not correct to say though it has been said, I am sure unintentionally, and, perhaps, it has been lead to be said by what has been said on this side that it does not matter now much wages the workers of the Varyl Begg Estate are paid because the UK Government pay for those wages and therefore we are not interested. That is not strictly correct. We pay 25% of the wages and of the cost of the Varyl Begg Estate. This is paid by the people of Gibraltar. That is all.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I think the Honourable the Chief Minister has made a very relevant point, if I may say so, and one which was not seized by the Minister for Public Works when I was asking questions of him earlier on. It is important that statements of policy are made by Ministers in respect of labour in the construction industry. And these statements of policy should be borne out in actual development projects and the Minister responsible for this very big development project has in no way tallied with his colleague the Minister for Labour and, if I may say so, the Honourable and Learned the Chief Minister who has just made a statement which makes a mockery of the replies given by the Honourable and Gallant Minister for Public Works to my questions earlier.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

If the Honourable Leader of the Opposition will give way, I don't think that anything that I have said in any way conflicts with what the Minister was saying. He was saying that he was not responsible for the wages paid, that the consultants authorised it. The matter of policy is a different matter. Nothing that I have said, certainly not only not meant but it cannot possible be interpreted to mean that he should have known that. Even if he had known that the whole of the estate is paid by the people of Gibraltar, if we have consultants we have consultants.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, the Minister for Public Works should know whether part of it is paid by the people of Gibraltar or not and in any case the Minister for Public Works does have a responsibility and he does have staff assigned to his Department whose duty it is to look after these big development projects.

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

Mr Speaker, I did not say that this all came out of ODA funds, neither was I asked whether it was. I certainly know that a percentage of this comes out of the Gibraltar Government funds but what relevance has it? We have consultants to do this thing and it makes no difference at all.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, if the Honourable and Gallant Member cannot see the relevance of the questions then, perhaps, he should not be where he is. Because it is absolutely relevant for the Minister for Public Works to know that unless he can offer satisfactory explanation to the House as to whether there has been an inflationary effect and if this is due to wages or is not due to wages or is due to materials or it is not due to materials, then he is failing in his duty. Now, the Honourable and Learned Chief Minister has made it perfectly clear and has given even more compelling reasons why the Minister for Public Works should know what this extra money is going to.

MR SPEAKER:

We are dealing with the merits of the motion.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I refrained on your advice to commenting on the broader aspects of this until I came to this debate. Therefore, I am making this point now and I do repeat that I feel the Minister has not acquitted himself well in the House in answer to the questions asked of him. It is not for me to say, Mr Speaker, whether it is proper or not proper for the Honourable Mr Bossano to raise matters concerning the Union in this House I would have thought that any point, provided

it is within Standing Orders, which affects anybody in Gibraltar ^{let} alone a quite sizeable number of people, is relevant to the considerations of this House, and, therefore, the Honourable Mr Bossano has every right to bring these matters up in the House whether Mr Canepa likes it or does not like it for as long as you, Mr Speaker, are prepared to allow it under Standing Orders.

Mr Speaker, the point made by Mr Bossano, apart from that, is a very relevant point because the labour situation in the construction industry in the Varyl Begg Estate in particular is one which has given concern to the Honourable Mr Canepa himself and he, of his own accord, has brought this to the notice of the House on another occasion. Therefore the dispute now in the construction industry is of concern to this House and the Honourable Mr Canepa has to my mind been quite right in stating his point of view in reply to the Honourable Mr Bossano. But may I say that whereas I agree with the Honourable Mr Canepa that the main difficulties facing Gibraltar in the construction industry derives from the existence of two unions and of the danger of leap-frogging, I can give him little credit for trying to resolve the difficulties in the construction industry and in the Varyl Begg Estate between these unions. In fact, there is some evidence to suppose that some members of the Government are supporting one particular union against the other. I hope that this is not the case, but there is some evidence to suppose that this is the case.

HON A J CANEPA:

Would the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition care to substantiate that? I tell you why I make the point, Mr Speaker, because I remember at the last meeting of the House the Honourable Mr Bossano wondering how many Members of this House were members of the Gibraltar Workers Union, and which amounts to the same thing. Would they care to substantiate that allegation?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Perhaps it might be interesting to know how many Members opposite are members of the Transport and General Workers Union?

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, perhaps, the Honourable Members are interested and, perhaps, Honourable Members might enquire. Mr Speaker, it is absolutely relevant

to the consideration of this supplementary vote, I would say, to deal with this labour situation. However, the Honourable the Minister for Public Works has not been able to answer the questions that have been put to him and I think it is a sorry state of affairs, moving on to a different point, it is a sorry state of affairs when £¹/₂m are being asked for the House for approval and the Minister has so very little to say. It is also a very sorry state of affairs when £30,000 require such insistent prodding by Honourable Members of the Opposition before someone - we are most grateful to the Financial and Development Secretary - before someone stands up and says that these £30,000 are in respect of this work. And Honourable Members who were here at the last House will know that there were very few occasions, if any, when my Honourable Colleagues on that side of the House did not have some sort of explanation for monies that they were asking the House to vote. And it is a very sorry state of affairs that Honourable Members opposite are not able to keep up to the same standard. Therefore, Mr Speaker, however much the Chief Minister may laugh he was not able to laugh before when the questions were being asked and he himself did not know the answers to them, much less his colleagues. Mr Speaker, we shall not, of course, vote against the Varyl Begg Estate supplementary provision and the hurrahs of the other side are well deserved because, after all, it was us who negotiated the original sum of money with Her Majesty's Government.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

You paid for the land.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Yes, and a good deal more new building than Honourable Members opposite have been able to get in their time. However, if we are in again or when we are in again, we shall make sure that the Honourable Mr Serfaty is able to visit the new projects when they are ready. Perhaps, he might influence his colleagues to be a bit more courteous with Honourable Members of the Opposition in the future.

Mr Speaker, therefore, of course we support these projects. I think in any case that most of these projects were initiated by Honourable Members on this side of the House so how can we go against them? It is three years since the Government has been in power and still we have not seen anything major in their time, except for the Honourable Mr Zammitt's - perhaps I am insulting my Honourable Friend Mr Caruana in saying this - the Honourable Mr Zammitt's Sports Centre. Apart from that, we have seen so very little development

HON A W SERFATY:

You will see, you will see.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I am sure we will, Mr Speaker I am sure we will and I hope we will see much more development and I hope we see more developments than we have seen in the last three years, because that has been very little indeed. And more plane seats I am reminded. All this is good for Gibraltar. We shall not vote against the Varyl Begg Estate and we shall, conditional on the comments that we have made, we shall support this vote.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to say one thing briefly because there is one thing I must say. In saying it I admit to being slow of wit, sometimes inept in statement and always simple minded in political thought, but I do have to put the context in which I made the statement that it would not have made any difference to the aid that we got whether the Varyl Begg Estate project costs that much more or not. I was at that time addressing myself to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition's statement that here we were voting an additional £ $\frac{1}{2}$ m on this project and my simple thought there was, yes, but we are voting Her Majesty's Government's money and that as it happened and it is as well to know, would not have affected. Now, I was not meaning to say by any means nor could I say that it makes no difference whether costs in the construction industry rise in Gibraltar more than can be avoided and, of course, that I could never say even if the UK aid could pay for it. This is not in Gibraltar's interest and it is not in the UK interest. But I feel I must say that it was not in that context that I made the statement.

Mr Speaker then put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and the House approved the votes detailed in Supplementary Estimates. Improvement and Development Fund No 4 of 1974/75 and that the sum of £604,395 be appropriated to meet the expenditure detailed therein.

BILLS

FIRST AND SECOND READING

(T) The Social Insurance (Amendment) Ordinance 1975.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that a Bill for an Ordinance to amend the Social Insurance Ordinance (Cap 145) be read a first time.

Mr Speaker put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and the Bill was read a first time.

SECOND READING

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that the Bill be now read a second time. Sir, in the course of the revision of the Social Insurance Scheme which has now very recently been completed, representations were received from a number of employed persons who had opted to enter or, in some cases, re-enter insurance when the opportunity was given in 1973, but who did not pay arrears of contribution on that occasion, which would have covered the period from when they first became employed, because they could not afford the arrears in one sum as was required at the time. In the current revision, Mr Speaker, however, those who did not opt to re-enter voluntarily then but who have been brought in compulsorily now, are being given the chance to pay the arrears by instalments over a period of five years or before they reach pensionable age, whichever may be the earlier and, therefore, Sir, they have been placed in a much more favourable position with regard to their acquiring entitlement to full benefits in due course than those who elected to come in in 1973. The point was raised by the Honourable Mr Bossano in a question in the House at the last meeting, and I undertook to introduce legislation because the Government was already considering the matter and the Bill which is now before the House, Mr Speaker, therefore, gives those concerned the opportunity to pay arrears of contributions over a period of time in the same way as for those who

came in as part of the revision that I have referred to. The number involved, Mr Speaker, may be as many as 347 although not all of them may necessarily or will necessarily elect to pay arrears. Mr Speaker, I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr Speaker then invited discussion on the general principles and merits of the Bill.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, we welcome this Bill insofar as it puts right really an injustice which dates back to 1973 when people were allowed to come into the Social Insurance Scheme provided all the arrears were paid in one go and the Government, as an employer, gave favoured treatment to its employees allowing them to pay or rather financing the payment of arrears and allowing them to pay the Government in instalments, and the rest to the working population who could have gone in at that time were precluded from so doing. At the time, from this side of the House my Honourable Friend Mr Bossano and members of the Opposition protested strongly at this injustice and asked that statutory provision should be made to enable people to pay their arrears in instalments and, in fact, we made a public pledge, if I remember rightly, that when the Opposition was returned to Government that that point would be put right. Well, fortunately, the Minister in moving this Bill has put that right so in that respect there is no need to return as has been said on the other side. But it is a pity that it is nearly two years - I don't know if anybody in the interim period has been affected by it, I would hope not - but it is a pity that it has taken the Government two years almost to devise a Bill that will enable to be done what they said could not be done in 1973. Certainly, in welcoming this Bill we would certainly like to hear from the Minister how it is that this is now possible in March, 1975, whereas it was not possible or practical in 1973. Because by such things we will be able to judge how far the Government cannot do things, how far the Government's claims that it cannot do things are correct when they are made because we have had a number of instances in the last couple of years in the field of social insurance as well as in other areas where Government has said it cannot be done and then it has done it. Certainly, we would welcome some explanation on that point. We are glad that however late it may be the Government is now putting right an injustice or putting right a discrimination that it carried out in 1973 when opportunity was given to certain sections to come into the Social Insurance Scheme or rather to pay up arrears in one lump sum and certain people were financed by the Government in this and no such financing was given to other sections

of the population who equally, we felt, had the right to pay their arrears in instalments as clearly they could not pay it in one lump sum. But certainly, Sir, we welcome this amending Bill.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, this is one of these happy occasions where the Opposition has had its way on a matter of some importance to a good number of people. The Minister said that this could not be done, as my Honourable Friend Mr Isola has stated. I believe he said it offended against the principles of insurance and that there were administrative difficulties. I am very glad that some time later without offending against either of these two things, it has been possible to allow these people to pay their arrears. And welcome as this amending measure is to the Opposition, I think I owe it to those who have represented it to me to put it to the Minister now for consideration before the Committee Stage and Third Reading of this Ordinance, to suggest especially in those cases of persons in official employment who have had an interrupted run of service, the employers should contribute to these arrears on the consideration that it was not their fault in many cases that the law did not allow them to contribute to social insurance after they had reached the salary of £500 per annum. It has been represented to me that there should be some indication from the Official Departments that the employer should contribute to the payment of these arrears. Of course, we think that there is so much better a case for allowing these people to come into the scheme by the payment of arrears than there is for the employers to contribute, but I would ask the Minister to consider further whether employers, especially the good employers, the official employers, should contribute in the case of persons with uninterrupted service to the payment of these arrears. It has further been represented to me that a system should be elaborated whereby some official documentation could be had by way of stamps and so forth for the payment of these arrears. There is, I believe, some connection between the payment of social insurance contributions and the deductions made in respect of works pensions which is not so clear at present as to put the employer under some obligation to make an adjustment in the deductions which he makes in respect of works pensions. I don't know whether the Minister knows what I am talking about but if he doesn't perhaps he would interrupt me so that I do not lose my right to speak.

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, I think he is referring to the statement of occupational pensions.

Where I would like some clarification, Sir, before I exercise my right to reply is on the interrupted service or non-interrupted service. I think he was referring to interrupted service. I would like some clarification on that, Sir.

HON M XIBERRAS:

No, I was talking about continuous service where I think that a person who has been working for the Gibraltar Government, MOD or PSA as it is now, and has ceased in the intervening period covered by the arrears to be an employee of these concerns would not have a very good case for asking the employer to contribute part of his arrears. A person who has had continuous service over 20 years or so does have a case for asking the employer to pay a part of these arrears. Of course if this were applied to the official employers including the Government, there might be a case for asking the private employer to do the same but I feel that the obligation is, perhaps, that bit stronger in the case of the official employer than it is in the case of the private employer that is subject to vicissitudes of a commercial nature and also a bigger turnover in labour and so forth. In the case of the official employers continuous service as I say could not the Minister prevail on the employers to contribute? I think that the deadline was sometime ago but if the Minister could do this, this would be a further step in this particular Bill and I think it might tidy up the operation.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, Sir, certainly to incorporate a provision in the Bill imposing a duty on employers to pay a contribution would be one of the most repugnant features it is possible for a bill to have, that is retrospective taxation, and quite honestly I could never recommend that a Bill of that nature should ever be passed.

HON M XIBERRAS:

If the Honourable Member will give way.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

No, not at the moment. The benefits are accruing of course to the employee. He has the option as to whether to pay the back payments.

But it would be an intolerable burden to impose on an employer to now compel him to pay an employer's contribution which for some years or until the law was changed then in 1973, were not payable.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Honourable Member for giving way.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am not giving way, I am sitting down.

HON M XIBERRAS:

He would rather not hear what I have to say.

HON A J CANEPA:

Sir, with regard to the latter

HON M XIBERRAS:

Would the Honourable Mr Canepa give way?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, Sir.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I am grateful to the Honourable Mr Canepa. It is an object lesson to the Attorney-General. Well, perhaps, he might bear with me.

MR SPEAKER:

Honourable Members who hold the floor are entitled to decide whether they should or should not give way and that should not be a subject for comment.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I am most grateful to Mr Canepa for giving way, and, perhaps, what I have to say very briefly might aid him in his reply. Repugnant as the retrospective taxation may be to the Attorney-General, I think it is equally our duty to try to see that people are not hard done by because of past mistakes. Fortunately, the Honourable the Attorney-General has spoken in such a broad way that he seems not to want to make up for past mistakes. However, not for his benefit but for the benefit of

MR SPEAKER:

I must remind Members of one thing. Giving way means to reply to something that a person who gives way is saying and is not to be taken as an opportunity to make another speech because the other speaker has not got the right to reply.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Very briefly, Mr Speaker, I was not asking the Honourable Mr Canepa necessarily to incorporate this in the law I was asking him - I think the words I used were "to prevail" and I said before the Committee Stage because this is the opportunity the House has for discussing these matters. But the Honourable Attorney-General can rest easy and keep his legal principles absolutely sacrosanct and we shall deal with principles of justice and equity on the other hand, Mr Speaker, perhaps the Honourable Mr Canepa might make a statement to the effect - not necessarily now but later on - to the effect that he will see it as a good thing that there should be some contribution, perhaps not for the entire period of the arrears but for a part of the period of the arrears, to prevail upon the Official Employers.

HON A J CANEPA:

being taken through
Sir, let me say that I hope the Leader of the Opposition appreciates that the reason why the Bill is taken into all the stages was because I was under the impression since the Honourable Mr Bossano had raised the matter in the House last time, that we were all desirous that this should be put into effect as soon as possible. The other thing is, Sir, that I am rather sorry in a way that one is accessible to the public and one gives an opportunity through a good deal of advertising,

takes the trouble to be

as it were, through the public media of these matters for the public to come to the Department and make representations and see officials and see myself in order to try to be of as much assistance as possible. And the whole question of the payment of arrears is not a matter as Members on the other side of the House have remarked, which has come up recently and, in fact, I made a statement in this House, Sir, before we broke up for the summer recess in which I did refer to the fact that we would be giving opportunities for people to pay arrears, the Bills were published last August and throughout the last two or three months the whole question of social insurance has been very much in the air. And yet, I haven't had anybody coming to me, Mr Speaker, or coming to any official in my Department who report to me on the kind of representations that we are receiving. I haven't had anybody coming to me to bring up this question about whether the Official Employers, in particular, ought themselves or not to have borne some brunt of these arrears in the case of continuous service. In that way it is a pity because I would have had more time to consider the matter but I think that I know sufficiently about it to make one point that does strike me which will give a somewhat different perspective to the question and it is linked to the fact that in particular under the National Superannuation Act in the UK, employers are required to abate occupational pensions certainly in respect of employees in the Public Service, to abate these pensions in respect of that share which the employer has made of the national insurance contribution and the amount by which it is abated is the employers share of the single person's contribution. ~~That~~ ^{is met by} fraction of the contribution record of the individuals that has been made by the employer, ~~that fraction of the~~ pension which the husband gets. The wife's pension is sacrosanct, that cannot be touched. That sum of money is then abated it is deducted from the occupational pension. And having ~~read~~ ^{heard} that point, Sir, I think the Leader of the Opposition will appreciate that it may well not be in the interest of an individual provided that he can afford the sum of money involved, ~~that~~ could be as much as £250, it is probably not in his interest that the employer should make a contribution towards those arrears because then the pension which the individual gets from his employer will be abated and this ~~statement~~ ^{statement} will continue, it will recur from time to time, when there are increases in the social insurance pension. And so you get the situation, Mr Speaker, whereby, for instance, a civil servant who is now near retirement is given an opportunity to pay the arrears himself. He may only have another few years of contribution to go before he becomes qualified for an old age pension, ^{but} if he has paid all the arrears himself ^{his} ~~then~~ retirement pension, his occupational pension cannot be touched by the employer and therefore he can get a full pension from his employer together with his full old-age pension for himself and his wife and that person, all things being considered, I think is in a better position than

if his employer had borne part of the contributions, ^{particularly so} and in successive revisions, Sir, the employer is paying a bigger and bigger share of the contribution and, therefore, the degree of abatement would be greater. That is the position for the United Kingdom Departments. Now, Sir, as far as the Gibraltar Government is concerned, we apply the rule of thumb an administrative rule of thumb which is, let me say, rather more generous. This we do because we think that we should give the lead as employers. But that is my reaction on the spot to the matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition. There may be other aspects, Sir.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Would the Honourable Member allow me to tell these people who have represented this to me to get in touch with them?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, Sir. They can get in touch with me or with the Department. Now, Sir, it is not correct to say that it is only now in March that we have, if you like, revised our thinking on the question of arrears. This was very much evident last summer and in August, as I said previously, Bills were published that gave people the opportunity to pay arrears. Having taken that step it was only logical that an oversight should be corrected at the earliest opportunity, ^{an} oversight which has been consequent primarily on the facilities to pay arrears that we extended last August. I don't think that those who in 1973 were not given the opportunity to pay arrears but who are now being given the opportunity to put things right, ~~I hope that no one~~ will have been adversely affected because for a start those persons in 1973 were all below the age of 55 and, therefore, today they would still have with the opportunity to pay arrears over five years ^{my} they should suffer no hardship in the sense that the arrears will ^{not} have to be paid in any period less than five years. It could well be though that a widow could have been left as a result of someone dying in the interim period. There, yes, I am afraid, Sir, that could have been an element of hardship and one regrets the matter. Another point that has been made, Sir, is why did I say in 1973 this could not be done, this was against all the principles of insurance, and now I have revised my thinking. It is a question of advice, Sir. It is a question of advice that one gets. We try to enunciate policy and we try and see and discuss with our officials in our department how best that policy can be implemented. And the advice that I was receiving at the time was that this could not be done as it went against the principles of insurance. And I did say - I remember, Sir, - when

Honourable Members opposite raised the matter on an adjournment - I think it was in July 1973 - I said: "look, I may be wrong, I am going to look into this and I am going to seek further advice. I have got somebody from UK coming to advise me on pensions, I will discuss the matter with him". Another thing that happened was that a Deputy Director of Labour was recruited and when we were discussing the problem he explained how, during the period of time when he was employed as Commissioner of Labour in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, he was given an opportunity by the Department of Health and Social Security in UK to make up his backlog, his arrears, of national insurance contributions. From there the idea germinated and we were able to give it legal effect. This is the way things happen in Departments. We are there with our officials and some people are able to come up with advice which meets more with the realities of the situation than others. That is the reason, pure and simple.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr Speaker put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and the Bill was read a second time.

The Honourable the Minister for Labour & Social Security gave notice that the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill would be taken at a later stage in the proceedings.

This was agreed to.

The Administration of Estates (Amendment) Ordinance, 1975

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have the honour to move that a Bill for an Ordinance to amend the Administration of Estates Ordinance (Cap 1) be read a first time.

Mr Speaker put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and the Bill was read a first time.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have the honour to move that this Bill be now read a second time. The practice followed in Gibraltar in the administration of estates of deceased persons is, by and large, the same as that followed in the United Kingdom - or I should say England. This is because such practice has been found to be appropriate to our needs here. If, of course it were not appropriate then we would not follow it, we would have our own legislation. Certain changes were made in England in 1971 ~~which~~ ^{and it} is considered that we can usefully adopt these changes here although in one instance one of the changes made in England applied here, in my opinion, automatically by virtue of a provision in our Supreme Court Ordinance. We are now merely proposing to write into our Administration of Estates Ordinance a provision which is - I won't say already by implication - but which is thereby perhaps, we might call it, reference. Clause 2 introduces a new section relating to the giving of guarantees where there is a grant of administration to an estate. Until 1971 on any grant of administration the person to whom the grant was made was required to give a bond, a security if you would like to put it that way, to ensure that he could administer the estate properly. And, in addition, he ~~could~~ be ordered to produce sureties. This was - I am sure members will appreciate - to prevent beneficiaries being adversely affected by careless or mal-administration. Very often this requirement to give a bond was not necessary. Perhaps the Administrator or personal representative could well himself have been either the main or the sole beneficiary and if he made a hash of the administration he only stood to lose. For that reason it was often not easy for a poor person either to give the requisite bond or even to find a surety to back his own bond. For this reason, therefore the law was changed with the result that the personal representative is not now required to give a bond and the Court has a discretion as to whether to order a surety to be provided or not. And that is what, we are now writing into our law in the new clause (2). Strictly speaking there is no need for this clause to appear in the Bill. Under the Supreme Court Ordinance our Supreme Court is given all the powers, jurisdictions authorities vested in the High Court in England, and it would, therefore, have power to order a surety to be given. But it seems that it is far preferable from the point of view of the practitioner in Gibraltar, to have this specific provision included in our Ordinance.

Clause (3) repeals one section of the existing Ordinance and puts in two new sections in its place. The first, which puts in the new section 27 is intended to state more clearly and more comprehensively the duties of a personal representative be he an executor or be he an administrator. The new section 27A abolishes two rights of personal

representatives which exists at the moment, the right of preference and the right of retainer, neither of which it is felt can any longer be justified. This is a highly technical matter ^{more of interest to} ~~before~~ the practitioners and we are virtually in a majority in the House at the moment though not quite. The right of preference is the right of a personal representative to pay creditors of the same class in such order as he pleases. The right of retainer is the privilege of a personal representative as against creditors of equal degree or lower degree to take out of the assets of the ~~estate~~ ^{estate} or the intestate as the case may be, sufficient to meet any debt owing to himself. We abolished these two rights as they have been abolished in England.

Clause (4) is a necessary provision. The Second Schedule of the Ordinance refers to certain consular treaties which His Majesty's Government as it then was in 1940 - the time the section was enacted - had with certain other countries. There were seven countries named there. In three cases that of Greece, Japan and Yugoslavia the treaties ceased to exist and we struck them out of our Ordinance as it has no further effect.

Lastly, the new clause (5). It often occurs that a person dies in a country leaving some property in that country and other property in other countries. His personal representative takes out a grant of administration in the country where the property is. But that grant does not enable him to deal with property in other countries and, therefore, he has to go to each country where there is property and get the permission, if I may put it that way, of the courts of that country to administer the property in that country. Now, there is a simple way of doing this in Gibraltar which is called the re-sealing of ~~the~~ Probate and in many Commonwealth countries there is similar legislation whereby if you go to the courts of a country with a grant of administration granted in another country, the courts will merely re-seal and allow you to deal with the estate in that country. This applies equally to ~~measures granted~~ ^{grants} in Gibraltar they can be re-sealed in the United Kingdom or vice versa and several other Commonwealth countries. What we are doing now is that we are amending our Probate Re-sealing Ordinance ^{by} ~~in~~ the procedure for re-sealing entirely into line with the procedure as it is in the United Kingdom but also more in line with the procedure for personal representation here of our own grant of administration. Mr Speaker, I commend the Bill to this Honourable House.

Mr Speaker invited discussions on the general principles and merits of the Bill.

HON W M ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, this side of the House of course welcomes the amendment to the Administration of Estates Ordinance. In fact, any legislation which brings the Gibraltar law up to date and streamlines it is welcomed by this side. But talking of the principles of the Bill and since we are now bringing up to date our Administration of Estates Ordinance, there is one section which I have seen that the Honourable and Learned the Attorney-General has not considered to up date and that is the section dealing with the person who dies intestate and only £3,000 going to the widow or husband as the case may be. I understand that in England this sum is a much higher one - £15,000. I think that in view of the fact that since this Administration of Estates Ordinance was enacted in 1954, this might be the opportunity of bringing it up to £5,000 in the case of the husband and wife. I bring this up because I am the only Member who can talk about this without having a direct interest in this particular matter. But in all seriousness I do feel that this might be an opportunity to up date the £3,000 to £5,000 in the case of husband or wife dying intestate. In other respects, of course, this side of the House welcomes the Bill and of course will vote in favour of it.

MR Speaker then put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and the Bill was read a second time.

The Honourable the Attorney-General gave notice that the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill should be taken at a subsequent meeting of the House.

The Criminal Justice Administration (Amendment) Ordinance, 1975.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have the honour to move that a Bill for an Ordinance to amend the Criminal Justice Administration Ordinance. (Cap 36) to enable persons who are the subject of attendance orders to receive treatment training and employment at places other than an attendance centre, be read a first time.

Mr Speaker put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and the Bill was read a first time.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have the honour to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Our law in its wisdom as does the law in many other civilised countries, provides that a Court in the case of an offender under the age of 21 may instead of ordering him to be incarcerated, order him to attend an attendance centre for the purpose of being treated. The idea being that, if possible, it is better to change an offender into a better citizen and if you can do so by treatment rather than sending him to prison then this should be done. In Gibraltar the only attendance centre at present is the Fire Station and the Chief Fire Officer is the officer in charge of the attendance centre. Necessarily the type of treatment which can be received or which an offender can receive at the Fire Station is restricted. In the past it has been confined very largely to cleaning, painting, and perhaps, polishing. This may be all very well but it does not, perhaps, change the offender into a better person. It is proposed, therefore, and the new Bill will achieve this, to allow the Chief Fire Officer to order the offender once he is seen at attendance centre to attend at some other place. The Chief Fire Officer will receive advice, perhaps from the Probation Officer, perhaps from the Principal Youth and Careers Officer, perhaps from other persons who are interested in the particular offender and he will attempt to decide what is the best way that this particular offender shall be trained or treated. Perhaps the offender might at some stage have shown an interest in sport. But, perhaps, this is lapsed because he has got a little bit older although the interest is still latent. In that case it would be quite possible for the offender to be encouraged to join some sporting club and he will go there and be encouraged to take part in games again. Or the offender might be encouraged to take up some kind of social work in which case we might go round with the Welfare Officer and be not only of assistance to the community but at the same time foster in his own self a communal spirit. We are giving to the officer in charge of the attendance centre wider powers to deal with offenders in the hope that this will make them better citizens. Polishing and cleaning, let us be quite frank about this, is not the best solution and in these more enlightened days if there is a wider power to look at each offender and decide the best way to treat him, then let us adopt this course. Mr Speaker, I commend the Bill to this Honourable House.

Mr Speaker invited discussion on the general principles and merits of the Bill.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, it is very gratifying to hear such liberal philosophies enunciated by the Honourable and Learned Member. As an ex-chairman of the Prison Board and Minister responsible for the Prison, I have the greatest sympathy for the philosophy of Dostoyevsky for the correction of crime and punishment rather than simple condemnation of it, and it is very gratifying to hear the remarks of the Honourable and Learned the Attorney-General, whose general views I would not have easily have categorised as falling in that particular place, and to say that it is good not only to have probation centres of this kind at fire station which despite the lack of expertise, has done a very admirable job of work in the past and to say that we need even more facilities, even better treatment, than polishing etc, etc, although I am sure the Honourable and Learned Member would be the first to admit that simple discipline can it itself be corrective of sorts. We on this side of the House have absolutely no hesitation in supporting this particular Bill and we hope that certain deficiencies in our treatment of persons who have been found guilty of some crime, however petty, will be forthcoming from that side of the House and we are absolutely certain that the Attorney-General after that particular intervention will support measures of this particular kind, that is, measures aimed at correcting the offender especially young offenders and not simply allowing him, after punishment, to go his own way.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, the question of improving the existing set-up regarding attendance centres for young persons became very much a top priority for the Child Care and Probation Committee at its first meeting last May. They are very much concerned and very much in favour of the provisions contained in this Bill. The Bill has also been cleared with the Family Care Unit and, therefore, has the full support of my Department. The approach which is going to be adopted as a result of this legislation is - I am sure Members opposite will be delighted to hear - very much in line with the latest thinking in the United Kingdom on this matter and I was able personally to confirm this last week because we had a visit from Miss Pamela Thayer whom I know that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition when he was in my place met in 1970. She was here at the time on an official visit and drew up a very

valuable report, the recommendations of which, most of them, 90%, have now been implemented, and she was able to confirm that this was the right approach to take. It is a more positive, a more constructive approach whereby young persons will, it is hoped, be performing useful social work for the community under the right sort of supervision instead of merely being asked to do work which, with the very best will in the world, could nevertheless be for young persons somewhat soul destroying.

So the Bill certainly has my full support, Sir.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I would just like to say a word. I fully support the Bill of course, but I think this would be a good opportunity to pay tribute to the help that has been received from the Fire Brigade because when the idea of attendance centres was first broached in the time of the City Council and the Government approached the then City Council, every possible institution had been approached in Gibraltar to see whether they could help and it was only the Fire Brigade that came forward and even though that may not have been the best, it has served as a starting point and it is from there that we can take it now. But the officers and the men of the Fire Brigade have given considerable thought and considerable care to this matter and in fairness I should mention the last Fire Chief, Mr Keith Hoare, who though a disciplinarian in many respects in this matter has taken a very personal interest and to the other men and the new Chief Fire Officer and I think this is a good opportunity to show our appreciation for the work they have done from which we can go to better measures.

Mr Speaker put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and the Bill was read a second time.

The Honourable Attorney-General gave notice that the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill should be taken at a subsequent meeting of the House.

The Banking and Financial Dealings (Amendment) Ordinance, 1975.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have the honour to move that a Bill for an Ordinance to amend the Banking Financial Dealings Ordinance 1973 (No 20 of 1973) be read a first time.

Mr Speaker put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and the Bill was read a first time.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move that this Bill be now read a second time. It is a very brief Bill which fixes the late summer bank holiday as being on the last Monday in August rather than being on the nearest Monday to the last Monday in August whether it be in September or August. Experience, particularly in the business field, has shown that it is more satisfactory to have our bank holiday on the same day as it is in the United Kingdom. In the United Kingdom it is now the last Monday in August in every year. It is not as has been in the past a Monday in September in some occasions. Mr Speaker, I might say in passing that the Bill is also providing that the public holiday is also on the last Monday in August, not on August or September as it is at the moment. Mr Speaker, I commend the Bill to this House.

Mr Speaker invited discussion on the general principles and merits of the Bill.

HON P J ISOLA:

We welcome the Bill as another good reason for the Opposition not having to go back to Government for the time being. As you will no doubt recollect we did raise this question of having the late summer holiday some considerable time ago on the last Monday in August. We were told that this was not possible for a number of reasons one of them being that the first Monday in the School term was a holiday. But, anyway, Sir, it is no use having recriminations and we are glad that the Government is back on the path to sanity.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am not quite sure what the Honourable Mr Isola means by the first

Monday in school term being a holiday. I would fully support the Bill as we would like the first Monday of September to be the start of the school term and should the first Monday in September be a bank holiday it would mean the school term would be inordinately delayed perhaps, to the joy of students but definitely not very easy for the department's working out of the schedules. I fully support this.

Mr Speaker put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and the Bill was read a second time.

The Honourable Attorney-General gave notice that the Committee Stage and Third Reading of the Bill would be taken at a subsequent meeting of the House.

The Supplementary Appropriation (1974-75) Ordinance, 1975.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Bill for a Supplementary Appropriation Ordinance which has been circulated was, of course, drafted to cover supplementary expenditure approved in the schedules of Supplementary Estimates Nos 4 and 5. Sir, as we are not proceeding at this stage of the present meeting with the Supplementary Estimates No 5, with your leave, Sir, I propose that I introduce a Supplementary Appropriation Ordinance likewise at a later stage of this meeting.

MR SPEAKER:

On this one you will be entitled to say that you would rather defer the First Reading of the Bill until a later stage but the Bill that you present to this meeting must be the one you have here. It can be amended, of course, to meet any contingencies but it is this Bill that you have to present to this meeting of the House at a later stage. All you are asking now, of course, is that the presentation of the First Reading should be deferred to a later stage of the meeting, which is perfectly in order.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Let me say, Mr Speaker, that this of course we have discussed this briefly just before the lunch recess. The point about this is, of course, that this is linked with the exchange that we had just before the lunch interval which culminated in the Chief Minister making certain remarks about having a sitting sometime during this coming week.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but this is not relevant now. In other words the consequences of the action taken this morning is that the Bill cannot be taken now. But, anyway, say what you have to say.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Sir, what I wanted to say is that if this should become necessary I as well as yourself, Mr Speaker, am willing to return from London and if necessary cancel my visit to London in order to attend to this matter. I should hope, of course, naturally, that this should not become necessary but I wish to make it clear to Honourable Members that I am prepared to return or to forego the visit. The way in which this might not become necessary hopefully for myself and for Honourable Members as well is if a statement of sufficient detail should be made in the course of this part of the meeting at the appropriate time.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, I have made this clear to the Leader of the Opposition that first thing tomorrow morning the Financial and Development Secretary will give an explanation of the reasons why he did not proceed with the Supplementary Estimates and give details and circulate an amended one as early as possible.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this House should resolve itself into committee to consider the following Bills clause by clause:

The Administrator - General's (Amendment) Bill, 1974.

The Social Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 1975.

The Administrator - General's (Amendment) Bill, 1974.

Clause 1

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I beg to give notice that Clause 1 of the Bill be amended by deletion of the figures "1974" and the substitution therefor of the figures "1975".

Mr Speaker put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and Clause 1, as amended, was agreed to and stood part of the Bill.

Clauses 2 to 12 were agreed to and stood part of the Bill.

The Long Title was agreed to and stood part of the Bill.

The Social Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 1975.

Clauses 1 and 2 were agreed to and stood part of the Bill.

The Long Title was agreed to and stood part of the Bill.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have the honour to ^{report} ~~move~~ that the Administrator General's (Amendment) Bill, 1975, and the Social Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 1975, have been considered in committee and agreed to. In the case of the Administrator General's Bill with amendments. I now move that they be read a third time and do pass.

Mr Speaker put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and the Bill were read a third time and passed.

MR SPEAKER:

I would now ask whether we recess now until tomorrow morning or we can start on the Private Members Motion standing in the name of the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I don't mind, Sir. What I wanted for tomorrow was the statement by the Financial and Development Secretary.

MR SPEAKER:

We can come back tomorrow basically for about 20 minutes and we would be gaining time. If that is the case the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition will have to move under the Standing Order 7(3) that his motion be taken now. That is all we have to do.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I have no objection to moving my motion, now, Mr Speaker. I shall not be very long at it but I would like to know what is going to happen tomorrow.

Does the Government envisage that it will be possible to go through the Supplementary Estimates which are being talked about tomorrow.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, I think I made it clear that what I intended tomorrow would be for an explanation to be made and the amended supplementary estimates would be circulated as soon as possible. This is what was asked for earlier on and this is what will be done.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, Mr Speaker, I then move that the motion standing in my name be taken at this stage.

Mr Speaker then put the question and this was agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTIONS

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I have the honour to move: "that this House is concerned with the general implications to the employment situation of the policy of compulsory retirement at 65 announced by PSA/DOE, one of the official employers in JIC, and with the personal hardship to the individuals concerned, in view of the inadequacies and shortcomings of the pension situation".

Mr Speaker, even though certainly in this last year, there have been a number of issues affecting the official employers and a union or unions, it has not been our habit to bring all these matters before the House. However, in this particular case since the House has a responsibility, and Ministers in particular, for the general level of pensions and the Government as a member of JIC and the question of retirement at a particular age in any of the official employers necessarily carries with it some connection with Government as an employer, we have thought it fit to raise this matter in this House to express our concern.

Mr Speaker, as is known PSA/DOE announced this policy of compulsory retirement at 65 and the Transport and General Workers Union and the Gibraltar Workers Union both protested against it. I believe the position is at present that PSA/DOE are considering the arguments put by the Transport and General Workers Union and the matter has remained there but as my motion says the implications are serious. Honourable members are aware that without going into figures there are quite a number of over 65's employed in PSA/DOE and these persons are, by and large, persons who have given good service over many years to that particular employer. They are, in fact, characteristic of a generation of persons who have given their working life to the official employers, generally, and who have come to expect an element of permanency in this official employment. We know that we are going through hard times now and we know that there are certain pressures on employers, but Members in this House and now least Members of long standing in this House, have a special obligation to this generation which started work at the time when conditions were far from ideal. They are people who perhaps have worked during the way years, people who have devoted as I say their whole working lives in the service of Gibraltar in a very direct way by working for the Official Employers. I speak of them in this general vein because the workers in PSA who are threatened with

dismissal now have their counterparts in the Dockyard and in the Gibraltar Government. There was a time, only recently, when the services of many of these men were essential to Gibraltar. I speak of 1969 with the withdrawal of Spanish labour when many old people were regarded, rightly, as being absolutely essential for their skills to Gibraltar after the Spanish labour force had been withdrawn. And our memory should not be so short as to now allow them to be dismissed simply because they are over 65. It is about the implications of the announcement that we should in this House be concerned. I do not have exact statistics but in the Dockyard there are, one can see at a glance going through it, a good number of older people who might also - though there has been I make this clear no indication of this from the Dockyard management - who might be in a similar position should the announced policy of PSA/DOE be adopted by the other Official Employers or another Official Employer which is the Dockyard and then the repercussions simply in terms of numbers affected would be that more serious. I have every confidence that the Gibraltar Government would under no circumstances adopt a similar policy but of course I must ask the Minister for Labour or the Chief Minister for reassurance on this particular point. If, at worst, the official employers or if, at worst, PSA should persist in their course and if, worse still - pardon the extra superlative - the Dockyard should follow suit, then we are going to be landed with a very serious problem. There is, of course, the present employment situation to continue. We had an indication only this morning from the Minister for Labour that it is not as easy now as it was some time ago for persons to obtain employment in Gibraltar. Persons over 65 naturally find it that more difficult to get employment. I would say this announcement by PSA is particularly inopportune in view of their employment situation. If we in Gibraltar suffered from a surplus from our own labour then perhaps some, more conservative, might justify a cut on that particular age level. But the situation is not at all that. We suffer from a dearth of our own Gibraltarian, labour and, therefore, we import labour to the tune of some 3,600 or so from outside. And amongst those 3,600 there must be skilled people, there must be people who cannot for the moment be replaced by Gibraltarians but also there must be people whose jobs can be done by Gibraltarians even if they are 65 years old. Mr Speaker, there might be other attenuating circumstances but, unfortunately, they do not exist. If we had a Pension Scheme, a Social Insurance Scheme which allowed a man to retire and live on his pension without the need to work then, of course, some employers might feel easier about the prospect of doing an over 65 out of a job. But the truth of the matter is that though there have been

improvements in pensions I am sure Honourable Members opposite will agree that the social insurance pension on its own is scarcely, enough even for those people who do have one, to live on. So the plight of a man who would have to live on a social insurance pension and find it difficult if not impossible to get a job in the private sector would be one of hardship and a very serious one and hardly a reward for a lifetime or a working life spent with the Official Employers.

Mr Speaker, the United Kingdom Departments - I am not talking about the local people in charge of the UK Departments, I am talking about the United Kingdom Departments generally - have come under fire in this House from time to time even by myself I recall this, when I was Minister for Labour because their work pensions lagged far behind the pensions of the Gibraltar Government and were, if I may suggest, an embarrassment to those Departments. They were really quite inadequate, quite measly pensions, and not everybody in employment in the United Kingdom Departments was established and entitled to a pension. The improvements which I think came eventually in 1972 or so were most welcome but even now not everybody would have a pension and even those who had a works pension would not find this adequate to their needs unless they have got a job and jobs for the over 65's are not very easy to find. Mr Speaker, much of the situation obtaining in 1969 with the withdrawal of Spanish labour continues to obtain now. It is here that I feel that the Government has a special responsibility and I would have liked the Minister for Labour and the Chief Minister to show to the House that they have taken some action on this matter because in 1970 the labour policy of the previous government was discussed in the Manpower Planning Committee and one of the aspects of that policy was that if a man over 65 was fit for the job he was doing then he should not in view of the scarcity of labour and other considerations, be deprived of his job. The Manpower Planning Committee minutes should record this decision which had at the time the approval of the United Kingdom Departments who were represented on that Committee and continue to be. It is a sad thing that the Manpower Planning Committee does not appear to be playing as important a part in the consolidation of labour policy as it did, but I am sure Honourable Members opposite will agree that this Committee was supposed to be one of the most important committees in Government in its functions of regulating quotas on the importation of labour with a view to maximising the use of Gibraltarian labour which includes the over 65's. And because it has statutory recognition or because it was in the Beeching Report that it should have statutory recognition and because as the Beeching Report said "with the use of wise

policies Gibraltar will be well served by this Committee", that I raise the matter now. There was the question of the over 65's, there was the question of getting women to take a job, there was the question of maximising, generally, on Gibraltarian labour and reducing our dependance on outside labour. And I would that Honourable Members opposite subscribed to this policy in the past and will continue to subscribe to that policy. Now, I do not think it is right that PSA/DOE if they have done it should have made this announcement without reference to the Manpower Planning Committee of which they are members. It is a major aspect of employment policy and the effects of this might, if the decision goes through, if the policy is accepted have repercussions, as I say, in the official employers and right into the private sector. Therefore, I wish to end by repeating the concern of this side of the House for the situation and to ask the Minister or the Chief Minister to give us news of developments to assure this House that the Government, both as an employer and as the Government of Gibraltar, will by every means try to persuade PSA/DOE not to go ahead with this policy. We do not want to keep unproductive people in employment. Rather we would like to cushion their transition into retirement by providing adequate facilities and social services for them. But if a man is fit for the job, if he is not holding up progress but is doing his job properly, then such a man especially in the labour circumstances of Gibraltar and bearing in mind the social security situation and the works pension situation, should be allowed to continue in employment. I look forward to hearing these assurances from Honourable Members opposite.

Mr Speaker proposed the motion in the terms moved by the Honourable M Xiberras.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, immediately on my return from my recent visit to Malta, that very weekend in fact, I received oral representations regarding the policy decision which had been aired in the press during my absence from Gibraltar. In addition to those oral representations on Monday the 17th February I also received written representations about the matter from the Gibraltar Workers Union. As the Leader of the Opposition rightly said both unions, the Transport and General Workers Union and the Gibraltar Workers Union, have been very vociferous in their representations to PSA/DOE on the matter and both of them have protested in no uncertain terms. And if I make some reference to the representations which I received from the Gibraltar Workers Union I hope

that the House will not think that I am taking sides or that I am being controversial and, in particular, I hope that if the Honourable Mr Bossano follows me in this debate, he will bear ~~that~~ in mind that as Minister for Labour and as a member of the Government of Gibraltar, it is my duty to protect and to look after the interests of all workers in Gibraltar regardless of what union they may or may not belong to. ~~and that~~ what is at stake here is not the welfare and the future of members of the Transport and General Workers Union or of the Gibraltar Workers Union but the welfare of Gibraltarians, of Gibraltarian families, and therefore, I perforce, cannot take a sectarian view on a matter which affects these families so very, very closely. The representations that I received, of course, initially drew attention to the decision that had been announced by PSA which entailed that workers who fell over the age of 65 had been given notice that their employment would cease as from 30th May, 1975 and this had been explained by the employers as being a matter of general policy. The Union felt that this was particularly inexcusable and one cannot help but going along with that view very much of the way when it was seen against an increasing number of work projects which the Agency was currently sub-contracting to private firms. The Union felt that this policy was cruel and inhuman because most of these men had served the Agency for very many years and were still mentally and physically capable of rendering good service and, of course, the point about their meagre pensions which the Leader of the Opposition referred to in the motion was also touched upon. I was asked to exercise my good offices to try and get the PSA to reconsider their decision to ~~try and~~ bring some consolation to the families and the workers concerned. I asked the Regional Director of the PSA/DOE to come to see me the following day and the first thing that I told him was that I wanted him to acquaint me with the situation, such as it was, but before doing that I explained to him what the policy of Government was, or rather what it is, in the field of pensions and I said that our policy is to make it possible for people to lead a decent life on their old age pension together with ^{any} pension which they might have earned from their employment. I said to him that although a great deal of progress has been made in the field of social insurance pensions, I didn't think that we had yet reached the stage in Gibraltar where all elderly persons, all persons over the age of 65, could afford to retire particularly since in very many cases they did not have an occupational pension from their employer, and ^{where} if they did in very many cases it was a meagre one and certainly less favourable than the one which Government as an employer provides for its own employees. In the meantime I stressed it had also become clear in recent months that it was becoming increasingly difficult to place persons over the age of 65 in employment and that at the time when there were fewer vacancies being

particularly

notified to my Department the current proposals of PSA/DOE would result in the further unemployment of people whom it would be difficult, if not impossible, to place. I therefore, stressed my very serious concern on this policy decision which I thought was particularly ill-timed and asked on behalf of the Government that the Agency ^{should} ~~should~~ consider their decision. I went on to say that whatever the final outcome might be, the longer notice of PSA's intention on this matter which was given, the better that it would be for all concerned and not the least for the Government who would then be given an opportunity to try and work out arrangements for the future of those affected to improve their prospects of rehabilitation and also to try and give my Department an opportunity to look into the welfare of those concerned. Now, Sir, I am certainly not here in the guise or in the role of a spokesman of the Regional Director but I feel, for the record, that it is my duty to quote from the record of the meeting that I had with him, the reasons that PSA give for this policy decision. And they are as follows:

"The Regional Director made the point that this philosophy was one that he was given from the United Kingdom and that it was not a new thing. And in fact, he said that he had made this point to the Unions a year ago. He proposed to give the longest possible notice and he stressed that the letters which had been distributed to the employees were not at present letters terminating their employment but a statement of PSA'S policy".

"This is the Regional Director, this is not me speaking" - "This was so that their older employees should be aware of the position although, in fact, not all of them would be retired. The reason was basically structural. They had a staff ceiling and large number of people were in the 50 to 60 and 60 to 70 age groups. Moreover, apprenticeship and training schemes were producing new people whom he would obviously wish to take up employment and who would be needed to replace the older workers in order to give a more balanced structure to their workforce. On the non-industrial side it was normal for people reaching retirement age to be re-engaged as Clerical Assistants but this meant that the entry of new people was being blocked. He went on to say that the numbers involved were likely to be of the order of 5 to 6 non-industrials and 20 industrials, and, finally, that the matter might still be reviewed and he undertook to give full details of the numbers and the names, as soon as possible, of those concerned".

Obviously, Sir, the thing that I seized on immediately was the hope that

since the matter might still be reviewed, something which I welcomed, ~~that~~ the concern which a number of bodies and which I as Minister for Labour was expressing at this decision particularly because it was very illtimed, ~~that that concern~~ might result in a re-appraisal of the situation and a reconsideration of the policy decision. Now, Sir, this afternoon before the House met I held a further meeting with the Regional Director and I asked him what was the latest information that he had for me in view of the fact that I had anticipated, rightly ~~as it stands out~~, ^{but} and in fact there was a chance the debate could ^{take place} ~~have been~~ this evening and I wanted to have the latest situation. The Regional Director told me this afternoon that he had now worked out his programme of those who were currently 65 years old or over or would reach 65 in the next three years. This year, that is during the course of 1975, the people affected who were over the age of 65 or approaching 65 would be 30 industrials, not 20 as was mentioned to me some time ago, 30 industrials 14 of whom are labourers, and as far as non-industrials were concerned there would only be 5 and of these 2 of them had planned to leave in any case. Now, Sir, the reason for the 30 industrials, according to him, was that there is a backlog of people over the age of 65 because PSA have not been adopting this policy for some years and now it is applicable not just to those who are near 65 but, in fact, they have 7 or 8 who are over the age of 70. As far as future years are concerned he said that in 1976 the problem would be less acute and would only involve 8 industrials and 3 non-industrials because by 1976 there would be no backlog and that would also be the pattern for the future. I told him, Sir, of course, that that to my mind only made matters worse because whereas previously we were thinking in terms of 20 industrials now the number had gone up to 30 and I said that vacancies for these people, to my mind, were virtually non-existent. The Regional Director also undertook this afternoon to try and find out how many people had planned to go this year, to leave employment, quite apart from the present redundancy situation. I pressed him further on the matter and he has undertaken in order to try to ameliorate the immediate problem, to stretch the programme over a rather longer period than what had been intended, perhaps, to stagger it throughout 1975 rather than to take an abrupt decision and make these people retire compulsorily on the 30th May. So far, Mr Speaker, I would say that we have gained something positive in that there is some express intention to stagger the termination of employment. On the other hand there is a negative point to be borne in mind that now the numbers involved by the end of 1975 ~~is~~ ^{are} somewhat higher. I cannot but stress my concern and that of the Government, Sir, over this issue and say - words which I think the Chief Minister will echo later on - that it is certainly not the intention of Government as an employer to take any similar decision.

