

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

MEETING OF 25th March 1980

QUESTIONS

AND

ANSWERS

(1 TO 120)

NO. 1 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government amend the Income Tax Ordinance so that wives in receipt of maintenance payments from their husbands for themselves and their children do not pay tax on those payments?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the charging to tax of maintenance payments received by wives separated from their husbands was incorporated into the Ordinance in 1978 to correct an anomaly whereby alimony was chargeable to tax whereas maintenance payments were not.

Since both alimony and maintenance payments are allowable on the husband Government sees no reason why they should be exempt from tax in the hands of the person receiving them.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 1 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, will the Government consider the obvious unfairness of a wife who is in a difficult enough situation being separated from her husband and having to provide for her children, receiving payments from the husband and then finding that those payments that she receives are not net? Would it not be fairer and more just that the position should be the same as when they were married, in other words, charge the tax on the husband and let the Courts take this into account when deciding what alimony or maintenance should be paid? Will the Government consider that situation?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government looked very carefully at this before the amendment was made. It is its view that the Court would take cognizance of the tax implications when a maintenance order is made.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is it not a fact really that it is impossible to state on the part of the Court what exactly will be the tax payable and does not the Government consider that it is fairer that those problems should be on the lap of the husband rather than in the lap of a wife who usually as a result of the break up of her marriage is in a difficult enough situation in having to provide for the physical upbringing of the children of the marriage? Would Government give this another thought?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, my understanding is there is no reason why a Court in awarding the maintenance should not award a tax free amount which would then be agreed by the parties grossed up as to the actual amount that should be paid.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 2 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government make provision in the forthcoming budget so that persons in receipt of Elderly Persons Pensions receive them tax free?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

With your permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to answer this question and question No. 3 standing in the name of the Honourable Mr J Bossano, together.

Sir, in preparing for the budget the Government reviews all aspects of revenue raising measures. I take note of the Honourable Members' questions but I am sure they will understand that I cannot anticipate the budget. I would however point out that the question of Tax Free Pensions for elderly persons also raises important matters of principle which the Government are examining carefully.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 2 AND 3 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

May I ask the Government that when they consider the matter for the budget, will they take into account what the Chief Minister said on a television programme known as 'Letterbox' prior to the elections, when a question was asked precisely in these terms, and he gave a knowing wink and nod that they would be dealing with it sympathetically?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, all aspects are taken into consideration. I would not wish to go further than that.

25 3 80

NO. 3 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government consider raising Personal Allowance under the Income Tax Ordinance in the forthcoming budget?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Answered together with Question No. 2 of 1980.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government explain why it is that only persons with 20 years employment service are entitled to a tax free gratuity?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, tax free gratuities may be paid to any person whether in the public or private sector irrespective of length of service provided that the payment is made on retirement and is covered by the terms of an approved pension scheme.

The twenty year rule applies exclusively to employees of the Crown who terminate their employment other than by way of retirement. These gratuities are specifically exempt from tax because any service in excess of twenty years would not enhance the amount of the gratuity.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 4 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Hon Member say why it is that a person with less than 20 years employment with the Crown has a taxable gratuity?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, that is not necessarily the case. The questions that the tax authorities ask themselves in deciding whether or not a gratuity should be paid tax free is, has the person reached the end of his working life, in fact, is he retiring from work? If so, the gratuity is tax free. Secondly, is the gratuity linked to a pension? If so, it is tax free. So that a person with only 15 years service could retire and get a tax free pension. It depends upon the circumstances in every case.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Hon Financial and Development Secretary not agree that some employees who do receive a tax free gratuity, in fact, get re-employed afterwards?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have no knowledge of such persons, it may be that they do, it may be that they don't, I don't know of any case of my own knowledge.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Hon Member not agree that in fact those persons who do pay tax from these gratuities are, compared with those who have them tax free, doubly penalised in that not only their gratuity is taxed but on top of that their salary for that year, their PAYE code, goes up because the gratuity is added as an annual increment for that particular year, so that on that particular year they pay far more tax on their salary because of the gratuity which is taxable.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

Will the Honourable Member explain why that is not so?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, the basic reason why tax is paid on gratuities is to get away from tax avoidance. It is possible, if gratuities were not taxed, for a person to receive a full salary over a period of 2 or 3 years, a large gratuity at the end of that period which, if all gratuities were tax free, would not be taxed and it is for this reason that to my knowledge most countries have a clause similar to that which we have in our Tax Ordinance. The question as to whether a person has to pay a higher rate of tax on his gratuity because it happens to be paid in the same year in which his service ends, is not necessarily unfair, it could be that the gratuity would be paid at a later date, as it were, after retirement.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Does Government have any plans for improving facilities at the arrival hall at Waterport and is Government satisfied with the general conditions of the shed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, Government is fully aware of conditions at the arrival hall at Waterport.