We are concerned that PSA should retain in their employment as many people over the age of 65 as possible. We are also concerned through the welfare service and the employment service in my Department to do everything we can for these people, and as employers we shall certainly see what can be done for some of these people ie, whether the Government itself might be in a position to take some of them on. Something further on the positive side is the fact that - and this is something I think which the Regional Director has informed the Honourable Mr Bossano - that their superannuation scheme is at present under review in London and it is their policy to ensure that the people being retired will have their position secured and would not lose any retrospective benefits. Therefore, Sir, having raised the point of the superannuation scheme, that gives me an opportunity to say that although the Government supports this motion there is an aspect of it, and that is the latter part of the motion where reference is made; "in view of the inadequacies and shortcomings of the pensions situation", which we cannot support entirely in its present form because inherent in that is a criticism of the efforts which the Government has been making to try to improve social insurance pensions. Far be it for me to say that we have reached the end of the road or that the situation is perfect but the fact is that significant steps have been taken and, therefore, one would hope that the criticism inherent in that statement is mainly directed at the superannuation pension of the employer concerned in this case, which we share, rather than pensions, generally. As far as the superannuation scheme is concerned, Mr Speaker, the situation is that whereas Government as an employer regards each year of service for pension purposes as 1/50th of the sum to be paid in pension, in the case of PSA/MOD and any United Kingdom employer, certainly as far as the public service, is concerned, each year of service is only 1/80th and, therefore, these pensions are far less favourable than Government pensions and in many cases have proved to be inadequate even in respect of people with well over 40 years of service. One comes across very many cases in the department, so this is something that we share. Government would like to see employers falling into line and adopting at least the rather more favourable provisions which the Government pensions scheme makes. I accept that elderly persons cannot live on the social insurance pension alone. I accept that today in Gibraltar a couple cannot live on £10 a week and I have said that my policy is that with that pension and the pension which they should get from the employer - and in the case of Government it could well be at least another £10 a week for the majority of our employees who have 33 years service - between the two pensions, elderly couples will be able to lead a perfectly decent life which they have earned. So I would hope, Mr Speaker, that the Government, indeed all of us here in this House, will be able to support the motion wholeheartedly and I would ask the mover of the

motion, the Leader of the Opposition so that there may be no disparity, I would ask him whether, perhaps, the words "superannuation" or "employers pension" or some similar such word could not be introduced in the motion in front of the word "pensions" so that we qualify exactly what we mean and, therefore, the whole of the Government side will be able to vote, without any further ado, wholeheartedly in favour of the motion because we do share the concern. Failing that, Sir, if the amendment does not come from the Opposition side someone on our side will introduce the amendment. But as I say, generally, apart from that reservation the Government is fully behind the sentiments that have been echoed. We echo the sentiments that have been expressed and we support the motion, barring that reservation, wholeheartedly.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, if I may just take the last point made by the Honourable Minister for Labour and Social Security first. I think he can take it that this is not another censure motion through the back door which seems to be the reaction often from Government benches. It isn't intended with this motion to criticise Government for the efforts they have made in raising pensions but to recognise notwithstanding those efforts the end result at present is an inadequate pension structure. It could well be that the level of the social security pension that we have at present would be sufficient if it were the case that every person in receipt of social insurance pension was getting the maximum and if every person was in addition to getting the maximum pension getting a pension from their employment. But that is not the case and for that reason both pensions are inadequate but if to avoid any reservations on the part of the Government it is necessary

HON A J CANEPA:

You will accept that any employee of DOE is just over 65 or will soon be reaching the age of 65, provided he has contributed to the Self Insurance Scheme since 1955, will get the full £10 for himself and his wife. There is no doubt about that. If there are deficiencies in their contribution record that is another matter.

HON J BOSSANO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, the motion is concerned at the implications for the employment situation of such a policy and, of course, if, in fact,

employers other than PSA were to extend this and even in PSA, for example, in the case of some of the non-industrials there may well be people who were excluded from insurance by the £500 rule and who never entered insurance and, therefore, have not got the necessary contribution record. But it is the case that of our pensioners there are very many who are not getting the full pension and who do not have a retirement pension either and I do not think the Government itself is satisfied with the present situation. In fact, the Honourable Minister has said that he doesn't for a moment suggest that we have reached the end of the road. He simply wants us to recognise the efforts that have been made along this road and it isn't our wish at this stage to part on that particular point so I don't think that the amendment that the Minister wishes - if he still wishes that it should be included will present any major problem..

MR SPEAKER:

Would you consult with the mover. Far be it for me to suggest how it is to be done but perhaps you could do away with the words "in view of the inadequacies and shortcomings of the pensions situation".

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker

MR SPEAKER:

I am afraid it must be Mr Bossano.

You have had your say and you will have your right to reply of course.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, may I suggest that I carry on and then, perhaps, one of my honourable colleagues can move the amendment. As regards the situation that has developed in the case of PSA/DOE specifically, Mr Speaker, the House may be interested to know that, in fact, the Transport and General Workers Union made representations to - I think it was the Under Secretary of State for the Navy or the MOD that came out to Gibraltar earlier on this year - and had a meeting with Union representatives both from Transport and in fact from the

non-industrial unions in GIBNIC and there the question of the possible redundancy of 65 year olds was raised and the Minister was asked to use his offices in UK to try and get a changed policy brought about and in addition to that the MOD Navy was asked to do what it could to create opportunities for employment in the event that the redundancies went through that in fact MOD should attempt to take on some of the people made redundant by PSA and at a meeting of the Joint Industrial Council the same point was made with the hope that the Gibraltar Government itself would also be able to take on in any vacancies they might have some of the people made redundant. These representations were listened to very sympathetically but they did not seem to produce any concrete result and, in fact, the Transport and General Workers Union was forced into a situation of having to take industrial action in order to bring home the message that the issue was of sufficient concern to the union to ensure that a stand would be made on this matter involving all union members although a very small section of the union was involved in the redundancy. There are non-union members involved as well but from the figures that the Minister for Labour has made available to the House and from the knowledge that I have of the individuals who have gone with the dismissal letters to the Transport and General Workers Union, I would say that the bulk of those affected are members of the T&GWU since we have had virtually something like 27 or 28 letters brought to the Transport and General Workers Union by individual workers asking the Union to make representations on their behalf. The latest position that the Minister has told us about does not to my mind bring any progress to the situation because the Minister started off by saying that PSA/DOE had made clear that the original letters were not intended to be a definitive redundancy notice, that is people were not being told that they were definitely finishing on the 30th May. Apparently, he has now been told today that the decision to end employment abruptly on the 30th May has been reversed. Well, of course, it was never the case that it was never intended to end abruptly on the 30th May then the decision cannot be reversed because there was no such decision in the first place. Certainly, the date of 30th May has been made quite clear to the employees concerned now that it is a flexible one and in some of these cases some of the people concerned will probably not mind very much ending their employment if they get an extra couple of months which will enable them to be entitled to some sort of pension whereas an arbitrary date might by virtue of a couple of months deprive them of entitlement. So this flexibility is desirable because otherwise you are virtually taking away rights that their employees are enjoying. But apart from the concern from the employees themselves and for the protection of their standard of living if they are deprived of their employment, is the question of the skills involved and the fact that we are limited in the number of skilled industrial

workers that we have in Gibraltar and some of these men are skilled craftsmen who have given their services to PSA as the Honourable Minister I think, mentioned, for up to 40 years. There are painters, electricians, and carpenters who have worked in PSA for 20, 30 or 40 years, and the PSA recognise they have a very difficult task in recruiting replacements. So whilst one can understand that they might have to wish to have a more balanced labour force rather than a labour force which is perhaps top heavy in being over 60 or over 50, one can understand this, it is more difficult to understand, Mr Speaker, the policy of PSA in depriving itself of the skilled people that it has knowing the difficulty it is going to have in replacing those skills. Now, one of the fears or the suspicions that the major union involved in this has had and has expressed to PSA is that the PSA may be planning to run down its operations in Gibraltar and that this is simply one step in that particular road. That they will start with the 65 year old's today and then they will go on to the 60 years old's tomorrow and then they will turn around and say, "Well, now we are so reduced in our labour position that we lack the capacity to do the work and we have to farm it out to contractors. This is the situation, of course, that is totally unacceptable to the Union that negotiates for employees in the public sector and particularly in the DOE because, generally speaking, conditions of service and fringe benefits in the private sector are considerably inferior to those in the public sector and, consequently, the private contractor is in a position sometimes to be able to undercut the worker employed by the public sector because he provides less benefits to this own employees and it is, in fact virtually a case of unfair competition where the more effective the Trade Union organisation is in the public sector the more allowances that they get, the better pension rise that they get, the more leave entitlement that they get, the weaker the competitive position of that worker becomes vis a vis his fellow worker in the private sector who is employed by a private contractor and where the position is that the private contractor can quote cheaper prices for doing the same work because his labour costs are lower even if the wage rates are comparable because the overheads associated with his labour costs are lower. Now, the Union feels that this is a distinct possibility in PSA and sees a much greater long term danger behind this move than simply that affecting the 65 year old's. I think, Mr Speaker, that the House would be very concerned if there was any truth behind this suspicion and if there was any running down in the direct labour employment by PSA. It is hoped that this will prove to be unfounded as far as the Union is concerned and that it will not materialise. But I think it is right that the Government should keep a very close watch on the policies that the employers in the public sector are adopting, not simply as a fellow employer but also in its responsibilities for maintaining the role of the public sector in the

economy of Gibraltar and the security of employment that that road provides. And that security of employment, Mr Speaker, is certainly not there as far as the private sector is concerned. So that it appears that there could well be a lot of implications behind this policy of the 65 year old's which could transcend the immediate problem of providing protection for the 30 individuals concerned, although those 30 individuals as citizens of Gibraltar are fully entitled to merit our time and our attention in debating what can be done to give them protection and if there was nothing more in this than just 30 individuals this motion would be equally fully justified. I would also like the Government to use the opportunity of having had the motion brought to the House to, in their own sphere, investigate whether there are any dangers of the type that I have mentioned and, if so, to use their influence to ensure that such dangers never become a reality.

MR SPEAKER:

We will now recess until tomorrow at 11 o'clock.

The House recessed at 7.15 p.m.

FRIDAY THE 7TH MARCH, 1975

The House resumed at 11.00 a.m.

MR SPEAKER:

I will remind the House that we are still on the private members' motion moved by the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition has moved the motion and we have had two contributors so far, Mr Canepa, and Mr Bossano. The floor is now available to anyone who wants to contribute to the debate.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I want first of all to associate myself completely with all the remarks made by the Minister for Labour about our concern I mean in this respect in connection with maintaining in employment those who can

perform a useful task in work. I do not think that age in itself is an impediment to carrying out work. A man of 40 might feel much older to carry out a particular job than a man of 67 and, in fact, I want to give the assurance, first, not only that the Government does not intend to carry out any such redundancies but that the Government and previously, even more the City Council, have got an excellent record of keeping people in employment and not only in keeping people in employment after the age of retirement but in availing themselves of the skills of people who have been made redundant by the Services and have been taken on by the City Council in the past. I recall people in the workshops, welders, blacksmiths and so on having been retired for whatever reasons at the time in the Dockyard 16 or 20 years ago and then being taken into the Council and giving very long years of faithful and excellent service as skilled craftsmen in the employment of the Council. And it is, of course, sometimes difficult because we carry perhaps a lot of weight in this respect because it is not evenly shared by other employers but I think in a community such as ours each employer should be prepared to carry an element of people if they have given faithful service even though they cannot produce complete productivity in the same way as the man who is 20 years younger, there should still be a place for them to carry out some work and we do a lot of that. In fact we do sometimes, perhaps, more than our share but we are proud of doing it because I think we owe it to the community and we owe it as an example to the other employers. I was just talking to somebody the other day who is carrying an easy job, of course in the employment of the Public Works Department and he was proudly telling me that he was 82 that week. It is true that it is, perhaps, pathetic that a man at 82 should carry on working but sometimes the kind of activity they do is one that they might be able to do even without working such as Park Attendant and things like that which is not difficult for a man of that age. We are very conscious of this and in particular in a situation where good skilled labour particularly is at a premium and this generation as the Leader of the Opposition and the mover mentioned earlier calling upon the older members in this House who have seen these people in employment for longer than perhaps others have been able to and in due course will no doubt qualify for a pension I do not know at what stage one should qualify for a pension for being here but I may be applying for one soon - I don't know. After 25 years I think one is entitled to a modified pension. So that in fact there is nothing more to say but to support it fully particularly as I understand that the Opposition is moving an amendment which suits precisely the point made by the Minister of Labour by introducing the word 'occupational' at some stage. I would just like to say something that the Honourable Mr Canepa did not complete in his statement of his talks with the Regional Director which is in the minutes and that is that we was asked if he could

provide details of the contract expenditure proposed to be undertaken by PSA during the next 12 months - this is in connection with the point made by Mr Bossano about the fact that it eroded the good conditions if much more work given out because the conditions of official employment, apart from the wages, were more beneficial and, therefore, in the end it was cheaper to give it out to contract and so on. "It is proposed to be undertaken by the PSA during the next 12 months or so over and above the normal maintenance the Regional Director said that this was available together with an estimate of the categories of manpower likely to be involved and he would forward this for his department's information". So that, in fact, there is an implicit promise of giving us particulars to be able to calibrate and to gauge the extent to which this could be affected. I think that given good will and desire to make the best available of the skills that are now in employment would go a long way to ameliorate the situation and we have no hesitation subject to the amendment, of which I have seen a copy, to support the motion.

HON A W SERFATY:

Sir, I would like to add something to what has been previously said because this question of retirement age is one of my pet subjects - yes, I am 65 nearly, but still going strong. Life expectancy and capability to work as a result of that has increased enormously in the last generation and I think this should be borne in mind. I think this has put the question of retirement at the age of 65 as rather outdated and I think PSA should take note of that. Another point is - I don't know to what extent it worries the executive of PSA, I think it should because they are nice chaps - retirement really shortens life. I have seen many articles on this subject and retirement does shorten life. I think this should be taken very seriously into account in the context of what we are discussing.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

If the Honourable Member will give way. I didn't want my omission to be misunderstood about the fact that I did not mention the non-industrials. There the position is a bit different and the Civil Service Association and other associations are very insistent on a retirement at the necessary period because otherwise it impedes promotion and so on. The Government are strict in this matter in one sense but quite easy in the other one since, in fact, quite a number of all these people who retire at 60 because of their age in the establishment are taken on again as in fact it was mentioned that

the non-industrials are taken on as Clerical Assistants. We in the Government take them up in their trade or in their skills. The Water Inspector, for example, retired on reaching the age of 60 and was re-employed as the workload in his section is higher so there is no fear I am sure in the respect of anybody becoming redundant so long as they are fit to work. We cannot say that we can prolong the employment of people in the non-industrial sector indefinitely because this presents problems. I am sure this will be appreciated.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, I think the subject has been fairly well covered but I feel particularly strongly on this just to say a few words if only in support of the motion and to record my feelings on it. It is good to see that once in a while both the Government side and the Opposition seem to be in agreement certainly in the spirit behind the motion, although there is going to be a slight amendment. The only point, Mr Speaker, which I would like to make is that we all are, of course, aware, that men of 65 as the Honourable Mr Serfaty has mentioned, are no doubt fit to continue doing a good day's work but in addition here in Gibraltar, Mr Speaker, without in any way wanting to discriminate against either EEC nationals or others, I think the point should be made that if ever there is going to be any unemployment or retirement of any sort, as long as there are Gibraltarians able to do the job that that should be the case and that should be the guiding factor in this.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

HON I ABECASIS:

Sir, my only contribution to this debate in my recollection is that in 1963, I think it was, when there was a White Paper cutting the services in the War Department I was then the Branch Secretary of the Civil Service Clerical Association and we drafted a redundancy procedure and there we accepted to retain clerks over the age of 65 who had not made up sufficient years of service to qualify for a full pension. We preferred for them to remain in office and to allow junior clerks to be discharged instead of the senior citizens unless the over 65's had sufficient service to qualify for a full pension. So the thinking is still the same. Ten years ago and today we still think that people over the age of 65 should only retire if necessary when they have attained full service to qualify for a full pension.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, there seems to be general agreement on both sides of the House as to how good employers should act in relation to the over 65's, certainly in the industrial field. It seems to me that this question of keeping men willing and able to work after the age of 65 and keeping them in employment seems to me this was a universally accepted practice and a well known practice in Gibraltar certainly for the last 10 or 15 years. If a man is willing and able to work, he is fit mentally to carry out his skilled job I think it has been a well known policy, especially in view of the shortage of skills in Gibraltar for official and private employers to keep them in employment. I agree the major principle of policy should be that a man should be able to retire when he reaches a certain age and should be in receipt of a pension to enable him to live decently for the rest of his life and that he shouldn't have to work purely because he needs the money to keep body and soul together. But I think here we are talking of people who are willing and able to stay working after the age of 65 in an employment situation in Gibraltar where there is room for them to continue working. What astounds me on what has happened here is that there has been no consultation between the official employers before implementing this policy on the part of the Department of the Environment. I thought, Sir, that official employers, and so we have been told very often in this House like to act in concert when it is a matter of importance so that all of them follow the same policy and I think it must be a matter of great regret that the Government had to call in the Regional Director to find out what it was all about. One would have thought that in a matter of such importance to the people of Gibraltar and to the Government of Gibraltar there would have been prior consultation between the Government and the Department of the Environment. Mr Speaker, having said that I think that it may not be enough just for the House to express concern. I think the House has to express concern as much as possible in a practical way. There is one way at least in which the Government, if it considers this a matter of national policy that should be followed in the territory of Gibraltar, the Government can act in a situation such as this in order to stop other employers, not only official but also in the private sector, using the age of 65 as an excuse for terminating employment because it suits them for a lot of many other reasons, perhaps. I would have thought the Government might have considered the amendment of the unfair dismissal section in the Regulation of Wages and Conditions of Employment Ordinance under which they could perhaps, make it a ground of unfair dismissal for a person is dismissed by reason only of having reached the age of 65, subject however to provisions under the schedule and a schedule could set out the circumstances in which a dismissal by reference purely to age could be justified, for example, physical inability to do the work or mental inability and so forth. I think that if big

employers get out of line on general employment policy which is generally agreed by the Government in Gibraltar and by the House to be in the vital interests of Gibraltar, I think the legislative machine should be used to enable some sort of redress to be given to a person in those circumstances. Unless, of course, the Government were to get firm assurances from other official employers that they will not come to the Government to consult them when they reckon they need the Government's support on a particular matter but will consult them when any decisions they make have repercussions for employees, generally, in Gibraltar and other employees in other official departments as well. Mr Speaker, I think most things that have been said on this motion have been very relevant and very appropriate and I would certainly like to add my voice in agreeing to all that has been said by Honourable Members on this side of the House and I would particularly agree with what the Honourable Mr Serfaty has said about retirement shortening life for people. I think it is true. I think people who are strong and fit and able to work and are pushed into retirement those people die sooner. I think depression sets in. There are people to whom work is not a natural attribute and they welcome retirement but there are others to whom you take away their right to work and their right to make a living and carry on playing a useful part in the community life as they see it and that definitely shortens life. But let that, Mr Speaker, be by no means a note of encouragement for the Honourable Mr Serfaty to stand for election again at the next House of Assembly elections. I am sure he will be able to say that at the age of 65, perhaps, he should make way for others. If, Mr Speaker, his retirement from public life is going to shorten his life then we urge him to stand again. Mr Speaker, I would like to propose an amendment to the Motion we have already talked about and that is I propose that the Motion be amended by the deletion of all the words after the word "of" in the last line and the substitution of the following words: "The occupational pensions in the Department concerned". This would, in fact, refer the Motion exclusively to the Department about which the House is expressing concern.

I commend the amendment to the House.

MR SPEAKER:

I now propose the amendment moved by the Honourable Mr Peter Isola to the Motion before the House presented by the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Speaker then put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and the Motion was amended accordingly.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

After all that has been said there is not very much to add to it. There are two little facets that I would just like to comment on. It appears that this thinking of compulsory retirement at 65 emanated somewhere in the UK. It is a great pity the Honourable Mr Peter Isola has said that there wasn't consultation because circumstances in the UK are often very different to circumstances in Gibraltar and we have to approach a problem like this from a Gibraltarian view point. In the UK, Sir, many people are rather anxious to retire because they have many other interests they want to get on with. They want to do gardening, they want to play golf but none of these things are available in Gibraltar. To a great extent a man's work is, if not his hobby, a major portion of his life and as the Honourable Mr Serfaty has said if you take it away from him if you stop a man from working you are almost hastening his death. The other thing of course, Sir, is that surely if we are going to give credence in the freedom of the individual to choose, if a man chooses to go on working it is hardly a reasonable thing especially from an official department to say: "No, we are going to set our face against it". It has been said, and I heartily endorse it, that Gibraltar when they were in need of people to work were only too happy to have people over 65 and the PSA quite happy to go along and take those people. Well, we the people of Gibraltar, wish persons over 65 to be able to enjoy their freedom to continue work should they so desire. And it is a pity that PSA did not consult people in Gibraltar on this policy before they put it into effect. I hope now that they will, perhaps, learn the lesson that when anything like this might come up in the future a little consultation would, perhaps, go a long way and obviate the - I would not say the unpleasantness - but the need to have brought a motion like this in the House on something that could most easily could have been obviated with I am sure good will that would have been on their side if they fully appreciated the situation.

Of course I support the Motion.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, I feel bound to say two things to explain my position. As Chairman of the Manpower Planning Committee I entirely endorse and support

the policy of continuing in Gibraltar to avail ourselves of the useful work of men however old they may be if they can do it. I entirely support that. Sir, however, I have been Chairman of the Committee since November, 1971, and I have no recollection of it ever having been discussed there or recorded as a decision that the policy would be to keep men beyond age 65 and I have not been able to discover overnight that there was such a decision. I do not question that there was - I do not know. If there were such a decision I would think it a perfectly right decision but I have not yet discovered that there was any obligation on a member of the Manpower Planning Committee specifically to bring this matter back to the Committee. I must, Sir, go on to say that I feel a position of reserve in regard to the policy dictated on an Agency here by its headquarters in the UK a policy which as I understand, relates in general. While I shall do everything in my power to persuade the PSA/DOE to take full account of the special circumstances of Gibraltar which justify keeping able men at work, I shall nevertheless abstain in this decision.

MR SPEAKER:

I now call on the mover to reply.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, the first point is that there is a very high degree of unanimity on this motion, if not complete, and the sole reservation I think apart from the matter mentioned by the Minister for Labour which has been the subject of my Honourable and Learned friend's amendment, has been the words of the Honourable the Financial and Development Secretary now. I may have said decision of the Manpower Planning Committee and I also most certainly said discussion of the matter. I do not claim for a moment that this was a formal decision of the Manpower Planning Committee and, therefore, I see no obligation for PSA to revert to the committee, but I do see an obligation for PSA to raise this matter in the Committee whatever has gone on before, whether there was discussion, decision or whatever there was. Because the Manpower Planning Committee is set up by a basic Ordinance in Gibraltar governing employment from one end of Gibraltar to the other and the official employers have a great responsibility to uphold the policy set out in that Ordinance especially in view of the fact that no Minister in this House is responsible for labour from abroad and this is one of the matters reserved normally to the Deputy Governor. Now, when Lord Beeching was here his views were in no small measure influenced by the representations of the United

Kingdom Departments and there was full consultation with him. And there were things said in the Beeching Report which a number of employers might not like but this was the document that was accepted eventually promoted by Honourable Members on this side of the House when they were in Government as being labour policy for the whole of Gibraltar. And the participation of the UK Departments in the Manpower Planning Committee set up by the control of employment Ordinance which was pursuant on the Beeching Report implies a very definite obligation in respect of the Manpower Planning Committee and, therefore, as I say, whether there was a decision or not I think matters of this kind should be discussed and consulted about in the Manpower Planning Committee. My honourable friend said that there should be legal recourse if necessary and whilst not necessarily disagreeing that the Unfair Dismissals Ordinance is the instrument for such legal recourse, I would suggest another one. And that is the Control of Employment Ordinance itself. Clause 8 Part II of which says: "A permit granted by the Director may be revoked by the Director at any time after three months' notice of his intention to revoke the permit has been given by the Director to the employer to whom it was granted. If the Director is satisfied that there is a resident of Gibraltar registered under Section 4 - that is the unemployed register - who is capable of undertaking and suitable for the employment in respect of which the permit was granted". It is not a very comfortable obligation and I know the decision would be hard for the Director to determine whether a man is fit for a job or not, But at the time people in this House felt sufficiently strongly to insert this sort of power into the Ordinance. And, therefore, what Honourable Members have been saying as to whether life begins at 65 or does not begin at 65 - and I share their view especially those of the Honourable Mr Serfaty to a great degree though not in its application to our 83 year old friend across the way - I think that we should do something more than that if the need arises. What I am saying is that if agreement is not possible on this then the Government and this House has an obligation to insist with PSA and Dockyard or anybody else that if these men are dismissed and if they go on the unemployed register, the Director should decide whether they are fit for the job having taken whatever advice he needs for this or not. And if he finds that such a person is fit for the job then it is open to the Government to refuse permits for the importation of labour from outside EEC. I know this is drastic but this House is very concerned about events and about this policy. The House will recall that it is not the first intimation of redundancy that we have had in the United Kingdom Departments. We have had redundancies of telephone operators, we have had the Windmill Hill redundancies, there have been a number of redundancies and I think we should take care that these things are not done with impunity. In the case of Windmill Hill and the telephone operators and so forth

other considerations may or may not apply but here we have tradesmen who are needed and here we have labourers who require no special skill and these people are being threatened with dismissal on the grounds of age whilst we are importing something like 3,600 non-EEC nationals and whilst we have on our statute book a law which says that EEC nationals are indeed Gibraltarians in the Government service have priority of employment. Therefore, the Government and the Attorney-General, if necessary, should see about the legality of this position for as long as the Director of Labour and Social Security is not given the opportunity on determining whether these persons are fit for the job or not. Mr Speaker, I should say, in passing, that of course I support the amendment that has been passed by the House. The intention was not, I assure the Minister, to embarrass him in any way it was simply to draw attention to the question of hardship and I am glad that on the basis of this amendment the House will be able to vote in favour, unanimously, in favour of this motion. I say this because I think the Financial and Development Secretary and the Attorney-General should vote in support of this motion because this House does have a responsibility in respect of giving Gibraltarians priority of employment. The Financial and Development Secretary has said that he will try his best to influence the situation in the direction in which the House would like to see it develop. But with due respect, to the Honourable Member, he as chairman of the Manpower Planning Committee, has a special obligation to see to it that the Beeching doctrine and the principles of the Control of Employment Ordinance are given effect to because something I assure the Honourable Member he will find in his minutes, and I am grateful for his perusal of them overnight, is the concern by the United Kingdom Departments along with the Gibraltar Government for importation permits for craftsmen. There was a time when there was great insistence from this department and I speak from personal experience, in the Manpower Planning Committee. And these craftsmen had to be had at any cost and the quotas were generous in respect of the UK Departments. And such insistence is barely compatible with dismissing Gibraltarians now, some of them tradesmen, purely on the grounds of age. When I have been to the Dockyard, for instance, the management has proudly pointed out to me that so and so has been with them for so many years and that he does an excellent job of work. And you go around and shake the person's hand in front of his employer and you say, "Well done, your work is very much appreciated by your employer here". Let us not forget that concern that we have for people in official employment when we debate this in the House and let us not lead these older people to believe that all these tours and all these congratulations and "well done old boy" are that much hypocrisy. So, I would hope that the Honourable the Financial and Development Secretary and the Honourable the Attorney-General note in favour of this motion. I think they have a definite obligation to do so. Otherwise I would suggest that the Honourable the Financial

and Development Secretary cannot have his heart in his job as Chairman of the Manpower Planning Committee. I beg your pardon, perhaps, heart is the wrong word. Perhaps there are certain influences at work on the Financial and Development Secretary, certain obligations, which would make his position as Chairman of the Manpower Planning Committee difficult. Mr Speaker, I hope the message has gone out from this House and within the House as well, that it is a matter on which we feel strongly. There is no evidence that the redundancies I have spoken about were linked but let us take care against the domino effect. Let us take care of a sudden reassessment of the position by the UK Departments and a gradual implementation of a policy of pruning, starting with particular jobs, and moving on to others. There is one more point I would like to make in respect of contract work which my honourable friend Mr Bossano mentioned and that is in our time in Government we supported giving contract work out to private contractors for as long as the Government labour force was fully occupied but this side of the House does not wish to see work farmed out to contractors when this will mean dismissals of men who have rendered long and faithful service.

MR SPEAKER:

I will then put the question as moved by the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition and amended by the amendment moved by the Honourable Mr Peter J Isola which reads as follows:

"This House is concerned with the general implications to the employment situation of the policy of compulsory retirement at 65 announced by PSA/DOE, one of the official employers in JIC, and with the personal hardship to the individuals concerned in view of the inadequacies and shortcomings of the occupational pensioners in the Department concerned".

On a division being taken the following Honourable Members voted in favour:

The Honourable I Abecasis
 The Honourable J Bossano
 The Honourable A J Canepa
 The Honourable J Caruana
 The Honourable L Devincenzi
 The Honourable M K Featherstone
 The Honourable Sir Joshua Hassan

The Honourable Lt Col J L Hoare
 The Honourable P J Isola
 The Honourable W M Isola
 The Honourable A W Serfaty
 The Honourable M Xiberras
 The Honourable H J Zammit

The following Honourable Members abstained:

The Honourable J K Havers
 The Honourable A Mackay

The following Honourable Members were absent:

The Honourable A P Montegriffo
 The Honourable Major R J Peliza

The Motion was accordingly carried.

MR SPEAKER:

Before I ask the Chief Minister to move the adjournment of the House to the 18th of March, 1975, I understand that the Honourable the Financial and Development Secretary has a statement to make on the matters we touched upon yesterday. May I draw Members' attention that we must not under any circumstances debate the statement. He is exclusively giving an explanation which can be accepted or rejected, it can be questioned at a later stage, but we are not going to open a debate on the explanation given. The situation is clear. It is the prerogative of Government to decide how they carry out their business in this House. They have deferred the consideration of certain supplementary estimates of expenditure to a later stage of the meeting. The Opposition have asked for an explanation which the Honourable the Financial and Development Secretary has agreed to give.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, thank you. I am glad to make a statement.

Sir, the reason why I did not proceed with Supplementary Estimates No 5 yesterday was simply the discovery too late that the schedule contained more

errors than could readily be dealt with by amendments in Committee of the House, apart from the fact that the single explanation in the remarks column indicating that the schedule related entirely the cost of living addition and the interim award, was not accurate. I admit straight away to a bad account job and it was not my intention in deferring consideration by the House to try to cover this up. This will be evident when a revised schedule is circulated on Monday. Sir, with this frank admission I shall now go on briefly to say about the schedule which has already been circulated, I trust that any concern about possible other explanations for the unusual course of deferment which I have taken will be removed. Sir, the schedule appeared from the remarks column in it to indicate that it covered the full cost of COLA and of the interim award for all Government employees in 1974/75. This intention was right. It will be recalled that £310,000 was provided in the approved estimates 1974/75 for new COLA awards after that of January, 1974 but this was in a block provision in Head XVI - Miscellaneous Services, and had later necessarily to be distributed over the relevant heads of expenditure. Schedule No 5 was designed to do this and to add the cost of additional COLA awards during the year as well as adding the cost of the interim award since again it will be recalled that no provision was included in the expenditure heads in the approved estimates 1974/75 for any 1974 Biennial Review award. Now, as was remarked by Honourable Members yesterday, it is a simple calculation to arrive closely enough to the overall cost of COLA and interim award on this basis in 1974/75. It is £123 per head for the interim award plus £146 per head for COLA which for approximately 2,750 employees amount to some £740,000 representing £430,000 above the £310,000 original provision. This net addition of £430,000 is £482,000 less than the total in the circulated schedule and this may explain the view of Honourable Members opposite that the schedule appeared to exceed the necessary provision by a figure in excess of £400,000. But as I have said the original block, £310,000, has also to be added for the House's approval under the respective heads. I am still left, however, to explain a balance of the difference of between £912,000 in the schedule as the total and £740,000, which is £172,000. I am afraid that two accounting errors are responsible for £120,000 of the excess. The remainder represent supplementary expenditure on overtime and other non-wage costs for which the approval of the House is required and will be sought in a separate supplementary schedule. Sir, the last point which I must emphasise is that the sole effect of what I have just described on the draft estimates of revenue and expenditure 1975/76 is an improvement of £40,000 in the closing balance for 1974/75. The remaining £80,000 of the £120,000 I have mentioned was not erroneously included in the revised 1974/75 expenditure in the draft estimates 1975/76. Mr Speaker, Sir, I can only once again express regret for the circulation of an

unsatisfactory supplementary expenditure schedule and for the inconvenience this has caused to Members of the House.

HON M XIBERRAS:

On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I am not in any way debating what the Financial and Development Secretary has said, or the cause for concern there is over it. I am concerned about the standing order which allows estimates to have to be tabled and circulated to Members by a particular time and I am concerned with the changes that there might be in the estimates as a result of this complete change in this particular supplementary estimates. Now what I would like is an assurance that the heads of expenditure as set out in the estimates which Honourable Members now have accurate. In other words that as we go through these estimates we are not considering a document which no longer has any validity.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

That assurance I give except that as I have explained there is £40,000 more expenditure shown in the draft estimates 1975/76 than there should be in the revised estimates for 1974/75.

MR SPEAKER:

May I say that the Estimates of expenditure before they can be discussed in the House must be circulated to Members 15 days before and must be laid on the table at the meeting at which they are going to be considered. The position in so far as I see it now is clear Supplementary Estimates of expenditure 1974/75 had been laid on the table. That will entitle anyone in this House to move any amendment to those estimates. If that is what is going to be done then that is completely and utterly proper. If what is envisaged is to withdraw the one which has been tabled and to bring a new one that would be out of order.

HON M XIBERRAS:

My concern, Mr Speaker, was that the changes that would be necessary as a result of this in the estimates would be such as to render the estimates of expenditure quite unintelligible or in practice a different document from the one that we now have.

MR SPEAKER:

That we have to consider when they are circulated.

HON M XIBERRAS:

It is a matter of great concern, Mr Speaker, if this had been the case that we were looking at estimates and they were £1m spread out over the different heads of expenditure which completely altered the picture under these different heads of expenditure.

MR SPEAKER:

All I would be prepared to accept ^{from} Government, of course, is notice of amendments to the estimates which have been circulated and nothing else.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Might I suggest, Mr Speaker, this is a matter for the Government to put the thing right but I am concerned about members of the Opposition who have a document before them which my fear was would be altered completed so that the period of notice given to the Opposition would have been of no avail.

MR SPEAKER:

That is tantamount to what has happened in the case of Bills. We had it in the Traffic Bill and we have had it in the Gaming Bill.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Do I take it, Mr Speaker, that the Financial Secretary is saying that this complete dislocation of the estimates on different heads of expenditure is not, in fact, going to happen.

MR SPEAKER:

May we have that assurance from the Financial and Development Secretary?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir. There will be one thing in the draft estimates of revenue and expenditure 1975/76. I shall wish to make one amendment which I have stated is the amounts of £40,000. Sir, may I say that I am anxious, of course, that the supplementary estimates should be proceeded with. If this must be by way of amendment of the schedule which has been circulated then, of course, I must comply. If it could be by way of substituting a clean new schedule or even two schedules, one of which would deal with the COLA and the interim award and one of which would deal with the few other matters that would be most convenient.

MR SPEAKER:

I would, perhaps, have the views of the Attorney-General on this one. I think the net result of what you wish to do may be that a completely different supplementary estimates of expenditure will be voted but the way it has to be done is by amendment.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I think first of all I would say it seems to me that if there is to be an entirely new supplementary estimates then, of course, the provisions of Order 44 (5) must be observed and they can be laid on the table 7 days before they are debated. I would think, I haven't yet seen the form in which my friend the Honourable the Financial and Development Secretary is proposing to approach this matter but it would seem to me that this is probably an amendment even though it is a very substantial amendment.

MR SPEAKER:

I think the assurances have been given to assuage the fears of the Opposition that the amendments to the supplementary estimates were going to be such as would dislodge the estimates of expenditure for 1975/76 in such a way as to make their task difficult. I think the assurance has been given that it will not happen.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move the adjournment of the House to Tuesday the

18th of March at 10.30 in the morning when we will proceed with the pending business of the first part of the proceedings and the Budget.

This was agreed to and the House adjourned to Tuesday the 18th March at 10.30 am.

The adjournment was taken at 12.20 p.m. on Friday the 7th March, 1975.

TUESDAY 18th MARCH 1975

The House resumed at 10.30 am.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I think it is important at some stage in this meeting - and perhaps this is not the most opportune moment - to establish what sort of procedure is going to be followed as regards the estimates of expenditure and the revenue raising measures as part of the debate. Reference to Hansard will show that there was some discussion on this last year. I believe the form followed last year was that the Financial & Development Secretary made a statement which covered overall all items of expenditure and the general expenditure position and then we went into individual Heads of expenditure and at that point Hon Members on this side of the House sought from Ministers comprehensive statements about their Departments and Hon Members opposite were not prepared to make these statements and so the general debate took place when the House reported back from Committee Stage. Now this has the disadvantage, of course, that Hon Members on this side of the House are asked to vote on individual items of expenditure before they know what the overall policy for each Department is. We would ask Hon Ministers to make their statement at the stage before votes are taken on the individual items. I think it is only fair because it allows Members here to decide whether the policy being followed in the Department is, generally speaking, the right one or not. Otherwise we would not be able to judge properly whether we should vote for individual items of expenditure or not. Now that is as far as the expenditure part of the debate goes. Then we have the revenue raising part and here we have had first of all some discussion about whether there should be a brief adjournment or not at that stage. Last year the Chief Minister granted an adjournment of I believe it was half an hour for the Opposition to consider the revenue raising measures and this even though it would not be considered sufficient, was in the words of the Chief Minister, something unprecedented and had not been done before and my Hon and Gallant Friend on my right, Major Peliza, said that it had not been sought before but I would like to establish for this year that there will be some sort of adjournment to consider revenue raising measures, if any. Mr Speaker, overall, I think it should be said that the procedure followed in this House at budget time, is not a satisfactory one. It does not compare well with the procedure followed at Westminster and I believe it is designed in such a way as to get this House to vote on expenditure and to commit itself to a certain amount of expenditure before it knows what the revenue raising measures are going to be.

This, of course, places the House at a disadvantage because it is not able to go back on its votes for expenditure even after consideration of the revenue raising measures. This I appreciate cannot be done for this year but insofar as there is latitude and flexibility with the current procedure I would like to hear the views of the Leader of the House on this.

MR SPEAKER:

I must say one thing and that is that the procedure which is followed by Government to present its estimates of expenditure and revenue raising matters, of course, is the exclusive prerogative of the Government of the time. I accept what the Leader of the Opposition has said that last year I think to be completely and utterly correct, some Ministers opted to give an explanation at the beginning of the itemised discussion of their expenditure, others opted not to do so. It was their prerogative to do so or not to give an explanation. However there has been a whole year in which this matter could have been discussed as to whether the procedure being carried out by Government is the correct one or not or whether it should be changed but, of course, the Chair has no power to guide or to tell Government how to conduct its business and insofar as the rules of procedure are concerned they are clear. The motion is moved by the Financial and Development Secretary, we move into Committee, we go into the expenditure item by item and then we have the general debate where both Government and Opposition are in a position to debate the issues involved. But there is very little else that I can do or the Leader of the Opposition can do on the matter. It is exclusively in the hands of the Chief Minister and his Government to decide how to proceed, within the rules, of course. Perhaps we might have the views of the Chief Minister on this matter.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Perhaps before he does, Mr Speaker, may I just mention one point arising from what you have said. I think Hon Members on the Standing Rules Committee are aware that there was at one time an indication that the rules of the House were about to be looked at afresh. This was sometime ago and it was in relation to that, Mr Speaker, you might recall that I raised this point, but the changes have not been brought to the notice of the Committee. On the procedure itself I appreciate that it is not up to Mr Speaker to indicate how the Government should conduct its business but my comments were related to what flexibility could be achieved even within the rules of this House.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Well, Mr Speaker, as you so rightly said this was last raised a year ago and there have been no approaches about any change of procedure for this year other than what appears in hansard - for those who have the time to re-read what they spoke and what happened. We are anxious to help to some extent the other side in their functions to scrutinise the estimates but we are not prepared to adjust our procedure just to suit the other side only. We have to have regard to the business of the House and we are following a procedure which was in practice before this administration. Now, insofar as Departments are concerned, it is a matter for Ministers how they deal with it, and sometimes, if I may say so, it is a matter of how the Shadows seek information as to how the Minister reacts in his statement and that is a matter for the Opposition. I am sure they will do that very well. With regard to the question of going back on the expenditure side when we come to the revenue raising measures, this is of course completely unacceptable. The Government comes here with the responsibility of saying; "this is what is required to run the Departments. If you agree with it we are delighted, if you don't agree with it and we hear what you have to say and we still think that that is so, that is so." After that it is the prerogative of the Government and of nobody else to introduce the measures of taxation or the revenue raising measures which are required to meet the bills and then to have the matter debated. I did give half an hour last year - it was a bit more by the end of the time the consultations had finished - and if there are any surprising measures this year that require time, I am quite prepared to do the same. I am not saying that we would not do the same. However, I very much hope that it will not be necessary to have a lot of consultations but, anyhow, I am not anticipating anything at this stage. With regard to the procedure itself, I think it is a matter for Members opposite to raise matters. On committee stage to have a general statement of policy and come back on items and speak as many times as we like on a particular item and then to pretend to have a meaningful real debate on policy, seems to me to duplicate the work of the House unnecessarily. I will put no inhibitions on Members on my side to make statements on such items of their departments which are considered a change of policy. If it is a matter of a revision of previous policies and bringing it up to date to meet with present day costs and so on, then very little statements of policy would be required. Therefore I think if we follow the procedure last year but with perhaps a little more latitude on the fact that if Members opposite ask for statements regarding aspects of policy then Ministers would react, I am quite happy to do it that way.

MR SPEAKER:

We are now going to deal with Supplementary Estimates of Expenditure No 5 of 1974/75 and, perhaps, in the meantime if the Chief Minister and the Leader of the Opposition have anything to say they can do so in the ante room. I think we have ventilated the position fully.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES NO 5 OF 1974/75

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have the honour to move that this House resolves itself into Committee to consider Supplementary Estimates No 5 of 1974/75.

MR SPEAKER:

Since there are extensive amendments to this supplementary estimates of expenditure, I have instructed the Clerk to call not just the item and the head but the subhead too.

Item 1 Head 1 Audit was agreed to.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, as the House is aware this has been a most controversial item before the House....

MR SPEAKER:

Perhaps the answer is that it will be most controversial once the extent of the amendments are known and, perhaps, that could be the subject matter of a debate. We are now in Committee and going item by item. We will have a general debate on it of course.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, we shall have to abstain on each of the items of expenditure because we wish to know what the explanation is for the copious amendments that have been presented and we would like to know the general explanation particularly since most of the items seem to refer to the same kind of expenditure or expenditure in respect of the same item, namely, the interim payment.

MR SPEAKER:

No, what I am prepared to allow is that on the first amendment that is moved to any particular item which as you see will be Item II - Cemeteries, that the Financial & Development Secretary gives a general reason for doing it. We will not debate that reason but that will give the Opposition an insight as to why and then it will give them the opportunity to reply in the general debate but we must not in Committee debate the general principles involved in all the amendments. Of course, I will allow the question of the general amendments to be debated in one particular item, but then I will rule everyone out of order on the grounds of repetition if it comes up again. We must not in committee every time we have an item raise the same question.

HON M XIBERRAS:

That is not the purpose of this side of the House, Mr Speaker. What we are saying is that we wish to know the general reasons for these amendments and wish to compare the general reasons given now by the Financial & Development Secretary with the statement that he made earlier on them. And, therefore, if we discuss the general reason for the amendment when the first amendment comes along then Hon Members on this side of the House provided discussion has been full will refer to the principle of it again.

MR SPEAKER:

And provided that it is accepted that each Member will speak once.

Item 2 Head II - Cemeteries 1 Personal Emoluments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Chairman, I beg to move as follows: Head II Cemeteries Subhead 1 Personal Emoluments: amend the figure £1309 to £268 on both occasions where it appears. Subhead 2 Gravediggers: amend the figure £1051 to £1015 on both occasions where it appears.

MR SPEAKER:

I am afraid that it is going to be more tiresome than that, I will require an amendment to each subhead. We will deal with the first subhead which is personal emoluments. So I will now propose the question which is that subhead 1 of Item 2 should be amended by the deletion of the numbers £1309 where they appear and the substitution therefore of the numbers £268. Now, perhaps, the

Financial & Development Secretary would give a basic explanation as to why these amendments are required and the House would then have a general idea as to the reasons for the further amendments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Chairman, thank you, I am very pleased to do this. I have already explained at the earlier stage of this meeting, that Supplementary Estimates No 5 of 1974/75 were drawn up not very wisely by reference to the approved estimates figures 1974/75 and the revised estimates of expenditure 1974/75 when they became available in the belief that the difference between these figures would substantially at any rate represent the additional expenditure on the interim award and COLA but recognising of course that revised estimates are changing every day in the last three months of the year. Now, Sir, when I discovered that the schedule as circulated was unsatisfactory I had as you know, Sir, the option of withdrawing it. I could have done that in effect by not laying the schedule on the table of the House at the beginning of the present meeting. I thought, however, that it would be preferable to go ahead, give my frank explanation because had I not laid it at the beginning of this meeting I should not have been able to lay it at any other point in this meeting and so this supplementary schedule could not have been laid on the table until the next meeting after the end of the financial year. Now, the amount of money involved representing the cost of the Interim Award in the Biennial Review and COLA in 1974/75 is substantial. It will now be seen that it totals £724,000 and even though there is £310,000 already approved in the form of a block vote by the House in last year's estimates to be set against that figure and even though it is well known that the Interim Award amounts to £123 per head of employees of the Government and that the COLA in 1974/75 is calculated per head in employment at 13 times a weekly rate of £2.10p and 39 weeks at the weekly rate of £3 and £5. These figures are known they cannot be calculated, nevertheless, it seems to me that it would be right to go ahead and put this schedule to the House before the end of the Financial year. We have been trying very hard - the House knows this - in the Accounts Department and in the Treasury to be more punctual in the presentation of supplementary estimates than in recent years has been the case. We try to do that because it is right to do that. There will, of course, always, Sir, be at least one final tidying up supplementary estimate after the end of the financial year, but we wanted to keep that as small as it would be. The figures before us now when we amend this schedule these will never be precise, it is the sum as I have said of £268 a year per man but the numbers in employment change from week to week, the schedule must also take account of savings that there may be on the personal emoluments, increments, overtime whatever and of other savings which may be brought to bear because as the House knows under the Financial Procedures Ordinance, the Financial & Development Secretary requires to be satisfied that likely savings are taken into account before he comes to the House for supplementary expenditure. Sir, that is my explanation.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I just ask the Financial & Development Secretary. I thought he said in his statement at the last meeting that the amendments to be produced made a difference of about £40,000 and it is now £200,000. Could we just have that point clarified?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, that was misunderstood. What the Hon and Learned Member has in mind that I said last time was this: That as a result of the revision of this supplementary expenditure, there will be one sum of £40,000 under Head X - Public Works expenditure, which represents an excess over our present assessment of the revised estimated expenditure in 1974/75. Therefore, all related figures in the out turn of 1974/75 in the financial statement should take account as emerges from the supplementary estimates, that there is £40,000 more expenditure shown in 1974/75, draft estimates of expenditure, than there should be under Head X - Public Works.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the explanation that the Financial & Development Secretary has given I am afraid falls short of an explanation which can account for all the many differences here, and this is particularly so in the amendment that is being moved precisely at this stage. The Financial & Development Secretary has said that in calculating the amount required for additional COLA and cost of living one has to consider the fact that there is a fluctuation in numbers employed and so on, shifts in the total complement of the civil service which, perhaps, it is difficult to be precise about at a particular point in time. And this is no doubt true taking the entire civil service as a whole, but it can hardly be true, Mr Speaker, of this particular subhead where are talking about one individual. And there is no explanation being given as to how it was originally thought that the cost of COLA and Interim for one individual was going to be £1,300 and it is now thought that the cost for that same individual is going to be £268 which is, of course, a figure that is fairly easy to check on taking into account the level of COLA and the level of the Interim Award which everybody in Gibraltar is aware. In addition Mr Speaker, in answer to my Hon and Learned colleague's question just now, the Financial & Development Secretary has said that the revised figures for 1974/75 will need altering by £40,000 in respect of the Public Works Head. Well, in fact, my understanding of the situation from the amendments that we've got here and the draft estimates of expenditure that are already

in possession of Members of the House, is that the revision that is required is substantially greater than £40,000 eg in respect of this particular subhead if Members look at page 12 of the draft Estimates they will find that the revised figure for 1974/75, in fact, includes a provision of £1300. Now if that £1300 is not the amount required as a result with the amendments that the Financial & Development Secretary is moving now, then that revised figure is incorrect.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, perhaps, what you are trying to say is that the fact that these particular supplementary estimates are being amended now will mean that the general estimates will have to be amended. But we will have to wait and see when the estimates come along.

HON J BOSSANO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, but I am saying furthermore that they will have to be amended by considerably more than £40,000 which is what the Financial & Development Secretary has just said is the total amount that will be required could be amended. It is true, Mr Speaker, to say that in the Education vote the amount that was originally in the supplementary estimates, £154,000, was not the amount that was, in fact, incorporated in the draft estimates. But I have checked every single one of these items and in the great majority of the other cases it is the unrevised sums that have been incorporated and a revision of these sums will produce a change in the estimated outcome for 1974/75 which is considerably greater than £40,000. I think if this is indeed the case the House would, no doubt, wish to have this confirmed by the Financial & Development Secretary and I must insist, Mr Speaker, that the explanation that has been given can hardly account for virtually every single computation having been got wrong in the first place.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Chairman, ⁸²the Hon Member has one perfectly valid point. Now, should I have said it or should I have waited until as I would have done, until he came to page 12 of the Estimates?

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, otherwise we are going to duplicate. All we are doing now and I would like Members to realise this is that an explanation has been requested for the amendments. Whether the explanation is satisfactory or not of course will give rise to a fair amount of comment from the Opposition. The comments will have to come at the appropriate time, but in order to enable the Opposition to vote for or against the proposed amendments this explanation was forthcoming and nothing else. I am not splitting hairs but I am trying to explain the position. You will have ample opportunity both in the general debate when we report from Committee and when we discuss the general Estimates of expenditure for 1975/76 when we go into the details of the matter.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Allow me, Sir, if I could just make just one comment in recognition of the point the Hon Member has said. When we reach page 12 of the Estimates Item 2 Cemeteries - then obviously, I was going to have to explain that in the revised estimates in respect of 1974/75 there is, in fact, an excess of £1000. I should have said £41,000, but, Sir, we must wait to see. I am confident that the broad explanation I have given for the provisions in the supplementary estimates is valid but we shall see when we come to the draft Estimates 1975/76 whether, in fact, the amount by which the 1974/75 revised expenditure has been overstated is £41,000 or significantly more.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, with respect but the Hon Financial & Development Secretary it would be helpful to Members to be told, broadly speaking, what is the general effects. Is it £41,000 or £51,000 or is it £61,000. I think that would be helpful to Members on this side.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, subject to correction, my figure is £41,000.

MR SPEAKER:

May I warn the Opposition of one danger they may be falling into. They will have ample opportunity to discuss the explanations and the reasons and the advisability of the amendments being carried out.

They will only have one opportunity to vote for or against the particular items in the expenditure and that is, I think, what the Opposition, if I may stick my neck out, should direct their minds to. Because once we vote this supplementary estimates of expenditure, you have lost your opportunity to question the actual expenditure.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, that is precisely the point that I made earlier. We have come to the House today with the information contained in the statement made by the Financial & Development Secretary when he gave notice that he would be introducing a number of amendments. Now, that explanation referred to the supplementary estimates as a whole. What we were seeking at this stage was a comprehensive explanation of the present figures by the Financial & Development Secretary. The Opposition in considering whether to vote for or against any particular item in the supplementary estimates must take into account that we, especially my Hon Friend Mr Bossano, has examined the estimates carefully, is not satisfied with the explanation given by the Financial and Development Secretary and, therefore, if the Opposition feels that there has not been an adequate comprehensive explanation of the supplementary estimates and the lack of this might affect any particular item, then we shall be forced to abstain on each vote. I would like to clear, Mr Speaker, one point and that is obviously and least of all Mr Bossano, is not voting against the principle of the interim award which has already been paid in part.

MR SPEAKER:

Fair enough. Whether any explanation is comprehensive or satisfactory must, per force, be a matter of opinion and we mustn't discuss the quality of the explanation. Whether it is satisfactory or comprehensive in the eyes of the Opposition is for them to decide and to act accordingly, but we mustn't now debate the quality of the explanation itself. We will now proceed with the items. Therefore, we are now voting the amendment to Item No 2 Cemeteries - Personal Emoluments. That the figures appearing as £1309 in column 4 and 5 be substituted by the figures £268 in each instance. Those in favour? Those against? Carried.

Subhead 2 - Gravediggers

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I have the honour to move the amendment of the figure £1051 to £1015 on both occasions where it appears.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could I just ask the Financial & Development Secretary how many are involved in this particular subhead?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, seven. And seven times £123 I think amount to £1015.

HON J BOSSANO:

Well, should it not be, Mr Speaker, seven by £268 if it was £268 for the Headkeeper? Is it perhaps, Mr Speaker, that the following entry, the £860 is shown separately for the interim award. Is that the case?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

It is seven times - we are here dealing not with the biennial review but with the COLA element - it is seven times £145.

The item was passed.

Subhead 8 (NEW) Biennial Review was agreed to and passed.

Item 3 Head IV Education. 1 Personal Emoluments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker I beg to move the amendment of the figure £154,000 to £74,000 on both occasions where it appears.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could I ask the Financial & Development Secretary how many are involved in the £74,000?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir. The number involved are 190 and the House will also remember that on a previous occasion I explained that there was a mistake of £80,000 in this figure.

The Item was passed.

Subhead 8 - Wages Staff

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I beg to move an amendment of the figure £5,500 to £2,390 on both occasions where it appears.

The Item was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 19 (NEW) Biennial Review was agreed to and passed.

Item 3 was agreed to and passed.

Item 1 Head IV Education as amended was agreed to and passed.

Item 4 Head V Electricity Undertaking. 1 Personal Emoluments was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 11. Meter Testing and Repairs and Fixing etc.

MR SPEAKER:

I would suggest to the Financial and Development Secretary since what you are asking is the deletion of Items 11, 15, 16, 37 and 38 you can move in one amendment that all the items should be removed.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Chairman, I have the honour to move that the Subheads 11, 15, 16, 37 and 38 be deleted.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I wonder if the Financial & Development Secretary could tell the House whether there is a different explanation for this amendment or whether, in fact, the original sums there had anything at all to do with the cost of living & the interim award?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir. The original figures had to do with cost of living and the biennial award but the explanation for the deletion is that there are estimated savings in the Electricity Department which should make it unnecessary to come to the House for supplementary expenditure.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, did the Financial & Development Secretary give any indication to the House that this was, in fact, a consideration when he first made his explanation to the House in respect of the supplementary estimates? The point I am making, Sir, is that there must have been a reason why these figures appeared in the supplementary estimates and what this side of the House is concerned with is finding out what that reason was at that stage. Otherwise what the Financial & Development Secretary has done is to give an explanation which omitted a series of considerations which have now been brought to bear on the supplementary estimates and what the House should seek, in our view, is the reason why those figures appeared in the first place.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Chairman, I really cannot understand the suspicions of the House in this matter. I have rephrased every point that I made in my explanation last time but I have said as frankly as it is open for me to do that the original schedule was based on a calculation of the difference between the approved estimates and of the revised estimates without taking into account sufficiently other considerations and savings that there might be and I also say, and this is important,

that our latest assessment which I have used for these supplementary estimates of the revised estimated expenditure 1974/75, head by head, can perfectly well differ from the figures in the revised estimates 1974/75 which were included in the draft Estimates, the draft Estimates 1975/76, because these of necessity had to be prepared weeks and longer than that ago. I would ask the Hon Members opposite to take my word for this that the figures which today we are asking supplementary approval for are the best closest estimate that the accountants in the respective Departments and in the Treasury can produce of the additional expenditure which should be brought to the House for approval.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, in respect of fluctuations in the number of the people involved this side of the House is prepared to give the Financial and Development Secretary all the latitude that he needs. You see these supplementary estimates were rather simple supplementary estimates all referring as presented originally to the same item, namely, the interim award, which it so happens involved a simple computation and, therefore, the only possible error could have been not knowing how many people had actually received the Interim Award and we are talking about not future expenditure so much as past expenditure though there is still an element I can see of future expenditure, but it is expenditure in respect of the financial year that is ending. Now what concerned us and the Financial & Development Secretary has used the word "suspicion" which we would not use but what we would like to do is to try and find out why these mistakes were made and what considerations were brought to bear on these supplementary estimates for the Financial and Development Secretary to arrive at his present figures. Now, if there is a difference in kind in the explanation given by the Financial & Development Secretary this is necessarily a cause for concern for Members of the Opposition and also because the sum of money involved may be in our estimation rather larger than what the Financial & Development Secretary has said - my Hon Friend Mr Bossano has indicated this already - it is important as a point of principle and in effect for the Opposition to try to draw from the Financial and Development Secretary why the original figures were put in.

MR SPEAKER:

I think what has caused this particular inquiry is the fact that the reasons for the deletion for this particular item is not the same as for the general amendment that is being put to the House. Is that correct? And is there an explanation why you want this particular item deleted other than the general reason that you have already stated.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, the reason is that the latest assessment carried out leads the Electricity Undertaking Department to consider that as a result of what happened during the industrial action there will be savings in their vote which will make it unnecessary for them to seek supplementary expenditure.

MR SPEAKER:

At least the explanation appears to be as simple as that but irrespective of whatever else may have happened to warrant general amendments, those amendments would have come to the House in any event. Is that correct?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I am sorry, Sir. I am not quite with you.

MR SPEAKER:

That irrespective of the reasons why the general amendments have been brought to this House this particular amendment results not from those explanations but from the fact that changed circumstances have warranted savings in the department. Therefore this particular amendment to the Electricity Department Head would have come irrespective of the fact that there has been a general error in the preparation of the supplementary estimates. Is that correct?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, because I think it will be clear to the House that after the circulation of the schedule that I described as unsatisfactory we went very carefully indeed into the requirements with each of the Departments.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the total provision required for the cost of living and interim award as a result of the amendment is £712,000. Now, presumably what the Financial & Development Secretary is saying is that that is the net cost of the interim award and that, therefore, there is a difference between that net cost and what would have been the cost had there not been offsetting savings. Is that the case or not?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Broadly speaking that is the case. Employees who are in post all of the year, not all are in post all of the year, would derive £268 from the interim award and the cost of COLA. If we took the number of Government employees at 2750 which is, broadly speaking, the number we usually adopt - the number varies especially with industrial day to day, week to week, month to month - but 268 times 2750 is £737,000. Now there have been some net savings to reduce that figure.

HON J BOSSANO:

The other point, Mr Speaker, is that these sums that have been deleted will, in fact, also affect the Draft Estimates, will they not? Because they were included in the revised estimate column of the Draft Estimates.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Actually, I am reminded and this is certainly true. In the original schedule there is expenditure deleted which was not related to the interim review and COLA. There will be supplementary expenditure yet to come on this item and others which is not related to the interim award and COLA.

HON J BOSSANO:

On the basis of the information that is available to the House - we don't know what is to come yet - the revised estimates for 1974/75, which the House has got will, in fact, show a difference of more than £41,000 if this needs to be deleted as well. Will they not?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir, for the reason that there is additional supplementary expenditure yet to come. It will not come to the House now until after the end of the year.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, surely the Financial & Development Secretary must know what is to come insofar as he says there will be no difference in the estimates of expenditure before the House. In other words

if there is yet another consideration to be brought to bear on this which would make the figure in the estimates for expenditure for this year come right as published then, surely, he must know what extra amount

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but we are now putting the cart before the horse. That we will discuss when we come to the general estimates for 1975/76.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, in giving an explanatilm of the supplementary estimates earlier before we adjourned I sought an assurance and got an assurance that only in respect of the Public Works vote would the estimates of expenditure for this year be different. What the Financial & Development Secretary is saying now is that he is standing by that explanation but for a different reason. In other words under this particular item he is saying that there is yet other supplementary provision to come which is not connected with the biennial review but which by chance is going to come up to the same figure as published in the estimates of expenditure for this year. Now that is a very big coincidence I would say and if it isn't a coincidence then the Financial & Development Secretary should certainly know what this expenditure is about if he has already computed it in order to put it into the estimates of expenditure.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, the reason why I said that it is £40,000 and I have now added the £1000 is that as I said before the £40,000 and the £1000 are arithmetical mistakes which were carried forward. There is no profit in taking, item by item, the supplementary estimates required here and comparing with the revised 1974 estimates of expenditure in the draft estimates. The reason why we have got into difficulties over this matter is that the schedule of supplementary estimates was originally drawn up by making a spurious calculation on each of these heads. The simple way for the present supplementary estimates to have been drawn up would have been to have got the numbers of personnel, taken on average, worked out in the course of the year and given to each man his COLA and cost of living....

MR SPEAKER:

I think we have got to accept that and we have got to go ahead otherwise we are going.....

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, this is an important point of principle. Insofar as we are talking now about expenditure which has been presented to this House and the reason being given for it. Now, we are not telling the Financial & Development Secretary that we do not believe what he is saying now but what we are saying is: "Do not, in giving an explanation, give such an explanation that it is going to lead to difficulties later on." Now, we are particularly concerned with the estimates of expenditure which we are going to discuss in a little while in the House and what we are saying is, "do not try to arrange these figures so that they fit the estimates of expenditure later on." Let us have a clear statement of what is needed and if there any any difference^s which would result for the estimates of expenditure then let us have then now. But what we are not prepared to sit here and listen to is whether there is another consideration which we have not been told about and that there is something else to come. That, I think, is not being fair to the Opposition.

MR SPEAKER:

I think we must accept the situation as it is. Whilst commiserating with the difficulties that you are faced with one has to accept the situation and the Opposition will have to act according to their concepts. One has to accept the explanation given by the Financial & Development Secretary and we mustn't go back to the principle involved on each item. That is the warning I gave at the beginning. So I am putting this amendment to the vote now without any further discussion. Those in favour? Those against? Carried.

The item was agreed to.

Subhead 53 (NEW) Biennial Review was agreed to and passed.

Item 4 Head V Electricity Undertaking, as amended was agreed to and passed.

MR SPEAKER:

There is a consequential amendment to the bottom of the page.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir. At the bottom of page 1 amend the carried forward figure of £207,024 to £119,498 and, Sir, if I may at the same time amend at the top of page 2 the brought forward figure of £270,024 to £119,498.

The amendment was agreed to.

Item 5 Head VI - Fire Service 1. Personal Emoluments.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker could I ask the Financial and Development Secretary how many individuals this covers?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:-

Sixty.

The item was agreed to.

Subhead 2. Wages

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I have the honour to move the amendment of the figure £201 to £210 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 4. Maintenance of Fire Brigade Equipment.

MR SPEAKER:

Again in this particular instance you can move the deletion of Subheads 4, 6 and 7 at the same time.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I beg to move that the subheads 4, 6 and 7 be deleted.

This was agreed to.

Head VI - Fire Service as amended was agreed to

Item 6 Head VIII. Judicial 2. Supreme Court (1) Personal Emoluments was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 6 Wages Staff, was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 11 (NEW) Biennial Review.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £145 to £123 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to and passed.

(3) Magistrates and Coroner's Courts 1. Personal Emoluments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £2294 to £1720 on both occasions where it appears.

HON J BOSSANO:

Can the Financial & Development Secretary say how many are involved in this, please?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Eight, Sir.

This was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 5. Wages Staff.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the deletion of the figures £468 and £100 on both occasions where they appear.

MR SPEAKER:

You want to delete the whole of subhead 5, don't you?

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, may I ask the Financial & Development Secretary why the figures were put in originally?

MR SPEAKER:

Let us find out what he wants to do first. Am I correct in saying that you want to delete the whole of subhead 5 - Wages Staff and the figures, too?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, the old subhead with its original provision and its proposed supplementary provision because it is no longer necessary now to come to the House for supplementary expenditure under this head because there are savings.

MR SPEAKER:

Therefore the amendment proposed is that subhead 5 Wages Staff should be deleted.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I wanted to ask the Financial & Development Secretary how the original figures got in? For what reason?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Because, Sir, as I have, I thought, painstakingly explained the original schedule was drawn up by reference to the approved estimates 1974/1975 and the revised estimate 1974/1975.

The amendment was agreed to.

Item 7 Head IX Labour and Social Security 1. Personal Emoluments.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, may I ask the Financial & Development Secretary how many individuals are involved in this?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

In personal emoluments, 47.

This was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 14. Accommodation of Labour.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I have the honour to move the amendment of the figures £15,000 to £8,410 on both occasions where it appears.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could I ask the Financial & Development Secretary whether this could make any difference to the revised estimated expenditure for 1974/75 or whether there is an explanation such as he gave before that we will be anticipating a future expenditure of the same order which we don't know anything about yet?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The explanation is that there are staff changes and vacancies so this will not mean that the revised expenditure of 1974/75 in the draft estimates is overstated.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I would like to point out to the House that what is being sought now is almost half of what was being sought before.

I don't think it reflects very well on this House that a figure should have been presented of £15,000 which has now been reduced to £6,400 and the explanation given is that there are staff changes and vacancies. Are we to understand the Financial and Development Secretary was not aware that they had only half the complement in this Department?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The question to me, Sir, is the statement that it does not reflect well on this House that such different figures should be brought as were originally brought. I accept that, Sir. I have said throughout the easier course undoubtedly would have been for me to withdraw the schedule which would never have been discussed in this House. I have given the explanation why the figures are wrong.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I didn't quite get the end of the explanation that the Financial & Development Secretary gave before as to whether, in fact, this would require an alteration in the revised estimates for 1974/75 or not. I am not sure whether he said it would or it would not.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

My answer, Sir, is that it would not, because I am so assured by the accountants in the Department.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, but is it not the case then if we are only going to need £8,400 between now and the end of the month because of staff changes.

MR SPEAKER:

I would suggest you make a note of that for the general debate. I know exactly what you are going to say. It is the general principle you want to discuss now, the implication of the answer you've been given.

HON J BOSSANO:

Well, Mr Speaker, as far as I am concerned if, in fact, we need £15,000 here then, surely, the Financial & Development Secretary should not amend it. If we don't need £15,000 then, surely, we have £7,000 more than we thought we had at the end of the year. To me the two things are mutually incompatible, either one thing is right and the other thing is wrong or the other way round and I would like the Financial & Development Secretary to tell me how he manages to get both things wrong or both things right.

MR SPEAKER:

I think the general answer given by the Financial & Development Secretary is that the net result of the general amendments is that one will compensate the other.

HON J BOSSANO:

But in this particular subhead under the Financial Procedures Ordinance the Financial & Development Secretary doesn't have the right to use the money for one thing just like that. So shall we then get an amendment on this particular subhead? That is what I am after. It is at page 27, Mr Speaker.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Are we speaking now of Item 14? Accommodation of Labour?. The revised estimate of expenditure in the estimates 1974/75 is £100,000. I think I will explain this as a general thing, if I may, at the end.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, somebody came to me alleging certain things about employment for taking care of hostels and so forth under this particular vote - accommodation of labour - which, I imagine, covers the employment of....

MR SPEAKER:

Not the general principles and conditions of employment.

HON M XIBERRAS:

No, women and men at Casemates and at the Deveil's Tower Hostel who do the cleaning for these hostels. This was a recent thing and I have a clear recollection of this. I was told that there were no vacancies at all and this particular lady was put on a waiting list. I can picture the lady concerned but I cannot recall her name, but I can make it available later on. I am surprised to see that there are vacancies here when apparently, the hostels are full, and the Casemates is also full. And yet there are staff changes and there are vacancies.

HON A J CANEPA:

I was checking on the figures yesterday in respect of this supplementary figure of £8,410. I asked how many industrials the Department employed and I was told altogether 58. Two of those would be in the Homes - child care - seven, I think, were cleaning of the offices, and that left about 50 or so for the hostels. I am not aware in the two and a half years that I have been in the Department that the industrial staff of the hostels has ever been higher than 50. The numbers have always been 40 something and certainly we have never had anything like half complement or any such impression which the Leader of the Opposition may have gathered. As far as I am aware we are pretty well fully staffed.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, we are not going to discuss that now.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, can I now say on the Hon Mr Bossano's point on Item 14 that the revised estimate of £100,000 in the draft estimates is £15,000 higher than the approved estimates 1974/75 and this includes for the 58 employees at £146 for COLA £8410 which we have here and that it will, therefore, be necessary for the Department to seek the approval of the House for further supplementary expenditure later on of the order of £7,000.

HON A J CANEPA:

With regard to that revised figure for 1974/75 I should point out that of course a year ago the Department had made no provision for the very substantial increase in the cost of electricity and food, for instance, at the restaurant of Devil's Tower Hostel and all that has put up our cost enormously. So the £15,000 would be required, certainly, to cover that alone.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, how could we object to an explanation of this kind. What we do object to is when the Financial & Development Secretary stands up and says this amendment is because there are vacancies and the Minister responsible for the Department stands up and says that he is not aware that there are any vacancies. That is what we object to. Of course we are prepared to take into account mistakes, wrong computations, and all the rest. But when it comes to explanations we can't sit here and hear contradictory explanations emanating from the Government bench.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I am sorry but I would like to follow up what the Financial & Development Secretary has just said in answer to my question. He said that we shall only need £8,400 for the interim award for the biennial review for 58 persons and that the other £7,000 will not make a difference to the outcome because it is going to be required for something which the House does not yet know about. Is that right?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir.

The item was agreed to.

Subhead 18 (NEW) Biennial Review.

HON J BOSSANO:

Could I have the number of persons involved?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sixty-five.

The item was agreed to and passed.

Item 8 Head X Public Works, 1. Personal Emoluments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £72,865 to £32,310 on both occasions where they appear.

This was agreed to.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, if I may move the insertion after subhead 1 of two new subheads as follows:

- (3) Cleaning of Offices: original estimated provision £2,160, supplementary expenditure now required £800, total supplementary expenditure £800; and
- (6) Training of apprentices: original provision £24,180, supplementary provision now required £7,180 and total supplementary expenditure required £7,180.

Mr Speaker proposed the question in the terms of the above amendment.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, on this one, am I to understand that these £800 and £7,180 are the same ones that were incorporated under this Head but mistakenly not called, for cleaning of offices and training of apprentices, or is this a new consideration?

MR SPEAKER:

This is a new item.

HON M XIBERRAS:

This is a new consideration but the original figure had nothing to do with these two?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

This did not occur previously.

HON M XIBERRAS:

May I then ask the Hon Financial & Development Secretary why it is necessary to put it in at this stage?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Because we now know that there is supplementary provision for the purpose we are discussing required under this subhead.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Then am I to take it, Mr Speaker, that they were left out in error? The department put in for this supplementary provision but they were omitted in error from the original supplementary estimates?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, in error or by assessment of the estimated expenditure at that time.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I would have thought that the inclusion of these two items would further confuse the issue because the supplementary estimates originally provided for the biennial review and the insertion of these two which apparently are an absolute necessity now, simply serves to confuse the issue and it appears from this that it is an attempt to increase the expenditure other than that which was originally envisaged by the supplementary estimates laid earlier before the House.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

This is by no means the case, Sir, at all. The simple explanation is that now we are trying to make this supplementary estimates schedule as accurate and comprehensive as we can.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, why does it cost £7,180 more to train apprentices - it is a pet subject of mine.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

It is provision for 27 officers, interim award and COLA.

Head X Public Works was agreed to and passed.

Item 9 Head XI. Public Works Annually Recurrent 1 Painting of Crown Properties.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £10,050 to £10,030 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 2 Maintenance and Repairs of Crown Properties.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £66,000 to £34,990 on both occasions where it appears.

HON J BOSSANO:

/are

Mr Speaker, could I ask the Financial & Development Secretary how many people involved in this figure and also what effect this has on the revised estimates for 1974/75 in connection with this Head as a whole. I am having difficulty in correlating the original approved estimate as they are given in the draft estimates and as they are given in this column, they seem to be two different things. On page 33 of the draft estimates and on this column there seems to be no correlation between any of the figures.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Here I readily admit that a question is put to the Financial Secretary which the Financial Secretary cannot possibly answer ie how many men are taken into account in each of these items. These items, Sir, on the next two pages cover the interim award and the cost of living addition for an industrial work force of about at any time 750 men who are engaged variously from day to day, from week to week, in gangs on the work which is financed from each of the subheads in the Public Works Annually Recurrent vote. The total of the figures beginning at Public Works Annually Recurrent 1. Painting of Crown Properties and running down as far as the end of Number 10, Head XII Public Works Annually Recurrent £16,000, the total of all these figures is £197,480, as I say, distributed over all these subheads. £197,480 would represent just under £268 for 737

workers but that as I have said is a very variable number. I believe at the moment it is more like 780 but there have been times when it has been 750 and times when it has been lower than that. So I do trust that Hon Members will trust the accountant in the Public Works Department to make a sensible and judicious allocation to these many Heads.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could I must ask the Financial & Development Secretary whether the total of £197,000 is the amended total or the original total. I wasn't very clear on that.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I am sorry could I have that question again.

HON J BOSSANO:

£197,000 for all these items in this Head. What I am trying to find out, Mr Speaker, is for example we have a £30,000 difference there. Do we have a £30,000 difference in the result or is that in fact offset by an increase somewhere?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The figure of £197,480 is the amended total.

HON J BOSSANO:

Then Mr Speaker, could I ask what effect this has on the revised estimate of 1974/75 as included in the draft estimates?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, this is the same answer I have given before. There is no effect on the draft estimates 1974/75.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, we were told there was a £40,000 difference in the Public Works Vote. There appears to be a difference in the region of £40,000 in the personal emoluments that we previously passed, and

now we have a difference of £30,000 in this particular Subhead - Maintenance and Repairs of Crown Properties - Now is the Financial and Development Secretary saying then that although we are now providing for £197,000, in the revised estimates he is providing more than we are voting at this stage because he knows although the House doesn't, that he is going to need more money before the end of the month.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

As I have said the £40,000 was a mistake which was carried forward. These figures are the accountant's figures which reconcile with their revised estimate as they were presented in the draft estimates.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker can I ask then whether any savings were anticipated under this Head when the original figures were submitted. Otherwise what was the reason for the original figures or was it an overestimate of the number of men employed?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

/the The general explanation of the original figure was as I say that they were derived from revised estimate at that time and that they did not take full and adequate account of savings.

HON J BOSSANO:

Could I just ask the Financial & Development Secretary in respect of this Subhead 2 - Maintenance and Repairs of Crown Properties, is he now saying in the House, in fact, that he estimates the expenditure on this subhead in 1974/75 to be in the region of £217,000 which is what one gets by adding the amended supplementary provision to the original provision in the first column?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

All I am saying at this point is that the £34,990 is the estimate of the requirements for interim review and COLA with account taken of savings.

MR SPEAKER:

Over and above the £183,000. That is what you have been asked.
Is that correct?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

Then as far as the House is concerned at this moment in time for this particular subhead we need something in the region of £218,000?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, at this point of time.

HON J BOSSANO:

Although in fact, Mr Speaker, in a short while in the draft estimates we are going to be told that we need £323,00 which is £100,000 more.

The item was agreed to.

Subhead 4. Upkeep and Operation of Centres

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figures £440 to £690 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment at the bottom of page 2 the carried forward figure of £467,727 to £248,799. And, Sir, amend at the top of page 3 the brought forward figure of £407,727 to £248,799.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 6. ^Supervision of Crown Properties.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £3370 to £6200 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed.to.

Subhead 11. Running Expenses and Maintenance of Motor Vehicles was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 12. Maintenance and Repairs - Plant and Machinery - was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 14. Leave and Sick Pay for Workmen.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £14,000 to £7,650 on both occasions where it appears.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, if I may ask the question again of how did the original figures get into this and if it is on the basis of approved estimates and so on as the Financial & Development Secretary has said. Can I ask the Financial & Development Secretary whether he can see any rhyme or reason in his explanations other than repeating this phrase "from the approved estimate." We are trying to determine whether there was a coherent reason for the mistake and we cannot see it. We are asking on individual items and we do not see a coherent reason running through the mistakes.

MR SPEAKER:

I think one must limit oneself to asking whether the reason for this particular amendment is not covered by the explanations already given by the Financial & Development Secretary. I take it the answer is that it is the same reason.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

That is so, Sir, yes, and I have already explained that there can be no great precision in the allocation to these subheads of the labour or, therefore, are of the emoluments of the labour.

This was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 16. Operation of Depots was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 17. Operation of Stores was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 18. Emergency Service.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £150 to £270 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 22. Maintenance of Roads was agreed to and passed.

MR SPEAKER:

Mr Clerk, will you call Items 26 to 41, en bloc, as there are no amendments and Members can raise any matters they wish on them.

Subheads 26 to 41 were agreed to and passed.

Subhead 42. Maintenance of Pumps and Other Plant - Salt Water Supply.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figures £3220 to £1300 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed.

Subhead 50. Pumping - Potable Water was agreed to.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to amend the carried forward figures of £492,927 at the bottom of page 3, to £328,679. Likewise amend at the top of page 4 the brought forward figures of £492,927 to £328,679.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 51. Distribution of Potable Water was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 52. Maintenance of Pumps and Other Plant - Potable Water.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £3230 to £640 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 53. Running of Water Works was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 54. Provision of Water to shipping was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 55. Operation of Distillers was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 56. Operation of King's Bastion Distiller.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £3,000 to £1,000 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 60. Pumping - Sanitation

HON J BOSSANO:

On these water supply amendments can the Financial & Development Secretary say whether this will have any effect on the charges included in the notional accounts?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir, these changes will not affect beyond what I have already said the provisions for expenditure in the draft estimates.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I wasn't asking about the draft estimates. I was talking about the notional accounts for the municipal services.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

They are, by and large, taken from the expenditure in the draft estimates.

This was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 61. Upkeep of Sewers and Drains was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 62. Maintenance of Sewage Pumps.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £3,240 to £1300 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 63. Toilets and Public Baths.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £2,630 to £4,850 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 65. Collection of Refuse.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I beg to move the amendment of the figure £11,770 to £10,300 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 66. Disposal of Refuse was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 67. Sweeping of Highways was agreed to and passed.

Head XI - Public Works Annually recurrent was agreed to and passed.

MR SPEAKER:

I understand that the Hon Financial & Development Secretary would now move the addition of a new item.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, I beg to move the addition of a new Item 10. Head XII Public Works Non-Recurrent. 139 (NEW) Biennial Review and Cost of Living Addition. There is no original provision because it is new and no previous supplementary expenditure. Supplementary expenditure now required £16,000, total supplementary expenditure required £16,000.

Mr Speaker proposed the question in the terms of the Financial and Development Secretary motion.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

This is just the allocation to the Public Works Annually Non-Recurrent of a suitable proportion of the interim award and the COLA for such number of the industrial labour force as may be thought to be engaged on these works.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the Financial & Development Secretary has said that there will be offsetting expenses and we accept this as the type of offsetting expense that one could legitimately say would have no effect on the outcome, that is, if, in fact, we are transferring from one subhead to another in a more accurate allocation, the cost of the interim award this is fair enough. Now, I take it that this is not the sort of explanation that he has given to try and convince us that the outcome is only going to be £41,000.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir.

This was agreed to and passed.

MR SPEAKER:

The Hon Financial and Development Secretary will move, I think, the amendment of renumbering Item 10, Item 11 and then the two amendments to the figures appearing there at one and the same time.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, consequentially upon the insertion of a new item 10. I move that the old item 10 be amended to Number 11, under Head 13. Law Officers the Attorney General, subhead 1 - Personal Emoluments, amend the figure £1,414 to £1,340 on both occasions where it appears.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could I just ask the Financial and Development Secretary whether he anticipates that he will require supplementary expenditure on this particular subhead which will require the personal emoluments to be increased by something near the original unamended figure since the original unamended figure is the one that is included in the revised estimates and the draft estimates.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The difference is £75. I would not venture to answer that question, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

So it is quite possible, Mr Speaker that the outcome even if we assume everything the Financial and Development Secretary has said up to now is accurate, would be £41,074.

This was agreed to and passed.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, consequentially now I move the amendment of item 11 to become item 12. Head XIV - House of Assembly. There Sir, at Subhead 1. Personal Emoluments, amend the figure £1198 to £809. on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, once again in the case of the House of Assembly, it is the unamended figure that is included in the draft estimates and, of course, again the sum may not appear to be very much it is only £200, but, of course, these figures have a habit of adding up to quite substantial amounts when we get to the end of the estimates. Could the Hon Financial and Development Secretary say whether here, in fact, he will still stand by the amount in the draft estimates and say whether he expects supplementary expenditure for the House of Assembly personal emoluments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

So far as I may be proved wrong that is so.

This was agreed to.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

At the bottom of page 4, Sir, amend the carried forward figure of £557,209 to £402,713 and amend at the top of page 5 the brought forward figure of £557,209 to £402,714.

This was agreed to.

Item 12 Head XV. Medical and Public Health 1. Personal Emoluments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, consequentially, amend Item 12 to become Item 13. Subhead 1 Personal Emoluments, amend the figure £112,374 to £98,624 on both occasions where it appears.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, in this case unlike the two previous ones where we had £74 and £389 and the Financial and Development Secretary did not appear to want to defend his position very much, can he tell me now in respect of this £13,746 which is included as part of the revised estimate 1974/75, if he expects to be needing supplementary provision for personal emoluments in the current year which will require him to allocate this sum which he is now amending as a result of the amendment just proposed.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir. I stand by my answer that in the draft estimates 1975/76 the revised estimate 1974/75 will not be affected by these changes.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I am not making a general point about the estimates, I am asking specifically about personal emoluments in the Medical Department. We are now told the original provision was £423,720.

We are told that we require an extra £98,624 as opposed to the £112,000 that was originally expected to be needed for this subhead. The difference of £13,000 is not reflected in the revised estimate on page 41 in this particular subhead. Is the Financial and Development Secretary saying that he is still going to be needing the £13,000 for this particular subhead, or is he saying that he wishes to retain that £13,000 in that subhead although he is going to use it for something else?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I maintain still that this will not affect the revised figure in the draft estimate 1975/76, insofar as we have reduced here the provision for COLA and the interim award if that is and that will be at the expense of other expenditure previously in this schedule that balance of supplementary expenditure will have to be sought separately.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, this is personal emoluments. It is the wages and salaries of the staff employed in the Medical Department. What I would like to know, Mr Speaker, is whether the amount of money that we need in the current financial year is the amount that is produced by adding the supplementary vote that the House has just approved to the original sum that was approved or the amount that we are told on page 41 of the draft estimates is the amount required. There is a difference of £13,000 and both cannot be accurate. Which of the two is accurate?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

My answer is the latter, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

Therefore, Mr Speaker, the figure on page 41 is incorrect?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, by no means. The figure that we require is the figure shown in the draft estimates for 1975/76.

HON J BOSSANO:

The figure that we require is at the end of the column on page 41 which shows the total vote required for personal emoluments. It is a figure that is produced by adding £112,000 to the original vote. The Financial & Development Secretary says that that is the accurate figure. Well, if that is the accurate figure he had better amend his amendment and put back £112,000, Mr Speaker

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir, because the difference is explained by additional personal emoluments which are not concerned with the interim award of the COLA.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, this additional personal emoluments the House knows nothing about. This is true, is it not?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

There will be an opportunity, Sir, to explain what that is.

This was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 11. Wages Staff was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 21. Disinfection etc.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, I beg to move the deletion of the whole of Subhead 21.

This was agreed to.

Head XV - Medical and Public Health was agreed to and passed.

Item 13 Head XVI Miscellaneous Services

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I move that item 13 be renumbered Item 14.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 3. Contribution to John Mackintosh Hall was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 4. Grant to the Gibraltar Museum was agreed to and passed.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, after subhead 4. insert the following two new items: 25 Industrial Training Centre, original provision £8,155, supplementary expenditure required £1,340, total supplementary required £1,340 and subhead 26 Victoria Stadium: insert original provision £12,000 supplementary expenditure now required £1,608, total supplementary expenditure £1,608.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, these are new items. Could the Financial and Development Secretary say what the money is required for?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The money is required for the same purpose, ie the interim award for the biennial review and cost of living to staff working at the Training Centre and the Victoria Stadium.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, is this expenditure figure under any other different Head when the supplementary estimates were **originally** presented and if not why have they been brought in at this stage?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

It ~~did~~ not figure before and it has been brought in at this stage for completeness.

This was agreed to and passed.

Head XVI - Miscellaneous Services was agreed to and passed.

Item 14 Head XVIII Police

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, consequentially, I beg to move the amendment of Item 14 to Item 15.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 1 Personal Emoluments was agreed to and passed.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could I ask the Financial & Development Secretary in respect of this additional provision for this item whether the share of the cost to the Admiralty is fully reflected in the revised estimates for 1974/75 under Head IV of Revenue?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

What I am trying to obtain is an idea of what is the net cost to the Gibraltar Government of the additional cost of the interim and COLA of this particular Head.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Frankly, I don't follow that question.

HON J BOSSANO:

What I would like to know, Mr Speaker, of what the total that is required for this head for interim and COLA, how much is going to be met from local revenue and how much is met from the Admiralty.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, the answer, as with the estimates, is about 58% by the Ministry of Defence.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 12. Traffic Control

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, subhead 12. Traffic Control. Amend as follows: include the figure £1,520 under supplementary provision already approved and amend the figure £659 to £725 under supplementary provision now required, and £659 to £2,245 under total supplementary provision.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 14. Cleaning of Offices and Stations

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend the figure £563 to £435 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, insert after subhead 14 a new subhead 17. Female searcher: original provision £435, supplementary provision now required £120 total supplementary provision required £120.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 18. Two Communication Attendants.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Chairman, I beg to move the deletion of the whole subhead.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 28 (NEW) Biennial Review was agreed to and passed.

Head XVIII - Police, was agreed to and passed.

Item 15 Head XIX - Port

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, consequentially, I beg to move the amendment of item 15 to item 16.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 1. Personal Emoluments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend the figure £15,188 to £15,276 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 5. Conservancy, Wharves etc was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 9. Cleaning - Offices and Stations was agreed to and passed.

Subhead 14. (NEW) Biennial Review was agreed to and passed.

Head XIX - Port, was agreed to and passed.

Item 16 Head XX Post Office and Savings Bank.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, consequentially, I beg to move the amendment of item 16 to item 17.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 1. Personal Emoluments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir amend the figure £18,305 to £15,946 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, insert after subhead 1. a new item as follows: 13 Cleaning of Offices, original provision £1,400, supplementary expenditure now required £200, total supplementary expenditure required £200.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 22 (NEW) Biennial Review was agreed to and passed.

Head XX Post Office and Savings Bank was agreed to and passed.

Item 17 Head XXI Prison

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, consequentially I beg to move the amendment of item 17 to item 18.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 1. Personal Emoluments was agreed to and passed.

Head XXI Prison was agreed to and passed.

Item 18 Head XXIII Revenue.

MR SPEAKER:

There are two consequential amendments here which you can do at one and the same time. The item and the total at the bottom of the page.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, amend item 18 Head XXIII Revenue to become item 19 and, Sir, amend at the bottom of page 5 the carried forward figure of £843,893 to £675,638 and amend the figures likewise at the top of page 6.

This was agreed to.

Head XXIII Revenue was agreed to and passed.

Item 19 Head XXIV Secretariat

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend item 19 Head XXIV Secretariat to become item 20.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 1. Personal Emoluments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend the figure £20,266 to £18,224 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 6. Office Maintenance and Cleaning.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend the figure £1,800 to £932 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, insert after subhead 6, a new item 10. Telephone Service, original provision £4,100, supplementary expenditure now required £207, total supplementary expenditure required £207.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 20 (NEW) Biennial Review.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend the figure £2,372 to £1,019 on both occasions where they appear.

This was agreed to.

Head XXIV Secretariat, was agreed to and passed.

Item 20 Head XXV Telephone Service

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend item 20 Head XXV Telephone Service to item 21.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 1 Personal Emoluments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend the figure £14,158 to £8,844 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 2. Maintenance and Repair of Exchanges.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend the figure £1,349 to £580 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 3. Maintenance and Extension of Lines.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend the figure £8,531 to £3,915 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 4. Maintenance and Running Expenses of Motor Vehicles.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend the figure £271 to £145 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 7. Training of Apprentices.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend the figure £665 to £290 on both occasions where it appears.

This was agreed to.

Subhead 15 (NEW) Biennial Review was agreed to and passed.

Head XXV Telephone Service was agreed to and passed.

Item 21 Head XXVI Tourist Office

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, amend item 21. Tourist Office to be item 22 and delete the whole item as under 21, and substitute by the following:

Item 22	Head XXVI	Tourist Office	£	£	£	£
	1	Personal Emoluments	17,660	-	2,710	2,710
	2	General Information Offices	3,223	-	290	290
	3	Air Terminal	8,100	-	145	145
	4	London Office	22,697	-	435	435
	12	St Michael's Cave	3,816	-	290	290
	14	Tower of Homage	1,920	-	145	145
	15	Caravan Parking Site	2,806	-	145	145
	16	Miniature Golf Course	803	-	145	145
	25	(NEW) Biennial Review	-	-	1,500	1,500

Mr Speaker proposed the question in the terms of the above amendment.

HON J BOSSANO:

Could I ask the Financial and Development Secretary, Mr Speaker, on subhead 1 Personal Emoluments. In the original estimate it was £8,000 and in the draft estimates on page 64 it is also £8,000.

Can I ask him whether he expects that entry on page 64 to need alteration in the light of the new mended subheads introduced in Item 22?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Under subhead 1 there has been a saving due to virements and I do not expect the figure in the draft estimates to change.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the House is now voting £2,700 for personal emoluments and in the revised estimates column on the draft estimates the amount includes a sum of £8,000 which was in the original schedule. Is the Financial & Development Secretary then saying that he expects to require in respect of personal emoluments for the Tourist Office an additional £5,300 ?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

This we will come to, Sir, at the appropriate point.

HON J BOSSANO:

Well, Mr Speaker, can the Financial & Development Secretary say how many people are involved in the £2,700 for the biennial review interim and COLA?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

As I said there has been a virement warrant.

HON J BOSSANO:

And can he explain how they arrived at the original £8,000 for 15 people, Mr Speaker?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Not better than by the explanation I have given so many times over by a calculation of the difference between two figures which did not adequately take account of what we are here trying to do.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the House must be indeed mystified by the way the Treasury controls expenditure because the revised estimate we have often been told in the House is arrived at by adding the supplementary estimate to the original approved estimate and now we are told that the supplementary estimate is arrived at by subtracting the original from the revised which is, of course, very logical but one doesn't know whether it is the hen or the egg that comes first and what I would like to know, Mr Speaker, is how the revised figure was arrived at and then, of course, knowing how the revised figure was arrived at, I would be able to deduce for myself how the supplementary figure was arrived at.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I already explained this morning that in any year inevitably there will at least be one supplementary expenditure schedule coming after the end of the year and so that is one thing you must know. The revised estimates are calculated by the accountants in the department week by week and these figures were changed. But as to how does the Treasury calculate, the answer is that the accounts system in all the departments operate that way.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, we are talking about 15 individuals in the employment of the Government for whom something in the region of an additional £6,000, will be required this year. It is not money that the Treasury or the Financial & Development Secretary can use for some other thing, it is money in this particular subhead. We are told that we only need to vote now for the interim and the COLA £2,700. We are told that originally we would have been asked to vote £8,000 but that that was a figure produced in error. We are now told that the difference of £5,300 will still be required for the payment of these 15 individuals but we are not told in respect of what although the Financial & Development Secretary claims to know why he will require that, he says he will tell us at the appropriate time. Well, Mr Speaker, when we come to debate the draft estimates we always find ourselves in the difficult situation of my wishing to bring in figures which relate to past expenditure which the House has already voted, and I appreciate....

MR SPEAKER:

You have my assurance that when we debate the estimates of expenditure for 1975/76 any figures which have been debated in this supplementary estimates will be relevant and I will not stop you

on that score. But I think we will have to wait until we do that for you to get the explanation you are seeking now.

HON J BOSSANO:

Well, can the Financial & Development Secretary tell the House, Mr Speaker, whether he knows in respect of what this additional £5,300 will be required. Is it overtime working by the 15 individuals or is there other allowances which are not, in fact, in this estimate but which will come in a forthcoming estimate?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

There was overtime involved and staff changes.

Head XXVI Tourist Office, was agreed to and passed.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I now beg to move the amendment to the total of £912,150 at the bottom of page 6 to £724,196.

This was agreed to.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have the honour to propose that the votes detailed in Supplementary Estimates No 5 of 1974/75, as amended, be approved.

Mr Speaker proposed the question in the terms of the Financial and Development Secretary's motion.

The House recessed at 1.00 pm.

The House resumed at 3.15 pm.

MR SPEAKER:

I will remind members that we have reported from Committee and I have proposed the question which is that the House approves the votes detailed in Supplementary Estimates No 5 of 1974/75, as amended, and therefore the debate is open.

MR SPEAKER:

Do I take it that there are no contributors to the debate because if that is the case I will put the question?

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, I am afraid that I am one of those who are mystified by the figures that have been thrown at me taken away and thrown back at me again. I noticed on the first supplementary estimates the figure at the end was £912,150 and this came after I think, if I understood the Financial and Development Secretary correctly, after the first revision of the approved estimates, then we come to the second revision which leaves me with a total of £724,196. Having taken one from the other I think that we have a balance in our favour of £187,954 which when looking and referring myself to the financial statement 1975/76 which obviously this must have a bearing on, I find that the deficit which is estimated there of £228,477 being reduced to £40,523. Now, I don't know whether I am getting anywhere near the figure now and the answer I see is no because apparently there is going to be a third revision of the estimates and this is I think extremely confusing and doesn't make it easy at all for Members of this House to follow the position of the finances of Gibraltar let alone the man in the street which after all is responsible for paying his taxes. I would have thought that when Supplementary Estimates No 5 was introduced or presented to this House, there should have been enough time to make the three revisions into one and produce a figure which was very near - and I accept perhaps it is impossible ever to arrive at the actual figure - I accept that and I agree that is the difficult task notwithstanding whatever I may be saying now I accept it is not an easy task for the people concerned. But notwithstanding that I think there is a great need to simplify the estimates and make the picture very clear to all those who are concerned in one way or another either in the Government side which I suppose must affect the Ministers in the same way as it affects Members of the Opposition unless they have prior knowledge of this. I would say that if it is difficult for us it must be difficult for Members of the Government itself. I would have thought that it should have been possible for the Treasury to produce a more definite set of figures before we came here today. I cannot understand how a few hours after it was laid on the table it was discovered that there were other figures that had to be added or subtracted from the supplementary estimates. And this, of course, leads to members of this House to begin to doubt whether, in fact, I can make a true assessment of the finances of Gibraltar with the figures I now have at hand. What is going to come next in the next 24 hours after we leave this House? What is there more that we don't know about? This is the thing that is worrying, I will of course accept that a mistake can occur but

there is more or less method in these mistakes it is right through the Departments. How can it happen when you have a department working its own figures that it so coincides that all the departments are making similar mistakes in their assessment? Obviously, I think, it does raise doubts and, of course, we all begin to think whether the Treasury in their zeal to improve the situation is hiding a bit of money here and there. This is the doubt, because obviously certainly from this side of the House we do not want to tax people more than they should and we are entitled to ask whether this is the true position of the situation today. And when we do come later on to consider the method of taxation, if there are going to be any, are they really justified? Looking back now to the last Budget wasn't the opposition really justified in saying that there was more money or that there would be more money at the end of the year than being suggested by the Government. I think, therefore, we are quite entitled to be critical in the way the estimates have been presented. I also suggest that we have wasted a lot of time, a considerable amount of time, by perhaps not adding on the side of the estimates notes as we have in the draft estimates pointing out why the changes have had to take place. There is no such indications here, and I think we have wasted a lot of time in trying to extract information which up to now quite honestly I, at least, am not so sure that I know.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

If the Honourable Member could give way for a moment, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Perhaps not at this stage since this is the debate. You will have the right to reply, of course.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

It was simply to explain, Sir, that I did try very carefully on page 7 of the revised schedule which I circulated to explain how the figures were arrived at.

HON MAJOR R J FELIZA:

Well, maybe that was the case but I still believe that, perhaps, it needs more explaining because I am still not clear in my mind quite honestly as to why certain figures have gone up and others have gone down. It seems to me it is not all due to changes in wages and salaries due to the interim awards and what have you. I think it has been pointed out that this is not the case. I wonder whether something has not been learned from this session and, perhaps, next year when we are presented with supplementary

estimates as I am sure we will be, whether a bigger effort cannot be made so that the position is made much clearer and also whether some thought should not be given as to the way that this could be introduced into the House. When we started the meeting I think it was suggested that a good introduction by the Minister concerned might help considerably in avoiding a lot of argument sometimes at cross purposes and I would suggest that, perhaps, the Leader of the House could think about doing something like that not only next year but with the rest of the business concerning the estimates that we have ahead of us here today.

MR SPEAKER:

I am waiting to see whether there is any other contributor. If there is not again I have to warn the House that I will put the question.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I am surprised that the Financial & Development Secretary has not stood up again.