Funds are being made available for remedial works. The renovations will include works to the roof to prevent leaking.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 5 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Would other remedial works be considered other than to the roof?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I said that funds are being made available for remedial works. The inference is that other work, too, will be done.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, when will these remedial works be put into motion?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

As soon as the House has passed the next Estimates and funds are available, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, when the Hon Member said that Government is fully aware of the conditions, does that mean he is aware of the condition of the shed or the surrounding area and does he intend to improve facilities as well as carrying out remedial works?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, I am aware of the situation at the Waterport and the remedial measures being taken include not merely the work on the hall itself but also the arrangement for people entering Gibraltar.



HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Would the Financial and Development Secretary deal as a matter of urgency, whatever else may be done, with the question of the toilets facilities in that area?

MR SPEAKER:

You will not answer that. We must be very careful about question time now. The Opposition are of course entitled to ask supplementaries but in the light of the number of questions we have had we will keep supplementaries to the particular matter affected by the question and this is outside that sphere. Next question.

NO. 6 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

In view of the fact that lotteries are only permitted in Gibraltar if sanctioned by the Government will Government take steps to prohibit the advertising of unauthorised foreign lotteries in local newspapers?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is an offence to print, publish or indeed to distribute any advertisement or any matter calculated to act as an inducement to participate in a lottery which has not been authorised under the provisions of the Gaming Ordinance.

Section 10(1)(c) of the Ordinance so stipulates. The advertising in local newspapers of unauthorised foreign lotteries is therefore in fact already prohibited.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 6 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, has any action been taken by Government as regards the advert appearing in the Chronicle on 15th March?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, yes, Sir. Immediately following the publication in the paper on the 15th March, a member of the Treasury pointed out to the newspaper concerned that the advertising of an unauthorised lottery constituted an offence. The newspaper confirmed that the advertisement was published in error and has given an assurance that similar advertisements will not be accepted in future. Arrangements have been made to bring the provisions of the Gaming Ordinance relating to foreign lotteries to the attention of all newspapers.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state the amounts outstanding in Electricity, Water and Telephone Bills per quarter broken down into 3 month periods up to and including September, 1979?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the amounts outstanding in Electricity, Water and Telephone bills were as follows:-

Electricity

As at 31st March 1979	£823,698.44
" " 30th June 1979	£766,346.62
" " 30th September 1979	£754,284.02

Water

As at 31st March 1979	£283,471.76
" " 30th June 1979	£323,341.19
" " 30th September 1979	£358,835.32

Telephone

As at 31st March 1979	£374,068.15
" " 30th June 1979	£488,143.13
" " 30th September 1979	£565,089.46

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 7 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, are there no amounts outstanding prior to the 31st March, 1979?

MR SPEAKER:

That is the amount outstanding up to the 31st March.

HON G T RESTANO:

I did ask in the question, Mr Speaker, broken down into 3 month periods. I would like to know what the amounts are outstanding, Mr Speaker, which have not been paid.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, at any moment of time amounts will be outstanding for bills. If I understand the Hon Member correctly, what in fact he is now asking is whether these amounts which in total were outstanding at the date that I have given, included amounts which have been outstanding for a period prior to that date. The answer is that those amounts do include certain sums which have been outstanding for some time.

HON G T RESTANO:

Could the Hon Member say more or less what amounts those are, approximately?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, no, I cannot and it would also be extremely expensive to go through each bill to find out what amounts were outstanding.

HON P J ISOLA:

This shows that there was something like £1½m outstanding on bills as at 30th September, 1979. I presume that figure does not include a large number of bills, because is it not a fact that when the Financial Secretary is talking about bills, I presume he is talking about bills actually issued as at that date, and is it not a fact that for many months before that date there have not been many bills issued in any of these 3 items, is that a fact or not?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, to the best of my knowledge and the figures given to me, these amounts include the bills that were issued up to the period I have given, that is, 30th September would include bills issued for amounts up to that date.