MR SPEAKER:

He will have the right to reply. He is the mover of the motion.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, would someone in the Government side try to assist in this because there are still a number of very serious queries as regards this supplementary schedule and the Opposition feels that this is important both in itself as a matter of principle in the way that the House is asked to vote funds. It is also important because it is relevant to the budget that is going to be discussed by the House. It is also important because it affects the procedure of this House insofar as when we move into discussion of the estimates of expenditure at least half this House will be in doubt as to whether the estimates of expenditure which we associate with the budget are accurate or not accurate. And the Financial and Development Secretary who in this House - obviously he does not do all the work personally himself - but in this House is responsible, has presented this supplementary expenditure schedule and also will present the estimates for the budget. Now, if the sum involved in this Supplementary Estimates No 5, which will be notorious by the time this House is finished with it, were a small

sum then the House could possibly quibble at the approach, question on mistakes and so forth, but not be particularly perturbed about the real substance of the mistake that has been made. But the sum involved is a very substantial sum and the mistake has been discovered directly before we are moving into the budget session proper and, therefore, Hon Members should not be surprised that the Opposition has paid so much attention to this. Earlier we insisted that the Financial & Development Secretary should offer some sort of explanation for this and he gave an explanation. And the explanation has been found to be wanting because the considerations that the Financial & Development Secretary brought before the House in explanation of the original supplementary estimates have been added to in his subsequent explanation today. That explanation has been obtained, almost I might say, under duress by Hon Members on this side of the House. Much better that the Financial & Development Secretary should have if he had such a case - because I really still don't know what the cause of the mistake is - should have not tried to confuse the issue by appearing to try to scrape the bottom of the barrel to produce expenditure which was not directly related to the main business of the original supplementary estimate which was the interim award and to add things and subtract things and talk about savings and items which were not at all referred to in the original supplementary estimates. It has made the whole operation seem like a cover-up, not for anything nefarious, let me add. This is not the accusation and if the Hon Financial & Development Secretary feels that it is this that Hon Members on this side of the House are accusing him of, he is mistaken. But we are entitled to criticise bad presentation and we are entitled to find out what the consequences of bad presentation are on the figures before us for which this House is responsible. It is not a question whether it is moral or immoral it is a question of whether it is accurate or inaccurate and if it is inaccurate as it has been proved to be, then we must look at the consequences of the inaccuracy. And more than we need to know the reason for the inaccuracy. We do not want to know who was responsible or who was not responsible, what we want is the explanation. It is up to the Financial & Development Secretary to find out exactly how things went wrong but he is under an obligation to tell Hon Members here what did go wrong. I would have said, Mr Speaker, that in a mistake as big as this there would be one coherent explanation for it. In other words one thing that went wrong and upset all the other figures. And this was in fact the impression which I gained from the original explanation of the Financial & Development Secretary, not the one given today. But the whole mistake appears to have been compounded by an attempt to build up expenditure for things other than the interim award in order to arrive at a figure which is nearer the one which appeared in the original supplementary estimates. I would be glad if the

Financial & Development Secretary can convince this side of the House that this has not been the case, but it very much appears to be so at the moment. When we are dealing with supplementary estimates, Mr Speaker, we get by no means copious but substantial marginal notes which indicate what the expenditure is for, and what we have had up to now is an original supplementary estimates in which the remarks column was taken up entirely by "interim award" and then an explanation which the Financial & Development Secretary alluded to a moment ago on page 7 which is of a general nature but refers to specific items. So that the original remark of "interim award" becomes now a cost of living addition and the interim award and the supplementary requirement is after deduction at each item of offsetting savings on wages or salary elements, overtime, increments, vacancies, etc, or materials - there we have a different element - or materials. Virements also apparently comes into it at this stage between subheads and this has also in certain cases, unspecified except when we have questioned, reduced the requirement. Under personal emoluments the provision is for cost of living addition and the interim award combined. Under Other Charges the subhead cost of living addition is included item by item, but the interim award is provided in one new biennial review item covering all items in the subhead. However, under Head XI - Public Works Annually Recurrent, which has no personal emoluments subhead the provision for cost of living addition and the interim award is shown as a combined sum item by item and then under Head XII - Public Works Non-Recurrent the combined provision for cost of living addition and interim award is not itemised but shown as a combined sum. That sort of explanation breaks with all traditions in this House as to the presentation of estimates. We have had to have item by item clarified as to whether it applied to one thing or another thing. Agreed that there are other notes that have been provided at the same time but not in every case have we been satisfied, particularly in the case of personal emoluments, that the final presentation of this is sufficiently clear and, certainly, my Hon Friend Mr Bossano was not satisfied that the presentation of this supplementary estimate which we have already approved is not going to affect the estimates of expenditure for the budget. We have the case, Mr Speaker, in which the Minister for Labour confirmed my indication or my knowledge that there were no vacancies available under the item, Accommodation of Labour from abroad, and yet the explanation there was that there were vacancies and staff changes. Mr Speaker, the vague allusions or vague explanations contained in this document cannot be taken by the Opposition except with a large pinch of salt. A complete revision of those estimates has had to be done, Mr Speaker, I said that if there was a large sum involved, perhaps, one thing that had gone wrong might have upset all the calculations. We have been told to find out why the figures were put in originally because in finding out why the

figures were put in originally, perhaps, we could trace what the mistake was that upset the whole applecart. But no such coherent explanation has been forthcoming. Instead we have had a combination of explanations and it appears that under each item we had a different explanation. For instance, savings and virement. We have new items which were put in apparently because it had become absolutely necessary to put this in at this stage and the exact amount required for those items was known. But when it came to savings we have been told that "Well, there have been savings. We don't know if it is going to affect the estimates or not but there have been savings and at a later stage we will explain what has happened." But the House was no wiser when considering the supplementary estimates themselves. And then, of course, the vacancies and so forth and so forth. Well Mr Speaker, we were talking of £900,000 odd and that is a very substantial figure and Hon Members cannot allow this to go by without raising these criticisms and I am sorry that this has to be done. Mr Speaker, we have been so preoccupied, and rightly preoccupied, with the presentation of these supplementary estimates that we have not even looked at the substance of the original supplementary estimates as presented and these supplementary estimates are in respect of the interim award. Now we will not go into any great depth about this at this moment but I think the House, in passing, should note how much the interim award has cost Gibraltar and also note in relation to my Hon Friend's question earlier in these proceedings, how much Gibraltar or the Government has got back in respect of the interim award. I shall not develop the theme because we shall be coming to it at estimates time. But I think the general indication is that the interim award which was gained after considerable amount of to-ing and fro-ing affecting the whole population has had quite a beneficial effect on the Government finances and certainly a stimulating effect on the economy and a protective effect on our standard of living. And whereby hangs a tale as we move into the award proper between April and June. Mr Speaker, most of the points that have been made by Members on this side of the House, and more will be made, will recur, no doubt, when the estimates of expenditure for the budget are being discussed and there we look forward to hearing how the Financial & Development Secretary reconciles the position he has reached in these supplementary estimates with the figures which appear in the estimates of expenditure for the budget.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, when the original Supplementary Estimates No 5 was brought to the House, the Opposition said that on their calculations there was a difference of something in the region of £400,000 between the figure that could be explained by reference to the remark column of cost of living and the interim award and the figure that

was shown of £912,000. As a result of the amendments that have been brought to the House today, the figure that the Government brought has been revised downwards by £190,000 and we have been told that of that £190,000, £80,000 has no impact at all on the outcome for the current financial year because, in fact, although it was included in Supplementary Estimates No 5 it was not included in the revised figure in the draft estimates. Of the remaining £110,000 the Financial & Development Secretary has told the House that he now expects £41,000 to be shown as an improvement on the expected outcome of this year's operations. And the unexplained difference of £69,000 we are told is something that will be explained at some unspecified date in the future when the House will be required to approve expenditure of this amount over and above that which has been approved in Supplementary Estimates No 5. No doubt in time we will see whether this is the case or not but certainly the fact that a very large proportion of this amount of money is under subheads connected with personal emoluments makes it difficult to understand how this can be so without being explainable in some detail at this stage. Now, apart from that figure, Mr Speaker, the discrepancy that there was between the Government's computations and our own is to be explained by recalling what happened in the estimates of last year when there was some confusion in the House as to what was the purpose of the provision of £310,000 under the miscellaneous expenses. Members will recall that at one stage the Hon Minister for Education, Mr Featherstone, said with reference to the estimates in his Department that there was a drop in the estimated cost of personal emoluments - and this is on page 188 of the Hansard of last year's debate - because, in fact, there was a provision for COLA which was included in the £310,000 and there was some confusion then as to what exactly the £310,000 was for, whether it was for a continuation of the existing COLA payments or whether it was for new COLA. Mr Featherstone at the time said that it was for new COLA but at a later stage in the proceeding the Financial & Development Secretary made it explicitly clear that part of this money was simply a continuation of the existing COLA payment, in fact, half of the sum £157,000 was the £1.10 COLA that was paid in 1973/74 and continued to be paid in 1974/75. The reason why I would like to draw attention to this at this stage is that we would not wish the wrong impression to be created amongst the general public that the interim award and the COLA in this financial year has cost more than it has, in fact, done. So that of this £740,000, Mr Speaker, £157,000 is simply the COLA that was being paid the previous year which carried on being paid. The new COLA of 1974/75 has come to £240,000 and the interim award has come to £330,000, making a total cost for the interim and COLA for 1974/75, that is, the new COLA and the interim in the current financial year as just over £500,000. It is important, I think, for the House to be aware of this and for the public to be aware of this because I am sure nobody would wish to give the impression that any great harm has been done to the current

financial position as a result of the payment of the interim that was agreed this year between the official employers and the unions that represent the employees of the official employers. Underlining the Computations for these costs one essential factor is the total amount of employees, Mr Speaker and I have accepted for the purpose of these calculations the figure that the Financial & Development Secretary has given that the Gibraltar Government employs 2,750 individuals although, in fact, that figure seems to me to be on the high side because I have totalled the establishment in the non-industrial scales which is something that is specified in the estimates individually under personal emoluments and I make that total 1289. Therefore, in order to have 2,750 we would require 1,461 industrials and to my knowledge although there are fluctuations in the number of industrials that the Government of Gibraltar employs, the fluctuations are never far from the figure of 1,000 and 1,100. So it appears to me that these figures are accurate to the extent that the 2,750 is accurate as the total labour force, industrial and non-industrial, of the Government of Gibraltar. But if it is indeed the case that the Government of Gibraltar overall as an average employs a couple of hundred people less than this figure then, of course, the total outcome for the year and the total cost of the supplementary estimate and consequently the figures in the draft estimates would all need to be revised downwards by a significant amount. No doubt, in time when we get the final figures for the year this is an exercise that is done but I think it is important to have as accurate figures as one can humanly get whilst being conscious of the difficulty of being able to count everything down to the last penny, Mr Speaker. It is important particularly at this time when the House has got to consider how much extra money is needed or not needed, to get as accurate a picture of the financial position as it is possible to arrive at.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Sir, I would just like to say a few words because it seems to me that whereas the mistake has been great and has taken plenty of our time it seems to me that the explanations and the reiteration of the Financial & Development Secretary about the fact that there have been human errors and mistakes in this matter do not appear to have registered on the Opposite side. As I understand the matter it is quite simple. He had estimates which before being laid before the House were found to be incorrect and he made the soonest possible withdrawal and announcement and made an explanation of what it meant and undertook to bring amendments. He could have brought a new one and we would have been spared the tediousness of moving all these amendments. It would have been all before the House in clean, so to speak, covering the amendment. But since

that was the only way it could be done if it should have been left for another meeting then he would have been subject to the accusations that he was avoiding the true picture of the result of the interim award and the cost of living award of the later part of the year in order not to have a clear picture before the House. So he had one of two options, either to do it this way and have it out in an explanation and in corrections or leave it later and then he would have been subject, quite rightly if I may say so, to the Opposition saying; "This is too late now. It would have been all right if it had been a small supplementary but this is a big item, this is a big lump and we want to see the true reflection of that next year." This is what we all want to do and that is why the amendments were carried out in the way they were done. As I understand it the Financial & Development Secretary has called it a spurious mistake. As I understand it in simple language it was an attempt at oversimplification through a comparison of the revised 1974/75 estimates with the approved 1974/75 estimates and once the basis of approach was mistaken at the beginning it went through the whole thing like wildfire, and that is what has happened. I think the Financial Secretary has explained if I may say so ad nauseam and, perhaps, we will still have another explanation before we finish this debate on the matters that have been raised which may be new insofar as any remarks that have been made in the general debates are concerned. But I would think that Hon Members opposite and particularly the Hon J Bossano who tried naturally from the available figures that he has to compute figures for the Government so to speak in order to satisfy his own mind in what he is applying his attention and his intellect to may not take into account all the factors and over simplify to try and bring himself in line with what the Government is doing, he may have oversimplified the matter like he has done, for example, on the numbers of people that we employ and the difference between one and another. He has lost sight of one very important item at least in mentioning it which makes a great difference in the final account in this matter and that is overtime. Overtime is a factor in which the Government is running at a very high peak and that has a very great effect, as indeed the effect that the award and the COLA has on overtime. I am sorry I stand corrected I beg your pardon, Sir, it is the difference between the revised estimate and the actual estimate in terms of overtime and so on. There was another matter which was raised by the Hon Major Peliza which I think has got to be explained. It is not that all the departments have been wrong in sending material it is that the assessments for all the departments have been made on the wrong basis and, therefore, it is not directly concerned with the individual departments when that supplementary estimates was prepared. In fact, it was the treasury that has to prepare the supplementaries in assessing

what monies were going to be required before the end of the year. I want to make this clear because I do not want our silence to be interpreted as leaving the Financial & Development Secretary so to speak to the dogs - with great respect to the expression - and leaving him entirely on his own. The Financial & Development Secretary has explained to me as much as he has done to the House and I think when a department makes a mistake and tries to make amends for it by explaining, at least there should be an attempt to understand it.

MR SPEAKER:

I will now invite the mover to reply.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am grateful to the Hon and Learned the Chief Minister for the explanations which he has given which very largely confirm what I have said and will be again what I shall say, only now I may do it briefly. Sir, may I start by commenting on the Hon Mr Bossano's question whether 2,750 is not an overestimate of the number of employees in the Government service. On the 7th March, 1975, we had 2,861 full-time industrial and non-industrial employees on our books and 259 part-time employees a total of 3,120 and, if anything, a figure of 2,750 may be taken as an under estimate of the average numbers we work to, we sometimes use a figure of 2,800. Secondly, Sir, may I make clear though I shall do this later in my budget statement that there was provision in the approved estimate 1974/75 under Head XVI Miscellaneous of a sum of £310,000 and that represented 2,750 employees drawing the rate of COLA through the year at the rate in issue in January 1974 which was £2.10. Now, therefore, that £310,000 is there approved in the 1974/75 estimates and is there as an offset to the supplementary estimates which relate to COLA but, of course, the £310,000 had to be distributed and be brought to the House again under the various heads as is the requirement of the rules of this House, Sir. But the £724,000 which is before the House has available in offset against it this £310,000 of COLA. Sir, it has been said - I don't want to make too much more of this - but it has been said could not a more definite set of figures be put before the House. Well, Mr Speaker, Sir, you know this very well, that I perhaps stretched the procedure of this House in circulating together with my notice of amendment a schedule which would show the result of the amendment when they had been completed. There, in that revised statement, is as precisely as within human resources at our disposal we can set out the estimated cost of the interim award and COLA in 1974

save for this purpose and I've said this earlier. That where in the personnel heads and subheads there were available savings on other items then it was incumbent upon us to reduce the supplementary provision requested by these amounts. Sir, was there not a coherent reason running through and explaining the difference between what I may call the revised schedule though, Sir, nothing strictly as such exists, but if I may call it the earlier one. Now I think, Sir, that a lot of confusion has arisen and I apologise. I know these things are difficult sometimes to explain. It has been said there was a break with tradition on the remarks column of supplementary estimates. I frankly do not think that is a very fair remark, Sir, because when we have a miscellaneous collection of supplementary estimates spreading over activities and operations, that is one thing. But here we are limited to the supplementary provision for just this purpose, the interim at £123 a year and the COLA at £146 a year this subject to deduction. Well, now, I could have said that the Public Works had so much by way of savings at that date on this. Maybe that would have helped the House, I don't know. I think that it is, however, one thing that has been confusing. I have stated and I firmly aver that the revised estimate 1974 expenditure as it appears in the draft estimates for 1975/76 is correct save that it is overstated by £40,000 which was a mistake under the Public Works Head X and by £1,000, another mistake, under Cemeteries Head II. These revised figures are as good as we get them and there really is no ground whatsoever for Hon Members to suspect that deliberately or by accident we have overstated the expenditure in the revised estimate for 1974/75. There is no reason whatever for such a thought. I have said that in the Supplementary Estimate for COLA where there were savings which could be taken into account they must be taken into account. But if in the original schedule where we showed a figure representing the difference between the approved estimate 1974/75 and the revised estimate 1974/75, if in that figure there was a sum of money which is not related to the biennial review on COLA, then we were not at liberty to set that off against any saving. That expenditure must remain to be brought to the House subsequently and the Hon Mr Bossano will see whether it corresponds with the amount he said or whether it does not but that will have to be brought to the House subsequently. Sir, I think these are all the comments I need make. I will say again that, of course, it is regrettable that any mistakes should be made, that any paper should be brought to the House which is unsatisfactory but these things happen. I can assure the House that there is absolutely no misleading in this and I think that if my explanations have been understood they show the position in regard to this supplementary requirement and in regard to the effect of this supplementary requirement on the draft 1975/76 Estimates to which we shall come. Thank you, Sir.

Mr Speaker put the question which was resolved in the affirmative and Supplementary Estimates No 5 of 1974/75, as amended, was agreed to and passed.

ESTIMATES OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE FOR 1975/76

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, I have the honour to move that this House approves the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year ending on the 31 March, 1976.

I propose in this Statement to start with a review of the main figures, with some immediate explanation of them. Thereafter I shall give an assessment of our financial position.

As the House is already aware, the deficit for 1974-75 of £228,477 appearing in the Financial Statement should be reduced to £188,477 by reason of the reduced expenditure of £40,000 under Head X Public Works. Thus the balance in the Consolidated Fund on 31 March 1975 and on 31 March 1976 increase by £40,000 to £1,037,680 and £1,568,730 respectively.

I will now review the financial position in the current year as it has developed. The actual balance in the Consolidated Fund on 1 April 1974 was £1,226,157, marginally exceeding by £21,938 the revised estimated balance shown in the Financial Statement 1974-75. The Revised Estimates for 1974-75 now show a deficit of £188,477, compared to a surplus of £392,010 shown in the Financial Statement 1974-75. That surplus was never of course to materialise. It was in recognition of the fact that the Approved Estimates made no provision for the Biennial Review or for additional COLA awards after 1 January, 1974 since these could not be estimated in advance. We now know that the interim award will cost Government £340,000 in 1974-75 and new COLA awards £95,000, the latter being additional to the sum of £310,000 provided in a block vote in Head XVI Miscellaneous Services to cover the cost of COLA at the rate in issue at January 1974. There was further additional expenditure during the year which net of savings amounted to £343,617. The more notable increases were Government Service Pensions (£102,000); Elderly Persons Pensions (£42,000); Public Works (£40,000); Rate Assessment of Government Buildings (£64,000); Medical Provisions and Drugs (£33,000); Sugar subsidy (£19,000); Subsidy to Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation (£18,000); and Public Debt Charges (£18,000).

The Revised Estimate of Revenue for 1974-75 is now put at £8,375,790, exceeding the Approved Estimate by £198,130. Some noteworthy increases were under Customs (£82,000) mainly due to rising import prices increasing the yield from ad-valorem duties; Licences (£175,000) mainly from Income Tax where although there was some temporary interruption of collections there were also windfalls from company tax, and from Stamp Duties: Fees of Court

(£130,000) mainly from Hospital Fees, Ministry of Defence share of the cost of the Police Force, Accommodation Charges for imported labour, and the new Duty Free Shop at the Airport. There was however a shortfall of £319,000 under Municipal Services, explained by delayed receipts resulting from industrial action, the deferment last year by one month of the new electricity charges, and an over-estimate of consumption of water and electricity.

In broad terms, but for the abnormal arrears of income tax and municipal service receipts there would have been a surplus in 1974-75 of between £100,000 and £200,000 after paying for the interim award and COLA. As things are, the revised estimated deficit of £188,477 will reduce the Consolidated Fund Reserve to £1,037,680. This is a quite inadequate level of Reserves. One has only to compare it with the balance of £1.4 million on 31 March 1973, representing over 20% of the recurrent Budget for 1973-74 which was less than £7 million. With the budget now rising to £10 million in 1975-76, a corresponding Reserve figure would be £2 million. We cannot in present circumstances aspire to what was not so long ago considered an appropriate level of Reserves - the equivalent of four months' revenue. But in this regard, as with everything else, account must in some measure be taken of the fall in the purchasing power of money. We need adequate reserve funds not only in ordinary prudence but also because in some ways the Rock is peculiarly vulnerable to costly accidents.

So, while the Draft Estimates for 1975-76 show a surplus of £531,050, that part of this surplus which derives from abnormal arrears of revenue collections from 1974-75 should in all prudence go to the restoration of the Reserves. It would be giving spurious accuracy to the abnormal arrears as distinct from arrears which are always outstanding if I put a precise figure on them, especially in a year when Income Tax collections have been catching up with arrears in preparation for the introduction of PAY AS YOU EARN on 1st April 1975. But whatever the precise figure might be, I consider it essential that as a minimum the Reserves should be restored in the course of the coming year to the 1973 level of £1.4 million, which will now represent less than two months' revenue at the current Budget level. This means that the available estimated surplus in 1975-76 becomes £168,730. I shall later show that there are requirements well in excess of that figure, and I am not now at all referring to the Biennial Review. However, thus far the position compares favourably with the deficit of £405,000 which faced us at this stage in the Budget proceedings last year. I shall explain how this position has been reached.

On the expenditure side, the aim throughout the preparation of these Estimates has been to do everything possible to contain public expenditure in face of rising costs, while at the same time avoiding damage to essential services. Staff numbers have been kept to the minimum. Some desirable public works expenditure has been deferred, and while this temporary relief to the Budget is possible now, the commitments will build up in future years. We are by no means the only Government at present having to undertake this form of exercise in the interests of maintaining stability.

Now, estimated expenditure in 1975-76 at £9,573,350 exceeds the Approved Estimate for 1974-75 by £1,787,700 or 23%. However, had the £435,000 for the interim award and new COLA in 1974-75 been included in that Approved Estimate, the increase would have been £1,352,700 or less than 16%. This is against a rate of inflation of 20%. In respect of the Biennial Review, which must of course now be treated as sub judice pending the Enquiry, the Draft Estimates 1975-76 include a full year's provision at the Interim Award rate of £69 a head per quarter. The cost of this for Government employees will be about £760,000, spread over Personal Emoluments Sub-heads and other Sub-heads where there is an element of labour. Together with COLA at the current rate of £3.05 a week costing about £440,000, this produces a total of about £1.2 million in 1975-76.

Under Other Charges throughout the Estimates account has been taken of the continuing rise in the cost of materials and equipment generally. The effects on expenditure of improvements in social legislation are also to be seen though in some of these cases such as the expansion of the Health Service and the increase in Elderly Persons Pensions there are compensating revenues or savings.

While it is by careful choice of priorities that the growth of Other Charges has been contained, we have been assisted in this by the willingness of the United Kingdom Government to relieve the recurrent budget, to the utmost extent that their aid policies allowed, through the new Development Aid Programme. Thus we can now increase our current housing maintenance programme while at the same time through substantial aid grants over the next three years we can catch up with the long neglected arrears of maintenance which have built up over many years. The Public Works Annually Recurrent Head as a whole shows an increase of £458,280 over the Approved Estimates 1974-75, but approximately £310,000 of this represents COLA and the Interim Award. The restoration of Penney House and St Bernard's Hospital with aid funds are other examples of relief to the Budget. It should not therefore be thought that the £58,000 reduction of expenditure on capital works under the Public Works Non-Recurrent Head, by comparison with the Revised Estimate 1974-75 represents any fall-off on the work programme of the Public Works Department.

Under the Education Head the additional UK Technical Assistance grant of £40,000 a year for teacher training, which was also agreed in the November aid talks in London, is reflected in the Estimates.

Under Labour and Social Security the increase of £119,160 in Other Charges is due mainly to a substantial improvement in the scheme for Elderly Persons Pensions, which is now estimated to cost an additional £99,000. It is estimated that the running costs of the Workers' Hostels will rise by £47,000 in 1975-76, but this will be offset by a corresponding increase in revenue. There are savings of £37,410 under Retirement Pensions arising from a review of the Social Insurance legislation in 1974 which, inter alia, led to the absorption of the Non-Contributory Social Insurance Benefits Fund into the Social Insurance Fund.

The Medical Services Head shows an increase of £242,000 under Other Charges, as compared with the Approved Estimate 1974-75. This Head now provides for a more comprehensive Health Service. Expenditure on drugs, dressings and pharmaceuticals is estimated to increase by £150,000.

Under the Secretariat Head there is a significant increase in the provision for rents of flats, which rises to £22,534. This results from the growing number of specialised expatriate staff required by the administration generally as well as for the Development Programme.

Under Consolidated Fund Charges I would mention Public Service Pensions and Public Debt Charges. The provision for pensions in the Approved Estimates 1974-75 did not take account of the new system of annual revision which now takes place with effect from 1 July each year, related to the percentage rise in the Index of Retail Prices. With the greater part of two revisions falling for payment this year, the Revised Estimate exceeds the Approved Estimate by £102,000. With provision for the 1975 review the draft estimate for 1975-76 exceeds the Revised Estimate 1974-75 by £58,000.

Public Debt Charges go up in 1975-76 by £156,840 compared with the Approved Estimate 1974-75, reaching a figure of £550,230.

Turning now the Revenue side, the Draft Estimates of Revenue for 1975-76 at £10,104,400 show an increase of £1,926,740 (24% over the Approved Estimate for 1974-75) and of £1,728,610 (21%) over the Revised Estimate. The Revenue Estimates for 1975-76, however, include abnormal arrears from 1974-75, mainly under Income Tax and Municipal Services.

All Revenue Heads show an improvement over the Approved Estimates for 1974-75 except the Lottery, which remains unchanged. The most striking increase is in Income Tax, where the effects of Pay As You Earn, additions to salaries and wages, and some abnormal arrears have increased the estimated yield to £2,250,000 in 1975-76, an increase of £800,000 over the Approved Estimate 1974-75 and of £650,000 over the Revised Estimate. The growth in Customs continues at a useful rate, reflecting more the still rising cost of imports than increased consumption of dutiable goods.

Under the other Revenue Heads, a number of items deserve mention. The comparisons are with the Approved Estimates 1974-75, unless otherwise stated.

Fees of Court etc goes up by £310,240, including increases in Hospital Fees (£167,300) and in the Ministry of Defence share of the cost of the Police Force (£62,000) reflecting higher salaries and wages, while the Duty Free Shop at the Airport is expected to yield £50,000.

Under Post Office and Telegraph a new agreement in course of negotiation with the Inter-Governmental Philatelic Corporation is estimated to account for £50,000 of the £80,000 increase from the sale of stamps.

Rents of Government Property show an overall increase of £101,000, of which £90,000 arises from the allocation of new housing at the Varyl Begg Estate.

Under the Miscellaneous Receipts Head the main reason for the increase of £150,000 is the proposed issue of the Gold Coin, which is estimated to yield £100,000 in 1975-76 with prospects of further revenues in subsequent years. This, like for example the opening of the duty free shop and the promotion of philatelic stamp sales, is evidence of the continuing efforts of the Government to raise revenue wherever possible without imposing a higher tax burden on the community.

Under Municipal Services the figures in the Approved and Revised Estimates for 1974-75 and the Draft Estimate for 1975-76 call for explanation. The shortfalls in the Revised Estimate 1974-75 for Electricity supply, Potable Water sales and the General Rate are to some extent due to delayed collections resulting from industrial action. It also seems however that consumption of electricity and water were over-estimated, perhaps in the former case due to a mild winter and economies in use following last year's rise in charges. In the 1975-76 estimate collection of arrears of municipal charges has been fully taken into account.

Also, the organisational machinery for the billing and collection of these revenues is being examined afresh with a view to improving efficiency. These factors explain the substantial improvement of £501,000 between the Revised Estimate for 1974-75 and the Draft Estimate for 1975-76.

This is an appropriate point to comment on the notional accounts for the Municipal Services and for Housing, which are included as Appendices to the Estimates.

The Municipal Services Accounts are brought together at Appendix J, where it will be seen that overall there is an estimated deficit of £267,436. As a matter of financial policy these Accounts taken together should be in balance, and the public utilities separately should also pay their way, with both recurrent and capital expenditure taken into account. Otherwise, for example, water consumers regardless of their need are being indiscriminately subsidized by the general taxpayer. If a person economises in the consumption of water because it is a scarce and costly commodity in Gibraltar, he is then still required to pay through taxation for the benefit of people who do not exercise such restraint, and likewise for the benefit of any large commercial consumers. In the interests of consumers generally, and in view of the ever-rising costs of their operation, these Public Utility Undertakings should be scrutinised regularly with a view to maximising efficiency.

The General Rate Account shows a surplus of £81,164, which is slightly less than the surplus of £97,862 in the account for 1974-75. It is becoming increasingly difficult to produce a realistic General Rate Account as the services included in it - those which formerly were the responsibility of the City Council - become more and more integrated into the overall range of activities undertaken by the Government. I have made some changes this year, in particular by eliminating the Public Health Service which is now an integral part of the Medical Department, and by reducing to a more realistic level the proportion charged to this account of technical and accounting staff costs in the Public Works Department.

The Brackish Water Service Account again shows a growing deficit which in 1975-76 is estimated to be £37,006, due mainly to the increased cost of labour.

The deficit in the Potable Water Service Account is estimated at £303,994 in 1975-76, almost treble its size in 1974-75. The major expenditure arises from the operation of the distillers. For 1975-76 the estimated cost of this alone, approximately half of the expenditure in the account, exceeds the total estimated revenue.

Our experience with distillers has not been fortunate, despite constant efforts by the Public Works Department to get more economical production out of them. Sooner or later the scarcity and high cost of water production will have to be recognised in increased charges, with selective relief where that is needed.

The Electricity Undertaking account is estimated to show a marginal surplus of £19,338 in 1975-76, with expenditure and receipts just exceeding the £1 million mark. The self-reliance shown by Gibraltar in absorbing last year's fuel-oil price rise was recognised by the UK Government in the November aid talks.

The Telephone Service Account is estimated to show in 1975-76 a deficit of £26,938.

Coming to the Housing Account, Appendix I, it continues to be clear from the estimated deficit of £436,427 that the present level of rents is totally inadequate to meet the cost of maintaining the various housing estates.

I turn now to the Improvement and Development Fund. The year 1973-74 opened with a surplus of £393,968. Actual receipts to the Fund in 1973-74 were £2,672,447 (as compared with the earlier Revised Estimate of £2,419,180) whilst actual expenditure amounted to £3,373,063 (as compared with the Revised Estimate of £3,250,795). The result of the year's operations therefore was that expenditure exceeded receipts by £700,616 (compared with the estimate of £831,615 in the Approved Estimate 1974-75). The fund accordingly closed with a deficit of £306,648 at 31 March 1974 compared to the estimated deficit of £437,647 in the Approved Estimates 1974-75.

Moving on to transactions in 1974-75, the revised estimated receipts now amount to £3,558,090 compared to £2,344,104 in the 1974-75 Estimates. Broadly, the increase of £1,214,805 is explained first by accelerated expenditure on development aid projects producing additional receipts of £710,153, and second, by the issue of a new Government loan for £500,000. It was of course announced in the Budget Statement last year that this £500,000 loan, and indeed a further loan of £300,000, was intended to be raised during the year, but following past practice this borrowing was not shown in the estimated receipts. In fact, only the £500,000 loan was raised. I have changed the convention this year by including in receipts in the 1975-76 estimates a further loan of £300,000 which it is intended to be raised in the coming year.

The revised estimated expenditure in the fund in 1974-75 is £3,452,081 compared to £2,695,814 in the Approved Estimates 1974-75, representing an increase of £756,267. As I have said,

expenditure on development aid projects during the year is expected to rise by £710,000. To this must be added additional expenditure of £46,000 on locally financed schemes and Development Aid projects requiring residual supplementation. I should explain that the Refuse Destructor which was initially estimated to cost £600,000 will now cost £715,500; £155,215 falling for payment in 1974-75, leaving a final payment of £500 in 1975-76. In the Approved Estimates 1974-75 there was provision for a final payment of only £20,000 in that year. This substantial increase of £135,215 on the Destructor in 1974-75 has been largely offset by a slower rate of expenditure on a number of other local projects, notably on water works.

The fund is now estimated to show a deficit of £199,820 on 31 March 1975 compared with the estimated deficit of £789,357 shown in the Financial Statement included in the Approved Estimates for 1974-75. But as I have said, that Statement did not include in receipts the loan of £500,000 which was raised in the course of the year.

The Draft Estimates for 1975-76 show expenditure totalling £3,651,486, including £556,990 to be met from local funds of which £185,000 is in respect of new schemes. Estimated receipts, which provide for the raising of the further loan of £500,000 which I have mentioned, are £3,614,605 and fall short of expenditure by £36,881. The deficit at 31 March 1976 would therefore rise to £236,701. This deficit takes no account of continuing commitments amounting to £75,802, being the balance required to complete locally financed projects beyond 1975-76. For the financing of this £312,503 it is necessary to transfer revenue surpluses from the recurrent budget rather than resort to still further borrowing, having regard to the already heavily increasing loan service burden and the near exhaustion of our borrowing capacity against the Government Funds. At least the figure of £236,701 falling due for payment in 1975-76 would be an appropriate charge on the budget for the coming year. This would convert the available surplus of £168,730 in the Recurrent Budget into a deficit of £67,971.

Returning to the Recurrent Budget, the position at this point is, with a deficit of £68,000 on a Budget of £10 million, one of virtual balance. There remain to be considered the final settlement of the Biennial Review, dating back to 1 October 1974, and the other unforeseen commitments and supplementary expenditure which inevitably will arise during the year - already for example the considerable damage to the water catchment. As I have said, the Biennial Review must be treated as sub judice pending the Enquiry, and accordingly it would not be proper, any more than practical or prudent, for me to suggest now what further provision for the cost of the settlement might be required.

However, there are certain measures which in any case are desirable on economic and social grounds. The Government also has in mind some new revenue-raising measures which, like a number already incorporated in the Estimates, will help our finances without bearing heavily on the community. These will be brought to the House at the appropriate stage in this meeting. Let me stress again that they are not related to any judgement on the Biennial Review. Any further revenue measures which may become necessary on that account will be brought to the House during the course of the year when the requirement is known.

What then is the assessment? During the past year or two we have wondered how, if the very high rates of world-wide inflation were to continue, we should be able to manage. Would the progressively rising rate of taxation which was necessary in the last two budgets have to continue, and if so could it be sustained?

Even in this small economy there are many interactions, and no simple, single explanation of our situation can be given. There are however reasons to believe that, while we cannot expect to go unscathed, it can be easier for Gibraltar than for many larger economies to live through the present difficult period. The UK Departments' expenditure in Gibraltar tends to rise, even if not fully, with the level of UK inflation. The earnings of many countries which have to compete in world markets are subject to considerable uncertainty in a period of international inflation.

Our tourist industry aimed at and of special appeal to the UK market, can hold up in this inflationary period provided we do not significantly exceed the rate of UK inflation or become too uncompetitive, in respect of quality of service as well as price, by comparison with neighbouring resorts.

Then there is Aid expenditure, which provides not only social capital in the form of housing, schools and medical and recreational facilities which are so important to the standard of living, but also provides indirectly both income and company tax revenues to the Government.

Mention of income tax leads me to the issue of fiscal policy. As the House knows, it is intended that a study of fiscal policy should be carried out this year. Any future measures in this respect should however be carefully considered, with due regard to the income and the responsibilities of the tax payer, and the need for allowances both equitable and encouraging to sound economic aims. There are other options also for analysis and advice in the fiscal study.

In the situation I have described we should not regard ourselves, relatively, as unfavourably placed to withstand the effects of inflation. If we can achieve a measure of improved productivity and output, then with judicious and equitable tax policies it should be possible to safeguard and in the most needy cases even increase real incomes in the community, while financing the growing size of the budget. Excessively inflationary wage demands without corresponding productivity increases could however jeopardise the measure of stability which we still have and the potential for further improvement which it provides. More than is the case in most countries, we have the control and solution of our financial problem in our own hands.

I have the Honour to move that this House now resolves itself into Committee to consider the Estimates of Expenditure in detail Head by Head, including Appendix G.

MR SPEAKER:

We will start with the Estimates of Expenditure, Mr Clerk, will you call the Head and the subhead.

HEAD I Audit (a) Personal Emoluments was agreed to and passed.

(b) Other Charges was agreed to and passed.

HEAD II Cemeteries (a) Personal Emoluments.

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Chairman, as I explained this morning I have to move an amendment in the column revised estimate 1974/75 of the total personal emoluments figure of £2,860 so that it becomes £1,860.

MR SPEAKER:

Is there no other incidental amendment before you arrive at that figure?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, in the summary again it occurs, £2,860, and it should be amended to £1,860 and, therefore, the total for cemeteries should become £12,810 instead of £13,810.

MR SPEAKER:

This is purely an amendment to the information appended to the Estimates.

(a) Personal Emoluments was agreed to and passed.

(b) Other Charges was agreed to and passed.

HEAD III Ecclesiastical was agreed to and passed.

HEAD IV Education (a) Personal Emoluments.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, I take it that the Minister is not going to make any statement of policy at this stage?

MR SPEAKER:

I wouldn't be so sure but I would ask him.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, last year no statement was made, we went straight into 20 questions or 200 questions or 2000 questions. I think it was eminently satisfactory and I would ask for the same procedure.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, on personal emoluments there is not very much one can say. On item 3 - Administrative Officer I notice there has been an upgrading in the post. I would only like to say here that I welcome this as this will help to keep good people in the Department or otherwise attract good people to go to the Department. On Experienced Mistresses - Item 20 - I am rather dissatisfied to see that there has been a decrease because I have always had a liking for Experienced Mistresses. Having said that, Mr Speaker, could the Minister just say why there has been this decrease in the establishment? Have they left or what?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, these experienced mistresses have just left the service for their own reasons, I presume.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Perhaps the Experienced Mistresses like the new Minister less than the old Minister.

HON J BOSSANO:

On the question of Experienced Mistresses, Mr Speaker, can the Minister say whether, in fact, the Department is at all considering creating any new posts of Experienced Teachers or whether, as has been decided in the past, once those who were in the posts left the service the post would eventually disappear?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I am not quite sure whether the Hon Mr Bossano is correct in saying "as has been decided in the past." The question of unqualified Teachers being recognised after a number of years service, is a question which is a continuing question and it is obviously up to the Director and the Minister at the time to consider what should be done at any particular time. I don't think it has been a stated policy at any time what should be done or what should not be done.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister confirm whether it is the stated policy of the Department to try to get a fully qualified teaching profession and whilst recognising the valuable service that has been rendered by people in the service already, not to encourage the continuation of the practice when one has a bilateral system part of the service being qualified and part being made up of unqualified individuals who eventually become qualified or are deemed to be qualified by virtue of their experience?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, obviously in the best system possible I would have every Teacher an honours graduate. It is basically the policy of the Department not to take on any new unqualified persons but persons who are unqualified there at the moment and who are giving and have given a very good service should, if they are worthy of their position, get some recognition of their service by some form of promotion. The Department is always willing to look into this question and consider what can be done for the good of the Department and the children, generally.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, in the estimates under personal emoluments there is no such thing as an establishment of unqualified teachers other than the Experienced Mistresses. Is this not so?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I do beg the pardon of the Hon Mr Bossano. My neighbour was speaking to me about something and I didn't quite get the first part of the question. Would he be good enough to repeat it?

HON J BOSSANO:

I asked the Minister, Mr Speaker, whether in the personal emoluments there was any provision for permanent unqualified teachers other than these 29 Experienced Mistresses.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, we have some supply teachers who are there on full time supply. They are not classified in the establishment as permanent teachers but they are there on full time supply and they are very close to being permanent. This is why they are looking into the position that, perhaps, they should somehow come on to the permanent establishment.

HON P J ISOLA:

Surely, that is not right, is it? It is not under supply teachers. Are they not under temporary teaching assistants?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, they are under both.

HON P J ISOLA:

Under supply teachers surely that is not referring to teachers who have been with the Department for a number of years on a fairly permanent basis? Supply teachers must surely refer to teachers that are brought in from time to time and possibly

kept on, but surely these must be qualified? Could I ask the Minister, has he taken on any unqualified teachers on supply in the last two years?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, under Temporary Teaching Assistance which - Item 21 - there are people who are really supply teachers of some form or other and some of them have been taken on. I think one of them is very close to a member of the Opposition.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Sir, item 20. I don't think the Minister has been very forthcoming. Five Experienced Teachers have left, he says, for their own reasons. Could he throw a little more light on this? Have they been discouraged and therefore left the service because of that or have they got a good reason for leaving? Could he be a little bit more explicit, please.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, much as the Minister would like to control it time does go on. One of the dear ladies was over 60 and she wished to retire and she has retired.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Well, say so.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Well I said they left for reasons of their own. What more do you want? Do you want me to list each and every reason? If you wish a written answer to that I shall be happy to give it to you.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister say whether he has received representations from the members of the teaching profession about their misgivings as regards an increase in the permanent unqualified teachers through this method of taking them on originally as temporary supply teachers and then allowing them to stay on a permanent basis?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, when the Hon Mr Bossano refers to members of the teaching profession I am not quite sure to whom he is referring. He might be referring to a body known as the GTA which, I understand, represents less than half the total number of teachers. He might be referring to the supply of teachers themselves.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but if you want to find out you might perhaps ask him what he means.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Well, let's ask him what he means, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker if indeed the GTA which is the union that is recognised as speaking for the teachers, is the one that has made the representations I will be glad to learn about this.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I understand, Sir, that the ACTSS also represent a number of teachers and they also made representations. The GTA have made some noises. They have, yes, indeed. They are always making a lot of noises.

HON J BOSSANO:

Well, could the Minister reproduce the noises in the House, Mr Speaker?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I don't think I can reproduce all the noises they make. They have come up objecting to certain things and proposing other things and sooner or later the Department will decide what it is going to do.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, one has read in the press recently or read statements made that the comprehensive schools are not properly staffed. One has also read that qualified teachers were doing rather more in a gesture of goodwill - I think was the expression used - than they had to in the schools and it was also mentioned that this goodwill was being withdrawn. We would like to know (a) whether the Minister is satisfied with his present establishment of qualified teachers, and if he isn't what is he doing about it? (b) I think we would like to know whether the schools now have problems as a result of these statement that one has heard; how far is the education of children suffering as a result? And we would also like to know (c) what plans the Minister has to prevent that interruption in the proper education of children in Government Schools?

MR SPEAKER:

Mr Isola, how do you refer all that to the item at present under discussion?

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, we are talking about personal emoluments and I am asking the Minister what policy he has or what proposals he has to put the matters that I have raised right if they are, in fact, matters of substance.

MR SPEAKER:

They are matters of substance for a debate, most certainly, yes.

HON P J ISOLA:

Well Mr Speaker, with respect, has he got enough teachers to ensure that qualified teachers don't have to exercise goodwill to the department in order to have the schools properly staffed and run?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the Hon Mr Peter Isola should not believe everything he reads in newspapers. If he has read all the newspapers, including that certain newspaper, carefully, he would have seen a communique from the Department which says there is no shortage of teachers that is

causing any undue alarm. Later on when we talk of policy I must come to this question of teachers, Sir, but I would assure him that a statement made on television that the boys comprehensive school was 12 teachers short if not a blatant lie is definitely a terminological inexactitude. And I would also at this point comment that the removal of goodwill is a rather strange area of discussion. If a person is only doing....

MR SPEAKER:

Yes but let us not get into a discussion.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

At the moment, Sir, we think we have enough teachers, perhaps more than enough teachers, to cope.

HON J BOSSANO:

It is true then, Mr Speaker, to say that there is no intention to recruit UK teachers and for that reason it does not appear under personal emoluments?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I would not categorically say there is no intention to recruit UK teachers. We have UK teachers here already and they have been recruited. Very often a person in the Services comes out here and his wife happens to be a qualified teacher. If she applies to us and we have a vacancy in the discipline she is able to offer then it is very opportune for us to recruit such a person. Also, Sir, if a situation should come up in which we are very short in a certain discipline and we cannot immediately manage to cover it easily from our own resources then, of course, we must reserve the right for the benefit of the children to seek people from elsewhere.

HON J BOSSANO:

But apart from such an unforeseen emergency occurring, Mr Speaker, it is true to say that it is not the intention of the Government to recruit, especially, expatriate teachers who would have expatriate conditions which as we all know are considerably superior to native conditions.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, it is not our intention in the slightest. We are simply saying that we must reserve the right, if we are in dire need of a teacher, to try and find that teacher.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Has the Minister made any investigation or has he discussed this with the unions or any other representatives of the teaching profession on the question of importing teachers at Burnham rates?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the GTA have come to us and told us what we have to do. We ought to advertise in Britain for teachers to come on Gibraltar rates and we can offer them accommodation in the Government hostel. That is the way the discussion has gone so far.

HON M XIBERRAS:

A propos of what, Mr Speaker? The Minister has said he is perfectly satisfied with the establishment and it seems rather strange that the Unions should say that advertisements should be placed in the UK press. Is there a shortage of teachers in the view of the teachers themselves?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, since already the teachers are having a pretty good life but seem to want a far better life, if they could go on working half the amount they work now they will probably want more teachers. They always seem to say they want more teachers but there doesn't always seem to be the justification in their case.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I admire the Minister's sang froid about all this, how cool he is about all this. No wonder he sometimes walks into trouble. We might see a repetition of the fist banging on television and the obstinacy and so forth of the teachers. But, Mr Speaker, considering the good life which teachers enjoy, do these personal emoluments take into account in any way the 30% increase in teachers' salaries granted in Britain?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, teacher salaries in Britain have been increased recently. Teacher salaries here have been increased by an interim award. I believe an investigator is going to come out to look into the whole aspect of the biennial review and it would appear to me, Sir, that the teachers are starting to make noises now and starting to try and bring up a crisis furtherment of their claims for better conditions in the biennial review. This is repetition of what happened two years ago.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, this is a view Mr Speaker, we would like to get down to some real indication of what the starting situation is. Would the Minister be kind enough, if it is not too much to ask him, to give a breakdown of the number of Gibraltarians and the number of non-Gibraltarian people that we have. I don't think the Hon and Learned the Chief Minister needs to pull a face about this.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

From the kind of answers that the Leader of the Opposition expects the Minister to have up his sleeve I was thinking of producing certificates of registration of Gibraltarian status.

HON M XIBERRAS:

The Hon and Learned Member was answering questions with difficulty on the medical department but I can assure the Hon and Learned Member that the statistics I am asking for is quite a common one in the Education Department, particularly when dealing with the number of brothers, nuns and as I say ex-patriate teachers. Has the Minister the information?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, but I can get it if he really insists.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, what has the Minister to tell us about the staffing situation, generally, for which we are going to vote close to £2¹/₂m?

MR SPEAKER:

I think in fairness to the Minister he is prepared to answer whatever question he is asked but he may not have these statistics at his fingertips.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister give an indication of how much a teacher earns - we have the scales there - for instance let us take the headmaster scale or the ordinary teacher scale and assistant teachers, £1557 maximum, that is, qualified. Now would he give an indication of how much more he makes if he has a responsibility post? Will he say something about the general structure of wages?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I can't quite see what all this has to do with passing the estimates of expenditure but on a responsibility post I think he can get up to £345 a year more.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Does the Minister find that the average age of teachers is high or low? Is he preoccupied in any way that people holding responsibility posts are rather young and people do not stay on?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There are some people with responsibility posts who are young, perhaps too young. Some are quite old. Some people stay for a long period of time, some people leave very quickly. Here there is a state of flux in the teaching profession which I might comment, Sir, is nothing whatsoever new and nothing compared to the state of flux of the teaching profession in the UK. I have some comparative figures which in due course I shall comment on, in the policy statement.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I am rather sorry he doesn't provide the information when he is asked before we vote the money and not after we vote the money. I hate to spoil his final speech but I think it is relevant information since we are voting personal emoluments.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Well, Sir, from a recent copy of The Times Educational Supplement on the 28th February I would quote under the heading "One in Three Quit Job" - nine teachers left their jobs in Brent last year than in any other London borough. Figures provided by the Assistant Masters Association this week showed that nearly a third of Brent teachers resigned. Newham, Haringay and Barking closely followed Brent at the top of the table, Hillingdon with 16.8% turnover was the least affected borough. The inner London Education Authority had a 25.8% turnover. Sir, Gibraltar has a turnover of 7.7%.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I am very grateful. I am very pleased to see that the Minister is keeping up with trends in the United Kingdom, a sentiment we prize. Brent, Hillingdon and Barking, Mr Speaker, could the Minister be equally forthcoming about the average age of teachers here. Does he have any idea?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Last January my Director and myself went round a number of schools in England and we found quite a good number of young teachers. I would say that we compare to UK.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I am not surprised, Mr Speaker, that the Minister is this complacent. We had a debate about Brother Hopkins some time ago and he was still complacent when Brother Hopkins was resigning. But be that as it may, I take it that he is not at all preoccupied that his teachers in responsibility posts are young and that they tend to leave at a particular age, as I say, about 35 or so?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The Hon Member is more informed than I am that they intend to do this.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Has this been the pattern in the past, Mr Speaker? Does ye see an improvement? This is one of the things Brother Hopkins had to say.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Who remebers Bro. Hopkins?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, my poor Department is now going to have the job of digging out for me the names of every teacher, their ages, and whether they are Gibraltarian or not and I shall present all this to the Hon Mr Xiberras in due course. I will also find their ages in responsibility posts.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I shall ask a question of the Hon Member later on. I shall give him notice about three months before I do so. Mr Speaker, getting on to the position of the lecturers at the Technical College ...

MR SPEAKER:

Which item?

HON M XIBERRAS:

This is item 28 - Lecturers Allowances. Is everything quiet in that front, could the Minister say? How many Gibraltarians are in post there? Could he give an indication? Education. It is not a new question, I ask it every year.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Eight, Sir. I was asked how many Gibraltarians at the Technical College, the answer is 8, Sir.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I am most grateful to the Minister. Would he say out of how many?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Out of 19, Sir. Let us say out of 20 and a half. The Headmaster and his assistant who is only a half because he only does a quarter of the time there, are also UK, Eight out of 20 and a half.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I am most grateful. I find that most encouraging. We are now getting not only to the production of statistics but to absolutely accurate statistics, down to 0.5 of a person. Now, is there any agreement that a proportion of the lecturers at the Technical College should be Gibraltarians?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, when the technical college was first started in the very dim and distant past I don't know quite what agreements were made. There is no agreement that I know of - there may be an agreement in the dim and distant past I don't know - I only know that the policy that we have been adopting is to try and get more Gibraltarians in there as time goes along.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I was trying to find out how successful these efforts had been, Mr Speaker, particularly because as in the gradually and painfully emerging picture of the Education Department, we see that there are apparently enough trained teachers to go round - the Minister thinks, perhaps too many - and we see also some progress being made here for the localisation or Gibraltarianisation of posts to the tune of 8 in 20 and we look forward to the future, if the Minister is doing that, we see that there are 20 posts there some of which should, I imagine, be Gibraltarianised in time. Now, could the Hon Minister please tell this House whether he expects in this coming year the money that we are voting to see any movement on that figure of 8?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, last year it was 6 local out of 18 and a half, now it is 8 out of 20 and a half. I think the percentage is an improvement. We have advertised for more local teachers and we hope to take more on in due course.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Any idea of how many?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Well, our policy is that should any member of the UK staff leave we try to replace him with a local person and we have away people on scholarships specifically taking technical training so they can come back to the Gibraltar & Dockyard Technical College.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Would the Minister know offhand how many are coming specifically for the technical college?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Between one and three. One is specific and the other two would have the same opportunities.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Thank you.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, Item 29 - Posts of Responsibility Allowance - £222 increase. Is this just for one teacher?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir. Item 29 is £24,718 in my figures.

MR SPEAKER:

The increase is £5,943.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

I am sorry. Item 31 - School Secretarial Service. There has been a decrease of £1,786. Could the Minister explain this, please?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, we've had great difficulty in getting the type of secretary we want and in view this year of the need to keep finances as low as possible, we have accepted that some schools may have to do a little bit of sharing of secretaries and this is the reason there is a saving in this subhead.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, does it mean that the school secretaries and assistants go from one school to another, they move around.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, they move around. They probably do one day or two days in one school and one or two days in another.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, accepting that there might be a need for economy, has this system been accepted kindly by the schools or have they been hard hit?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, since these estimates have been confidential up to now, the schools are not fully appraised of it. In due course we will see their reaction.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

One small point, Mr Speaker. I just wanted to find about the £100 vote for Laboratory technicians - Item 34. Why is this?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, this is a token vote. Last year we advertised for Laboratory Technicians. We didn't get any replies and we advertised again. We got one reply but the person was going to leave after six months and at the moment we are advertising again and this is a token vote to see what comes along. Obviously, of course, once we get the technicians we will come for supplementaries.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

If I may just go up one to Item 33 - Warden Allowance Edmund Rice Home. It was £60 last year and £60 this year, again why no improvement there?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, as I said last year I know nothing about this. It appears we have always been paying out £60. We pay three fifths and the Department of Labour pays two fifths and it just got in there again. That is all there is.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I see no provision under the personal emoluments for anybody to do with the University of the air which the Hon Member announced, I believe, one or two years ago.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I did not announce. I said we were looking into that as a possibility. If it should come along the first person that would have anything to do with it would obviously be the Teachers Centre Warden who runs further education.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could I just ask the Minister what is the present total establishment as reflected in personal emoluments?

HON FINANCIAL & DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Chairman, may I answer that the enumerated establishment adds up to 248 but the total establishment which includes Item 21 and 22, Teaching Assistant and the supply Teachers is 297. Now, I will explain for the benefit of Members that Item 35, Cost of Living Allowance, takes account of 280 people at £159 for COLA and the biennial review takes account of 253 people at what is four times 69. You may think there is an inconsistency there but there is a reason thereto. There comes a stage in the consideration of these estimates where the Treasury says to the Department: "Now, look here, you don't have a full complement all the year round, do you? You have changes and you have vacancies." The total provision for COLA and the biennial review is £15,000 less than would have been accounted for by the total establishment and the larger reduction is in the interim award which is paid monthly rather than in the COLA which is paid weekly.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I wanted to ask something, on the personal emolument vote. The total vote of education of £900,000 of which £501,000 is personal emoluments and even in the Other Charges vote which we will be considering shortly, there is a figure of teaching training and development of £35,000 so that it must be obvious to Hon Members that the bulk of the money voted to this department concerns teachers, a very large bulk. Whilst listening to the Minister speaking in answer to questions by my Hon Friend the Leader of the Opposition, I got the distinct impression he is rather cynical about the teaching profession.....

MR SPEAKER:

Are you asking something or not?

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, I am going to ask him. He was rather cynical about the teaching profession and doesn't seem to lay much store about obtaining their goodwill. Could I ask the Minister that when he makes his policy statement he tells the House frankly whether he likes teachers or not. Whether he puts any store about getting the goodwill of the profession, because if he doesn't, Mr Speaker, he seems to be in my humble estimation in the wrong ministry.

Personal Emoluments were agreed to.

The Committee recessed at 5.45 pm

The Committee resumed at 6.00 pm.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Mr Speaker, Sir, on a point of personal explanation may I mention that I found my five missing Experienced Mistresses. One has retired, and the other four, following graduation in the UK, are now qualified mistresses.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Thank you very much indeed. Obviously, I have enlightened you on this occasion.

(b) Other Charges

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, Item 4 - Teacher Training and Development. There is..

MR SPEAKER:

Before you do that is there anyone who wishes to raise any matter on any previous item to item 4?

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, in item 2 there is an increase of £21,000 which represents 31%. Would the Minister say what part of this percentage is eroded by higher cost of books?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, we had the three increases of Mr Brown and last year we had the first Featherstone increase. This is the second Featherstone increase. We have made considerable increases as can be seen from the figures. I cannot say exactly what percentage is eroded by higher costs but we have allowed for higher costs and higher freight and we have also increased the capititation figures considerably.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Sir, still on item 2, Mr Speaker. Books and Equipment have been lumped together. Is there any distinction which the Minister would draw between books and equipment? What is meant by equipment, language laboratories and things of the sort?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, in view that the expression "Books and Equipment" has been going now for the last three years I would have thought the other side knew what it was. It does not include things like furniture or anything specific like that but it does include the specialised items which are not books and stationary. We have allowances for woodwork and craft, needlework, purchase of foodstuffs for domestics science and then there is also the special equipment in which schools can indent for various items like a tape recorder, audio visual equipment etc, but it would not, I would assume, take a whole language laboratory which would be rather a large capital item.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister then satisfied with the situation as regards books at present in schools?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, to quote the Hon Mr Xiberras one is never satisfied but, at least, I think we are doing very well. We are very far ahead of many schools in UK.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, still on the subject. Does the Minister still have difficulty in purchasing through the Crown Agents? Is it purchased direct or how does he indent for these books and equipment?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We are making may of our orders direct to firms. The Crown Agents are still acting as the paying agents.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Thank you.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, one other thing on this item. Very often one gets complaints from parents and even from students themselves of lack of certain books especially on the higher grades, sixth formers, etc. Could the Minister confirm this or deny it categorically or does it happen now and again, where books that are very important for 'O' levels and 'A' levels are just not available?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, complaints have not come to me that these books are just not available, there have until recently been delays in delivery and this was partly because we were ordering through the Crown Agents. Since we have been ordering direct the delivery has very much improved, but I don't know of any specific instances of books not being available as such.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, I can assure the Minister that this has come to my knowledge on more than one occasion and I would just ask the Minister whether when the books requested are of major importance, whether every effort will be made to ensure that at least those particular books are air freighted if necessary. There is a good link now so, perhaps, this can be made use of.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, obviously my Department is to some extent at the mercy of the headmaster of the school or the head of department if such books don't arrive. If they don't inform us of this there is not much we can do. If the Hon Member knows of any instances and he wishes to write to me and inform me I will look into it immediately.

HON P J ISOLA:

On the Scholarships Fund, earlier in this meeting the Minister announced a 20% increase in allowances as well as the full cost of the air fares granted under the award regulations. Is that the reason for the £10,000 increase because it would seem it would have to be slightly more, wouldn't it?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, when we did the estimating we allowed for the increase of the 20%. We didn't allow exactly the air fare because we did not know exactly what the air fare was. But the figure here is a higher figure than the 20% increase as well.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is this extra thousand being put in to take account of possible further increases? Is the Minister satisfied with the present allowances because I think I read a letter very recently by some students saying the increase was pitiful. They may be quite wrong but could we have the Minister's views?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, in the statement I made the other day the 20% applied to maintenance of students and, of course, this £45,000 also includes the actual cost of the course which has not been increased by 20%. The course is 25% of the total £45,000 so if you took some £11,000 off that the maintenance would work round £33,000 and 20% of £33,000 is £6,600.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does he consider there is any substance in the points raised by the students which we read about?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, even if you gave students 100% increase you would still get one or two students writing in and saying they wanted more. I think 20% is a very bare increase. It is just, roughly, the increase in cost of living charges in Britain.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, I don't think we can dismiss this all that lightly. It could very well be that although the 20% increase might overall be sufficient, there could be a number of students in some universities where because of their being in that particular university it might not be sufficient and it could very well be that these students who seem to have written very forcibly, if I may say so, and they did appear to be very certain of what they were saying, that they might have a valid point and all I would ask the Minister is that whilst appreciating this overall increase that, perhaps, he could investigate the cases where some special increase might be justified.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, from the recent experience that I got of Universities the amount of money we are now paying for maintenance is considered by them as quite adequate but I would mention, Sir, if the Hon Member likes to read the award regulations, if there is a case of hardship then Government can provide more money.

HON M XIBERRAS:

May I just say, in passing, that I have for instance received quite a number of letters which were before the increases from people in England setting out their grievance. This was before the 20% increase and it seems to me from those letters that it isn't just the young people wanting more money. I would ask the Minister to consider whether 20% is, in fact, enough bearing in mind that the last increase

MR SPEAKER:

I think the Minister has answered the question. I think the Minister has said that he has ascertained that it is sufficient but that if in any specific case it shouldn't be there are provisions to enable him to do something about it.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I am not talking about individual cases, I am talking, generally.

MR SPEAKER:

I think he has said that, generally, he is satisfied that it is sufficient.

HON. M XIBERRAS:

I am bringing forward some representations that I have had from students in UK which would suggest differently. Could I have an answer to that question whether, in fact, the Minister will keep the situation under close review or whether he feels that he has done justice to the claims of the students and does not intend to touch it for some time to come?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, if the Hon Member will remember we based our regulations, in general, on the UK system by which we gave ample maintenance in term time. The effect of our 20%, Sir, is going to give the student £18.58 per week during term time. This compares with the British technical assistance scheme which is £18.45.

HON M XIBERRAS:

On the air fares, Mr Speaker, would the Minister clarify what is meant by the air fare in the statement that he made to the House earlier in this meeting? Does this mean the air fare at the beginning and the end of the course or does it, in fact, mean every year.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, again, if the Hon Member will read the regulation we give one passage to and from the UK per year. This will mean that in

the case of a new student when he leaves he will be given his ticket to the UK with a return which he can use any time during that year. When he comes back at the end of that school university year and he is due to go back again, he will be given another ticket which will again take him there and have a return to come back. Like that he is there for three years he will have three full trips to England and back.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, Item 4 - Teacher Training and Development. There we have a decrease of £18,000. Will the Minister say whether this is mainly due to the technical assistance being obtained from the UK?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, if the Hon Member will add to our estimate of £35,000 the £40,000 that we are being given from the UK which makes £75,280, he will see that it is really an increase of £23,000 as we are receiving £40,000 very kindly from ODM aid then we have put in the exact figures.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, could the Minister give an indication of staffing needs and how they are being met? Much of a point of asking him questions under the other part of this head was to establish whether the requirement for teachers had been or not. What is the situation here? Have we trained enough teachers, have we reached a peak or what is the situation now?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I am sure the Hon Member will appreciate that the position is always somewhat fluid and has to be kept under review continually. Our wish is that students should be sent away to train basically in the disciplines that we need and also for the type of schools that we wish them to serve in, eg, if we have shortage in the primary schools then we would need students that would go to train in primary. Part of the difficulty, of course, Sir, is that one cannot at any given moment say which teachers, after training, will actually return to Gibraltar so that you can get shortages and you can get increases. But we are trying to cover the needs in the disciplines and the needs in the different categories of schools when selecting teachers or students.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, the increase in the vote seems to belie the impression that one had when listening to the Minister answering questions on the other part of the estimates. I think I heard somebody say that there were enough teachers and, perhaps too many. Here we have an increase in the vote for Teacher Training. How does he reconcile one statement with the other?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Hardly an increase, Sir. It is that the fee of the teacher training went up last year from £250 to £650.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Any idea of how many teachers are being trained at present? Has the number gone up or down?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There is a marginal note giving all the details.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Yes, May I apologise for that.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, on that it does seem as if there are problems because the 16 commencing in 1977 must be the highest in a considerable number of years. I would wonder if the figures in the note are accurate. If the Hon Minister looks at the approved estimates of last year he will find under the note on teacher training and development that it stated 12 courses end in 1974 which is not in this one, of course. I hope he can confirm that they did, in fact, end in 1974. Then it says 5 in 1975 but I notice here we are told 11 courses end in 1975. Is it that 12 which ended in 1974 didn't in fact end, and there were 6 which had unfortunately to do another year? Then I notice it said last year, 8 end in 1976 and we are told 9 end in 1976 this year. Then we were told 12 courses commence in 1974 and in these estimates we are told 13 end in 1977.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the reason is that a certain number of persons actually go to University, get a degree and then afterwards they ask to stay on to get a Diploma of Education. The Diploma comes out of the teacher training vote.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, I know, but how many did end?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Until they have passed you can't say that they are going to get it straight away.

HON P J ISOLA:

Well, can we be told how many ended in 1974 in fact?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I don't have that at my fingertips, Sir, but I will find out for you.

HON P J ISOLA:

Well, the only real point of course of substance apart from the accuracy is why is it being thought necessary to have 16 starting off in 1975? Is it a higher rate of resignations, deaths or retirements?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It is not a higher rate of resignations, resignations run about the same for the last two or three years. I should say basically, Sir, it is trying to see what is the situation three or four years ahead when you depend to some extent on these part-time, temporary teaching assistants, wives of service people that come here, UK people that do land in Gibraltar. It is partly to be able, possibly, to Gibraltarianise to a greater extent.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, it seems to me that there is a need for quite a considerable increase in sending students to the UK because it appears that out of 211 qualified there are as many as 50 which are assistants on supply and it does seem to me, Mr Speaker, that it is a very high percentage of the total number of individuals teaching in Gibraltar who happen to be just supplying or as we also call them temporary assistants. I would imagine, Mr Speaker, that in this particular instance, taking as we have this technical assistance from the UK, that we should have used at least some or perhaps all of these decreases to send more students to UK so that the position would improve in years to come. Another thing, Mr Speaker, on the same item is, can the Minister confirm that it is the policy of the Department to take less women than men in the teaching profession because of the wastage factor, getting married and so on?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, on the number of teachers, I would recommend Members of the Opposition to look at appendix H in which they'll see in the scholarship side quite a number of people are training in their scholarships at Universities to be teachers and I do believe in the ones terminating in 1977 there is another half a dozen there. Sir, there is no policy in the Department to discriminate between men and women. We believe in women's lib.

HON J BOSSANO:

In the personal emoluments we had provision in 1975/76 for 14 student teachers. Are these people, in fact, students who are employed in the Department before being sent to train, and does that mean that in the year after we can expect at best 14 scholarships for teachers in UK?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir. The teachers who are shown under the emoluments are teachers who have already been selected to go for teacher training this coming September on certain conditions. The basic condition is that they have proved themselves satisfactorily to be teachers during their actual period of probation, the one year they are serving in the schools. If you get somebody who after due consideration the headteachers and other persons who have dealt with them find that they should not be teachers then perhaps they wouldn't be sent, but under normal circumstances they will be sent.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Minister saying, Mr Speaker, that the 14 student teachers are actually going next September, is that what he is saying? Well in that case are those 14 in addition to the 16 courses due to commence in 1975 or are they the same and, if so, are we providing for the same thing twice?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No Sir, next September we will provide for the courses starting in 1976 and those people will be the second half of the people in the personal emoluments. This is where it is somewhat fluid, you can't say exactly the number each year.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is it true that the wastage of qualified teachers in the Department is running at about 20 a year?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I wouldn't say qualified teachers. Teachers, generally, about 20.

HON J BOSSANO:

So in fact, Mr Speaker, if we only produce 16 we are going to find ourselves in the situation where the shortage is likely to increase rather than decrease.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I just earlier commented that if the Hon Member would like to look at the Appendix, Sir, there are a number of persons who are training under the Scholarship Vote first to get a degree and then afterwards get a Diploma or Education and they will also come back as teachers. They will get a B.Ed.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, on Item 8 Wages Staff. I would like to ask the Financial & Development Secretary whether he can explain how it is that the revised estimates column shows £74,995 which is an increase of £15,000 although in fact, in the Supplementary Estimates No 5 it provided I think for something like £2,390.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the actual figure that was required was something like £9,000 or £11,000 but we had £9,000 available from a virement so that is why only £2,000 was actually asked for.

HON J BOSSANO:

Well, can the Minister say since this is in respect of COLA and the interim award, how many individuals are involved.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It is very difficult to say, Sir. Although there are 142 people but since these people don't work fulltime and some are geared to three quarters, it is a very difficult figure to get an exact number. It works out, roughly, to 82 fulltime but it is 142 people who gear down to 82 because of their doing half days and so.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, I wonder if I might go back to the Dockyard and Technical College, I was looking up the Scholarship Fund at the back, when my Hon Friend jumped in. It is Item 7.

There is a rather large item of expenditure here. I asked the Minister a little while back about this technical college - I think it was in relation to the statement made by the Hon Mr Canepa on industrial training - and I said I would take up the discussion at estimates time. Would the Minister care to comment on this increase of £8,459, especially in relation to the contribution of the Gibraltar Government to the running of the Gibraltar Technical College?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the increase is 13 on 59, roughly 20%. That is just about normal increase on most expenditure.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I take it the Minister is satisfied that this is necessary and fair.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I think I did give an answer about the technical college a little while ago and if one were to take it on the student hour basis I think the Gibraltar Governmen gets about 54% of the use of the College. Since we pay 50% I think we must accept this as fair.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I thought he was on a different track the last time I asked him. I thought he was critical of the situation. Mr Speaker, how does this increase compare with what the Gibraltar Government pays in respect of the Dockyard Training Centre in respect of training of apprentices.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No idea, Sir.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, perhaps, the Financial & Development Secretary who some time ago did some research on this following up one of my questions, might remember that I was rather taken aback by the size of the extra cost of training apprentices. I wonder how the two compare? We might come back to it.

Well, still under this one, is the Minister going to develop his statement now about the Dockyard Technical College at a later stage, does he intend to do that? It is an important part of the Education vote and I think we should hear something about how it is progressing.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, Item 12 - School Furniture. The explanation given is less furniture required. I would like to ask the Minister whether less is required or whether it has been the Financial and Development Secretary or the powers that he has that have cut on the amount of furniture that has been required?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, as I have said very frequently in the past this Government works in co-operation with each other and, obviously, when we were looking at the estimates this year the year in which finances were rather critical, we were asked to cut down where we feel the expenditure is not necessary. Sir, our school furniture in the main is in good condition as quite a lot of new furniture has been pouring in over the last few years. This is one place where we felt for one year we could save a little money and we have done so.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, I accept that the only thing is that, perhaps the explanation should be that less money is being spent on furniture rather than less money required. It is required but it not being given maybe for good reason.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, if it is reasonably new and it has a life of 10 years and it has only had a life of 7, nothing is required.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Item 13, Mr Speaker, Adult and Continuation Classes. Again there is a decrease here of £120. There is no explanation given. Can I ask the Minister whether it is lack of enthusiasm by the public or what is the reason for this decrease?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, for once the Hon Member has hit the nail on the head, it is lack of enthusiasm by the public. Sometimes we have run classes, 10 people start after three weeks only 2 are turning up. This year we are not going to start those classes, should there be demand for them then we will look at it again.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, I thank the Minister for saying that for once I have hit the nail on the head. I can do so again so let him be careful.

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, does the Minister think that in a matter of a fairly small sum of money involved his approach is quite right? Does he not think that he should encourage adult and continuation classes even if they do finish with only two; does he not think it better to advertise again in the new year and see whether he can get more people interested? This is an educational process, it is not a process, surely, to see whether he can get off with less money in this particular vote. The amount actually spent on adult and continuation classes is a ludicrously small sum in the Education vote and I think this performs a very useful function as far as the public is concerned especially those people who have not had the benefits of modern education in Gibraltar. Can the Minister take a more enterprising attitude in encouraging adults to attend evening classes and what does he propose to do other than just advertise occasionally in the press?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the Hon Member always tries to denigrate the efforts of the Department at every opportunity and the Minister in particular. This decision has been taken, Sir, after two years of practical experience in which we have a very capable and very able person in charge of further education and he has by many means tried to pursue certain classes and they have just failed. One cannot continually knock one's head against the wall and say that people must come to classes in Arabic if people just don't want to come.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, if he would choose the subject of Arabic, Mr Speaker, that is likely to occur. But let me assure the Minister that I am not denigrating in any way the efforts of his Department. My remarks were aimed entirely at himself. In fact, I have been criticising the Minister in a Department which is so dependent on teachers and on human beings, I have been criticising the Minister for his attitude and approach to the teaching profession as a whole, and this criticism is direct at himself. Is he enthusiastic about trying to educate the adult population of Gibraltar further in the needs that may be required? What is he doing about it?

MR SPEAKER:

Insofar as that may reflect the vote it is not very relevant, is it?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Every effort is made to keep small classes going where they are worthwhile especially when an exam is involved, but we are giving classes in about 40 different things. I don't think we can say we are not trying at all. But there have been classes where the numbers of people have just not been available. We have tried certain classes, we have tried German one year we have tried Arabic, we tried Italian, we tried a number of classes, some of them come off and some of them don't.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Chairman, we would hate to see a decrease in such an important vote, perhaps it is that the Minister is not paying the teachers enough. This is a suggestion but if the Minister delves into the scanty literature about adult education in Gibraltar, he will notice that most people who have written about adult education in Gibraltar contrast the pitiful state of affairs there with the quite flourishing situation in the secondary schools and so forth in Gibraltar. It has been attributed to bi-lingualism in Gibraltar and a good many things. I wonder whether the Minister might not take a broader view of adult education and not just stick to classes at Mackintosh Hall? Is there any way in which he could expand the activities through the person in charge and, as it were, take education

MR SPEAKER:

We are now going into the general principle of further education. You want to know why the vote has been decreased by £900 and the answer has been given. There are certain classes which have not proved popular and that is the reason for the decrease.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Sir, it is going to be a very long debate, if I may say so, if we are going to refer to each item. As an example, in the Education vote if we are going to touch on the technical college and each point it is going to be a very long debate. What is the money being used for? And I have already been told it is for classes at Mackintosh Hall. Now, I am asking the Minister would he consider expanding activities for instance in bringing people to lecture on particular subjects, get them on television or things of the kind rather than simply asking people to attend formal classes.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Classes are held at St Christopher's School, Mackintosh Hall, Technical College and, I think, in one or two of the secondary schools also.

HON M XIBERRAS:

The Minister has not got the point of my remark.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Oh, I get the point. I will look into it for you.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I wish the Minister would show me the courtesy of making a counter point. I am not asking the Minister where he is holding his adult education classes, I am asking the Minister not to be so narrow minded about the concept of adult education. Would the Minister consider having something inviting people. We suffer from a great deal of cultural isolation, and perhaps, he could encourage a more liberal interpretation of the phrase adult education and continuation classes.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, we are willing to consider it.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is it a fact, Mr Speaker, that although minority interests tend to be very poorly supported there are more popular subjects for which there is often an unsatisfied demand, and could the Minister not consider instead of simply reducing the vote, perhaps, running more than one class in the subjects which are popular?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, we haven't had any knowledge that there are certain popular ones and they are not being sufficiently attended to but, of course, if that is so we are always willing to expand. This is only a small amount of money we can soon get some supplementaries for it.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr. Speaker Item 14 - Curricular Development Services. Again there is a decrease and no explanation given. Perhaps the Minister will explain?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the Curricular Development Services is tied up mainly with the Teacher Centre and the heavy expenditure over the last two years has been to provide a fair measure of capital equipment especially in the forte of the Teacher Centre which is audio visual. Since they have already got a fair measure of this, the recurrent expenditure will obviously get less. This is why the amount is less this year. It is in the teacher centre but that is the centre for all audio visual that is taken to the schools etc. Audio visual is based in the teacher centre and then if there is a film show at a certain school then the equipment is taken there etc. The idea being, of course, that you don't have the same film in six different schools, that film is based in the teacher centre and is taken to each school as required.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Sir, on Curricular Development Services, is that the total expenditure on the Centre? Or this is just audio visual equipment?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

These are the different services in the centre such as audio visual, reference books and various other things of that ilk.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I am very interested in this, Mr Speaker. In my days it was a question of going down to Mackintosh Hall and seeing what there was in the library. It has improved I take it? Could I ask the Minister, does he get regular recordings and so forth from BBC or is it still too expensive to get here in Gibraltar?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We have not had regular ones but we have been making new approaches to both the British Council and the BBC to see if something can be done on a more reasonable basis. With regard to the teacher

centre, Sir, I think the real proof of the pudding would be in the eating. If the Hon Member would like to come and visit it one evening or one afternoon with the greatest of pleasure I will show him round and I will show him all the facilities that are available.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I thank the Hon Member and I shall be delighted to take up the invitation. Perhaps this might set a precedent for other things.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, Item 15 - Financial Aid to Youth Council. Here there is an increase of £500 which represents 6% or 6½%. It would appear to me that due to inflation in the cost of everything that this increase is very small. Can the Minister say whether again there has been a severe cut on the money requested by the Youth Council?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the main aim of the Youth Service is to make our youngsters partners in the whole operation. They are taking more responsibility in financing their own ventures and this is one of the reasons why the subsidies required by various clubs is not as great as it has been hitherto, because they themselves are providing nearer to what we would hope would be the eventual aim of about 50% from each of us.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, I am glad to hear that youth are taking a more active part in their own financing and this is very good and I accept that. But will the Minister answer the question whether they have requested more and it has not been possible to give it to them?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, every section requests more initially on the possibly trade union principle of "If you want five you ask for fifty and you accept five in the long run". Obviously, the Youth Department when they make their first provisional figures try to make the maximum possible but then they come to a realisation of how things are and we have worked out to this figure.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, I don't know whether the youth do that or not but certainly what the Minister has just said is contrary to what he said before that the youths themselves were trying to help themselves and take a more active part. If that is the case I doubt whether they would ask for fifty to get five.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

These figures are prepared, of course, from our section of the Department which is through the Principal Youth and Careers Officer. He prepares the figures that he thinks he needs, but he may put it for a new van which is a very laudible thing but he realises that he doesn't get his new van this year so it is removed but, of course, his initial figures may have been considerably higher or somewhat higher than the actual figures that we finalise on. Obviously, I am not saying he tries it on but all heads of departments try and get the maximum that they can when they make their initial figures.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker does this particular item reflect in any way the recommendations of the Corben Report?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would say yes, Sir, insofar as the youth is becoming a partner in the whole scheme, yes.

HON P J ISOLA:

My only worry, Mr Speaker, is that the Minister has said that the particular officer involved obviously puts in for what he thinks and then it's cut down. My only worry is whether the Minister or the Government is being fair to youth in the proportion that increases have been given because if £7,500 was necessary in 1974/75 and found to be justified - and I should imagine a lot of this expenditure is recurring expenditure of some sort or another - I would have thought a more equitable situation would have been a 20% increase, especially, if one contrasts this with the increase to the cultural and sporting societies vote which is roughly the same sort of situation with older people and one finds a 50% increase proposed for this year. I notice the approved estimate for 1974/75 was £3,000

and the revised expenditure was £3,500 and I notice the new expenditure is £4,500 which is a 50% increase on the approved estimate of ~~last year~~. It would seem to me that there is a slight lack of balance in that and certainly I think on this side of the House we wonder whether people who perhaps can't shout so much are being kept down in this great economy drive in this crisis year.

MR SPEAKER:

We mustn't make a statement every time in every item because otherwise we would never finish.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, was it not the Minister who was talking about this year as being a critical period? I was wondering whether savings could be made elsewhere and not in these sort of situations.

MR SPEAKER:

I think the Opposition has made its point and we might have an answer from the Minister if he cares to reply.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, as far as I know there has been no reappraisal or changing of anything from the youth umbrella to the cultural one. The Youth Officer put in for a new automatic duplicator. Well, there is an automatic duplicator in the actual Department of Education. We thought, perhaps, to have one in the Department and one down there was a little extravagant and if he had something that had to be automatically duplicated he could come up to the main department and do it there. We saved £350 on that.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, the only observation I make on that and I know it's a small one but we have heard of a van and we've heard of an automatic duplicator so it is quite obvious there has been quite considerable cutting down on the amount that the Youth Council possibly thought might have here. I would have thought there was a lot to be said for making the youth complex as independent as possible and I would have that a duplicator would be useful for that. But the point that is emerging from the discussion is that

it does appear that the Youth Council has suffered some considerable cuts in their request and that their increasing expenditure is only 6% on last year whereas the cultural association - I am not saying the Government is getting from one to the other....

MR SPEAKER:

Order. We are making statements now and I will not allow that.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I would then like to ask the Minister why the Government has thought fit to give in one case a 50% increase on the approved estimate of last year and in this case only 6%?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Well, I don't see, Sir, how that follows from the Education vote.

HON P J ISOLA:

The reason why I put it that way, Mr Speaker, is that in one case we are dealing with youth and in the other we are dealing with people of voting age. Let's put it that way.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, since many of the members in the youth associations are over the age of 18 I presume the remarks are equally applicable.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, it was my understanding that we were debating the estimates in Committee? Am I to understand that we are only allowed to ask questions?

MR SPEAKER:

No, I am not suggesting that. What you are not allowed to do is to get up and make a speech on any given matter on any given item.

HON M XIBERRAS:

We are allowed to state views about particular items.

MR SPEAKER:

You are allowed to ask questions and seek information to enable you to vote for or against.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, the Minister said his recommendations do follow the Corben Report. Could I ask him then in what way does it follow the Corben report? Am I to take it, Mr Speaker, that the Corben Report has now outlived its usefulness given the changes....

MR SPEAKER:

That is precisely what is out of order Now you want to discuss the Corben Report.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I would have said, Mr Speaker, that it hasnot followed the Corben Report in its general principles. I am prefixing another question but, perhaps, the Minister is no longer in agreement with the Corben Report. Could I ask the Minister what sort of things does this money go on? I think it is relevant to the question my Hon and Learned Friend asked. What is it used for, is it used simply for the clubs, is it used for activities? Because we might get as has been in certain social payments, we might get a duplication, a tremendous duplication, of money and we might get money coming under one vote and then money coming under another vote and we don't know exactly how.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but let us find out where it comes from.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Well, it is going to be very difficult because if we can't take it that this particular stage we won't be able to take it when it comes to the Minister for Sports' vote, if it is still Mr Zammit's vote. I notice that the Stadium Manager has been transferred to Secretariat so I don't know whether Mr Zammit still has a vote or not.

MR SPEAKER:

You are entitled to ask what this money is for. It is a simple question you want to ask. If that had been asked originally we might have saved a lot of time.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I am very grateful for the semi statement made in which I can pick up the point when he asked whether the Minister was no longer in favour of the Corben Report because that implies I was in favour of it before, whereas I used to be accused of not being in favour of it. We are still in favour of the Corben Report and we are implementing it with very good and useful assistance from the Gibraltar Youth Council. So, where does the money go? Well, let us be really honest for once

HON M XIBERRAS:

Oh, what do you mean for once?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

More than the other side. Originally they asked for £9,000 and we cut it to £8,000, so these gigantic increases are not so great after all. The money goes in the works of the Principal Youth and Careers Officer to continuation of club activities to cater for girl members - we are trying to get more girls into the youth club - provision to cater for youth groups using old St Jago's School. And this means basically that we give all the different youth clubs a subsidy to help them towards their expenses. Then there is rates, electricity, telephone and incidental expenses incurred by the Youth and Careers Office in connection with youth clubs and youth organisations. Visual aids including books, periodicals, subscriptions etc, vocational and educational guidance. This is all old hat of the Hon Mr Isola and the Hon Mr Devincenzi who have already done all this. Camping equipment to replace obsolete sleeping bags etc - 540 persons used camping equipment last year. One automatic duplicator which was removed: training of voluntary youth workers in UK. It is proposed to send 5 youth workers to UK for training courses lasting six weeks, and running expenses of van, including licences, insurance, petrol and repairs. They got a new van last year.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I thank the Hon Member. Perhaps I should have rephrased my question to: "Was the Corben Report in favour of the Minister?" Mr Speaker, I thank the Minister for that list. It appears that a lot of money is going to go directly to the Youth Officer rather than otherwise. As an example could the Minister say how much is going for camping equipment?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

He has asked for £300. I would comment that last year of the total money I should say 60% to 70% went direct to the different youth associations or the different clubs.

HON DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker may I just finish up that one by

MR SPEAKER:

Provided there is no repetition on what has been said. If it is something which hasn't been touched upon by all means, but not otherwise.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker I also thank the Minister for that long list of items which he has given but all I would say is that the list of items he has given only indicates and confirms that because most of them are of a recurrent expenditure like books and other things it is all the more reason why perhaps the 6% would not cover it.

Item No 16 - Educational Visits and Holidays. Here there is a very substantial decrease of £7,000. Why the decrease?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the Hon Member will remember that I said last year that one must first attend to the basics in education and the frills can come later. This is to some of the extent one of the frills

and we have cut the figure here. I knew that they would have cries of "shame," Sir, but people today are not so badly off as they were when these schemes were originally thought of and we have understood that sometimes the same person has benefitted more than once from this sort of thing, others are unable to go and this, to be honest, is where we have made some cuts.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, quite frankly I do accept that, perhaps, frills should be cut off but I would not consider holidays which are not only holidays but are also educational visits, as being frills especially under the present circumstances in Gibraltar. I think, Mr Speaker, that if there is a demand and I would imagine that there is a demand for educational visits and holidays, I think the Government have been most unfair in having cut so much especially when this £7,000 taken against higher costs reflect even a higher amount. I would ask the Minister to consider that if he finds that the demands are there, he should not hesitate to ask for additional funds and I am sure this side of the House will agree readily for this type of educational visits and holidays.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I would assure the Hon Member first of all that educational visits, visits that are really needed for the education of a child, will continue as hitherto eg, there is the visit that certain members studying Geography make so that they can learn what different terrains are rather than just from text books. If we get a demand which we see is justified and they are basically children who have not had an opportunity before we are, of course, very happy to look at it and if these demands needed supplementary funds then, of course, we will come here but I would just comment, Sir, that it is very easy for the Opposition at this time of the estimates to say that they will support any demands for extra expenditure, but when the time comes to raise more revenue then they are the ones who question why have we got to put this or that tax up. Now they wish to spend, later they do not wish to find the money.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Sir, I think the Hon Minister opposite is in the habit of criticising, perhaps, a bit too much and he is very cynical at times. I think it is most unfair to say that we have been asking for more and more. The Opposition has been quite reasonable and what we think should be increased and we have more

or less accepted part of the explanations given. I would ask the Minister not to dampen any enthusiasm that there might be for such visits. What is more I think the Minister should do his utmost to encourage these visits. I think they are of a highly education value and I know that in some cases some of the children who do go might be able to afford to go on their own, on the other hand there are many who cannot do so. If only because of those children - and there are many - who cannot go on holiday otherwise I think it is a shame that the Government should have selected this particular item and to have cut it so severely.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Isn't the Minister taking a rather narrow view of education altogether, and isn't this a reflection of his attitude towards education? I think it is rather depressing to listen to his suggestion that it is a frill for young people to move out of what is today a very confined space. I would have thought that if anything he would have increased the vote to enable young people to be able to assimilate the knowledge that they get from books into the actual happening in the world around us. I think it is a very important item and this is why I have kept quite up to now, but I really feel very strongly about this one. So strongly that when we went to England originally in 1969 we were able to convince ODA, which is not that generous with money, to allocate money precisely for this purpose. And I am very surprised to see that the Minister who should, if anything, be encouraging that to happen, to come along and slash a vote by 50%. It is even more because of inflation which according to his own assessment is about 20%. So I would suggest to the Minister that he does not consider this a frill, that this is a very important aspect of education for young people, and that he will consider this very carefully and, perhaps, reinstate the amount of money, perhaps, increase it.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, before the Minister answers could he also explain to the House how this House having approved expenditure for visits and holidays for the current year ending 31st March 1974/75 of £13,000 on what the Minister told us his Department required last year, why the Department has not spent £6,500? Has the Government deliberately cut the current vote as well apart from cutting for next year? I think the House is owed an explanation of why the House having approved £13,000 for Educational Holidays for Schoolchildren in the current year, the Minister with no word of explanation during that year to that House, has cut by £6,500.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, if the Honourable Member will remember last year I said that we were looking for places other than the United Kingdom. Portugal was going to be one of the places, in fact, we used Portugal the year before. But I think it was prudent of the Department, in view of the political situation in Portugal not to send children to Portugal last year, and this is the reason that less money was spent.

HON P J ISOLA:

Why did the Minister, if Portugal was not possible, Mr Speaker, why did he not consider other places, including, I would suggest, the United Kingdom?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, quite a number did go to the United Kingdom. To cover the total number of children we would have liked to cover would have meant an expenditure somewhere on the present air fares and present prices in the UK, far beyond the £13,000 and we did not think that that money could justifiably be asked from this House.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, with respect to the Minister, if he could not have sent all the people he would have wished to have sent last year to the United Kingdom, he could at least have used the £6,500 in sending a part of them and use another £6,500 this year for sending another part of them instead of cutting last year and this year and depriving the children of Gibraltar of the same sort of expansion that other children more fortunately placed have and are entitled to.

We think it is most reprehensible of the Government with no financial crisis as has been demonstrated by the speech of the Financial and Development Secretary, with no real financial crisis in their hands to cut again precisely on an item of expenditure which contributes so largely to the welfare of our young community in Gibraltar and the future citizens of Gibraltar. Are they going to grow up in Gibraltar not having seen any other part of the world except Gibraltar? When they see their first cow what is going to happen, or "Saltie" the pig, Mr Speaker?

HON M XIBERRAS:

I am particularly critical of the Minister, Mr Speaker, because of the reasons he has given for cutting this vote. If the Minister had said; "Well, most children do get across and I know that from my statistics that I take from the schools", then this might have been some defence. If he had said part of this money had been redirected and was going to the youth associations for the same purpose, to end the isolation, then, one might not have accepted it but some attention could be paid to the argument. But at a time when air fares are going up, when he knows it is difficult for young people to get out to the United Kingdom, we have absolutely no defence of this cut by the Minister. I think the Minister did not have his heart in this kind of vote since the beginning and I seem to remember some time ago some AACR pronouncement to the effect that the Minister did not consider this to be essential and I think it is entirely, as my Hon Friend has said, reprehensible that this cut should come here. We have been worried about one or two cuts, we have been worried about the youth services, one or two things, and now we come to this particular vote and the Minister offers no defence at all. This is absolutely fundamental. This is education, going out and going out regularly, as regularly as possible. How many times does the Minister go to England? How many times does the Minister leave Gibraltar himself a year? Or for that matter anybody sitting around this room? Is it fair for the Minister of Education to stand up and say; "No, this is not essential to education." It is absolutely essential. This is a frill, he said. Well, it is not a frill. In the circumstances of Gibraltar it is absolutely essential that a child leaves this environment and returns to it with regularity and if the Government at one time, our Government, instituted this on the basis that a child would go at least once in his school career to the United Kingdom, we have progressed since those days and if it is necessary to send him twice he would go twice if it is possible. But we can't have a Minister for Education who can't see beyond his nose, educationally, saying that this is a frill, this is an extra. And we have the Minister for air communications saying that the air fares are going up 50% and that he can't do anything at all about it.

MR SPEAKER:

Order. Does the Opposition want a vote on this particular item?

HON M XIBERRAS:

Oh, yes. We are hopeful that before we come to the vote we can move the Minister a little bit and get him to say; "Well, yes, I consider this to be essential and I will divert funds or the funds have been diverted elsewhere."

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I have already said that educational visits will continue. If there is a demand which is considered justified for persons that haven't been to the UK already to be able to go and we can find the money, we will do it. I would still insist, Sir, that this is not one of the basic features of Education whether it is looking beyond my nose or not. I think it grossly unfair of the Honourable Mr Xiberras to ask how many times has the Honourable Minister been to England. He should have said how many times in the last 3 years have the Honourable Minister's children been to England and the answer will be, none.

HON M XIBERRAS:

I don't want to get that personal. About the Minister, yes he is in this House.

MR SPEAKER:

Order. Is the Minister prepared to reconsider the vote? That is what you have been asked.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, at this stage, no, Sir.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, the evidence all around us is that people do welcome trips abroad and especially for young children. It is our duty to get them out of here for a while. It is duty to do this with regularity. How can the Minister for Education say it is a frill?

MR SPEAKER:

That is why I have asked a specific question of the Minister because the time has come for a decision to be taken. The Minister is not prepared to change his vote or to reconsider the situation and that is why I am asking the Opposition whether they want a vote on this particular item.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, to reconsider his stand because, with respect to him, his approach to this subject lacks a certain amount of imagination. The educational system of Gibraltar has gone comprehensive and as a result you have one boys' school and one girls' school. You have hockey teams, you have got football teams and so forth in these schools. Who do they play against, what other schools? None, Mr Speaker. Has not the Minister considered the possibility of having a group of school-children, a good hockey team from one of the schools or a good football team from one of the schools, doing a week in England? Using the money but not cut this vote, Mr Speaker, If he doesn't want to send them on holiday to the United Kingdom, well, don't send them there, send them to Morocco send them to Timbuctoo, but keep the money for this purpose in the Department's vote. The Government estimates show that the Government can afford it this year. We appeal to the Minister not to be obstinate in this but to approach it in a spirit having heard the strength of feeling on this side of the House and I am sure a certain amount of sympathy for this strength of feeling on the other side of the House, to reinstate this amount and spend it usefully for the benefit of the children of Gibraltar.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, I have already said that educational visits will continue. I think only a few days ago we sent a netball team to Tangier to play, so these visits will continue. If it is justified that we send large groups of children to the UK we are willing to look at it. At the moment we have got this figure, if this figure does not prove adequate we are willing to consider more, but for the moment this is considered reasonably adequate.

HON M XIBERRAS:

Mr Speaker, how does the Minister reconcile the statement that he made about students in which we pay the air fare of a grown-up student to come back to Gibraltar once a year. Well, they are away from the broad wide wide world here in Gibraltar and they need to go out.

Mr Speaker, how can the Minister reconcile one thing with the other? Isn't there a demand for grown-up people to go out of Gibraltar, and is the Minister for Education going to tell me

that there is no demand at all amongst school boys or is he going to take a narrow interpretation of educational visits? I can tell him that I was personally involved when this vote was started and it started with two mini buses which my Honourable Friend Mr Peter Isola acquired second-hand and I have taken parties out to Morocco and I have seen the effects of that holiday and somebody else in the establishment began to push ODA for an extension of this vote, and it goes against the grain to allow this vote to go down because we have been too personally involved in this.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, I think the Minister should not be hypocritical and say that he is going to do his best and at the same time allow the vote to be cut by 50%. That is hypocritical and nothing else. He should be straightforward and say he does not believe in that sort of contribution towards education and be straightforward about it, at least he would be frank. But the way he is putting it now is hypocritical and I think he should be more frank about it.

HON L DEVINCENZI:

Mr Speaker, I think it has been made clear how this side feels and I feel the Minister should not think in any way that one is trying to score points against him but he should reconsider not on the heat of the debate but, perhaps, in a very sensible manner and perhaps in a sympathetic manner because after all we are talking about young children. I think Mr Speaker, the basic difference as you are well aware that exists between the Minister and speakers on this side is that whilst the Minister speaks of possible demands, one is thinking of encouragement, to spread the word, to ask the teachers to try and arrange something. It is up to the Department if they feel that way, and I think they should, to encourage because it is very important and I think this feeling has been expressed very fully.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the calm and measured words of the Honourable Mr Devincenzi are very different to the vituperation of the Honourable Major Peliza. I would like the Honourable Major Peliza to say point blank that he disbelieves me and doesn't take my word when I say that if we see that more money is needed I will come to this House for it. I am not asking for it at this juncture.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, he is contradicting himself. He just said earlier today that it was impossible to send to England all the children that would like to go there. My Honourable Friend Mr Isola suggested that if he has not got enough money to send all of them at one time perhaps a few at a time could be sent every year. Therefore I cannot believe what he says because he is contradicting himself.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can we move an amendment to increase the item of expenditure?

MR SPEAKER:

Not to increase.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can we invite a Minister of the Government to move it for us?

MR SPEAKER:

You can vote against the item as a protest.

Education - Other Charges was agreed to.

Head IV Education was agreed to.

The Committee recessed at 7.25 pm.

WEDNESDAY THE 19TH MARCH 1975

The Committee resumed at 10.30 a.m.

HEAD V - ELECTRICITY UNDERTAKING (A) PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS

HON W M ISOLA

Mr Speaker I would like to ask the Minister for Public Works and Municipal Services, under Item 3 that there is a decrease of £2,073 and that is because there is at present a vacancy. Is that correct?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This refers to Assistant Electrical Engineer. I do not think there is a decrease. I think it is the fact that people are filling that job who are on the bottom of the scale. May I just refer . . .

MR SPEAKER

There is provision for two only pending filling of vacancies. There is a vacancy.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Oh, well, yes. There are two vacancies there.

HON W M ISOLA

Can the Minister state when this particular vacancy will be filled?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I beg your pardon?

HON W M ISOLA

When will this vacancy be filled?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The problem here, I think, is one of the individuals concerned being accepted into the A & P Grade because they just fall short of the requirements of that particular grade and this is under negotiation at the

present time as part of the biennial review.

HON W M ISOLA

Does it mean that when this vacancy is filled, that automatically there will be an increase of £073?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

There will be a relatively corresponding decrease further down the scale.

HON W M ISOLA

I am not terribly clear on this. Where will the decrease be somewhere down the scale?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

TGI, TGII and TGIII.

HON W M ISOLA

If we go one further down under Item 4, Technical Grade I there are another two vacancies. A decrease of £4,92. Can the Minister explain why there should be another decrease?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

It is the same reason. I am trying to ^{relate} ~~correlate~~ these for names in my own mind. We have one man filling two posts. He is doing Assistant Electrical Engineer and Generation Engineer: another man is being a TGI and Engineering Assistant and a Graduate Engineer is also being treated as a TGI. So you have got one vacancy there because there is a stepping stone. There are, in fact, four vacancies in the technical grade in the Department at the moment. This is because we are waiting for people with qualifications to come back and the fact that we cannot get people with the right professional qualifications in Gibraltar. They are just falling short and up to now we have had a great deal of discussion and negotiation in trying to get people with practical qualifications but not with paper qualifications upgraded into the A & P grade. These will be stepping stones. We have got these two people to fill up and two people below to fill up there, but this is the way we are presenting them here.

HON W M ISOLA

I am sorry but I am not very happy about that answer, Mr Chairman.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I am sorry but neither are we terribly happy about this, but we have to face facts that at the present time they cannot be promoted into these posts because they do not have the necessary qualifications. They are doing the job but they cannot be promoted into these particular posts.

HON W M ISOLA

If you are not happy with the situation what is the Government doing to fill these vacancies or to put people on to courses?

MR SPEAKER

The Minister has said that they are qualified in experience and in practice but they are not qualified on paper and, therefore, they are waiting for these qualifications but that they are doing their jobs properly.

HON W M ISOLA

Can the Minister state for how long this grade has been vacant?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Four years.

HON W M ISOLA

It is a sad state of affairs, is it not, Mr Chairman?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I am rather surprised that the Honourable Member himself is not aware of this because this was the position in his time. It has not changed and we are still fighting for it. I think we are on the verge of success but this is the time it takes to get these posts upgraded

when people have not got their little bit of paper that says they can spell and write.

HON M XIBERRAS

May I say something on that one, Mr Speaker? Are they people who are going to qualify for HND or OND? Is that the sort of qualification the Minister is talking about?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

No, these are much more advanced. These are professionals, chartered engineers.

HON M XIBERRAS

In that case, I remember a review taking place about four years ago of the needs of various departments and I remember at the time that people were required who were not quite engineers but who had a sufficiently high qualification, and the qualification adjudged to be the appropriate one for this was the Higher National Diploma.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Well, this is something else but this is basically the problem here. We have got people filling the posts who just failed by a cat's whisker to qualify for their charter. They are filling the job and we are trying to negotiate and have them put up into the A & P Grade from the Technical grade.

HON M XIBERRAS

Does that mean that they will prevent other people with the qualifications from occupying the posts?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Not at all. We have these vacancies earmarked for that sort of people.

HON W M ISOLA

On Item 7. I see we have there two additional technicians which were approved in 1974. Can the Minister state whether these two additional technicians are actually now working as Technicians on Scale 105?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

These are. This is, in effect, a little bit of a mixture. These are two people who have been re-graded as Technicians when they were Special Grade Apprentices last year because of some agreement with the Unions they were brought up into the Technicians description. I think they were converted, in fact, from ~~non-~~ industrials to ^{now} industrials.

HON W M ISOLA

Am I right in assuming that at this particular moment of time we now have four Technicians under this particular scale, or only two?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

We have four. We had two there last year and two more who have come up from the other grade.

HON W M ISOLA

On Item 21 I notice there is an increase under On-call allowance. Does that mean that the On-call allowance has been increased?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The figure of £358 is made up of 52 weeks at £4.45 plus nine public holidays at 60 pence additional and 26 weeks as in winter we have two people on stand by service and not one. The total of that comes to £358.

(a) Personal emoluments was agreed to.

(b) Other Charges

HON LT COL J L HOARE

On other charges I would like to say that the estimates have been drawn up on an anticipated generation of 48 million units.

HON W M ISOLA

Mr Chairman, on Item 4, I am glad to see that there has been a decrease in Fuel and Fuel Sundries of £69,500.

I am sure I am right in saying, obviously, that the price of fuel has gone down in the last four or five months?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The fuel on the ^{diesel} 1st April 1974 was £45.50 for thin fuel oil, and marine ~~vehicle~~ was £69.50. The prices have been reduced and are now £42.95 - a matter of £2.55 - and £55.95 for the marine ~~vehicle~~. There has been a slight drop in price. ^{diesel}

HON W M ISOLA

In view that prices have gone down and there is going to be a saving of £69.500, can the Minister state whether he intends to reintroduce the lighting of public buildings?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I think at the moment we are still paying back a great deal of electricity that we borrowed. We are generating a great deal of power at the moment and we are almost back to "normality". If I can put that in inverted commas. I think that as soon as we can see our way clear of course we will go back to floodlighting public buildings.

HON W M ISOLA

Can the Minister state as a matter of interest how much the floodlighting of the House of Assembly costs?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

If you give me a minute I will try to find out.