HON P J ISOLA:

If the billing section was behind, as indeed it was by a number of months at that time of the year, the actual amount owing would in effect have been, would it not, considerably in excess of £1½m?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, it may have been but not necessarily because the figures could include the amounts and these figures are made up after the date. If the Hon Member had asked me on the 1st of October, 1979, the amounts outstanding as at the 30th September, it is true that these would not have included the amounts of bills not sent out for up to September but these figures are historic and therefore will have subsumed those amounts that were sent out for the period up to 30th September which issued after the 30th September.

NO. 8 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Can Government state to what use, other than the processing of Electricity and Water Bills, will the computer be put?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the initial task for the computer was the billing of Electricity and Water Services.

The aim is to issue all Municipal Bills ie Electricity, Water, Telephone and Rates in that order through the computer. Once this task is completed it is proposed to put on to the computer the wages of all industrial staff of the Government.

In the longer term it is intended to use the computer for the payment of monthly salaries, statistics, the control of stores and the production of income tax tables.

Subsequent targets will be selected after consultation with departments.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 8 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, are in fact all electricity and water bills now being processed by the computer?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, 60% of electricity and water consumers are on the computer, we hope that the remaining 40% will be on by July this year.

HON G T RESTANO:

And how long after that, Mr Speaker, will the wages and statistics and income tax be processed?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The next task, Mr Speaker, is telephone and rates and it will probably take about a year to get those on. The rest would be an ongoing programme, our programme is for three years.

NO. 9 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, would Government confirm that reminders are indeed being sent out on unpaid Electricity and Water Bills after three months and would Government not agree that except in certain areas of acute hardship three months is too long a period of time for credit to be given?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, I confirmed in answer to the Honourable Member's Question No 26/79 that reminders for payment of unpaid Electricity and Water Bills are sent out after 3 months. The Government is already considering measures to reduce the credit periods of 3 months.

25 3 80

NO. 10 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government consider inserting the date of reading in all Electricity and Water Bills?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, Electricity and Water Bills issued by the computer already incorporate the date of reading of the Bills. Monthly Bills not issued by the computer carry a stamp to denote the date of reading.

NO. 11 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is Government satisfied that the FCA formula represents a fair charge to the consumer having regard to the fact that the cost of light fuel oil represents the smaller percentage of energy generated?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, sub-paragraph 5 of the first schedule to the Public Utility Undertakings Ordinance defines the average weighted cost of fuel and takes into account the fact that the majority of fuel used to generate electricity is of the less expensive thin fuel oil.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 11 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, may I ask, will the Government consider reverting to the old system of increasing electricity charges, doing away with the FCA formula altogether and putting up or putting down the price of electricity to the consumer once a year at budget time as is done with everything else?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Sir, the provision of the FCA clause is incorporated into the majority of public undertakings in Western European countries, therefore, the Government is not disposed towards the feelings of the Hon Member opposite.



NO. 12 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is it a prerequisite of the awarding of aid from the ODA for constructional development that where possible, materials should be bought from sources in England and if so, will Government confirm that it keeps a very close watch to ensure that this requirement is observed with particular reference to specified items both in the original specification of any particular contract and in the contractor's offer at tendering time?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Yes, Sir. ODA Development Aid is granted on condition that goods and services are procured from the United Kingdom save to the extent permitted by any general or specific waiver or as allowed by the ODA. The requirement is observed in respect of each and every project. Furthermore I am informed that this is one of the points which the Principal Auditor pays attention to when examining the United Kingdom Development Aid statements which are submitted annually.

2. The above rule does not apply to public works contracts over a specified monetary limit which in accordance with EEC Directives give companies registered in EEC countries the right to tender.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 12 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

How does Government ensure that where items have been loosely specified within the specifications of the contract and not named as being of proprietary nature but rather a British Standards number quoted such specifications are indeed met particularly when items emanate from countries outside the United Kingdom?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is difficult to answer a question in such broad terms. What I would point out between building contracts generally the sand, cement, aggregate and timber have general waivers on the buy British.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

25 3 80

NO. 13 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government state the total amounts spent in development from the Improvement and Development Fund from 1st April 1979 to 29th February 1980 from (a) local funds (b) British Government Aid Funds?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, with the permission of the Hon Member I would like to deal with this question and the following question jointly.