MR SPEAKER

If the information is available it should be given, if not we must proceed as we must not interrupt the meeting.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I am afraid this involves a little complicated mathematics but as far as we can see off hand, because even my Electrical Engineer has not got these figures at his fingertips, we are working on a rough assessment of something like 20p an hour.

HON W M ISOLA

Good, in other words, Mr Speaker, am I right in saying that it would cost to floodlight the House of Assembly about £350 a year, about £1 a day.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

If we had it on for five hours only, yes, that would be about right.

HON W M ISOLA

Does the Minister not think that it is worthwhile lighting it straight away and having all these buildings lit like the City Hall, Waterport, Referendum Gate, all for under £1000?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I think we are now, with all due respect Mr Speaker, going into the question of the illuminations of Gibraltar which does not come into this Head at all. But I will certainly take the point, I will certainly look into this and I think we are now in the position where we can afford a little bit of generation on this job. We have not done it up to now but we will certainly look at it and do it, if possible.

HON W M ISOLA

Well, I am very glad to hear that at long last something is going to be done to get Gibraltar to be more attractive. On Item 14 - Repairs and Maintenance Station Offices and Buildings - we have an increase of £500 which the note says includes cost of living addition. Can the Minister explain that?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I think this merely indicates that this is wages of people employed on this job and that that includes the cost of living addition. It does not mean to say that we are going to do exactly the same amount of work as last year because the amount is the same. It means that we are going to do £11,000 worth of work on this particular job this year, taking into account the cost of living addition because the biennial review is taken elsewhere. It is merely as a guide, as information.

HON W M ISOLA

I am sorry, I thought we had already done personal emoluments.

MR SPEAKER

This is not personal emoluments, this is cost of repairs, labour etc.

HON W M ISOLA

And I suppose it is the same for Item No.16 - Running expenses and Maintenance of Motor Vehicles, running expenses of £5,000 and there is an increase of £700 which again includes the cost of living.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Yes, if I can make this clear at (a) Personal Emoluments, you have the staff; at (b) you have the wages of the non-industrials.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, I wonder if the Minister, having been enlightened himself in this question of lighting public buildings, whether he might enlighten me now and tell me what part of this Head refers to the reading of meters. I am referring particularly to a number of complaints about the erratic nature of the electricity bills that are received.

MR SPEAKER

Shall we ask the Minister whether there is a particular item that deals with that and then we will deal with it when we come to it, perhaps.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

It does not come under this Head at all. I think it comes under Revenue.

Mr M XIBERRAS

Thank you.

HON W M ISOLA

I see that under Item 22 - Purchase of Generating Tools Spares and Equipment, we are asking to vote for an increase of nearly double as to what we spent last year. Can the Minister say something about this item, it seems to be rather a large increase.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Perhaps note (f) has been overlooked because this amount includes a £7,000 odd ~~revote~~ from last year. But if he is interested I can give him a breakdown of the items which, of course, do not recur every year. One gets spares according to what one foresees, i.e., you do not have a repeat order every year.

HON W. M. ISOLA

I am sorry, Mr Speaker, in 1973/74 I see an expenditure of £6,000, the revised estimate of 1974/75 is £5,000 and now we are being asked to vote £15,000 for spares and equipment. How much of this amount which we are being asked to vote is a revote and how much is estimated this year?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

It is not quite that simple because what was spent last year and what was left from last year are subject to increased costs. What we are providing this year which we could not get last year because of delays will cost us this year £7,413. New items this year on current prices are £8,400. One can only provide for the cost of that particular time on the assumption that all these items although ordered on time are going to be delivered within the year. If they are not delivered there is nothing you can do about it. However, we are not filling our stores with very sophisticated spares merely to have them there, we limit our supplies to those we think we shall need during the year to keep the generating station going.

HON M XIBERRAS

On Item 21 - Training of Apprentices - could the Minister give an indication of how this is progressing against the background repeated many years over that Technician 6 qualification which was to be reached. Are apprentices reaching this qualification?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

No, I understand that we are a little bit disappointed with the results being achieved there. What this particular figure provides for is four apprentices this year because we cannot get enough people volunteering for this sort of thing.

HON M XIBERRAS

Well, I am not glad to hear that in fact but that was not the point of my question. The point of my question was to what level do we train apprentices in the Electricity Department? I understand that the appropriate level would be Technician 6 level whilst in Construction it is Technician 4. I was wondering whether we actually train them to that level or whether there are difficulties in the way.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I can confirm the first part of the question that it is to Technician 6. I think, overall, the results are a little disappointing. If I can be given just one second I will find out how many of these who have passed out this year have reached the required standard.

HON M XIBERRAS

I appreciate that Mr Chairman. Once the Minister is doing that may I say that the point of the question is also that as is known apprentices are required for other official employers and it is said from time to time that they do not have the right material, they do not get entrants who are sufficiently qualified. My understanding was that our apprentices did relatively well and I am sorry to hear what the Minister has had to say. This, of course, should be a slightly higher qualification than for other trades - Technician IV or simple City and Guilds - but it is important in view of the future distribution of the labour force. I am sure the Minister for Labour would agree that it is essential to have a good supply of good apprentices going.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I understand that most of our apprentices at the Dockyard only do the Craft Course but they can qualify up to Technician IV here. But if they want to go to T6 then they have to go to the United Kingdom.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Chairman, I shall be raising the whole question of apprenticeships later on and I shall be asking questions on apprentices on the various departments as we go along.

On Item 48 - New Cables to provide electricity to Sandy Bay - I am talking about set jobs of this kind. Is the Department implementing a policy of payment by results in the laying of cables and so forth? After all the Financial and Development Secretary has commended productivity to the people of Gibraltar and I think the Government is under an obligation to see that the where withall for productivity schemes to come about there and this is, perhaps, a very good example of this.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

These are items which have been completed. There is no money in this year. But it is a fact that the Electricity Department more than any other Department, does this kind of deal with its industrials because it lends itself to this kind of work. We do this a great deal.

HEAD V - ELECTRICITY UNDERTAKING was agreed to

HEAD VI - FIRE SERVICE (A) PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS was agreed to.

(B) OTHER CHARGES

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I would like to draw attention here to Item No.19 which refers to a Land-rover Appliance. This one is a new type of vehicle which has come into production quite recently which is very narrow. It is only 5' 10" wide but carries the same load of fire fighting equipment as our big Dennis Engine and this is to replace one which was bought in 1960 and is now beyond economic repair.

HON W M ISOLA

On Item 10 - Training Courses. Can the Minister say whether these courses attended outside Gibraltar or where do they go for these courses? This, apparently, is new since in 1973/74 there were no training courses.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

There were courses last year, in fact, it was started last year. But the Honourable Member is quite right, these are courses outside Gibraltar not only to the Fire Fighting College in Epsom, I think it is, but also attachment to the Fire Brigades at home.

HON P J ISOLA

At home?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I used the expression "at home" in its broadest term. Some of us have two homes, and have had two homes for a long time. This is still my home but I still pay a lot of UK tax. Anyway, this is, in fact, to broaden the experience of our firemen in its widest sense, i.e. let them meet incidents which they do not meet normally here. In the same way they can teach people at the other end other incidents we have here such as lifting people from lifts and from the face of the Rock. This is part and parcel of the training and I am a great believer in training to meet all emergencies.

rescuing

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, bearing in mind the very encouraging words that the Minister has said about the positive effects of travel abroad for firemen, I wonder whether the Chief Minister might consider putting this Minister as Minister for Education and then we might have more holidays for school children.

HON W M ISOLA

On this question of training courses. How many members of the Fire Brigade is it envisaged to send to these courses in England with the provision of £1,000?

HON LT COL J L HOARE.

We hope to send about 4 with this money. We sent two last year and one man was able to get a scholarship which was very useful. But I think this covers for four people on two-weekly courses. The attachment is free and only entails fares and tuition fees at the college itself. We have a close liaison with the London Fire

Brigade. In fact, the Gibraltar Fire Brigade sent a football team over last year and as I say we have a very good liaison.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister whether he is satisfied, generally, with the Fire Service. Does it give value for money and is morale high.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I would say - perhaps I would have said this in the general debate - that I am very satisfied with the Fire Brigade. I think we have a band of very dedicated individuals whose morale is of the highest and whose standards of professional efficiency is at the highest.

HON M XIBERRAS

I am delighted to hear this, it is a sentiment we share entirely from the Opposition bench and I hope that the Honourable Member does not subscribe to communiques at strike time

HEAD VI - FIRE SERVICE was agreed to.

HEAD VII - THE GOVERNOR (A) Personal Emoluments

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, in Head VII there is a charge for the biennial review of £276 and a cost of living allowance of £160 for one person. Is this, in fact, the basis on which the cost of the provision for the interim award for the whole of 1975/76 has been made? Is this the sum that has been used to compute the cost for the whole of the public sector of Gibraltar Government employees?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

I think it will be found, Sir, that accountants in departments have variously used £159 or £158. There are slight variations, slight roundings, and the accountants have reasons for this because, as we said yesterday, in the case of one person he will be in post we assume too, but where there are a number of

people concerned, there is a room for a little variation and this one we would leave to the accountant.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, on a general consideration, a rather delicate matter, I do feel and I have said this in this House, in fact, when the present Governor arrived, I do feel strongly that there should be democratising of The Convent, if I may say so . . .

MR SPEAKER

Yes, but that will be on the general debate I am sure. You are talking about the principles involved and not about the particular items in this Head.

HON M XIBERRAS

I am talking about one of the allowances. May I continue, Sir?

MR SPEAKER

It depends on what you are going to say.

HON M XIBERRAS

Perhaps you will rule me out of order if I am. I think, Mr Speaker, that it is not a good thing that members of this House, for instance, or members of the general public should feel cut off from this particular venue. In Gibraltar we do not have, in fact, a Chief Minister's residence. We do not have a place where the Chief Minister of Gibraltar, other than the City Hall which is a bare room after all; can be attracted to and share in one side in the process of Government and I feel that, as I say, it is not a healthy state of affairs when Honourable Members of this side of the House have still not had access to the only focal point of Government which is known at present. There are Honourable Members on this side of the House who have not yet had the pleasure of a visit to the particular venue which is covered by the expenditure under this Head. I feel that I should say this at this particular point particularly in view of my remarks when the present Governor took office in this House. I think that, perhaps, something might be done in the direction of providing some sort of focal point for the Chief Minister if this can be allowed by the finances of Gibraltar, but we should, I think, participate all of us and not only

some of us in this aspect of the governmental life of Gibraltar.

HEAD VII - PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS AND OTHER CHARGES was passed.

HEAD VIII - JUDICIAL (1) COURT OF APPEAL

HON M XIBERRAS

Perhaps someone will enlighten me on this. The cost of appeals to the Court of Appeal is borne by whom? Are the costs heavy or not?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

In civil matters the costs are of course carried by the party which loses the appeal. In criminal matters it is unusual in the extreme for any party to be ordered to pay the costs. Under the law we pay to the Judges of Appeal a small basic annual salary - I think it is £300 each - and then, of course, if they come out to Gibraltar they are paid for their time out here.

HON M XIBERRAS

Does the Honourable and Learned the Attorney General have any idea of what the costs involved are then? I am just thinking whether this Court of Appeal is accessible to people.

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

In Criminal Cases legal aid is available for a convicted person. In civil cases again legal ~~aid~~ *assistance* is available.

HON CHIEF MINISTER

I would like to refer to something that the Honourable and Learned Attorney has said which may be misunderstood by lay people with respect on this matter. When it says in the civil case that the costs are borne by the unsuccessful party it means the cost of bringing the appeal but not the cost of the judges. That is justice which must be provided and does not bear any burden on the facts. The Constitution of Gibraltar provides a Chief Justice, a Court of Appeal, a Magistrate, a Judge

of First Instance and that is not paid by the litigant. The litigant does not contribute to that, the litigant only pays the fees of Court provided according to the actual matter which arises in the court. That should be made clear.

HON M XIBERRAS

I thank the Chief Minister for that lecture. Perhaps he will bear with me when I lecture him on other subjects. I am most grateful and I said that in a joking vein, of course. I was trying to find the Chief Minister's sense of humour. Now, I wonder whether the Honourable and Learned Attorney General is, in fact, satisfied with this procedure which has been in existence now for about four years.

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

Perhaps I am being unduly stupid. Satisfied with what procedure?

HON M XIBERRAS

With the procedure of the three judges and so forth. With the Court of Appeal as it is now.

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

Yes, I am entirely satisfied.

HON W M ISOLA

We have in the actual expenditure 1973/74 for the Court of Appeal, £1000 and we are estimating for £3600. Does that mean that there were a couple of Court of Appeal cases during 1974/75?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

No, the Court of Appeal, in fact, has not been out here since January, 1973. The estimate for 1974/75 was on the assumption that the Court would be required to come out. It is quite impossible as obviously Members will appreciate for anybody to know that there is going to be an appeal either in a criminal or in a civil case. The revised estimate is wrong, it could have been 3 or 4 months ago. There is no indication at all whether,

perhaps, in a criminal case there is going to be an appeal and the judges were going to be called out here. We have to assume that the court is going to come out in each year and that is why we make this provision of £3600.

HON W M ISOLA

I am glad the Honourable and Learned Attorney General has cleared this matter because the revised estimates showed £3600 and, of course, in actual fact that should really be blank now except for the £1000 odd.

- (1) Court of Appeal was agreed to
- (2) Supreme Court (a) Personal Emoluments was agreed to.

(b) Other Charges

HON P J ISOLA

Sir, on Item 4 - Legal Aid and Assistance - The amount being paid out on legal aid shows, in my view, that the current eligibility for legal aid is put at a very high salary received and therefore the legal aid and assistance scheme which is meant to be a social scheme to enable people to go to court without means is not really working justly. We did bring this point up, I think, when there was an amendment made to the Legal Aid and Assistance Ordinance recently about the rates of pay. I think it is no secret that a High Court action costs about £400 or £500 per side and it seems to me that the amount of legal aid that is being paid out would indicate that the eligibility of legal aid is fairly narrow. If the House will remember, when we discussed this, the figure that was said - I have forgotten what it was at that time - was thought to be adequate and the Government feared that there would be a flood of applications for legal aid if the limit was reduced. Well, having regard to the comparatively small sum that is being paid out in legal aid and assistance, I think that Government ought to give us some sort of assurance that they will look into this matter again with the view of extending legal aid and assistance to litigants on a more generous basis than it has done up to now because it does seem to me and in my own personal experience - I do not know whether other practitioners have it - that there are a great number of people who cannot afford an action and do not qualify for legal aid. To me it is absolutely clear from practice and I would have thought that we were trying to go forward in the social field - as the

Minister for Labour is anxious to do - we go forward in the medical field and health field as well providing people with medical assistance and so forth. This is also a very essential part of the life of a community and I would invite the Government to consider the extension of the legal aid scheme so as to make the courts more readily available to people with less means. At the moment it is a luxury for some people, like staying at the ~~Ritz~~ Hotel. You can go to the Courts so long as you can pay for it, if you cannot pay for it, well, you cannot go. This, I think, is an unfrotunate aspect of life in Gibraltar and there must be a bigger balance.

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

As I am sure the Honourable and Learned Member must be aware we did last year pass legislation bringing more people into the field to be eligible for legal ~~aid~~. It is a matter which we have under consideration all the time and which is viewed with sympathy. Anybody with an income below £X is entitled to legal aid.

assistance

HON M XIBERRAS

Is it £1000?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

It is considerably less than that. It was increased last year by I think 10% or 20% but this is kept under consideration all the time.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, is there not a danger here that we might be generous rather too late and we find that people are trying to catch up with the reality of the situation. The provision of £650 for this year is not a very large amount and we might find that the provisions that were made in the Bill that the Honourable the Attorney General referred to are not enough even for now. What was the ceiling, does the Attorney General remember?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

There is what you might call a double ceiling. There is a ceiling of income and a ceiling of capital. I think it is something like an income of £700 and of

capital £350 but I have had no indication that people have been precluded from approaching the Court because of their financial inability to do so. I am quite prepared to receive evidence of this and if that is so then I will, of course, invite Government to consider whether we should raise the ceiling.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, my Honourable and Learned Friend on my left, Mr. Isola, has already given some evidence of this in the sense that it is his experience that people are precluded and he has invited other members of the legal profession here to do the same, but I would be grateful to the Attorney General if he kept this matter under very close review because people rather go into debt sometimes than apply for legal aid and it is condusive in the case of convictions to good rehabilitation if the chap has to pay back the lawyers' fees on top of the fine.

(b) OTHER CHARGES was agreed to.

(3) Magistrate's and Coroner's Courts
(a) Personal Emoluments

HON M XIBERRAS

I would like to enquire, Mr Speaker, about the volume of work in the Magistrates' Court. We know that the Magistrate had too many cases to deal with at one particular time and there were late sittings and so forth and, in fact, the parking ticket system was introduced in order to facilitate work and relieve the Magistrates' Court of some of the work. I wonder whether someone in the Government bench will give an indication as to whether there has been a slackening off now or not?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

I really must disabuse the Leader of the Opposition. This was a view held by Members of the Opposition when parking tickets were introduced that it was to relieve business in the Magistrates' Court. That is not so. The question of payment of a fixed penalty existed before we amended the Traffic Ordinance. The only difference of the parking tickets was that a ticket could be fixed on the windscreen of a vehicle instead of having to be sent through the post. That had no effect, as far as I am aware, on the business in the

Magistrates' Court and, in fact, I do not think that the introduction of the parking ticket has reduced the business there but it has reduced the call on the time of the police as far as I am aware.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, the Attorney General might have to disabuse more than the Leader of the Opposition - there might be people in his own side of the House who share this view - but in any case I gather that there is still, in fact, a great volume of work in the Magistrates' Court.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, no doubt the Honourable and Learned the Attorney General will have particulars on the parking ticket situation, how many parking tickets have been stuck on etc, when we consider the police estimates, but as far as it affects this particular vote I would have thought that if a lot of parking tickets were being issued and people were paying on the tickets, that the volume of work in the Magistrates' Court would, in fact, be reduced. If, in fact, no parking tickets are issued, or hardly any, due to administrative directions or call it what you will, then, of course, obviously the volume of work in the Magistrates' Court would be the same. Can the Honourable and Learned the Attorney General give an indication whether the volume of work has decreased as a result of the parking tickets system and people paying direct the fines without having to be summoned to the Court?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

People were paying fines without being summoned before the parking ticket system was introduced. They received through the post the chance of paying the fixed penalty. Now, instead of receiving it through the post they receive it on the vehicle. I cannot tell the Honourable and Learned Member whether more advantage is being taken of the fixed penalty system since parking tickets were introduced. I can, perhaps, find that out.

HON P J ISOLA

Well, perhaps, Mr Speaker, he will be able to find that out before we deal with the Police which is quite a few Heads ahead of this one. Do I understand that the Honourable and Learned the Attorney General cannot, in

fact, tell us as a matter of fact whether the volume of work in the Magistrates' Court has increased or decreased during the year under review, for whatever reason?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

No, I cannot give an answer as to the number of cases.

HON CHIEF MINISTER

I would like to say a word on this one. Mention has been made about long hours and late sittings which of course occasionally a lot of people experience but they are not at all about traffic. Normally what happens is that there is a volume of work of petty theft or serious charges, wounding, assault, all these sort of things which are the main source of work of the Magistrates' Court and the difficulty is that there is not a second courthouse where Justices could sit and there is no supporting staff for a second court to sit at the same time.

(a) PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS were agreed to.

(b) OTHER CHARGES were agreed to.

HEAD IX - LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY - (a) PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS.

HON A J CANEPA

Mr Speaker, I think under personal emoluments, Item 16, the most significant item for 1975/76 is the provision in respect of ~~the~~ ^{the} creation of 4 new posts of Houseparents. Previously, Sir, provision was made for 2 Houseparents for the Edmund Rice Home for Boys and such provision was made under Other Charges. In fact, under the block vote for Child Care, the two Houseparents were being paid a wage of £18 per week on an industrial basis, that was the basic wage for both house parents. What we are now doing, Sir, is that these posts are becoming, as it were, non-industrialised. They are being established and we are providing for four, two for the Edmund Rice Home for boys and 2 for the Girls Home which is to be known as the Bishop Healy Home for Girls and it is hoped that by making the post much more attractive than what they have been, persons of a high calibre will be recruited. In fact, I can announce interviews are being held this afternoon. The other point I would like to mention, Sir, is the upgrading of the post of Probation Officer and hence the increase that we are seeking of £192.

This is a very important post not only as far as the staff of the Department are concerned but I think as far as the welfare aspect of the work of our community are concerned. ~~and~~ In the past the position has not been entirely satisfactory and I hope that it will be so now that it has been upgraded. On the debit side, as it were, Sir - rather, I still think it is very much on the credit side because it does represent a saving - when the post of Probation Officer was created, this post had previously been a Senior Clerical post, when the post was created there was a vacancy for a Senior Clerical Officer. Well, the Department has not needed this vacancy, it has not been filled in the course of the last year and, therefore, we are dispensing with it and that is the reason why under Item 9 there is a decrease of just over a £1000 in respect of Senior Clerical Officers.

HON J BOSSANO

Could I just ask the Minister whether any of his officers are involved in the running of the accommodation of labour hostels?

HON A J CANEPA

There is a section in the Department in respect of accommodation of labour.

HON J BOSSANO

What I wanted to know, Mr Speaker, was whether in computing the cost of running the hostels account was taken of the amount of time that was taken up by officers who are included in personal emoluments.

HON A J CANEPA

No Sir, the vote for accommodation of labour under Other Charges does not include any proportion of the personal emoluments of the salaried staff who are involved in the administration of the hostel. It is under personal emoluments, separately. What is included under accommodation of labour is the wages of the industrial staff.

HON J BOSSANO

In assessing, Mr Speaker, whether the hostel is, in fact, breaking even, making a loss or a profit are there any internal accounts that the Department does where they take into consideration the

proportional costs of the department being responsible for the running of the hostel?

HON A J CANEPA

There are accounts, obviously, but they do not take into account salaried staff.

HON P J ISOLA

Could the Minister say under this Head which is the officer responsible for the section and at the same time could he also tell us which is the section also responsible for conciliation service of the Department?

HON A J CANEPA

Sir, accommodation of labour is administered by the Senior Labour Officer - though, of course, he has got other duties in addition to that - so we have the Senior Labour Officer, we have one Senior Clerical Officer and I think that we must have about two Clerical Officers. Well, obviously, the Director of Labour himself and the Deputy Director and the Senior Labour Officer, they have part duties and then full time one Senior Clerical Officer and two clerical assistants, that is the first question. Secondly, Sir, involved in the conciliation services are the Director of Labour, the Deputy Director of Labour, the Senior Labour Officer and possibly, Sir, with relatively minor disputes of a personal nature, the two Labour Inspectors.

HON M XIBERRAS

Sir, on the Family Care Unit would the Minister give an indication - and I would in passing like to thank him for explaining the vote to Honourable Members on this side and making a statement, however brief, and express the hope that other Ministers will follow the same pattern from now onwards. Could the Minister say whether the functions and visits of the Family Care Unit are actually being realised?

MR SPEAKER

I take it you are referring to the Family Care Officer because we are on Personal Emoluments now. There will be another vote I am sure on Other Charges.

HON M XIBERRAS

Well, Sir, I am speaking in fact of the training of officers and so forth.

HON A J CANEPA

There is no provision for the Family Care Unit as such under Other Charges.

HON M XIBERRAS

Sir, referring to the Thayer Report which envisaged a particular job for the Family Care Unit, is the Family Care Unit doing the job it is supposed to do or are the demands of more humdrum cases such that the original purpose is not being achieved?

HON A J CANEPA

I think that by and large the Family Care Unit is doing the job that was envisaged for it under the recommendations of the Thayer Report. The Unit was created as a result or in pursuance of one of the recommendations of the Thayer Report. Naturally, they are involved very much in humdrum cases and this is, I think, part and parcel of their job. As far as I am aware I am entirely satisfied with the work the Unit do and I am entirely satisfied about the direction that that work has taken. I have no reason to have any views to the contrary.

HON M XIBERRAS

I am not, Mr Speaker, to talk quite frankly, I think the Family Care Unit has a lot to do with humdrum cases - I do not want to mention any particular ones. For instance, could I ask the Minister whether the Family Care Unit really go out and make peace in particular families? Do they really get out and about?

HON A J CANEPA

Sir, they get out and about so much, to the extent that very often I try to get hold of the Family Care Officer and she is never in. Most of their work is in the field and when these posts were created, it was a specific point made in their job description that a great deal of their work would be what is called "field work".

It is not a case of people sitting in their offices drawing up reports.

HON M XIBERRAS

On the housing cases I know there is a particular job of work to do there and I know that the Department is under pressure from housing applicants that they should investigate their particular circumstances and so on and the problems are real and I can appreciate that the Family Care Unit should not become the place where people go for complaints in housing. On the other hand a number of housing cases, as the Honourable Member is aware, do entail Family problems and I would like to know whether the Family Care Unit is able to cope with this side of the work or does it find the burden a bit heavy?

HON A J CANEPA

Sir, undoubtedly, in Gibraltar, with our housing situations, very many welfare problems and very many problems where there are family squabbles and family disputes are related with the housing situation and they very often come to the notice of the Unit and the Unit uses its best offices and I think it tries to get the Housing Unit to cooperate and to help out the people involved in respect of their housing problem. I think it is done fairly successfully on the whole and this is where some of the older pre-war accommodation - the room and a kitchen accommodation - is valuable in helping to meet the immediate problem of the young family, in particular, that may find themselves homeless.

HON M XIBERRAS

How is training for the Family Care Unit proceeding?

HON A J CANEPA

Well, Sir, the conditions of service with regard to the Trainee Welfare Assistants that were appointed last year lay down that they would be expected to undertake training courses. One was sent last September, unfortunately, he returned last Christmas and has not returned back to the United Kingdom to pursue her studies. It is intended to send the second Trainee Welfare Assistant in the course of the next financial year. The Family Care Officer herself ought to have been to the UK to train but it has not been possible to send her yet because of

the fact that the Unit consists of 4 individuals and we were hoping to get the Welfare Assistants trained before and then, perhaps, the Family Care Officer could go on a short course.

HON M XIBERRAS

So in another, shall we say, two years the Family Care Unit which was established about three years ago should be fully operational with qualified people.

HON A J CANEPA

The Unit was fully established about this time last year, Sir, and I am keeping my fingers crossed that we do not have a repetition of what I have just referred to and that the Unit will be fully trained in two year's time.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Chairman, is the Child Care and Probation Committee functioning?

HON A J CANEPA

Oh, yes, Sir, very much so. A new committee was set up in May last year and I think they have held three or four full meetings in addition to what could be called another meeting which was held 2 or 3 weeks ago in connection with the visit to Gibraltar of Miss Pamela Thayer.

HON M XIBERRAS

Could the Minister briefly indicate what the composition is?

HON A J CANEPA

I think the Committee is made up of seven members, a small committee because the old one had become somewhat unwieldy. The Chairman is the Deputy Director of Labour and appointed to it are the Family Care Officer,

a representative of the Commissioner of Police, the Warden of the Edmund Rice Home for Boys, an appointee of the Bishop, Father Buckley, Miss Olga Giraladi, a Justice of the Peace and Mr J Levy, a lawyer.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Chairman, I wonder whether the Minister would now say what, roughly, is the work of this Committee? Does it deal with broad social issues of the day and, if so, does it do so in co-ordination with other established Government Committees?

HON A J CANEPA

I think, Sir, broadly ^{their} ~~these~~ terms of reference were to advise Government on the problems of juvenile delinquency and the treatment and rehabilitation for young persons having particular regard to the recommendations of the Thayer report. Those were their terms of reference.

HON M XIBERRAS

What I am talking about are some of the social problems such as drugs, which are facing Gibraltar now? I know that another lawyer - not a very young one, this one - heads another Government Committee to do with drugs but, perhaps, there is a connection between the appointment of of both lawyers. However, I wonder whether this Committee does deal with the broad problems such as drugs, or whether it deals with individual cases. I would favour a Committee dealing with the broader problems.

HON A J CANEPA

Sir, I am trying to think whether I have got the minutes of the last 3 or 4 meetings where I do not think the problem of drugs has been discussed in ~~broad~~ ^{their} terms, as yet. Initially they were very much concerned with the improvements which, at the earlier stage of this meeting, were implemented to the legislation regarding Attendance Centres. I know that the first two meetings were concerned with that, and they have also been very much concerned with the provisions that we have been making for the Edmund Rice Home for Girls. I would imagine that ~~in~~ in future bearing in mind their wide terms of reference, I would imagine that they could approach the problem of drug addiction in Gibraltar.

in a very wide sense. I would not like to see this Committee getting involved in the kind of thing that ^{attention that} the old Child Care Committee ^{used to get} ~~used to get~~ which was very much involved in one or two individual cases. I would hope that their outlook would be a broad one and it has been so far on the matters they have dealt with.

HON M XIBERRAS

This is precisely what I am driving at. I did not like at all the idea of the old Committee going over, perhaps, the same cases time and time again. I wonder whether the Minister shares my view that there is no committee in Gibraltar which deals with the broad problems such as drugs, child care with many mothers going out to work, provision of nurseries, and the effects on family life of this sort of general thing. Would the Minister consider looking into or, perhaps, consulting with Miss Thayer about having a committee of a sort that would discuss the broad social problems with which all societies are faced and Gibraltar in particular. I think that there is a need for this and I believe that the Government when it came into office - it was part of its election approach - had this question of sanity and of social standards very much in mind and I wonder whether the Minister would now be, after three years, prepared to do something positive about it.

HON A J CANEPA

I think, Sir, that we already have very much the type of committee that the Leader of the Opposition is referring to in the Youth Welfare Council. I certainly do not think that we are lacking in **Committees** in Gibraltar and there is no problem about setting up another one, perhaps, some sort of an overall committee that **will** co-ordinate or provide certain liaison or link between all the committees like the Child Care Committee but the Youth Welfare Council itself has two sub-committees, one is involved with employment the other one is involved with the welfare of young people. If these matters which the Leader of the Opposition is referring to are not within the province of this Youth Welfare Council and Committee, then I honestly do not know what should be.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, the big problem is not creating another

Committee it is that the Committees are fragmented and no committee deals with the broad issues affecting Gibraltar. I have no intimation that the Youth Welfare Council deals with family problems as such. The Drug Committee seems to me to be pretty ineffective and the Child Care Committee again does not, even now, deal with the broader issues. I think there is a lack of advice, to my mind, on the broader issues, and it was the hope, Sir, when the census was taken, that some body would be created that would take into account the broad social problems and I would say to the Minister that it is the problem of his Department, primarily, and perhaps the Honourable Mr Montegriffo's Department of Medical Services. I think there is a very great need for a Committee of this kind and I wonder whether the Minister would take this to heart.

HON A J CANEPA

I take it to heart. The only thing that surprises me is that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition did not put this point to Miss Thayer. Could I say this, Sir. I think that the Leader of the Opposition has got some definite ideas about this and I would invite him to put these ideas to me and if something is created he can take part of the credit for it, I do not mind. I certainly do not mind other people taking credit for good work. If he has got some concrete ideas let him write to me, let him put them in writing, and I will certainly look into the matter and take it up.

HON M XIBERRAS

The Minister will probably find them in the Department already.

(a) PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS were agreed to.

(b) OTHER CHARGES.

HON A J CANEPA

Sir, let me say that in giving a brief statement of what I consider to be the salient points in the estimates of expenditure of my Department, I am not enjoining upon my fellow Ministers, one way or the

other, that they should follow the precedent which I am setting or that they should follow my example. This has been the way that I have approached the estimates of my Department in the last two years. Whether it is the right way this is the way I like to do it and other people are free to do it whichever way they please. Sir, under Item 2 - Supplementary Benefits - I should like to point out that the decrease as between the revised and the approved figure for 1974/75 is due to the transfer of about 200 cases non-householders to the item under the Elderly Persons Pension. There is provision, Sir, in the estimates for 1975/76 for the usual general revision of rates later in the year, and I think I shall probably do this, Sir, in conjunction with the revision of social insurance benefits earmarked for 1976. I think, therefore, in connection with social insurance, in passing, I could announce, Sir, that we have now reached the stage when yearly annual revisions of old age pensions and supplementary benefits will be possible. We have now got out of the way the more difficult aspects of the exercises on social insurance that we have had in 1973 and 1975 and from now on I think, Sir, it should be relatively plain sailing - relatively I say - so it should be possible to have annual revisions and it is, therefore, my intention to have another revision of Social Insurance Benefits, Supplementary Benefits, and so on in January, 1976, and the Department is already working on the legislation for this revision. With regard to retirement pensions - Item 4 - the decrease in this item which was formerly the non-Contributory Social Insurance Benefit, is due to the discontinuation of supplementation of Social Insurance Benefits, and the direct provision for retirement pensions for this category of about 100 retirement pensioners that we are making is, in fact, double last year's for pensions were increased by 100% recently last January. Under Child Care, Sir - that is Item 12 - last year we made provision for the Edmund Rice Home of £5,500, £1,000 of which, Sir, roughly, was in respect of wages. This year, Sir, for the running of the two Homes the provision that we are making is £12,300 under Other Charges and £3,700 under Personal Emoluments which is a total of £16,000 earmarked for the running of the Homes and this substantially increased provision includes the equipping of the new Home and also the provision of new beds and the renewal of other furniture for the Edmund Rice Homes, so there will be some improvements there as well. Now, Sir, I hope that ~~if~~ with respect to Item 15 - Holidays for the Elderly - we will not have a repetition on the events of yesterday evening. The experience, Sir, that we gained last year with regard to the holidays for the Elderly, seems to indicate that the demand for these has fallen off very considerably. We placed three advertisements in the press, Sir, and old

people were also informed at the payment counter and were ^{advised} ~~invited~~ that they could apply for these holidays. And the response; Sir, was not what it has been in the past. The House may recall that in 1973 I made some provision for the expansion of the scheme. Now, Sir, it is not intended to have any expansion but I can assure the House that we are not making any substantial cuts here because this is not the item where Government would try to make savings. We are also having, Sir, some difficulty in getting accompanying staff for these parties that we send on holidays. Mainly, Sir, it is the staff of the Family Care Unit in addition to some help from the Medical Department nursing staff that accompany these parties, and with the Family Care Unit having one of its members on training in the United Kingdom our numbers, for practical purposes, are down by one and, therefore, we would have problems in sending two parties on holiday. What we are hoping to do this year, Sir, is to have a single larger party, take as many people as can conveniently be catered for by the staff available and the figure that we have in mind is a party of about 12. So let me assure the House that there is no intention to retrench on this and save a few hundred pounds, my approach is flexible. I am prepared to look at the thing again next year in the light of the experience which we may gain this coming year and, in fact, I can also give the House an assurance that if the demand proves to be greater than what it was last year, and if staff is available and more people can be sent on holiday, I shall be coming, if supplementary provision is required, ~~I shall be coming~~ to the House for that. Supplementary provision may not be required in any case, Sir, because it might be possible to have a saving of a few hundred pounds under some other item in our vote but it is not my idea to retrench at all, as I say, what savings is this going to produce?

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister on Item 3 - Expenses of Sponsored Patients sent for Treatment to UK. What is the position at the moment? Has it been found, for example, that there is an unsatisfied demand? Is there a queue of people waiting to be sent or is there any limit on the number who get sent, or is it just a question of however many people need to be sent are paid for?

HON A J CANEPA

Under the reciprocal Health Agreement we can send up to 40 Sponsored Patients and on the basis of the figures ever since I think the scheme was introduced, I do not think the numbers have ever exceeded 40. On average I think they send between 30 and 35. It may have been slightly higher this year, my colleague tells me 42 have been

sent this year. So there is no limitation in that respect.

HON J BOSSANO

The sums in this particular head, Mr Speaker, are they in fact for the payment of the expenses of accompanying relatives or for accommodation in UK and the air passages and that sort of thing?

HON A J CANEPA

They pay in all cases, for the air passage, for the patient and for the accompanying relative. In all cases for the maintenance of the patient and for maintenance of the accompanying relative, if required.

HON M XIBERRAS

On this item, Mr Chairman, would the Minister for Medical Services comment or, perhaps, the Minister for Labour and Social Security talk about the relationship between this vote and any other patients that are sent to the United Kingdom?

HON A J CANEPA

My colleague informs me that he is dealing with that under his own head of expenditure.

HON P J ISOLA

On this item, do I understand the position that under the Reciprocal Agreement up to 40 patients may be sent under which I presume the treatment is free. Above 40 we would have to pay. Am I right in assuming that if in any one year we unfortunately go above the number of 40 the Government does send, i.e., it does not hold them back.

HON A J CANEPA

Yes, as happened this year. If 42 have already been to the UK that

means we have sent two more than the quota provided for and we have paid all expenses for those two. If next year there ~~are~~ 50 or 60, likewise. I think, Sir, that in spirit all administrations have regarded this scheme and the provision that has been made as very much of a token nature.

HON P J ISOLA

We are glad to learn, obviously, that relatives can accompany the sponsored patients and so forth and the return air fare is paid. Has the Minister made any progress - I think you were going to look at it when we last raised it - has he made any progress of paying the expenses of those patients who unfortunately do not come back alive? This does seem to cause hardship, sponsored patients that unfortunately die in the United Kingdom, bringing them back for burial in Gibraltar. Can the Minister give us some information on that?

HON A J CANEPA

Sir, this point has been made by the Honourable Member more than once in the House, twice, I think, and on both occasions my reply has been that we will look at the matter sympathetically but I am reluctant to adopt a hard and fast rule. I prefer to have representations made and to examine each case on its own merit. I do not doubt, Sir, that it does cause a great deal of anguish at the time and there could be cases of hardship. I can also appreciate the fact that Gibraltarian families feel compelled, and that is natural, to have the bodies of these unfortunate people brought back to Gibraltar. But I am very reluctant to adopt a hard and fast rule because practically anyone in Gibraltar regardless of income can avail themselves of the sponsored patient scheme. No distinction is made as far as the patient is concerned with regard to their means, whether they are wealthy people or whether they are hard up. That is why I am reluctant to make a hard and fast rule and I prefer the approach to be one of looking at each case as it comes up on its merits.

HON P J ISOLA

I appreciate what the Minister says and I think this would be alright if, perhaps, he could assure me that in the case where a sponsored patient does die in the United Kingdom, the responsible officer, whichever department it might be, the Medical or the Labour Department, does approach the relatives informing them that there is this possibility if their means justify it. The reason

I say this is that what is generally about is that the Government does not pay for the return of the body. The first thing a relative is told is that the Government does not pay and though I agree with the Minister that there is no reason why in the case of people who can afford to pay for the return of the bodies the Government should pay, nevertheless, I think there is a need to enlighten people who suffer a loss especially at the time of the loss for somebody from the relevant department to tell them that the Government does consider sympathetically arranging for the return of the body to Gibraltar. I think that would be helpful in the administration of his well intentioned sentiments.

HON A J CANEPA

In fact in one recent case I am familiar with, when the patient died the relatives were at a complete and utter loss as to what to do. They did not know what arrangements to make and immediately they got in touch with the Family Care Unit in the department and they were helped in respect of the arrangements. The department immediately got into contact with the funeral directors and so on and all the arrangements were made. The payment and assistance by Government is a separate matter. As I said this is something which would come afterwards. The people concerned regardless of their means may at the particular moment not know how to go about repatriating the body and that is one aspect where I know already we have helped. The other case of assistance would have to be looked at and examined carefully.

HON P J ISOLA

When a body is to be repatriated I would imagine the question of payment arises at a very early stage. Does the department arrange for the body to come back and then the question of payment arises?

HON A J CANEPA

I think that this is my experience, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA

I see, I am glad the Family Care Unit deals with it. Could, perhaps, the Minister ensure that once a patient dies the Family Care Unit approaches relatives, as part of the service to see whether they need any help in the matter. I think this would be helpful.

HON A J CANEPA

The only thing, Sir, is that obviously it should not be forgotten that there is a relative there in UK on the spot and he is the one obviously that gets into contact immediately with his relatives in Gibraltar and that is how the news may well first come to the Family Care Unit, i.e., through the relatives in Gibraltar.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

I can see the point the Minister is trying to make but all these things as you all know do happen suddenly and I think the relatives, in making up their minds, must already have an indication as to whether, in fact, the arrangements can be carried out knowing that payment is not going to be demanded there on the spot. Is the Government acting as a sort of guarantor in the first instance and then payment is made later on? This is very important.

HON A J CANEPA

I think this is a question of attitudes, really. The Government accepts that it is natural that people should want to bring the body over. I think from there, once the attitude is right, I think the problem can be dealt with. I think some progress has been made in the sense that more than once in the House I have said that we will look at the problem and I am prepared to consider it. I said I would take the matter to my colleagues in Council of Ministers and the Treasury would foot the bill. If I am satisfied and if I can satisfy my political colleagues, the Treasury will provide the money.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Since, happily, the instances when this is required I hope are few and far between, I think the amount involved is really small considering the amount of hardship that this can cause to one or two families and I wonder whether, in fact, the Minister could be a bit more definite about it and as I said undertake to ensure that the body would be brought to Gibraltar and then finalising the question of payment here. I think individuals who have got the means obviously will not be going round begging for this sort of thing. I think particularly the Gibraltarians have very high sentiments about this and I do not believe they would go round begging for this unless it was absolutely essential, literally that they did not have the money to pay. So I do not think that the Government

should be all that afraid of losses in this instance, first of all because the amount must be very, very small indeed in any year and, secondly, I think because in most cases those who have the means would pay in any case.

HON CHIEF MINISTER

I do not like to talk about individual cases as has been mentioned occasionally by Members opposite, but I do know of a reasonably recent one in which the opposite was the case. A very humble family whose relative died outside Gibraltar but who had made provision and saved all their lives to make sure that the funeral expenses were paid by the family and not by anybody, charity or otherwise. And, therefore, it is not a question of going and asking immediately. It is a matter of relationship between the Department and the family. The family may take exception if they were told that the Government will bring the body back at their expense, but if the Minister is agreeable, as he says, to make the Family Care Unit intervene when a case of this nature happens, the machinery is there and he will have the support of his colleagues to pay.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

I am very pleased to see the Chief Minister obviously arguing in favour that there will be no difficulty in collecting the money. Now if that difficulty is obviously over because by and large the people of Gibraltar normally prefer to pay themselves for that sort of last act for the relatives, there is really no great danger at all of any great losses. I think the amount involved must be very small indeed in any year. Therefore could the Minister not be a bit more definite about this. In the sort of remote way that this is going to be done at the moment the family involved will get the impression that they will not have the means to do it so easily. I would like to see a more positive approach to this whereby the individual knows what the position is fairly early in the situation. In some instances, elderly people who accompany the patient may feel very lonely in England and very isolated and, as I think the Minister pointed out, not really knowing what to do, and this does cause considerable anguish. I would like to see the Minister being a bit more positive and having some scheme whereby this is well known by the individual, perhaps, even before it happens.

HON A J CANEPA

Let me assure the Honourable Member that help will be forthcoming wherever that help is required.

MR SPEAKER

Well, I think we are more or less ad idem and we have discussed the matter fully. Any other items under Other Charges?

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, on Item 14 - Accommodation of Labour - the explanation given is increased costs. Could we have some indication of whether this is simply the result of the increased wages, or whether there is additional staff being taken?

HON A J CANEPA

Increased wages, increased charges of electricity, water and food in the restaurant. I would say those must be four of the main reasons.

HON J BOSSANO

In the Supplementary Estimates No.5, Mr Speaker, the original sum required on top of the approved estimate was £15,000 which explains the revised figure in the final column of £100,000. That figure has now been reduced to £8,410 so one would expect the revised estimates to be something like £93,000 instead of £100,000. Can the Minister of Labour say, since presumably he is expecting to need the other £7,000, can he give an indication of what the other £7,000 is going to be needed for?

HON A J CANEPA

In fact, Sir, I know that the Director of Labour asked the Treasury for a warrant of £21,800 Supplementary provision to meet the sharp increase, apart from wages, to meet the increases in the cost of goods and services, especially electricity and water, of which the consumption in the hostels is quite considerable. The Director asked in December for a special warrant of £21,800 over and above the provision which we had which the House had voted last year. Therefore I would say, Sir, the likelihood is that probably in another schedule of Supplementary Estimates, there will have to be provision for these items.

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, on the figure for 1975/76, £132,000, the estimated revenue is £131,000 which means that the Department does not expect to make a profit on the operation. Can the Minister say whether the estimated revenue is at a given level of occupancy or with the hostel half full?

HON A J CANEPA

It is probably based on about 140 or 150 at Devil's Tower and the others full. What has happened in practice in the last two or three years is that we have not been balancing our books under this item. Invariably we make a loss and in some cases it has been a very substantial one. I can remember the first year, for instance, a loss of £39,000 because of improved amenities and so on at the Hostels.

HON J BOSSANO

I would like to ask, Mr Speaker, a general point as regards the payment of things like telephone service, electricity charges and water charges, for example in this department or in another department. Whether it is a notional amount that is put in the Department's account or whether the department actually pay for what they actually consume?

HON A J CANEPA

I think we pay, Sir, for what we actually consume.

HON M XIBERRAS

On accommodation of labour, the occupancy of the Devil's Tower Hostel was given as 140 to 150. Now, what is the prospect for this Hostel. Would the Minister indicate when he expects to have the hostel full or nearly full?

HON A J CANEPA

If and when, I hope, we get our full complement of

labour for the Development Programme then we would be drawing on that hostel to accommodate that labour. We have always had in mind keeping something up our sleeve for the requirement of the Government itself. I think the numbers are likely, on a temporary basis, to go beyond 150. Some of the Filipino labour is being accommodated on a temporary basis and it could well go above 200 for 5 or 6 weeks. I always have also, Sir, some provision of 40 or 50 for skilled and essential labour for the needs of pretty well anybody in Gibraltar in the private sector. One has always had in mind about 100 in connection with our Development Programme.

HON M XIBERRAS .

What is the charge at the Hostel, £3?

HON A J CANEPA

The charge is £4 a week for bed only, and £1.30 I think a day additional extra for food as well at the restaurant which is not running very economically, let me say.

HON M XIBERRAS

The reason why we make a loss is that it is not fully occupied. Mr Speaker, in respect of White Store Hostel and Casemates, do we make a profit there?

HON A J CANEPA

I think, Sir, they do rather better, but the charges there are extremely low. £1.50 a week.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, the improvements carried out a little while back at Casemates, does this come out of this particular vote or does it come out of the Public Works Vote?

HON A J CANEPA

It came out of this vote Sir, and I refer to the figure of £39,000 two years ago. Last year, I think, we spent another £7,000 or £8,000, something of that order, in further improvements and out of this vote, certainly.

HON M XIBERRAS

Would the Minister say that the accommodation in Casemates now with the installation of showers and so forth is quite adequate, perhaps not superlative, but quite adequate, or not?

HON A J CANEPA

I think it is adequate, Sir, but the numbers are very high, and this raises problems.

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, are there any plans to increase the availability of accommodation during the coming financial year? I am sure the Minister agrees that there is tremendous pressure on the available accommodation, there is a long waiting queue to get into the hostels.

HON A J CANEPA

I think under the Aid Assistance there is a sum, not fully committed, but we have been pressing the United Kingdom Government for funds to provide further accommodation for our imported labour and we have got one or two sites in mind.

HON M XIBERRAS

Sir, since the imported labour force is quite substantial does the Minister have any idea of the numbers in Government accommodation as opposed to numbers in private accommodation?

HON A J CANEPA

Sir, I do not have the figures readily available here but we have got 900 at Casemates, about 150 at White Store, about another 100, I think, at North Pavilion and, say, 150 at Devil's Tower out of the total alien labour force. So I would say slightly under a half.

HON M XIBERRAS

About 1600.

HON A J CANEPA

Yes, about that.

HON M XIBERRAS

What, therefore, in view of the fact that 1600 are not living in hostel accommodation, does the Government have in mind offering more Government accommodation in order to relieve private accommodation?

HON A J CANEPA

Sir, I have said that it is our intention to try and provide more accommodation and some of it would be earmarked for Government's own requirements. Let me say that Government itself as an employer does not take up as many of those beds as, perhaps, we would be entitled to, but I am very conscious of the need to relieve the private sector of its problems. The situation there is not entirely satisfactory and the more Government can do itself the better the situation for these people.

(b) OTHER CHARGES was agreed to.

HEAD IX - LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY was agreed to.

HEAD X - PUBLIC WORKS

(a) Personal Emoluments - Administration

HON LT COL J L HOARE

May I first of all bring to notice, Mr Speaker, some of the major alterations in the structure of the Public Works Department. The increases in staff, overall, at the moment is 10. Of these, 5 are technicians which appear at item 36, 42 and 47 on page 29 who were previously trainee technicians so that merely means that they have gone from one place to another. The other increase is at page 30 - Item No. 59 - this is a new TGIII at the Waterworks. This man is to under-study and replace the foreman - the TGII - there who is due to go towards the latter end of next year. The running of the Waterworks is a very complex duty and we have thought it prudent to have a younger man for whom we have advertised to take this job of under-study and assistant. The present assistant is considered to be too old to take over because he is due to go within a year of the other man. Now, on page 30 also - Items 60, 65 - there are seven new bodies but two of them have come from other Departments, in respect of the Housing Survey Unit which appears here for the first time. In fact, since these estimates went to print, the number of Housing Surveyors in this Housing Survey Unit has come up to 3. We have now managed to get down and they are working on this survey. The other item that I would like to bring to notice is the reduction of one in the Housing Unit. The Housing Unit is being re-organised, I think it is called a restructuring of the staff. I am not completely au fait with the detailed work on it, but the net result is that there is a reduction of one, I think, principally at the expense of Rent Collectors which have dropped from 10 to 6 and for whom special provision is made at Item 77 in a Productivity Bonus, in other words 6 are doing the original work of 10. I think the other items are merely staff changes, replacements, increments and so forth. I would also draw attention on page 31, of the recruitment of additional staff for the Development Programme, 15 people for whom we are allowing a block figure of £20,000 from our own funds but a great deal of this will come from the Overseas Development Aid Fund and we are getting a little difficulty in recruiting this staff from the UK.