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Answered together with Question No. 14 of 1980.

NO. 14 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government state how much has been actually spent on the Development Programme under the different Heads of Expenditure in the Improvement and Development Fund numbered 101 to 113 Head by Head between 1st April, 1979, and 29th February, 1980?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, the Improvement and Development Fund recorded expenditure from 1st April, 1979, to 29th February, 1980, is:

Head	£
101 Housing	1,163,423
102 Schools	429,284
103 Tourist Development	7,690
104 Miscellaneous Projects	715,688
105 General Services	190,734
106 Government Offices and Buildings	247,907
107 Port Development	451,961
108 Marina Development	24,829
109 Public Lighting	4,077
110 Electricity Service	120,162
111 Potable Water Service	174,816
112 Telephone Service	116,725
113 Police	NIL
	<u>3,647,296</u>

Of this amount £1,258,560 is from local funds and £2,388,736 from ODA Funds.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 13 AND 14 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask for those last two figures again?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The total expenditure to 29th February, 1980, is £3,647,296 and this is made up of local funds, £1,258,560; ODA funds £2,388,736.

HON P J ISOLA:

I don't suppose the Hon Financial and Development Secretary has handy the difference between the amount spent since 31st October 1979 and 29th February 1980 which was the last time I asked this question, the amount that has been spent since then, I don't know whether he has it handy?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the total expenditure to the 26th October 1979 was £1,667,531 so that we have spent slightly under £2m since that date.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is there any particular reason why quite a considerable amount more has been spent between October and February as opposed to 1st April to October?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Hon Member may recall that in answering Question No. 124 in October last year, I did mention that we had commitments of about £1.2m and the bills for those have now come in so that this is part of the reason why expenditure would appear to be heavier, because of the commitment factor. I have not been able to include in the figures from 1st April, 1979, to 29th February, 1980, the commitments which we have on projects because we have not received accounts from the Crown Agents.

HON P J ISOLA:

Am I right in saying, therefore, that from the Development Programme which commenced in 1978, if we take the £3m spent between 1978 and 1979 and the £3,600,000 referred now by the Financial and Development Secretary, am I right in saying, therefore, that of the total programme announced in 1978, April, amounting to £14m from United Kingdom funds and £8m from local funds making a total of £22m, in actual fact at the end of the second year of the 3-year programme we will have spent £6.6m, at least up to 29th February, 1980. Would that be factually correct?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, there are two points that I would like to make. First of all the £14m from ODA included £1m for technical cooperation which is not included in my figures because they are ODA figures and we don't have them. Secondly, whilst the Hon Member's arithmetic on actual expenditure is possibly correct, I haven't been able to check it, because it is not available, but it does not include commitments already entered into for work.

HON P J ISOLA:

I appreciate that, Mr Speaker, but can the Financial and Development Secretary assure the House that the amount estimated of roughly £22m up to 31st March, 1981, will be achieved bearing in mind that in a period of two years less than one third considerably less than one third, £6.6m has been spent, is there any hope of the Development Programme being substantially completed by 31st March, 1981?

MR SPEAKER:

I will allow a yes or no but no more. We are not going to debate the feasibility of spending this money within the period. This is question time.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, I would merely like to say as I told the Hon Member in October that one cannot give any categorical assurances whatsoever on the Development Programme.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 15 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government consider the making of payments by way of compensation to those who have suffered quantifiable losses as a result of the present power cuts?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, no, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 15 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, why not? Does Government not feel there is some element of responsibility which they should fulfil?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the legal position is governed by Section 11(a) of the Public Utility Undertakings Ordinance which reads as follows: "No action shall lie against the Government, or any servant or agent of the Government in respect of any injury, damage, loss or inconvenience forced by or arising directly or indirectly from any interruptions, defects, variations or discontinuance of the supply of electricity or from any breakdown of or accident to or defect in the Government's machinery or any other apparatus."

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, I am aware of this and that is why I am sure the Hon Member will agree that it needs Government's approbation for compensation to be made, and I ask for reasons for not giving compensation in this occasion when so many people have suffered quantifiable losses?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government has received no claims, the Government has received no enquiries.

HON A J HAYNES:

Would Government's attitude be different, Sir, if they were to receive enquiries and complaints?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

As I stated in answer to the Hon Member's original question, no, Sir.