Item here

I must say

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

May I ask the Minister if there is any particular officer in the administration who is concentrating on the question of productivity?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Not an individual officer. All the heads of the various departments have got this continually in mind and where appropriate we do go in for payment by results. For example the latest one is the distiller, whereby offering a productivity bonus the people there instead of meeting a deadline of the 25th of March, they completed the job a week earlier and enabled us to have an extra weeks distilling. Another thing that we go in for a great deal is piecework. We are trying to do this as much as possible. But there are very few jobs on the Public Works side where you can do this because very often when you start a job you do not know what is underneath, and people cannot commit themselves. Painting is one kind of work that we have in mind, but people will not do this because they do not know when they come to tackle a wall how much has to be scraped, re-mortared, replastered and all this sort of thing. On carpentry work very often people will not give you a price because they do not know what will arise until the thing is broken down. But this idea of paying by results is one which we encourage.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

I am very glad to hear that, obviously, the Minister has got this in mind but what I was trying to get at is that there are simple ways of increasing productivity, enabling the individual to get more money and at the same time saving public money, all of which I think we are all interested in. But although there are others which are much more complex and complicated ones. I know that this is being done in other place not necessarily in Gibraltar. This is why I said whether, in fact, there was one particular officer who would be trying to work out schemes for introducing new kinds of productivity deals within the Department. If there is I would like to know about that.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

No, we have not got one officer because the duties are so diverse. You cannot expect one individual to go about productivity in the water section, the construction section or the roads because they are too diverse, but each head of department is charged with this and superimposed over all this, one has the Productivity and Training Unit who are being brought in constantly. At the moment they are looking at the Workshops and the garages. We make full use of them and we find them very useful. Some of their ideas are pretty woolly-headed, very good in theory but not necessarily in practice, but we use the Productivity Unit, we take note of what they say and then we make up our own minds.

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, I wonder whether the Minister is aware that the DOE is setting up a Planning Committee with representatives of the Union, in fact a joint management/Union Committee, to look up the workload of the DOE which in many respects is very similar to the nature of the work of the Public Works Department, and would he consider, perhaps after the experiment in the DOE has been given a chance to see whether it will work or not, will consider introducing something along the same lines in his own Department, should it prove a positive step in the direction of increasing productivity with a view to being able to do more work with the same number of people?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Of course I give that assurance but I would much rather that other people carry out the experiment and we learn from their mistakes.

HON M XIBERRAS

Sir, still on the question of productivity which will help management and also help the employees in getting higher wages, does the Minister have any idea at all of the savings that he carries out in his Department? These used to be quantified to a degree by the Productivity and Training Unit at one particular time as part of the monitoring of the productivity deals. Now,

does the Minister have any indication of the savings carried out by this method?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I certainly have not got these available. We are inclined more or less to deal with each item as it arises, work it out then, come to some equitable arrangement with the Union as to the sharing, and then leave it at that because, invariably, it means coming for more money. I will look into this and, certainly, I will let the Honourable Leader of the Opposition know.

HON M XI BERRAS

I am grateful for that but I am a bit worried about this because this, as Honourable Members are aware, is a very big department, it spends an awful lot of money, and the Productivity and Training Unit has been very keen to look at this form some time back. I suppose it is the butt of criticism of many in the sense that it is the largest spending department of the Government, and from what the Minister has said I do not see any real advance on the position reached some time ago when the Productivity and Training Unit was created. Job Price Contracts and other schemes were in existence then and, if I may add, a certain reluctance by the people in charge at TG level to implement schemes of this kind. What the Minister has said, does not, I must say quite frankly, lead me to suppose that much advance has taken place in that. When we come under plant, machinery, and so on we will be talking about this more but I think it will be a theme of the Opposition in this big spending department, particularly in view of what the Financial Secretary has said from year to year, that we should make the most of our capacity and the rewards should correspondingly be increased for the workers. Still on the broader sense of productivity, the administration itself. Does the Minister, perhaps I might ask him a leading question, does the Minister, consider that

his structure of the Department, particularly amongst the upper echelons, is now more or less adequate to the job, or does he think that he has too much on one side or the other side? I ask this question because the Productivity and Training Unit carried out a series of consultation with Mr Martin when he was here and I was wondering whether any savings had been achieved or were envisaged? I am talking about the higher echelons now.

HON LT COL J L HQARE

Mr Speaker, this is most difficult because, you see, talking about this relationship of productivity presupposes . . .

MR SPEAKER

You have been asked whether you are satisfied that the structure of your administration is as you would like it now.

HON LT COL J L HQARE

Yes, this is so, and so much so that I am sure I commented on this last year, that these estimates now show what is on the ground and not what was in the mind. *which* Until last year we followed the form from time immemorial ~~and~~ bore no relationship to what was happening on the ground. This is why we have sub divided this *by year by* various heads so we can see exactly what they are. This is something with us the whole time . . .

MR SPEAKER

Yes, but we must not discuss Productivity in detail. I think the point has been made and we must leave it at that.

HON LT COL J L HQARE

But may I sum up by saying this, that we look at our productivity, our workload is constantly changing and this is why it is difficult to relate one with the other. and produce one body saved here, one body saved there. It is because our workload is increasing constantly and in this way we are achieving some form of productivity in that we are still doing more work with the same number of people.

HON M XI BERRAS

Mr Speaker, I know one can get very wooly talking about productivity and so forth and I do not want to go into any great detail but as regards the administration there

were some changes proposed some two or three years ago, charts of the layout and so forth, and these were aimed at economising whilst of course maintaining the balance in the Department, and planning especially to carry out these economies for the future. Now, is the Department expanding administratively, or is there a rationalisation of the department?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The answer to this is that there is a rationalisation of the Department. It is evident even here, where our depots and stores are now concentrated from about 7 into 3. This is reflected here, that we have got 3 time-keepers instead of six, and in stores you had a lot more storemen than storekeepers because your stores were dispersed. This rationalisation, this centralisation is taking place constantly.

HON M XIBERRAS

I am talking about the administration.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The administration is also the same. The main bodies shown under the administration spectrum shown here is the minimum. You cannot cut out any more bodies than this. This carries the administrative staff for a workload which is continuing.

HON M XIBERRAS

This is at the Engineer level, is it?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

No, no, in the administration it is purely administration if that is what you are getting at.

MR SPEAKER

You must be specific. We are now exclusively talking on the administration. We are coming down to all the other sub-heads and all the other sub-departments. The question that you have asked is, whether your administrative or executive structure is right for the purposes of running the department properly. Am I right?

HON M XIBERRAS

I am talking, generally, about the administrative structure of the department which will include the engineer level, the supervisory level, and so forth. For instance, one gets the impression that we are perhaps well staffed with engineers, but we are understaffed in the middle echelon. Is this a fact?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Where we are really understaffed is in the setting up of a Quantity Surveying Section. We have only got one Assistant Quantity Surveyor. A Quantity Surveyor would help us tremendously in getting more work out, particularly to contracts. A great deal of our difficulty now is that the backing up organisation, that section, is inadequate. This is one which has been requested over and over again and we have now got approval to implement this scheme and, in fact, we are looking for quantity surveyors. We will probably be able to use the ones provided for under technical assistance and on the housing survey in the interim but we are re-inforcing our Quantity Surveyors. The engineer side is adequately staffed. Where we are not fully served as well as we should be is at TGIII level, Leading Hand level, and things like that.

HON M XIBERRAS

This is what I am talking about.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

But these are human weaknesses very prevalent in Gibraltar. Unfortunately, this is the trouble, that

the supervision at that level could be improved but it is a matter of individuals.

HON M XIBERRAS

Would not the Honourable Member say, however, that at engineer level he might have one or, perhaps two, engineers too many? I am not suggesting, of course, that you kick the ones that you have in post out, but I am talking about the structure of the Department for the future.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

No, I do not accept that. In fact I have had to take one engineer off a special job to deal with the water catchments. There are two engineers employed there, and these things although you do not plan for them they do happen. I cannot give you a report at the moment but we have had to juggle about with our labour force to do what we thought was the highest priority first.

HON M XIBERRAS

Talking about the middle management, the Technical Grade scale, have the appreciation courses at Landport now ceased and were they any use?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I think we still run them but the response to them is not very enthusiastic at all.

HON M XIBERRAS

What plans are there, since the Minister is not satisfied with middle management, to train middle management in manpower management, and improve the situation?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

We are, in fact, bringing out six more Clerks of Works for this development programme. We brought out a Clerk of Works for Varyl Begg Estate and we have a Clerk of Works supervising the Stadium and jobs like that. We are trying to do it, but Clerks of Works just are not picked off with a hot pin. Lower down depends a great deal as well on the Clerk of Works. I mean leadership is ~~there~~ from the top downwards, but not from the bottom upwards. But you get to a certain level where it really is difficult because we have our own way of life.

supervision

MR SPEAKER

Right, we will take a vote on administration. There will be further opportunities to speak as there are at least 20 different sub heads on which questions will be, perhaps, more pertinent.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, I take it you will be indulgent with me in the sense that you will allow me to ask general questions about staff.

MR SPEAKER

Oh, yes, we are still on the same Head but I feel that we should progress on the administration and there will be ample opportunity to go into detail.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, I notice that the personal emoluments vote is £262,900 and that is all attributable to bodies in the department. If I may just ask a general question, I notice under the next vote of Other Charges

MR SPEAKER

Why not ask it then?

HON P J ISOLA

The reason is that I wonder, if the Minister can give me a composite figure of how much of the total vote of the Department that includes the £1,663,000 for 1975/76, how much of it is attributable directly to salaries or wages in the department? In other words what is the total salary and wages roll estimated for the Department for 1975/76?

HON LT.COL J L HOARE

I am sorry but this is quite impossible. Salaries is £262,900. Wages, generally, come under Head XI and the items under each particular Head not only covers wages but materials. I am afraid there is no question of being able to split this at all. I could do this with a great deal of labour, or perhaps, I could get this exercise done and pass it on to you.

HON P J ISOLA

Or, possibly, inform us - and this should not be difficult, I suppose - how many industrials there are servicing this structure?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I think the figure was given yesterday. It varies between 800 and 850 from day to day, but it is round about the 800 mark. For example, on account of the damage to the catchments we had to go and get some more unskilled labour, which is readily available, for that.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Only if it would help the purpose and claiming no accuracy for this at all but, say, 750 work force and say that the figure is about £1.2 million for a broad indication.

ADMINISTRATION was agreed to.

BEACHES AND CLEANING was agreed to.

CONSTRUCTION was agreed to.

DRAWING OFFICE was agreed to.

ELECTRICAL

HON J BOSSANO

I notice there has been a change from TGII to TGI. Is there any particular explanation for this?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Yes, in the Electrical side of the department. One TGI instead of a TGII; one TGI and one TGIII instead of one TGII and one TGIII. This is the top of the tree, and he has gone up one step because he has got that extra workload and responsibility.

HON J BOSSANO

The increased workload, Mr Speaker, would appear to suggest that they need more individuals rather than upgrading. Has there been a change in the nature of the work that the TGII performed?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Greater responsibility, this is why you get the higher grade. Whether there is an increase in the staff employed in Electrical work this we shall see when we come to the other side because they are spread over the whole of the wages vote. We have electricians employed everywhere.

HON M XIBERRAS

Would the Minister know offhand, very roughly, how many men per section?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I am sorry, this is quite impossible to tell because it fluctuates from job to job. Some of our gangs, particularly the unskilled, can be used on construction one day and on road trenching the next day. But the skilled labour force is fairly constant.

HON M XIBERRAS

I think it is important to compare how many industrials, skilled and middle management and so forth the department is composed of, very roughly to have an idea of what a Section is. I think it is a relevant question when considering these sums of money and perhaps I could . . .

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I will try and get these figures after lunch.

ELECTRICAL was agreed to.

GARDENS was agreed to.

MAINTENANCE was agreed to.

MECHANICAL was agreed to.

CIVIL ENGINEERING was agreed to.

SEWERS was agreed to.

STORES

HON M XIBERRAS

On the issue of stores has any new procedure been introduced? It is said that there are great delays in work because of the issue of stores, which used to be - perhaps it is not any more - rather slow and complicated

and bureaucratic. Have any new procedures been introduced?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I am not aware of any delays because of delays in issue of stores. There may be delays because of lack of materials which are not readily available because of late deliveries but certainly not in the issuing of stores. I am not aware of any, neither is my Director who has just let me know that he is not aware of any either.

STORES was agreed to.

WATER

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, on water, does this cover the distillation plant as well or just the water catchments?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Mr Speaker, the distiller comes under Mechanical, not under water. These are concerned with the piping, supply purification of water catchments, and things like that. Not only fresh water but brackish water as well.

HON M XIBERRAS

What about losses of water, is this section responsible for tracing losses of water?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Yes, the man who goes out with the very sophisticated fault finding instruments and works in the middle of the night when there is little flow going, this comes under the supervision of this department, yes.

HON M XIBERRAS

I am told that an estimate by a professional man of the losses of water in one year is something in the region of £68,000.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I would not know that amount. **An average** of 20% is an acceptable loss by wastage anywhere in the world. I do not think we get that. In certain places it is as high as 36%. Here we are very lucky that major water bursts get reported fairly quickly because people go without their water and in this way we restrict the loss. But I am not particularly perturbed that we have an undue loss through leaks. We tackle them very quickly.

HON M XIBERRAS

When was the last time a survey was conducted on the losses of water, something comprehensive which would allow the Minister to make the sort of statement that he is making now? I am talking about water because water is going to be a rather touchy subject in these estimates, and I think that it is important for the public to know what losses there have been and whether, in fact, we know what losses there have been.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

No, this has not been carried out for some time.

MR SPEAKER

If the Minister would rather refer to information we could recess now.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

It is just not available, Mr Speaker, because we have to go through a lot of departments because we no longer send the bills out, we are not aware, and the Meter Readers are not under our control. Our control

of the amounts

of wastage is by going round with this sophisticated machinery over all mains in Gibraltar, in rotation, at different times during the silent hours of the night which is, generally, between 10 and 3 o'clock in the morning. Of course, the moment there is a major break they either see it coming through the surface or people complain because they lose pressure.

HON M XI BERRAS

Well, Mr Speaker, there will be several opportunities of discussing water as these proceedings progress, but I thought I should make the point here because the losses, I understand, are very substantial and, perhaps, the Minister in time for the debate that we will be having on the question of water might give us an authoritative statement on water losses.

WATER was agreed to.

The Committee recessed at 1.05 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 3.15 p.m.

HOUSING SURVEY UNIT was agreed to.

HOUSING SECTION

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Item 70 - Rent Collectors. I notice that there has been quite a considerable decrease. Can we have an explanation, please?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Well, I do not know very much about it but I did draw attention to that particular item in conjunction with Item No.77, which is a productivity bonus payable only to Rent Collectors, I think I mentioned that the work was being done by six men.

HOUSING SECTION was agreed to.

GENERAL

HON MAJOR R J PELIXA

On the recruitment of additional staff for which I think you have got £20,000 earmarked there and, apparently, there is going to be great difficulty in recruiting, is this the true figure? Are we in any way overestimating or underestimating?

HON A W SERFATY

I can answer for the Architects, the Quantity Surveyors and the Clerks of Works. These are definitely required for the implementation of the Aid Programme.

HON MAJOR R J PELIXA

Yes, I know you said it would be required but apparently there is going to be great difficulty in recruiting them. If we need them and we cannot find them we will not spend the money, will we?

HON A W SERFATY

Well, we have already been told that some interviews have already been held in London for the appointment of the Architect.

HON MAJOR R J PELIXA

On that score can the Minister say what salary scales these men are going to be paid? This is important because of the repercussions it could have on other people who are already in Gibraltar. There is no indication here at all, just a token vote of what the scales are going to be. Could we have something on that, please?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Chairman, we need a considerable number of technical staff to carry out the new development programme over the next three years. In fact, Her Majestys Government have recognised this and have urged us not to embark upon the programme without adequate technical staff. We are more than hopeful that in many cases we shall be able to charge the staff to the development project, in some cases we know we can, in other cases we are hopeful that we can. However, there will be some of these staff whom we have to provide here for ourselves and we put in a block provision of £20,000. At this stage we cannot say what the salaries we shall have to pay will be. We will have to make offers and we will have to advertise for staff and pay what we have got to.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

On the question of recruiting, what about the actual salaries of these individuals? Obviously we want to get on with the Development Programme but, on the other hand, one has to bear in mind the effect that this will have on our own employees here already. Obviously, the scales will have some effect on the people already working in the Department.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

This is a problem. We have a great many staff on technical assistance and they are paid rates which are sufficient to attract the staff in the UK and I am afraid that local Gibraltarian staff have got to live with that situation. I know that it can appear invidious but they are only here for a limited period.

HON L DEVICENZI

Mr Speaker, in Item 77 - Productivity Bonus. I am glad to see that the Government has some faith in productivity and they have made provision this year for £768. I see this is payable to Rent Collectors only.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I have already mentioned that. This has to be read in conjunction with the items raised by the Honourable Major Peliza. But the other productivity bonus, if it should arise is included in the total wage. Here it is shown separately.

HON L DEVICENZI

Sir, Item No.80 - Quantity Surveyors fees £1,200. Is this for expatriates?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This is the fees payable to any Quantity Surveyor when we employ them to assess a contract because we have not got an adequate Quantity Surveying Section in the Department at the moment. They are not salaries they are fees for a specific job.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Please forgive me because you may have given this answer already and I may have been out of the Chamber. How is the sum of £11,109 in respect of Item 79 - Overtime - accounted for?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This is overtime for the whole of Head X. This is a cock-shy and obviously you have to make some provision.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

This is then a little bit more than a token.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

A fairly hefty token, yes.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Chairman, may I say for the information of the House that when the approved estimates finally appear there will be a reduction shown in the total of the extreme right hand column Revised Estimates 1974/75 here, a reduction of £40,000, reducing the figure of £206,525 for the reasons I have already explained.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, on the question of staff, generally, which I raised before lunch, I have here a breakdown of staff in the Public Works Department some time ago in 1972 down to the last labourer. I would not like to bore the House with detailed information and so on, but a general question which I will put to the Minister is, what proportion is there between the industrial staff, the non-industrial staff especially the middle management and the senior staff? Also what the average cost of employing an industrial is these days? I do not think this is an unreasonable request bearing in mind the basic wage, the average overtime, especially an industrial from abroad, where accommodation costs should also be computed. This is important because if the cost is in the region of let us say £1,200, then it is important to know what the policy of the department is in respect of the recruitment of industrials and in respect of making the department less dependent on labour from abroad, this being the largest spending department of the Government and the department which employs most labour from abroad. I also raised the average size of a section and here too I notice there are 42 in one section, skilled and unskilled, not counting 3 Leading Hands and one TGIII. This is the sort of information I think will be of use to the House in determining whether the funds being sought by the department are justified and whether the Government is carrying out its stated policy of rationalisation in this large Government department.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The average figure for industrials is about £1,600. If these figures are wanted I must have time to produce them because I have them under separate headings, gang by gang. But even then it is the same people here who do the work under the I and D fund.

These people are used all over the place, but if he wants the total breakdown then I must have notice of this, because this means an analysis of the whole of our labour force. One other concept which I think is very often forgotten is that because you had 72 people - I am quoting the figure in 1972 - and you have got 72 people today, that the amount of work being done is the same. This is not so, more work is being produced than ever before, because we have got a great commitment with practically the same labour force. So this in itself is productivity.

HON M XIBERRAS

This is what we are trying to establish. We are not willing to take the Minister's word for it just like that. Our main concern is the productivity of the Department and this is what we are trying to establish.

MR SPEAKER

The answer has been that if you require the figures they will be produced, but the Minister cannot let you have them now.

HON M XIBERRAS

Well, I put the Minister on notice then that when the House reverts out of Committee, then we shall be discussing these general considerations in the debate.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I also give notice, Mr Speaker, that it may not be possible to have these figures by that time. I just cannot stop the work of the Department to produce these figures. On Saturday I lost one of my most experienced financial clerks. I cannot pick a replacement out of the trees for that man. That department which would be intimately involved with this will not be staffed adequately till 3 or 4 months time.

HON M XIBERRAS

Well, Mr Speaker that is up to the Minister of course. It is up to the Minister to do it. But I would not accept for a moment that the information which is being sought by the Opposition is not relevant. I think one basic figure has been established and that is that an industrial costs the Government to employ something in the region of £1,600 a year and that is quite a sum of money. Are we talking about a skilled man or an unskilled man?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

We were talking about an unskilled man but the figure that I was asked for originally was an average and that means everybody. I understand from the information given to me that it is £1,600 for an unskilled man.

HON M XIBERRAS

Well, £1,600 as the House will appreciate, is a very sizeable amount for an unskilled man. I would ask the Minister what procedure is there for recruitment of unskilled personnel in his Department? Is there a systematic way in which they are recruited and is adequate control exercised by relatively senior people in his Department, are are people engaged by the middle management?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Engagements are made by the Director who delegates that job to a Senior Clerical Officer. Our recruitment of unskilled labour is the least of our worries. Our greatest worry is the recruitment of skilled labour and it is no good getting as much unskilled labour as there is available if you have not got the skilled labour to go with it. Once again, the recruiting is done by the Director through the Department of Labour where we keep very close tabs with them. But it is not a haphazard affair and, obviously, one has to investigate the people applying as well. We come back to the question of supervision. This is, we know, our weakest link but how do you change a lifetime's attitude of supervision here? We have run courses at the Training Centre but

even then no amount of courses are worth a bit if when the chap comes back he does not put it into practice. This is up to the individual. Unless of course we have a supervisor with a supervisor over a supervisor. Where are you going to end?

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, is the Minister aware of a plan to have precisely that. A man whose job would be to supervise the supervisors themselves in the use of manpower. We still cannot accept that the Minister should say "I am not satisfied with my supervisors and there is nothing I can do about it." That is the point that must be brought home. Equally, my point about recruitment is not that it is difficult to recruit labour as the Minister for Labour was saying at the last budget session, my point about recruitment is; are you sure that you need the unskilled labour that you have bearing in mind, especially, that one unskilled man costs the Government £1,600 which is as much, if I remember correctly, as the basic wage of a teacher or more.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

We do not recruit all the ~~the~~ unskilled labour which is available. We recruit it in such numbers as will give us a balanced labour force and according to the requirements of the skilled tradesmen that we have. But we have lots of jobs where the proportion of skilled labour and unskilled tilts very heavily on the side of the unskilled labour. For instance refilling a road does not require any skilled labour, it requires unskilled labour. On the other hand to turn a piece of metal into a proper shape this requires a very skilled man, it requires a skilled man to do the carpentry or the painting or the plastering in maintenance. This lumping together of the labour force in a department such as ours is unrealistic. Each man fills a separate role and one of the most difficult things about supervision is the fact that our people are out in penny packets.

MR SPEAKER

I think we are now beginning to talk at cross purposes. The question that is being asked is, whether you are satisfied that your system is such as to enable you to

gauge whether you are getting the kind of labour that you need, and that you are not over-employing by not having proper supervision. We all know that there are different trades and that there are different skills necessary for different jobs.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This is why I was trying to explain that we are satisfied that the unskilled labour that we have got is what we want.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Chairman, may I add this because I have spoken about productivity and I appreciate the value of productivity and that we are all very much concerned about and we have the Productivity and Training Manager and we have the Industrial Relations Officer. But let us not, and allow me to say this and I do not wish to say this disparagingly, I hope I will be excused for saying this, but when the Honourable Minister talked about many years of characteristic it is, I am assured, fairly characteristic of the Gibraltarian people that they do not like giving orders and ensuring that they are carried out. Now, these are human characteristics with which we also have to contend.

HON P J ISOLA

I would say at this stage that throughout these estimates on personal emoluments there are quite a number of new posts created and provision made for the superstructure or whatever you would like to call it of the Department. We have heard the Minister say that there is a problem of supervision down on the ground for the reasons that have been given by him and by the Financial and Development Secretary. Our concern is to know how he envisages that all this extra new posts in the Department is going to permeate through in terms of efficiency at the other end. I mean, are they making arrangements for more constant inspection of work places or where jobs are being done, or is everything being left to the Leading Hand at the place of work and say, "Well, he does not do his job very well but there is nothing much we can do about it". How far is the result of the creation of these new posts

which we are being asked to vote for, how far is that going to permeate through on the ground? How far is it going to result in more inspection of the different places of work and so forth? How far does he think this is going to increase the efficiency of the Department and the more useful employment of a very large sum of money that he seeks to get provision for?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I have not missed the point at all. There has only been one technical post upgraded from TGIII to TGII. For the initial work of the Development Programme we are trying to recruit, as I have said before, 6 Clerks of Works. These are the Sergeant Majors who set the pace, the Clerks of Works, and if you have got a good Clerk of Works then the TGIII's and the Leading Hands and the labourers will do their work. Our fault, our weakness, in the construction industry in Gibraltar, particularly the Public Works, has been that there have been no regular Clerk of Works. This is why in the last two years we have brought out especially Clerks of Works for the major jobs. Regarding the question of inspection, let me assure you that we have instituted regular inspections and when we come later on in the estimates you will see the other work that we are having to do because of these inspections. Buildings are being inspected regularly, bridges are being inspected regularly, roads are being inspected regularly. This is the way that we are using our supervisory staff.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, I think this is a helpful point that he has brought out now, the question of Clerks of Works - we will come to the Financial Secretary's remarks in a minute - but could I ask the Minister for Public Works when he says recruit, what does he mean by recruit 6 Clerks of Works?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

These are being obtained from the UK. These are itemised in Item 74. Recruitment of Additional Staff - 2 Architects, 1 Quantity Surveyor for the contract documents and work, one Senior Clerical Officer, for

the clerical work, 1 Clerical Officer, 2 stenographers, 2 Technicians, 6 Clerks of Works. Clerks of Works, out of proportion to all the others. They will set the pace to the rest of the staff being employed there.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

I think the Minister has made a very good point on this question of the Clerks of Works and this, apparently, is the deficiency at the moment. Could the Minister say what is being done to put that right. I cannot accept the contention that the Gibraltarians are unable either to give orders or accept orders. Having been in the Army myself and having seen my own Sergeant Majors, and I myself having been a Sergeant Major, I know that the Gibraltarians can give orders and also obey orders and out of uniform, if I may say so. What is required - is proper leadership, and I was going to ask, what is being done to ensure that if we have the material, which I am sure we have, to produce something that will fill up the gap of the Clerk of Works that apparently we have not got. Is anything being done in that respect?

HON LT COL J-L HOARE

I think that now we are going into the characteristics of individuals. But I think it is a fact that the majority of middle management is reluctant to take . . .

MR SPEAKER

The question that is being asked is what is being done to fill the gap. It has been said that, perhaps, there are no good Clerks of Works in Gibraltar and that we have to recruit them from overseas. You are now being asked whether something is being done to fill up this gap and to provide for the future.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Yes, Mr Speaker. We have got these courses going at the Training Centre. We have also got a considerable number of technicians who are training up for these middle management posts and some of them are producing

very good results. There was a press release about one individual in my own department who has done remarkably well. These are the people that are being trained for middle management in the future. It is a pity it was not done ten years ago.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, there is one other point. I will not take up what the Financial Secretary said, at this stage about his remarks about Gibraltarian middle management, the capacity of Gibraltarians to give orders and receive them. However, I will take him up on the other point from the Productivity and Training Unit point which is precisely what I have been trying to elicit from the Minister, to what extent the Productivity and Training Unit, to which we shall come, influences the systematic . . .

MR SPEAKER

It will be relevant when we come to that item.

HON M XIBERRAS

Yes, but the Productivity and Training Unit of course, is important in itself. But the effect of the Productivity and Training Unit on this major Government Department is . . .

Mr SPEAKER

It may be relevant when we discuss the item concerned with the Unit otherwise we will have repetition.

HON M XIBERRAS

Well, it is certainly relevant now because it appears to me that there is not much influence of the Productivity and Training Unit on this Department. I can inform the Minister that some years ago there was a

recruitment procedure which was vetted by the Productivity and Training Unit which ensured that there was no wastage. There were plans for the training of middle management which he has also mentioned, and various other things which if he cares I shall go into, but I do not see that the Minister is amenable to the Productivity and Training Unit having an influence towards greater productivity in his department.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I think this is quite wrong. Of course I believe in productivity, of course I believe in training. This is what I have been instructed and grown up with all my life, but there are two sides to every productivity agreement and not all the schemes put up by the Productivity and Training Unit who are dealing with theories . . .

MR SPEAKER

We are not going to discuss the Productivity and Training Unit at this stage.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

May I refute entirely the allegation made, I am for productivity, I believe in productivity, and I prefer productivity to any other form of inducement.

- GENERAL was agreed to.

OTHER CHARGES

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I would like to bring up a couple of items which may save questioning. On Item 2 - Technical Books - there is quite a leap there from £750 to £3,740. Of this increase £2,590 is for new equipment which we consider necessary for the Development Programme, additional

staff coming. The other item is the training of apprentices. We have 6 at the Dockyard Training Centre on engineering and mechanical. We hope to get three new entrants this year. We have trainees at the bench particularly in our own workshops, 6 with one new entrant; we have 20 at the Training Centre and, generally, we have 6 labourers to craftsmen going at any one time. Of course we have to pay the allowances. There were 36 apprentices in 1974, there were 28 in 1973, so we are encouraging apprentices as much as we can. One thing which really hits us very hard is the meteoric rise in the cost of training apprentices in the Dockyard. In 1966/67 the cost was £180, in 1968/69 it went up to £265; in 1969/70 it went up to 291; in 1970/71 it went up to £773; in 1972/73 it was £785 and last year it was £1,206. There is a reduction in the Telephone Service and this is due to the operator now becoming a non-industrial and coming on to the administrative side. On Item 9 - Courses of Instruction - there is an increase of £200 on that which reflects the higher fares and the higher fees payable to different colleges. This is further evidence that I encourage training. I want my engineers to go away and have a look and keep up to date with modern techniques. Things are changing constantly and the more I can encourage them the more I shall continue encouraging them.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, I am delighted to hear that because after all the question of training in that department started systematically when the Training Centre was built in the time of the last administration. I am very glad that this continues and that the momentum set afoot at that time continues today. I was not for a moment accusing the Minister of not being interested in training. However, we are not here to indiscriminately praise the Minister. We must make sure that this big department where there is big Government spending, works as efficiently as possible. Mr Speaker, what the Minister has said about the cost of training apprentices in the Dockyard is a matter which is not new to this House. The Financial and Development Secretary knows - he has done research for me kindly on a number of occasions - that this is truly appalling in the way costs are going up and this increase in costs is not reflected either in other organisations which do training for Government, nor is it reflected conversely in those cases where Government itself is paid in respect of training or schooling. If Honourable Members will recall the

Education vote, I raised the point then . . .

MR SPEAKER

I do not want to interrupt the Honourable Member but we are going to the general concepts. It is a vote and anything which is going to affect the particular vote is completely and utterly relevant. I am not trying to cut down in any manner, but we must not on each particular item expound on the principle itself.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, all I am saying, really, and, perhaps, I can say it more briefly, is how can these big increases in the Dockyard Technical College be justified compared to the increases which have taken place in training elsewhere, and why should Government pay out these very great increases at Technical College when in another case we have, let me say, say Services children in our schools and the proportional increase in the cost of training them is no where near what it has been in the Dockyard Technical College. This is, perhaps, the third year in which I have raised the point, and it all stems actually from the building of the new Training Centre at the Dockyard and the Honourable Financial Secretary might recall that I asked the question then, of whether we were helping to pay for the cost of the centre itself, rather than the cost of the training? Now, I would invite the Minister to attempt to answer that question since he himself has raised that point.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I do not know how the bills are made up. I merely have to provide in my own estimates for the cost of the apprentices of my Department and that is all, I have no control over the amounts raised. I merely have to provide in my own estimates that amount.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Chairman, perhaps I may say a word on this. I have been very well aware, as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has said, about the very steeply rising

costs. Sometimes we have got to accept this, the Honourable Mr Bossano will agree with me that if you have 20% increase, 20% inflation, you are going to find expenditure doubling themselves in less than four years, I think, but we must everywhere we possibly can avoid that happening. The increases have been very steep indeed and I know that looking at them and scrutinizing the estimates, we have been discussing whether there are not cheaper as good facilities for the training of apprentices elsewhere that we could find and if they are available we shall use them, at Landport or wherever. I think the Minister may wish to add to what I have said.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, has the Financial Secretary made any representations or any members of the Government made any representations to the management of the Dockyard?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Representations in the sense of asking and pressing very hard for detailed justification of the extent of these rises. That, however, is difficult to get and I understand that the numbers being trained has been falling and that has made the charge per head that much greater. But we will certainly seek the justification for the increase.

HON M XIBERRAS

Well, Mr Speaker, we must deplore the uncooperativeness of the authorities in the Dockyard and we deplore it strongly and I think the House should show its disagreement with the attitude and with the costs by reducing this part of the vote nominally and urging the Government to examine the possibility of training elsewhere provided, of course, that the training is up to the required standard.

HON FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

But, Mr Chairman, it must not be assumed from anything I have said that we have evidence that the increases in charges is not justified. As I have said costs are rising.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

I am sure the Financial Secretary has looked at the increase which is over 50%, so if the number of apprentices have been reduced and proportionately cost more to train the apprentice I cannot see how there could be an increase of over 50%. I cannot see how that can be justified at all. The authorities concerned with whom I think we have always been able to co-operate very satisfactorily to the benefit of both their interests and our interest, should be more co-operative. As it stands now I personally would feel it against the interest of the cost of the school, let alone the interest of the Government, to vote in favour of that vote.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, if this has been a matter which had just been raised on one occasion then fair enough, we can criticise it and let it go by, but year after year I have raised it and I pressed the Financial Secretary to get some justification and here we have the Minister himself agreeing with this - he calls it meteoric - and this is probably the third year in which we protested and I think we should do something a little bit more than that on this occasion. Therefore, Sir, we would move to reduce that vote, nominally, by £1.

MR SPEAKER

Will you please put it in writing.

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, on this item I would like to ask the Minister for Public Works whether he is satisfied at the treatment of the apprentices in the Training Centre.

HON LT COL J L HCARE

I do not think this is within my province. I am not responsible for the administration. In any case I would think that if you put your pupil, in the same way that you put your son under the control of somebody, you leave it to him unless you get a complaint. When

there is a complaint then you investigate it. It has not come to my knowledge that there is any ill-treatment or anything else. If such is the case then, perhaps, I can have it in writing and I will investigate.

HON M XIBERRAS

I beg to move that the estimate for 1975/76 of £39,400 in respect of this item be reduced by £1 to £39,399.

Mr Speaker put the question in the terms of the amendment moved by the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition and on a vote being taken the following Honourable Members voted in favour :-

The Hon M Xiberras
The Hon Major R J Peliza
The Hon P J Isola
The Hon W M Isola
The Hon J Bossano
The Hon L Devincenzi

The following Honourable Members voted against :-

The Hon Sir Joshua Hassan
The Hon A P Montegriffo
The Hon A W Serfaty
The Hon M K Featherstone
The Hon A J Canepa
The Hon I Abecasis
The Hon Lt Col J L Hoare
The Hon H J Zammitt
The Hon J K Havers
The Hon A Mackay

The amendment was accordingly defeated and Item 6 was passed and the remaining Items of Head X - Other Charges - was agreed to.

HEAD XI - PUBLIC WORKS ANNUALLY RECURRENT - BEACHES

HON W M ISOLA

Mr Speaker, I notice that there is an increase of £18,000 on this vote and before I say something about the beaches and the Montagu, I see that part of it is increased cost of living and interim award and also under vote (b) it says "increased costs". Can the Minister give us some idea of what he means by increased costs on the question of the beaches?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

They need brooms, they need paint brushes, they need paint and they need detergent and all sorts of things for keeping not only the beaches clean but the toilets, the showers and the amenities around there. There is no increase anticipated this year in the number of people employed on beaches. There was an increase of one last year, a life-guard at Montague Basin. I was rather surprised when I went there on one of my visits that Montagu Basin which last year was used by 38,808 people who paid to go in - a vast increase on previous numbers - had no life-guard on duty, and it is just as easy for somebody to get into difficulties there as before. But this is what increased costs means, increased cost of materials.

HON W M ISOLA

Mr Speaker, on this question of beaches, this side of the House is not at all happy with the way the beaches were maintained this year. The Minister has just mentioned the question of showers. Since the coin boxes were removed from the showers in Catalan Bay and Eastern Beach last year the situation has deteriorated. I had the experience of having to go to the ladies toilet and pay the attendant there before I could take a shower.

LT COL J L HOARE

This is so humorous that I have really lost the thread of it. Will he please repeat it in words of one syllable so that a very simple soldier can understand.

MR SPEAKER

All that the Honourable Member is trying to say is that the showers were not operating properly. He wants to know why this happened and has it been put right. It is as simple as that.

HON W M ISOLA

In other words, Mr Speaker, the coin box facilities were removed and have not been replaced yet. We are being asked to vote a sum of £58,000 just to maintain our beaches and Montagu Bastion pavilion. What I am stating is that last year the beaches were in a terrible dirty state, the Beach Cleaners were not doing their work and here we are being asked to vote an increase of £18,000 on this particular vote. Has the Minister any plans or is he doing anything to try to improve our beaches, not only for the civilians but also for the tourists? Has he any new ideas or new plans for this item which is a very substantial one when one considers that the Bathing Season is not all the year round.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I think that is a most sweeping generality, that the beaches were filthy last year. I did not have one single complaint and I would suggest, Mr Speaker, to the Honourable and Learned Gentleman over there that if he has a complaint the answer is not to wait till estimate time but to let me know on the spot. He knows my telephone number, there is a beach life-guard, and a supervisor on each beach, let him report it to him and then it will come to me but let us not have this kind of thing. I think this is most unfair. I go round to the beaches very often during the summer and I find the exact opposite to what he says. The beaches were not filthy, the beaches were very well looked after last year and I did not have one single complaint to me personally throughout the year, which is in great contrast to what he says.

HON W M ISOLA

Is the Minister then saying that he is satisfied in the way that beaches were maintained last year?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Most emphatically, yes.

HON W M ISOLA

Well, I hope the public gets to know that that is how the Minister thinks the beaches should be maintained.

HON P J ISOLA

What about the point about the coin operated boxes? What is happening to those?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This must have been a particular occasion that the caretaker was not there when the Honourable Member went there at that particular time. But you have both a male and a female attendant to look after the showers and toilets. Why this happened on this particular day I would not know. We removed the coin boxes, of course, because you cannot get sixpences. They were originally made to take sixpences which you do not have nowadays.

HON W M ISOLA

Mr Speaker, this just shows how little the Minister knows about the showers. Is the Minister still not aware that in all the shower rooms in Catalan Bay there was no male attendant and that you had to go to the female attendant. Is that as much as he knows about his own beaches which he says he visits so often?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I can assure the Honourable Member that there is a male attendant at Catalan Bay as indeed there is at Camp Bay and at Little Bay and at Sandy Bay and at Eastern Beach.

BEACHES was agreed to.

BUILDINGS

HON J BOSSANO

On this item, in Supplementary Estimate No.5 there were two items 1 and 2 which I take are shown together in the draft estimates and the supplementary provision there was £44,000 taking the two items together. Can the Minister explain why the revised estimates in the last column here is that much greater than that shown by adding these two sums?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I do not know the breakdown of the revised estimates figure but the current year's figure is £280,000 for maintenance and £80,000 for painting. Now, we have elected to do this this year because it is quite impossible to split this up. When you are going to paint . . .

MR SPEAKER

No, you have been asked why the figure in the last column 1974/75 does not tally with the figure shown. He presumes that this is the total sum of the two figures appearing in supplementary No.5 of 1974/75, but that there is still a difference. Why is there a difference?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The figures that I have got here are the correct ones. The revised figure is £323,000 and next year it is £360,000.

MR SPEAKER

Yes, but it does not tally with the figures shown in Supplementary Estimates No.5.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This is because there are other supplementary estimates to come.

MR SPEAKER

Well, that is your answer.

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, I expected that answer because it is the answer that has been used before. But in a difference of £33,000 has the Minister got any idea what is to come that costs £33,000 and has got to be spent between now and the 31st of March?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

It has not got to be spent between now and the 31st of March, it ~~has~~ already been spent. There has been a great deal more maintenance this year, a great deal more painting of properties than there was before. Thanks to the extraordinarily dry weather, long summer and mild winter that we have had we have been able to do much **more** actual work than we envisaged.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Is there any element at all of productivity in this? Is there any kind of productivity scheme connected with this maintenance because I think it is most important. Something that goes back to 5 years now when a scheme was going to be implemented. Has any progress been made in that direction?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

No, there is no particular or general productivity arrangement for this because people work in penny packets according to whatever particular job they are doing.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Well, could the Minister not look into this? I think, if I remember rightly, quite a saving could be made if the scheme could be organised. For instance, you pay so much for every glass that is repaired or, perhaps, there is a bonus for every glass that is prepared.

MR SPEAKER

I think in fairness to the Minister he said that there was no such scheme because it cannot be organised.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

This is what I am trying to say. I do not agree that it cannot be organised.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I have not said this cannot be organised. In fact, this is something we are looking into at the moment. We are looking at this in conjunction with the terms of contract, but there *is none* the moment. We do have individual cases, Mr Speaker, where we get the very large job and we implement Job Price Contracts. But these kind of jobs are limited because *you* can only do this when only one type of tradesman is involved. But when you want a carpenter, a plumber, a mason and a painter involved you cannot implement a Job Price Contract.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

We are also looking into the question of term contracts. This is another way of doing it. But once again term contracts require a great deal of additional staff after the work is done to measure, to assess, and all the rest of it. It is a matter of opinion whether in the long run it is a cheaper way of doing it or not. This is something we are looking at at this very moment.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA.

I will take the matter up later on because I am not quite satisfied with the answer. I know it is a very complex thing - I am not disputing that - but I think it is feasible and certainly it looks as if in places where this is tried out there is a saving in money and labour. Labour, particularly, which is very important.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, this is a large item as has been pointed out - £360,000. First of all when the Minister says it is very difficult, has the Minister examined further the question of a schedule of rates. A schedule of rates for maintenance.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This is what I mentioned, that if we do this sort of thing then you have got to have additional staff afterwards to measure, assess and all the rest of it. And it is a matter of conjecture whether in the long run it would be cheaper. I know that the biggest user of the term contract in Gibraltar is not satisfied with the results.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, the Minister should not get annoyed about our questions. We are trying to elicit what he has tried and what he has not tried.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Please do not think that your questions either annoy me, embarrass me, or anything else. I take them in the way they come. If they are seeking information then I am only too willing to give it.

HON M XIBERRAS

That, Mr Speaker, is the spirit. The Minister just

mentioned the question of a term contract. Now this is a touchy one and I do not think it should be mentioned just like that. Perhaps the Honourable friend on my left might take up the matter.

MR SPEAKER

May I say that we are not going to discuss term contracts now. The Minister has said that he is looking into every possibility, including that of term contracts. We must not catch on to every single thing that is said in order to have a debate on it.

HON M XIBERRAS

The assurances that I want to get from the Minister are that this money that we are voting for now is not going to be spent on a term contract, in farming out work for contract, unless the union concerned is consulted about it. I am referring particularly to the DOE situation where this arose.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

We have not got a term contract yet and this is purely hypothetical. But we do give painting contracts out under this system to our painting contractors. The term contract is something else completely. A term contract is something which caters for every conceivable kind of repair and this we rarely give out. But painting is one where we have a regular programme in addition to our own painting.

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, when the Minister decides on giving out work to contractors . . .

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The Minister does not give contracts. The Director decides what can be given out to contract, what can be done departmentally and I do not come into it at all.

The tender goes out and is dealt with by the Tender Board.

MR SPEAKER

What the Honourable Member is trying to suggest is that if the Minister decides to give out work to tender - he is not suggesting that you decide who to give it to - but I am sure it is the Minister's policy decision to give work out to tender.

HON LT COL J L HQARE

Oh, yes, I see.

HON J BOSSANO

Thank you, Mr Speaker, it is not which contractor gets it, it is whether it goes to contract or whether it is done by direct labour that I am concerned with. What I would like to ask the Minister is whether, in fact, there is any attempt to find out not only which is the cheapest of the contractors but whether the department itself can do it directly at an equivalent cost or, perhaps, even cheaper.

HON LT COL J L HQARE

This is very much in our minds and in fact our experience up to the moment is that our direct labour is much cheaper than contractors, which is understandable. They are there for the profit, we have to do it with our own overheads. But it is a matter of capacity. We cannot get additional skilled labour, there is a limit to how much you can expect to get anybody to work. In short we do look at every major work as to whether it is worth-while doing by us or by contract. If the contract price is too high we do it ourselves.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, on the general productivity agreement for

maintenance - I do not know whether the Minister will care to discuss it under this head or later on.

MR SPEAKER

We have done it already, it has been discussed.

DEPOTS AND STORES was agreed to.

GARDENS

HON W M ISOLA

Mr Speaker; I notice that in the actual expenditure 1973/74 we spent £38,000 in the upkeep of Gardens, Parks and Upper Rock. We are now being asked in 1975/76 to vote the sum of £63,300. Can the Minister state whether he envisages any improvement in the upkeep of our gardens? Because as it is at present we have not improved, we have gone backwards.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Is it really a fact that he has not seen any improvement in the gardens in Gibraltar since 1972/73? Is it a fact? Is it a fact that wages have gone up since then? Is it a fact that the materials have gone up since then? I do not know when he went last to the Alameda Gardens but he will see that we set up a very large nursery there which is able to give us all sorts of flowers to put into the ground in all our gardens constantly. I am sorry but this is a criticism that I do not accept. I am not averse to accepting criticism but not this one. I think the gardens are much better than they were in 1972/73.

HON W M ISOLA

Mr Speaker, we are being asked to vote for something like 33% more on this item. It cannot all be increased cost of labour. What improvements have we got since that date to warrant this large increase of money to be spent? I have not got to go to Alameda Gardens to see the improvement. If anyone walks along Main Street and goes by the Cathedral of St Mary the Crowned you can see rubble there and grass growing all over the place. Is that

how we are spending £63,000?

Mr. SPEAKER

No, Mr Isola, this is the money that is going to be spent next year. We will have to wait and see what improvements are made next year.

HON W M ISOLA

What improvements does the Minister envisage for the Gardens, Parks and Upper Rock in view of the fact that we are being asked to vote quite a substantial increase which cannot all go to increased cost of wages.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I have said, Mr Speaker, that it is not only increased wages but there is also the increased cost of materials.

HON P J ISOLA

Are there any improvements envisaged for the next year 1975/76?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Yes, we will carry on and increase the number of times we put new flowers in these areas. For the first time ever when flowers fade they are taken away and replaced by others. The nursery in the Alameda Gardens may be a source of derision to the Honourable Member but . . .

MR. SPEAKER

Now that you are talking about nurseries I think I had better put it to the vote before they start asking about teachers.

HON P J ISOLA

Is the improvement envisaged just the replacement of flowers. Is that all we can look forward to in 1975/76?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

We are also improving the facilities on the Upper Rock. The Upper Rock at weekends is Brighton beach all over again. That needs a great deal of cleaning after every Saturday and every Sunday. The people who go out for picnics all over Gibraltar today is out of all proportion to what it was two or three years ago.

GARDENS was agreed to.

GENERAL

HON M XIBERRAS

Under general, can I ask the Honourable Colonel under Item 7 - Leave and Sick Pay for Workmen. Is he prepared to comment on that?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Well, is it doing any harm? Is it not a fact that sick pay includes Cost of Living Addition and Interim Award? It may be unnecessary, perhaps, but it is certainly not untrue.

HON M XIBERRAS

What does it include, does it include leave and sick pay under each head?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

That is the total for everybody so this is why it is under General.

HON M XIBERRAS

Is this increase in the rate of sick pay?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I am really surprised by that one. Surely sick pay is basic pay plus cost of living addition and biennial review.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, but does the Honourable Minister have any idea of any statistics about leave and sick pay for workmen?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I will merely say that we are now getting to the stage, not once but many times, when a chap has come from unpaid and we say "no" and he says; "But I have not had my sick leave yet". So the next day he does not turn up and since he is not required to **produce** a medical certificate for less than three days, he has to get paid for it. He says; "I am on uncertified sick leave".

HON M XIBERRAS

What proportion, more or less?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I am sorry but I really cannot say.

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, the Minister said that the explanation was simply the question of the sick pay now having to take account of the interim and the COLA. Is that right?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I am saying that this is the factual figure, that it does increase. This is not a cock-shy, certainly not the figure in the last column. This is based on fact and this is what we are finding.

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, surely, if the figure in the last column is £36,000 and the Government is making provision in the wages for the forthcoming year for the payment of the interim at the rate of £69 for four quarters he ought to make provision in the sick pay also for a higher figure than that that was actually paid for 1974/75, since wages are going to be higher in 1975/76?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Oh, no. We do not believe in encouraging sick pay.

HON J BOSSANO

On the item just before that, Mr Speaker, Item No.6 - Furniture for Government Offices and Residences. It says in the note (c) includes additional furniture for the Development Programme. I am rather intrigued by this furniture that is needed for the Development Programme.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Well, it should not be surprising since most of these expatriate officers are married. When they come out here they have, as part of their contract, to be provided with a furnished house.

HON CHIEF MINISTER

Office equipment has also to be obtained for the technical staff who will have to be given offices to work in.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, the Financial and Development Secretary drew attention to the rents of flats in his opening remarks.

MR SPEAKER

This deals exclusively with the provision of furniture for Government offices and residences.

HON M XIBERRAS

Can I ask whether all the flats which he mentioned are furnished and does this correspond to the cost of furnishing those flats?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

I must refer to £22,000 as I recall under Secretariat for the rent of quarters. Part of this is for the officers who come for the Development Programme. If we can house such officers in, for example, the Varyl Begg Estate, then . . .

MR SPEAKER

Perhaps I have interrupted before I should but I do not think we must go into these details.

HON CHIEF MINISTER

If we get a flat for an officer and it is possible to give either a Government quarter or a flat which is unfurnished it must be furnished for the occupation of that officer. It is much cheaper than renting furnished accommodation.

HON M XIBERRAS

The point I am driving at, Mr Speaker, is the total cost under this particular item. The increase is a big one that is why I am drawing attention to it. It is from £4,700 to £31,660.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The office furniture amounts to £7,760 and there are details in this sphere. Residential repairs and additions, £2,240; additional furniture requirements for the Development Programme £21,200, total £31,440. There must have been something extra for £200 odd.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, how many people are involved in the third item involving £21,400?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

It could be as much as 17 in which case that would not be enough, but neither do we foresee having 17 spare houses which we are going to furnish.

HON M XIBERRAS

Are these houses being furnished from scratch, as it were?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Most of them will have to be furnished from scratch.

HON L DEVICENZI

Sir, Item 10 - Rock Safety Measures and Coastal Protection. There is only £100 increase. Does this increase also make provision for the protection of further invasions by "Salties" and the like which make Gibraltar the laughing stock of our neighbouring cities?

GENERAL was agreed to.

HIGHWAYS

HON W M ISOLA

Sir, Item 13 - Illuminations for Festivals. Can the Minister state for which Festival?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Mr Speaker, this figure of £1,800 at the moment I have temporarily broken up as follows. Main Street - £1,300 . . .

MR SPEAKER

You are being asked for which festival?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This covers Main Street Christmas Festival; The Catalan Bay Festival and the Lourdes Procession Illuminations at Moorish Castle.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker re Item 11. Does car parking come under this at all?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

No.

HON M XIBERRAS

If it is just maintenance of roads is anything extra being done?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This does not include any major programme as such which is dealt with separately under the I & D Fund.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, the Minister reckons he requires 70% more than in 1974/75 for maintenance of roads. Is he not over estimating?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Mr Speaker, if I could get the special labour force I could double this to the benefit of Gibraltar as there is so much to catch up on. At the moment, this very day, we have started on Willis's Road which should have been done three or four years ago. This includes an additional gang to try and catch up. It is false economy to save money on this which is going to cost us twice as much in a couple of years time. We can do a great deal more this year because our new asphalt plant will be working and we can produce asphalt at twice the rate we have done up to now.

HON P J ISOLA

That is fine. The point being made is not that we are objecting to the expenditure, the point that we are making throughout this particular Public Works Annually Recurrent expenditure vote is that we do not seem to be getting any news of any additional work being done, rather maintaining the same programme at the cost of 50%, 60% and in some cases 70% more. If there is to be extra work then it is readily understandable. I am grateful for the answer of the Minister that there is going to be more work on this last item but that is not the answer that we have been getting on the other items in which there are similarly high rates of percentage increases. Talking about catching up, if I may, I agree entirely with the remarks made by the Minister. Perhaps, a certain amount of catching up will be done in the non-recurrent vote. There seems to be a lot of catching up to be done.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, what about the road to the Port? Is that being done in conjunction with the Varyl Begg Estate under this particular money?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

No, there is provision for that in another subhead.

HIGHWAYS was agreed to

MECHANICAL

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, again there is the same situation arising almost throughout. The only explanation in the remarks column is "increased cost of living and increased costs". Now, we would like to know because it is a 50% difference on the original estimate, whether in fact it is more work as it does not make sense because, of course, the increased wages in the Public Works Department are exactly the same as increased wages everywhere else.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The running expenses of maintenance of motor vehicles have not remained static during the last year. Petrol has gone up, fares have gone up, fuel has gone up. All these are items which are included here.

MECHANICAL was agreed to.

PUMPING

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, on pumping there is a considerable increase. May be it is increased costs, fuel and so forth. Now, would the Minister say whether he has done anything about that productivity agreement I raised last year which would reduce the cost by some £11,000.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I think the question which was raised last year was in connection particularly with Ragged Staff salt water pump. The man on the Upper Rock only goes up there once a week to fill the tanks up, the rest of the week he is employed with the gang up there keeping the Rock clean. The main one was Ragged Staff which is manned by two men. We considered putting automatic pumps there but we threw the idea overboard because the result, ~~of that~~ if there should be a stoppage, and it is not infrequent nowadays because of seaweed and

bits of plastic in the sea running up the intake and we would find out too late and there would be too much damage done.

PUMPING was agreed to.

SANITATION was agreed to.

WATER SUPPLY

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, on water, the Financial and Development Secretary mentioned in his opening remarks that the cost of operating the distillers was high. The increase is from £226,570 for 1974/75 to £270,000 which is not very much but perhaps the Financial and Development Secretary might say a few words about this particular subhead?

MR SPEAKER

Are you asking for something in particular?

HON M XIBERRAS

I am asking for clarification of the Financial Secretary's earlier remarks.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

My remarks, Sir, were to the effect that the cost of operation of the distillers themselves representing about half of the expenditure in the potable water account exceeds the amount of receipts that we get from the sale of water. I was referring to the very costly production of water.

HON M XIBERRAS

But not that there has been a dramatic increase from

last year and this year?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

No, but it goes on inexorably I am afraid.

HON J BOSSANO

Mr. Speaker, on the question of water, is it the case that for example we make a loss on the water that we distil and a profit on the water that we collect?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Since this is mixed and matured in the same reservoir I do not know when we sell water which is which. What I can give - and I think this is quite illuminating - is the rise in the amount of supply. In other words, the water that we have produced and put into our tanks. In 1971 the total supply was 122 million gallons. In 1972 it was 126 million gallons, in 1973 it was 132 million gallons and in 1974 it was 152 million gallons of water put on supply in Gibraltar. Now, it does not need a lot of imagination that during the last two or three years the amount of rainfall that we have had has been infinitesimal compared to the total consumption. And, in fact, last year we produced only 151.3 million, including rain, and we put on supply 152.492,500 gallons. The consumption of water is increasing constantly. I take great joy in this because this means an improved standard of living for people. There are more and more people having piped water in their houses. Seventy two old houses had fresh water connections installed last year and people are using more baths. The consumption of water in Gibraltar follows the world pattern of increased use.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

On the question of the increase which I think the Financial and Development Secretary said was not dramatic, I have made a rather quick calculation here which comes up to over £86,000 pounds. I may be wrong but I suppose the element of cost of living allowance

and interim award - because I do not believe the distillers employ all those many people - cannot have a large chunk of that amount. Oil, I believe, has gone down on last year, has it not? Could someone explain to me how it is that we now have an increase of £86,000? This is very very relevant because obviously this is going to affect the cost of water and, consequently, something that we may hear at the other stage of the Budget time when the cost of water may come into play. I would like this to be clarified, how it is that there has been, in fact, such a dramatic rise in the cost of it.

HON LT COL J L HOARE:

When we prepared our estimates last year they were based on the norm of 40 weeks working and 12 weeks major maintenance and minor maintenance. But, in fact, we were so short of water because of lack of rain and increased consumption that they have been running almost non-stop. To such an extent that the North Face distiller stopped of its own accord. Not because we stopped it but because it had not had adequate maintenance. It was either keeping the distillers going or importing a tanker at £50,000 for 5 million gallons. £1 per 100 gallons. Therefore we took the decision to keep these going as long as we jolly well could. We have now rested then. The North Face distiller had its major annual overhaul as soon as the rain started here; they have been finished before time as a result of a productivity bonus, and is now working full tilt. As soon as we get a little bit more stock in the reservoirs we will stop the other one to give it its maintenance and a certain amount of major modifications which we have found necessary during the year. We have had the attendance almost continuously of the atomic energy people here and the designers and as a result of this we hope to be getting out of that particular distiller much nearer its rated capacity than what we have. At the moment we have only been getting about 65% and it is something which we have had to face. It is not because we have not tried to improve, it is just because it has not been possible.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

It means, therefore, that this coming year you foresee the distillers working at a greater capacity than last year, and therefore, the cost is going to be higher. Is that right?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The increase is £40,000 and let us not forget that these distillers are manned 24 hours a day.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

What I am saying is that it is going to cost us £86,000 more. I think, perhaps, your point is right. If the distillers are going to be working longer hours this coming year they are going to consume more fuel, therefore, it is going to cost us more. If that is explanation I accept it. I do not want to waste your time. Is that the reason for it?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Yes, we hope to run it for the full 40 weeks, and if necessary, for more so that we build up our stocks.

HON P J ISOLA

The Minister said 152 million gallons of water was supplied during 1974 and I think he gave us 132 million in 1973. Can the Minister give us the amount of water that was supplied for shipping during those three years?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Yes, I have got it here. In 1972 it was 9 million, in 1973 it was 7 million; in 1974 it was 6.576 million.

HON P J ISOLA

Is that due to a decline in the number of ships requiring water or to a decline in Government policy?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

No, it is a decline in the amount of stocks of water available and as I pointed out last year the amount

supplied is still 1 million less than we produced. So our stocks at the end of the year were 1 million less than there were the year before. We are running that close.

HON P J ISOLA

The Minister told us that the North Front Distiller was not actually closed in 1970, it just stopped. If there had been no rain was there a chance that the other distiller could just have stopped?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Of course, this is one of the things that make it essential for us to keep a limited reserve in the reservoirs because you have no control over the rain at all. Therefore, one must have to try to have at least two week's supply in the reservoirs. At times we have not had that.

HON P J ISOLA

Did the Minister not consider it prudent in those circumstances to import some water into Gibraltar?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This was considered on several occasions but I was anxious to save the people of Gibraltar £50,000 for the importation of 5 million gallons of water. Nobody in Gibraltar has gone short of water. None of the resident either in the houses or in the hotels have gone short of water.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can you give us an idea of how much it costs to produce a ton of water by the distillers?

LT COL J L HOARE

On this year's figures 1975/76 order of cost and last year's order

of production it comes out to £35.88p per 100 gallons which gives us a corresponding amount of 80.08p per ton.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

And this, you are saying, is based on the 1975/76 costs. The other point I would like to ask - because it is obvious that we are very near the brink as far as water is concerned - it is envisaged to install another distiller?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I think I can say that not only ourselves but DOE are considering another distiller, but we are looking at the possibility of installing a distiller and using the spare heat energy of the generating station and this might be provided under ODA funds. And we are looking at different types of distillers because the distiller world does not keep still. I am quite sure in my mind that when we get the mechanics and the chemicals right in the VTE it will be good buy at the time. Now, whether it will be a good buy in today's advances in this side of technology is another matter. And this is what we are looking at - not only the answer of the DOE, in fact, there have been teams from the UK, from PSA at the highest level looking into this thing here because they have been up a gum tree - if I can use that inelegant phrase - as regards water. You may not be aware but the DOE have had to ration the Forces in Gibraltar - we have not.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

As obviously it must take some time in finding the right chemical and mechanical formula and consumption of water is rising and the demand from shipping too, is there and we are not able to fully supply them and if the Suez Canal is opened the demand may be greater, has the Government any plans to meet the coming demand for this year at all? Obviously the additional distiller is too late, what other arrangements are being made?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I think that if we can get both these distillers to come a little bit nearer their rate of capacity - and the signs are that this is so - we will be able to increase our supply substantially. I have given you the figures of water supply to shipping in 1973/74. Is there a dramatic drop considering the circumstances of Gibraltar at this particular time considering the circumstances of the whole of the Mediterranean during that time. Has it been so dramatic? Since then, of course, I have doubled the ration of water to shipping.

MR SPEAKER

What the Honourable member is trying to find out is whether you have any contingency plans to be able to supply the extra demand if the Suez Canal opens.

HON ~~MAJOR~~ R J ~~PELIZA~~

That is right. In fact, you will be able to stand next year and say; "Look at what I have done in 1975/76." Particularly, I think, when we know the distillers are very temperamental and I am sure the Minister would not like to stake everything on the distillers.

HON L DEVICENZI

Without in any way trying to minimise what the Minister has said I would say that although it does not mean much of a drop from the figures he has given, those figures are only relevant depending on the tonnage of shipping that has asked for water. If there had been an increase in water demand from shipping then there might be a drop. This is also relevant.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speakerñ what is the expected increase in demand with the construction of Varyl Begg Estate and so forth?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

We are working on a pattern of a new increase of round-about 10% a year. This is the trend.

WATER SUPPLY was agreed to.

HOUSING SECTION was agreed to.

HEAD XII - PUBLIC WORKS - NON-RECURRENT - MINOR WORKS.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, I remarked earlier on that we keep being told there is a lot of catching up to be done with which we would heartily concur on this side of the House, but a general remark on this particular estimate of Head XII Public Works Non-Recurrent is that the promise by the department to do things in 1975/76 is unfortunately not matched by its record of performance where previous promises have been made in the course of estimates time. One only has to look through this particular page to find that on estimates already approved in this House, in fact, very little has been done. One notices that immediately under Housing, where only £1,000 has apparently been spent or is to be spent by 31st March, against total original estimate of £8,000. We find in the Port, for example, that £4,200 has been spent out of a total estimate of £6,000. You have got Purchases of Plant and you find nothing has been spent on a low loading trailer as it has not been bought presumably. One goes to the next page and one finds again there on the original estimate £9,000 and only £5,000 have been spent up to 31st March 1975, and I would observe here, Mr Speaker, that I notice that on replacement of man-hole covers - and I assure the Minister there is a great need for them, this is obvious to people as they walk around Gibraltar in lots of places - only £50 appears to have been spent to date, in other words, nothing seems to have been done about them virtually. We go to the beaches and nothing appears to have been spent to the 31st March in the construction of the dwarf wall at Camp Bay at least from the figures in front of us. You go down to Little Bay and you see walls, repairs and protection. Nothing has been spent in the current

year to the 31st March 1975. Supreme Court renovation first stage, nothing up to the 31st March. Anyway, Mr Speaker, I think I have made the point and what we on this side of the House would like to know is how the department proposes to convince us - not convince us because they do not have to convince us - but how does the department propose to spend all this money in 1975/76 that they talk about. We do not have any particular objection, Mr Speaker, about them spending it but what we want to be assured of is that the work will be done. And it is no use the Minister in this House telling us ; "A lot of work has to be caught up with, we have to do a lot of acceleration", and then we find that on his estimates of last year he has, in fact, done very little and that is what is a matter for concern. It is not a question of figures, of producing a Budget that shows you the revenue only exceeds expenditure by £½ million. On this as presented to us and on past performance in non-recurrent the surplus at the end of the year should be considerably larger than that put forward to us by the Financial and Development Secretary. So before being asked to vote additional money for 1975/76, perhaps, the Minister would first tell us why he has not done in 1974/75 the things he told the House he would do this time last year and then tell us how he proposes to do the things he has been asking for provision for next year.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I am very sorry that the Honourable and Learned Gentlemen has gone to such depth. He obviously is confused by the presentation of Head XII which is always from time immemorial different from the presentations of other Heads. You have got to read this year's Head in conjunction with last years. Let us deal first of all with housing. A great deal of work has, in fact, been done and may I just as a matter of bringing these items into perspective, compare the amounts in this particular vote re-voted from year to year. I think that is the only way you can do it. From the year 1970/71 to the year 1971/72, the amount of re-votes was £278,138. From the year 1971/72 to 1972/73, £254,000; from 1972/73 to 1973/74, £93,000. What we were committed to do that year we did. In 1973/74 to 1974/75 £49,730. The brought forward 1974/75 to 1975/76 at the moment is £22,285. An item of work which is done does not appear again under this subhead. It is not like the I and D

Fund it is not like a Head of recurrent expenditure. In Housing this year we have in the I and D Fund £100,000 which would normally appear in this Head and it is now included in the I and D Fund. Coming back to the Port, the original estimates for all this in the year dot was £1,000. This is now £3,000 of the work that we are going to do this year patching up and in particular it is to enable the use of fork lift trucks and this is in lieu of the total resurfacing because uneven surfaces particularly between Jetties No.1 and No.2 cause a lot of dropping of the loads. I think with all due respect to the last speaker he got on the wrong horse. We do not repeat items from year to year. He did mention this question of the Plant. All the plant is here that we ordered last year except the compressor and that is here and it should be delivered at any time now. The only new items this year are the low loading trailer and the bitumen sprayer. May I comment on Items 60 and 61 - Landport Bridge and Orange Bastion. This is as the result of what I said earlier this morning of our regular inspection. Because of our regular inspections we have found that Landport Bridge has two members very seriously corroded and we are going to put those right this year in addition to resurfacing the road through the tunnel. The same thing happened with Orange Bastion which carries Line Wall Road. Two of the members of that bridge are beginning to show signs of corrosion and this will be seen to this year. On the question of manhole covers we have been experimenting with different types and they are all so heavy that it has been impossible to use the ones that we manufacture. We have got new ideas this year and this year we are definitely going to tackle this job. The construction of the dwarf wall at Camp Bay is completely new. What we find is that the heavy seas in Camp Bay bring onto the lower sun terrace a lot of debris, a lot of stones and a lot of seaweed and things like that. By building a protective wall in front of it we can stop this and prevent the breaking of the tables which we have all along that front there. If there is any one item among that lot that requires clarification perhaps I can be asked and I will explain.

/on the
item just
before that
on the
'roads'. I
would like
to make a
comment

MR SPEAKER

I think we have gone through the whole of Head XII. I am going to ask if there are any other items under Head XII on which Members would like to ask questions.

HON M XIBERRAS

I would like to ask on the last item - No.105 - Erection of wall at Victoria Stadium.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

I would like to give my honourable colleague, the Minister for Sport full credit for this.

HON H J ZAMMITT

This is merely, Sir, a wall which will have four different effects. The post and panelling is the one which exists at the moment on the southern side of the Stadium and the idea is that we want to build this wall behind the old phase of the Stadium. We hope to re-site the wire mesh at present round the hockey pitch to a position in front of the present stands and also erect the wall around the hockey pitch. The major effect is that it will stop the blowing away of nortex which of course is rather expensive and the other effect is that it will not allow access onto the football pitch itself because we will now have a wire mesh in front of the present stand and I consider that particularly hockey that has no other revenue other than the grant given by Government, they will now be able to collect gate money and meet or partly meet their own financial commitments.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for that contribution. I hope he will not spend money without consulting the Associations concerned about his plans connected with the erection of the wall.

HON H J ZAMMITT

I can assure the Honourable Member, Sir, that before I asked for the money I had consulted the Associations concerned and they agree with this.

HON L DEVICENZI

Can I just ask on Item 62 - Reconstruction and Retaining Wall at Europa Road. What stretch of wall is this? Could you just enlighten me on that one?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

If the Honourable member has gone along Europa Road he will find that there are people working on it. This is the wall from below Lathbury Barracks to the Government quarter at 30, Europa Road ~~itself~~ which not only retains Europa Road itself and that quarter but it protects Hospital Hill because if you have a landslide it would affect the whole of Hospital Hill. It is rather a major job and it is going to cost a lot of money.

HON L DEVICENZI

Sir, Item No.82 - Purchase of Life Boat and New Motor. Has the Minister received any representations from anyone regarding the use of the life line which is fired from a gun which appears not to be working properly?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This is, in fact, a boat and motor for Little Bay beach in place of that life line that does not work so well. There will be a lifeline but the major method of controlling and helping people in distress would be by a motor boat. This is at Little Bay.

HON L DEVICENZI

I was thinking of Catalan Bay

HON LT COL J L HOARE

There is already a motor boat at Catalan Bay. Little Bay is the only one that has not got a motor boat.

HON L DEVICENZI

Is the life line working properly? This is what I want to know.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The motors are tested every morning. I thank you for bringing the matter up and I will now insist that the life lines are tested every morning.

HON L DEVICENZI

Thank you.

HON W M ISOLA

Item 81 - Purchase of Beach Furniture. Can the Minister give us some more information as to what sort of beach furniture is being purchased and where this beach furniture is going to be taken to. Is it Little Bay, Camp Bay or Catalan Bay?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Mr Speaker, this is primarily to replace all those deck chairs and sun shades which are broken during the year. In addition to this it is my intention to extend the shading which was put up at Camp Bay as an experiment last year limited to 20 to 30 yards, to extend this to 50 or 60 yards so that people do not have to use umbrellas at Camp Bay which is prone to sudden gusts of winds and it is not uncommon to lose half a dozen umbrellas in a short space of time.

HON W M ISOLA

Am I right in assuming that the £1,900 which we are being asked to vote under this particular item is for beach furniture at Little Bay and nowhere else?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Oh, no. It is to replace all deck chairs and all umbrellas broken at all beaches. The figure last year was £2,200 but we are not going to replace quite so many this year because there were not so many broken.

HON W M ISOLA

Am I right in thinking, therefore, that there is such a thing as Government beach furniture in Eastern Beach and Catalan Bay?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

Not in Catalan Bay. This is the one place where we ~~have~~ not. But there are deck chairs and umbrellas at all the other beaches.

HON L DEVICENZI

May I just ask the Minister for Sports and Information to be sporting enough to give me the information on Item 105 which has just been raised. The Minister did answer that he had consulted the associations concerned. Could the Minister give the House any information on whether there was any agreement on this, or whether there were just consultations.

HON H J ZAMMITT

Yes, Sir, they obviously agreed. The most affected sport was hockey. I went back to them on this one and of course they agreed because they hope to participate in the World Cup in 1978 and, therefore, it would be a good way to enable them to start collecting some money as they can do from now on, I think as hockey is very well supported. Either way may I say, Mr Speaker, that it was high time that we had to close the stadium on this side because we were finding things rather inconvenient. The only association that could have had some qualms would have been the Hockey Association but they did agree to it because from now on they will be able to charge

entrance fee. I must emphasise that the facility is and has always been free. The facility is offered free by Government but if takings are taken at the gate then, of course, Government takes 25% of those takings.

HON M XIBERRAS

Ah, this is the point

HON H J ZAMMITT

Of course, Mr Speaker.

MR S EAKER

From the erection of a wall we are going into the morality of Government charging a percentage. The charge could be made without the erection of a wall.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, I would consider first the erection of a stand because the stand at the hockey pitch, if it is as popular as it is made out and I think it is, hardly provides adequate accommodation. I would have thought it would have been better from a point of view of sport lovers to have had a stand built than a wall round. Does he consider the environmental effect of having a wall put round the hockey pitch, shutting the place in? It closes up the approach to the Airport, it closes Gibraltar up. What is the point of having a wall? Is it to get a few pennies in to the Government? I just do not understand. I would have thought something more artistic could have been done round the hockey pitch.

MR SPEAKER

In fairness to the Government they have said they do not make a charge. They have said that if the Clubs make a charge, then they are entitled to a percentage.

HON H J ZAMMITT

May I be allowed to explain this to the Honourable Member opposite. I think he is well aware that we cannot construct stands on the hockey pitch, that we cannot build a wall right round the hockey pitch because of the 75 yards restriction because of the runway. We can never have a permanent stand for hockey despite its great popularity. What we are going to do is build an angle of a wall from the Security Police Post right round to the present changing rooms. We cannot build anything northwards beyond that. We have stands for hockey and I am surprised that the Honourable Member probably has not been round there. Members opposite will find that when we have the other phase of the Stadium finished we will have what are known as portable retractable stands which the RAF or the aviation authority allow . . .

MR SPEAKER

I will allow you to talk about the proposed wall but not about the stands.

HON P J ISOLA

The result is going to be, Sir, that the wives, girl friends, and children of hockey players who today park their cars and sit in the cars on cold days whilst their husbands or boy friends play hockey, will now have to go in and stand in the rain? Does the Minister consider that an increased amenity to hockey and to the public, generally?

HON H J ZAMMITT

Sir, I am sorry I do not mind a joke but this is a bit too much. It is ridiculous, Sir, that the Honourable Member should think that it is better to allow a wife or a girl friend to sit in a car and watch a game of hockey and not be prepared to pay 10p. And yet wives and girl friends of hockey players are obviously and constantly being asked to go round asking for money and hold bingo sessions and raffles to enable hockey teams to play outside Gibraltar. This proposal will help them to get their own revenue. What is wrong with that?

HON P J ISOLA

The Minister, Mr Speaker, with respect, is misinformed.

MR SPEAKER

The Minister has quite rightly said that he has consulted the Hockey Association. I think in fairness to all we must draw a line somewhere.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, with respect, here it is the elected members who were talking not the Hockey Association. As I understand the position the Hockey Association is not altogether happy with the arrangements and, as I said before, the Minister is misinformed. There are a considerable number of people who do sit in their cars in the area, not just in the roadway but all round, while their husbands or boy friends play hockey which is an amateur sport. It is not a professional sport we are talking about, we are talking about an amateur sport.

MR SPEAKER

We have spoken enough about this. If you want a vote you are entitled to have one.

HON M XIBERRAS

I have some interest in the matter and I have not raised the point directly myself yet. Obviously, this is not the place to discuss policy as regards hockey or sport or anything like that. We are talking about the erection of a wall. I am interested in the Minister's very full explanation of what purpose he intends the wall to serve. I gather from what he has said that he intends to make this wall a first step towards asking people to pay. . .

MR SPEAKER

No, he has not under any circumstances said that. The

Minister has said that the Government would never charge for the use of the Stadium. If the clubs do opt to make a charge then the Government is entitled to a percentage. That is all he has said.

HON M XIBERRAS

This is why I wanted to make sure that there had been consultation on this with the Hockey Association and whether the Hockey Association had, in fact, agreed to this or not.

MR SPEAKER

I am not going to allow discussion on this. That is why I stopped the Minister.

HON W M ISOLA

Mr Speaker, we are all very grateful, obviously, to the Royal Engineers for the work they have done for Gibraltar and under Item 93 I note that there is £1,000 being voted for materials for the Royal Engineers. Could, perhaps, the Minister tell us what projects the Royal Engineers are undertaking for Gibraltar at this particular moment?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

At the moment they are not doing anything except finishing the Rosia Guard room. They gave us a great deal of help with the catchments for which we have already expressed our thanks on behalf of the people of Gibraltar. Next year they are not going to be able to do very much for us, although I am persuading them to enclose Dead Man's Hole which is our emergency refuse outlet. They will enclose it with brickwork or something like that so that when we have to use it papers do not fly all over the area. But the Royal Engineers - if I may take the Brigadier's place for a minute - next year are going to be employed almost exclusively on doing the Naval grounds for the DOE.

HON W M ISOLA

I am grateful for that reply but can the Minister state what we are giving the Royal Engineers £1,000 for?

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This is a reserve in case we want them to do any work we have got the money available there to buy materials. They never charge us for labour but we have to find the material. This is a contingency £1,000 in case we want them.

HON W M ISOLA

What the Minister is trying to tell us is that he is asking us to vote for £1,000 for material for the Royal Engineers when in actual fact there is no need at this particular moment to vote the £1,000. Surely, Mr Speaker, if the matter should arise then, surely, he could come here for supplementary estimates. There is no need to ask us to vote money which is not being earmarked to be spent in the forthcoming year.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

This is not a fact. Very often we have to meet a lot of emergencies such as rock falls at Little Bay and Camp Bay, for example. Although at the moment we have not got any work for them I have not despaired that I can talk them into doing some jobs for us during the year.

HON W M ISOLA

Mr Speaker, Item 97 - Tourist Department - Improvement. I note we have been asked to vote for quite a substantial sum, £7,000. Can the Minister give us some idea of where and how this money is going to be spent.

HON LT COL J L HOARE

The Minister will give way to his colleague who has decided what he is going to do with the £7,000.

HON A W SERFATY

We are going to spend £2,800 in St Michael's Cave, and if the Honourable Member wants I will give him a breakdown of this. £470 in the Upper Galleries; £230 in the Tourist Office; £2,500 in the Air Terminal; £500 in the Alameda Theatre and £500 on the Upper Rock.

HON W M ISOLA

I am very glad for that answer. I see you have spent £2,500 in the Airport.

HON A W SERFATY

In the Air Terminal Building.

HON W M ISOLA

What are the improvements in the Air Terminal which is going to cost £2,500?

HON A W SERFATY

External painting £1,500; new furniture £800 and repairs to entrance doors £200.

HON W M ISOLA

I would like to have a little more information on the £2,800 spent in St Michael's Cave.

HON A W SERFATY

Sir, diversion of drips over stage £150; relaying part of existing drainage £700; painting auditorium tiers £150; new toilet facilities £1,050; new lighting equipment £200; illustrated diorama of Cave's history £500; remote registering thermometer £50.

HON P J ISOLA

After that impressive development programme for tourism in Gibraltar can we expect to have the Song Festival and Miss Gibraltar Competitions in St Michael's Cave?

HON A W SERFATY

I can answer that one.

MR SPEAKER

No, no.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

I think we would like to take a vote on Item 105, Mr Speaker. Victoria Stadium - Erection of Wall.

MR SPEAKER

Well, let us make sure that we know where we stand. We will take the whole vote with the exception of Item 105. Those in favour, those against, passed.

Other Works with the exception of Item 105 was agreed to.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

I feel very strongly on Item 105. I think the proposed wall can literally change the whole character of hockey games in Gibraltar which today is very much a family affair. If the wall is erected and it creates this barrier between family and hockey you may find that some of the players may not even turn up because they cannot bring their families.

MR SPEAKER

Let us now take a vote on Item 105.

On a vote being taken on the above item the following Honourable Members voted in favour :

The Hon Sir Joshua Hassan
 The Hon A P Montegriffo
 The Hon A W Serfaty
 The Hon M K Featherstone
 The Hon A J Canepa
 The Hon J Abecasis
 The Hon Lt Col J L Hoare
 The Hon H J Zammitt
 The Hon J K Havers
 The Hon A Mackay

The following Honourable Members voted against :

The Hon M Xiberras
 The Hon Major R J Peliza
 The Hon P J Isola
 The Hon W M Isola
 The Hon J Bossano
 The Hon L Devicenzi

Item 105 was accordingly passed.

HEAD XII - PUBLIC WORKS NON- RECURRENT was passed.

HEAD XIII - LAW OFFICERS - PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS.

HON W M ISOLA

I notice v • are now going to have an Assistant Crown Counsel. Is that for the coming year.

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL

There is a Gibraltarian on scholarship in the United Kingdom. He is taking his degree at University, he is taking his Bar Finals in May and we hope he will join

the Department straight away.

PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS was agreed to.

OTHER CHARGES was agreed to.

HEAD XII - PUBLIC WORKS - NON-RECURRENT was agreed to.

HEAD XIV - HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY - PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS was agreed to.

OTHER CHARGES

HON CHIEF MINISTER

The question of the allowance to Members is one which has been discussed between myself and the Leader of the Opposition - I will put it in that order so that there is no suggestion that it has been raised by him particularly - and it has been decided that the review which is to be made in respect of certain officers at the top of the scale whose review was not done fully last time and will be done following on the biennial review for the rest of the staff, will go into the question of Members' allowances, generally, and this may or may not be related in some respects to aspects which have been considered in the Constitutional Committee. In the meantime Honourable Members are as prone to suffer from the effects of inflation as anybody else and there has been agreement that allowances of Honourable Members should be increased insofar as Members on this side of the House are concerned to £60 a quarter and insofar as Members opposite are concerned to £30 a quarter and to keep the present proportions of the allowances. I would like to take this opportunity also to point out that there is a modest but I hope effective provision in the estimates this year for some kind of secretarial assistance to the Leader of the Opposition both in sum and mechanically.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, the Chief Minister's account of what has transpired is accurate. One hopes, of course, that the allowance will tide Members over this period until the review takes place. From this side of the House we have made no secret that we would like to see a certain structure here, namely, the possibility of some fulltime Ministers, because we feel that this House of Assembly should be open to all classes of people and at the moment it is no secret that there is a certain amount of financial hardship, varying with Members, in sitting in this House. We hope that the Constitutional Committee eventually will be able to make a recommendation and this recommendation will be able to be implemented in time. The Chief Minister also mentioned a review which is taking place and that the gentleman carrying out the review will also take into account the question of allowances so what the House is voting for at present is very much of an interim. As regards the allowance for the Leader of the Opposition I think this is a very necessary thing if I may say so. I happen to be the man here at present but I think it is absolutely necessary because whereas most Members of the Opposition find that intermittently, they have time on their hands to be able to follow their own particular personal interests or occupation, I think it is no secret that the Leader of the Opposition has slightly more to do. It so happened that the Leaders of the Opposition up to now have had in one capacity or another some secretarial help in a private capacity but I feel it was a handicap should there be a Leader of the Opposition who did not have such secretarial assistance and, therefore, the allowances which is of £100 per annum and the loan of a dictaphone machine and a transcriber, does help quite considerably in discharging the duties of Leader of the Opposition and I am grateful to Members, being the man in post at this particular moment, for this allowance. I think it is always a good thing to make provision for the Leader of the Opposition not because I am here myself, and some time earlier I asked that the allowance of the Leader of the Opposition should be put into the Consolidated Fund along with that of other gentlemen present here today. I see that it has not been done but I think that recognition of the system that we have of Government and Opposition and of the impartiality of certain members of this House should be given effect to in the Estimates. I would like, Mr Speaker, whilst I am about it, to refer by vague allusion to members other than elected members of this House and I would have liked to have seen certain salary or salaries voted out of the

Consolidated Fund. I would put it no more strongly than that. I would not like to go back on things but I do hope that the Government if they have followed my train of thought will be able to bring some sort of amendment at some particular time and, perhaps, they might consider it before this meeting is out, to allow for the translation to the Consolidated Fund of the salaries of certain officers. I think this is most important and if the Honourable and Learned the Chief Minister has not followed me or if the Honourable the Financial and Development Secretary has not followed me I am willing to explain further in another place. But I am sorry that, in fact, certain correspondence that has taken place has not been given effect to in the way I think Members on this side of the House would have liked it.

HON CHIEF MINISTER

Except for the reference made by the Leader of the Opposition to the allowance to the Leader of the Opposition being in the Consolidated Fund, I know of no other suggestion made in this respect.

MR SPEAKER

Perhaps it is not for me to let the cat out of the bag but I think the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition is referring to the Clerk of the House.

HON M XIBERRAS

Yes

HON CHIEF MINISTER

Oh, I am sorry, I see. I beg your pardon. It cannot be done this session, obviously, because it would require an amendment to the Consolidated Fund Ordinance. The salaries were fixed by law and that could not be done in this session. I understand there are one or two other difficulties but, certainly, I have not been appraised directly of it but I will take an interest in the matter and I would only like to say that I hope that all the produce of either the allowance or the machine

does not fall in the office of the Chief Minister.

OTHER CHARGES was agreed to

HEAD XIV - HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY was agreed to.

HEAD XV - MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH - PERSONAL
EMOLUMENTS

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

The increase in personal emoluments for 1975/76 will be seen in the Draft Estimates and which in part has been reflected in the Revised Estimates for 1974/75, can be explained as follows : The amount of COLA interim award amounting to £142,000 has been taken into account, the balance is roughly taken up by normal increase by the appointment of an extra Assistant Matron, by the recruiting of an extra doctor for the Group Practice Medical Scheme, by the recruiting of an expert Dental Surgeon to improve the school medical service also we have our full complement, for the first time, of Assistant Public Health Inspectors - Item 58 on page 41 - which is the cadre from where we hope to send people to the UK to be trained and to take up the vacancies that now exist in the Department. Two are already there apart from the seven shown here, under Technical Assistance, and we are hoping to send this year two or three more.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, is there any particular reason why in the Personal Emoluments column we have no revised estimates for 1974/75 and no actual expenditure for 1973/74?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

Sir, as I understand it in all Departments involving staff you do not get a revision, you just get a lump sum. It is only when it involves industrials that you get the revised figure.

HON P J ISOLA

On Item 6 - Superintendent KGV Hospital - I notice that is an allowance. Does not the Government consider that there has been an increase in the need for psychiatric treatment, a necessity for a full time Superintendent in the KGV Hospital? I am not for one moment suggesting that the present one should not be that person but does the Government not consider that the present Superintendent should, in fact, be fulltime in that particular hospital which - I have not had experience of it but I have had experience through other people of it - seems to lack the modern professionalism that this sort of institution requires nowadays.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

The present occupant of the post was employed prior to my taking over as Minister in 1972 both on psychiatry and anaesthetics. Now he has been relieved of most of the burden of doing anaesthetics and is doing work for the Health Centre on a secondment basis. We recently had the opportunity of meeting a gentleman from the London Medical Committee Advisory Board and he was very impressed and very pleasantly surprised that we in Gibraltar were able, within a group practice, to have a psychiatrist because it is found that in community medicine which is the modern approach to medicine which we have developed, perhaps, by mere chance in Gibraltar, a psychiatrist within a Group Practice is very essential. It may well be that not only do we need, as the Honourable Member has mentioned, a full timer up there it may also well be that we need a full timer as psychiatrist-cum-general practitioner within the practice. But I shall certainly take the point that the Honourable Member has mentioned but I would also warn him that he is not going to stay in the Health Centre for ever. He is only there on a secondment basis until the Health Centre settles down and then he will go to do anaesthetics as at the moment he has slowed down on that particular speciality.

HON P J ISOLA

The reason I say this, Mr Speaker, is that we should be assured that the KGV Psychiatric Hospital should not suffer at all in his administration and the running of it by the lack of a fulltime man in charge of it. I think

the Minister will readily agree that there has been quite a change in modern attitudes to this side of medicine and I would hope that more attention would be given to the KGV Hospital than perhaps has been given in the general expansion of the medical services in Gibraltar.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

I will certainly take the point and I will discuss it with Dr Montegriffo.

HON M XIBERRAS

Mr Speaker, how are we off for doctors, do we have sufficient doctors?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

Within the hospital we have got the full complement. In the Health Centre because of expansion we have tried to recruit one before June or July.

HON L DEVICENZI

Mr Speaker, I think this might be relevant under the Group Practice Medical Scheme. Is there any limit to the time that a doctor can give a prescription for?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

The limit is a month, it is on a monthly basis. If doctors give a prescription for 3 months, what they do is to triplicate the prescription so that the patient does not have to return to the doctor again for another prescription but I am afraid administratively this is not proving a great success and we may have to abide by the contract and by the regulations and insist that doctors prescribe for not more than a month. In any case whether the prescription is for three months or six months he only gets one month's supply at a time.

HON L DEVICENZI

This I take it is a condition imposed by the Scheme. The chemists do not come into this, do they?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

It is a negotiated agreement with the chemists because otherwise doctors could prescribe for a year and the medicines could be sold and it would be a wastage.

HON P J ISOLA

I notice the Senior Pharmacist disappears and instead you have a Senior Dispenser.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

The problem is a complicated one. In a way it is indirectly involved with an industrial dispute going on at the moment and that is why the gentleman that could have been promoted has not been promoted pending settlement of something else that is going on within the Department.

HON P J ISOLA

Is the intention to have a Senior Dispenser and a Chief Pharmacist?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

No, Sir. The intention is to have a Chief Pharmacist and with the decreased volume of dispensing in the Hospital we may not need - I would not like to prejudice the whole issue - but as I see it I do not think we need a Senior Dispenser. What we need is a man who really has control of the place also to take on, as in fact he is doing now, the greater volume of work resulting from the health service which is more administrative than purely dispensing.

HON L DEVICENZI

Mr Speaker, is it a fact that in cases where there is a prescription and no chemist has had the medicine, the patients have to go to Hospital and there have been charged more than 10p for it?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

No, Sir. If that happened I would like the Honourable Member to give me all the necessary information. What we do in the Hospital is that when they have not got the medicine they ring up the Hospital and if we have got the medicine ourselves we send it over to the pharmacist concerned and they pay back or return it in kind.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Could the Minister give us some information about the situation of the Public Health Inspectors? How many should be qualified, how many we have qualified, and what sort of action is being taken to get as many as possible qualified? I think this is a very important factor.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

Yes, I am very glad ^{that} the Honourable and Gallant Member has raised this point now. I intend to raise it again in the debate if only to pay some tribute to that particular section of the Department which I think deserves it. You will find that our establishment on the advice of the present Chief Public Health Inspector should be, as the column shows, under Establishment for 1975/76, but though we have got an establishment there of five Public Health Inspectors, in actual fact we have only got one and that is why that is reflected in the money which is being voted. In order to encourage people to train we have created the grade of Assistant Public Health Inspector where we encourage people with certain qualifications - because they are now demanding higher qualifications for this particular type of job - to join as Assistant Public Health Inspectors and as I have explained at the beginning that is the cadre of people whom we will start sending this year to train as Public Health Inspectors. At the moment apart from those seven shown, there are already two in Britain,

out of Technical Assistance Funds and this year we are hoping to send two or three depending whether one of them gets the necessary 'A' levels. So we are now on the right track **though**, perhaps, a little bit away from the ultimate position that we should like to reach as soon as possible.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

It is obvious, I think, from the high qualifications required from these men now that their functions are extremely important. It is obviously an urgent matter to try and get them there but even more important I would say is to make sure that when they are qualified there are ways and means of encouraging them to stay here and that we do not find that they leave for the United Kingdom. I hope the Minister will bear that in mind.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

I will do my best to retain them, whether I succeed or not I cannot promise.

(a) PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS were agreed to.

(b) OTHER CHARGES

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

Sir, may I give a very brief explanation on Other Charges. The difference between the approved estimates and the Draft Estimates for 1975/76 is a rather heavy one - £242,000 - of which the token figure of £160,000 is included for what is called "free medicine" under the Group Practice Medical Scheme. The difference between the £150,000 shown in the estimates and the £160,000 I have mentioned is due to a saving in the Hospital dispensary. I must, however, warn the House that this may be somewhat on the low side but until the end of the year we shall not know the exact figure. Further increases are due to provisions - £23,000 - COLA and interim award £39,000, and the rest is mainly taken up by extra cost of electricity amounting to £8,000 and also further expenditure under Items 6 and 18 which mainly deal with equipment.

HON W M ISOLA

At the Budget debate last year the Minister said that the Anti-Smoking Campaign would be in full swing by mid-May. I cannot remember seeing anything about this campaign last year, certainly not in the press or television. If there was I may have missed it. Has the Minister made any estimates for the campaign this year, perhaps, under incidental expenses? Has he made any provision, and does he intend to continue this anti-smoking campaign?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

I am glad to see that the Honourable Member now being a non-smoker takes such an interest in the Anti-Smoking Campaign. I am afraid that I err on the wrong side of the book. I have not been able, despite my efforts, to give up smoking but under one head or other some money is set aside for carrying on the campaign not in the, shall I say, intensive manner in which it was started but to carry on to persuade through lectures to school children etc., not to start smoking.

HON W M ISOLA

Mr Speaker, has the Minister considered the idea of banning tobacco advertisements on radio and television as they do in England and warning people about the dangers of smoking like they do in England?

MR SPEAKER

Let us not discuss the Anti Smoking Campaign. Let us ask by all means whether there is any provision in the estimates for carrying out the campaign.

HON W M ISOLA

Well, is there provision in the Estimates for carrying out the Anti-Smoking Campaign as is being done now in England?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

No, Sir, there is nothing in the estimates or in Government policy at the moment to ban advertisements of cigarettes, etc., on television.

HON L DEVICENZI

On Item 2 - Provisions - there is an increase of nearly 50%. Is this because there are more patients because 50% for increased costs seems to be quite a lot if it means provisions as we understand it.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

On provisions the increase is £23,000 which takes only into account the increase in the price of bread which if you were able to save ten loaves a day in the Hospital it would save £700. So you can imagine what the 2 or 3 increases in the price of bread has meant to the Government. The Government is not immune to inflation. We also have got to pay for services rendered and the amount of increases all round has been quite considerable.

HON L DEVICENZI

I realise the increases have been considerable, we all know that, but notwithstanding the bread factor it is a 50% increase. Unless, of course you are anticipating having many more patients in 1975/76.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

If you look at the revised estimates the actual cost for 1974/75 was £18,000 - more than anticipated - and I think in fact that we are cutting it very short.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, I have got two sets of questions and, perhaps, I should put them separately. In the question of Drugs, Dressings and Pharmaceutical Sundries, which is an increase of £150,000 on last year which I presume is meant to take in the free medicines under the Health

Scheme and so forth, has the Minister been able to consider further the questions that were raised on this side of the House on the possibility of extending the free medicines to everybody, for example, insured under the Social Insurance Scheme because it appears to me that anybody in the Social Insurance Scheme is automatically a member of the Health Scheme as he pays a contribution every year whether they are self-employed or employed. Has the Minister been able to consider whether those people should be entitled to free medicines and those aspects of the Health Service even though they may not have their doctor in the Health Centre?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

The answer I give now is the same answer I gave before. That is not possible. And perhaps if Mr Speaker would allow me I will . . .

HON P J ISOLA

Perhaps we can talk about that in the general debate but could the Minister perhaps, venture a figure of what the additional cost would be if that was included?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

We are reckoning that the drugs that are being dispensed under the Group Practice Medical Scheme will cost round about £160,000, but it is too early to say at this stage.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, has his Department made an estimate of what the extra total cost would be if everybody who is an insured person was entitled to free medicines without having to go through the Health Centre. Has an estimate been made on that?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

Sir, the Health Centre would completely collapse apart

from creating first class and second class citizens.

HON P J ISOLA

I am not talking about the effects of that, that can be argued. What I am talking about it, has an estimate been made of what the cost would be, not to the Health Centre in terms of moral destruction, but in terms of cash in drugs and medicines.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

Well, what we have estimated is about £160,000. Everybody who is insured is entitled to go to the Health Centre.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, everybody who is insured is compulsorily paying towards the Health Centre whether he uses it or not. Now, what I am asking the Minister is, has any estimate been made of the additional cost in medicines and drugs if insured persons were to be allowed free medicines whichever doctor they have and whether they went to the Health Centre or not?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

We have based it as if 25,000 people were to be prescribed five items and that amounts to about £160,000. This is based on a formula that is used in the UK. Whether in Gibraltar less people or more people go to the Health Centre is a different matter, it is a question of temperament and character. That is why we cannot make a proper assessment until the Scheme runs for a year. One must assume that the same as in Britain, people who pay the insurance and make the contribution may not be using the Health Service as such and may be going elsewhere.

HON P J ISOLA

I am clear now. So really an estimate has been made for free drugs and medicines on the assumption that the whole population avail themselves of the Service.

HON P J MONTEGRIFFO

On the assumption that each patient is prescribed six items yearly costing £6.

HON P J ISOLA

One sees the issue more clearly now. Could I then ask, Mr Speaker. I notice under Item 15 - Courses of Training in the United Kingdom, that there is a decrease in expenditure there. Is there a change of policy towards training staff in the United Kingdom?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

No, Sir, it is one of the decreases that this Government and I am sure the whole House will be very happy about. For the first time this year our training school has reached such a high standard of training that the Royal College of Nurses have recognised the School and most of our locally trained nurses are recognised and obtain their SRN direct from the school without having to go to the United Kingdom.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Although this is, I think, very laudable and praise must go to all concerned, will there be an opportunity for nurses who do qualify in Gibraltar to spend some time serving abroad so that they do gain the experience that a much bigger institution as there are in England can provide. Could something be arranged in that respect so that although they obtain the academical qualification here they would also gain from further training in the United Kingdom.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

I will not take the Honourable Member up on that point because I feel the smallness of the place and the services that are rendered in Gibraltar - not because of the Minister whoever it happens to be - give a very good training for our nurses. But quite apart from that, that is why the money is provided, to encourage those whom we would like to send to UK for a six-month or nine month course to get a second qualification which we can-

not provide in Gibraltar and that would give them - apart from their training of nurses - a real look at the world outside.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

I was not thinking of people who are going to get wider qualifications. I was thinking also of people who may want to widen their experience by training in other places.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

We are prepared to do that. And, indeed, we encourage that.

HON P J ISOLA

The other point, Mr Speaker. Operation, Anaesthetic, Dental and Consultation Fees. I notice there is an increase there on last year of over 50%. Is this explained by anticipated additional operations or professional treatment, by a larger share of the operation fee accruing to the Specialist or increased operation anaesthetic dental and consultation fees?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

No, Sir. It so happens that when the Rules were laid on the table two or three months ago all the private patients fees now accrue to the doctors. The result of the revision of fees meant that the private sector of the Hospital will be producing £80,000 which though it goes into revenue on the one hand, on the other hand we give it to the doctors. It is their money, not ours.

HON P J ISOLA

Is the position then that a Hospital surgeon has the free use of the Hospital operating theatre and nursing and so forth, and all the fees accrue to him?

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

Yes, except that they pay to us more for a private room and they also pay for the use of the theatre to the Government.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, does the fee for the room cover the economic cost of nursing and food in the room per day.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

Definitely not. I took very much in mind the position that the Honourable Member took very many years ago and I remember your words which were that in the first place you could not push up the price too much because otherwise very few people would be able to afford the private rooms in the Hospital because of the small population and, therefore, one must charge a fee that whilst fairly high is not so high as to have only the select few able to pay for the room. It costs about £15 per patient per day, whether it is in the private corridor or downstairs. We are now charging £8 and before it was £4.

HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, of course I appreciate that and I am not suggesting fees should be put up in the private corridor. I was just following on on my question with regard to the operating theatre and the medical service. It appears that any fee that is paid for the room in effect does not pay for the operating theatre at all, because it is less than what should be paid. So we are really left with the operating theatre. Is the position then that Hospital surgeons or persons in the employment of the Government in the Hospital where private patients are concerned have this concession of the operating theatre and all its frills free of charge, and would such a theatre be allowed on similar terms to any specialist that might be flown out for any particular operation by any private patient? If not, what sort of fee would be charged by the Government? I think this is of some importance.

HON A P MONTEGRIFFO

I think that in the case of a local patient being dealt with by a "local" consultant they do pay something for the theatre, I think it is £10. But in any case when it is an outside consultant they must pay the £10. Whether the consultants in Gibraltar or the BMA in Gibraltar or the Medical Committee allow anybody to come without their consent into the Hospital, is another matter. I think there was a ruling from the consultants in Gibraltar, many, many years ago, that traditionally, no consultant is allowed to enter the Hospital unless it is with the consent of the consultants of the Hospital or they are consultants who are visiting consultants employed by the Government like the ones we get from different hospitals in the UK. Some consultants take great objection to any other consultant coming without the consent of the Medical Committee. If the Honourable Member feels that that is wrong I would be very glad to bring it to the notice of the profession.

HON P J ISOLA

It just seems to me to be a curious kind of closed shop at the expense of the Government.

(b) OTHER CHARGES were agreed to.

(HEAD XV - MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH was agreed to.

The Committee recessed at 6.15 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 6.40 p.m.

HEAD XVI - MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES

MR SPEAKER

Since there are no subheads I would ask the Opposition to ask questions in numerical order of the different items so that we know where we stand.