NO. 16 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

What proposals were put by Government to the Liquidators of Dayfenn Ltd with regard to the payment of compensation in lieu of the resale procedure for Engineer House and have these proposals been accepted?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, the Liquidator appointed to deal with the affairs of L W Dayfenn (Gibraltar) Limited took over an enquiry which had been made in November 1977 to the Company's solicitors as to whether their clients would be prepared to surrender their residual interest in Engineer House in return for the payment of an appropriate sum as compensation and, if so, what amount the Company would be prepared to accept. An indication was also given of the conditions which would govern a resale of the property. Later, at the solicitor's request, an assessment of the value of the property was furnished by Government's valuer.

Following the appointment of a Liquidator sometime in October 1979, the engagement of a private qualified Valuer was agreed between the Official Receiver and the Liquidator in order to obtain from him a valuation of the site.

An estimate of value was submitted in January this year to the Liquidator by the local valuer engaged for this purpose. This was submitted to the Official Receiver and is now being considered by the Government.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 16 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Could the Minister state exactly what this is?

HON A J CANEPA:

I do not think that I ought to state what the sum involved is as it could prejudice the outcome of the negotiations.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Bearing in mind that this has been going on for almost 10 years, could the Minister assure the House that some definite steps will be taken within the foreseeable future to ensure that that land is returned to Gibraltar?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think I can give that assurance, Mr Speaker.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Does Government have any proposals for reprinting the Laws of Gibraltar so as to bring them up to date with the current legislation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Yes, Sir.

The need for a revision is accepted in principle. Council of Ministers in August 1978 approved a revision of the laws of Gibraltar in principle, subject to enquiries being made as to the availability of a person to undertake the work and as to the probable cost.

Because of other commitments, it has not yet been possible to make progress on this matter nor can I say when work will commence.

The revision of the laws will involve bringing in a suitable person, possibly on technical assistance, to be the revisor. The capital cost would probably have to be borne by the Government. I propose to put firm proposals to Government during this year with a view to being able to have the revision commenced in 1981.

In the meantime, work in my own chambers is proceeding for the reprinting of those individual statutes that have been extensively amended. In 1978 5 such Ordinances were reprinted. At present proofs for the revision of 4 more Ordinances have been completed and they will be reprinted shortly. Pending the revision of the laws as a whole, this process will continue.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 17 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Is it not a fact that it is impossible to buy a set of the laws of Gibraltar, and isn't that rather an alarming situation?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, it came to my notice following an enquiry from a practitioner just this week that the laws of Gibraltar evidently are not readily obtainable. I agree that is an undesirable situation and it is one which we will pursue.

HON P J ISOLA:

Should not that give the question of having the laws revised a certain urgency because it would seem to me that if the revision is not going to be put in hand until 1981, it will be 1983 before anybody can buy a set of the laws of Gibraltar?



HON ATTORNEY--GENERAL:

All I can say, Mr Speaker, is that I accept completely in principle the need for a revision and obviously the availability of the statute law is a most important matter. I am reluctant to give a firm commitment to have a reprint done before then when I can't myself see the way clear to getting it done earlier.

NO. 18 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Is Government responsible for the unsightly barrier obstructing the movement of pedestrians on the pavement along Main Street north of where Cannon Lane joins Main Street and for how long has this barrier been in this position?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, if the Honourable Member has no objection, I propose to answer this question with but after question number 19.

The barrier outside the premises at 197/201 Main Street was put there by the Government in September 1978 to protect passers-by from the danger caused by the state of the building.

The barrier now needs replacing and the Government has notified the owners that under section 43 of the Public Health Ordinance close boarded hoards or fences to the satisfaction of the Government should be put up to separate the building from the street and should be maintained in good condition until the Government otherwise requires.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 18 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is there any reason why the Government hasn't taken action in this respect before? I have brought it to the notice of this House before that that is a real eyesore to Gibraltar right in the middle of our town. Why hasn't the Government taken action before?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, this matter has to be looked at in the wider context of the building generally. Over the last year the Government has taken action. The Government's concern immediately has been to prevent danger to the public.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

But doesn't the Hon the Attorney-General realise that that in itself is a danger in that pedestrians have to come down from the pavement at a point in Main Street which is really dangerous because of the narrowness of the street and the amount of traffic going round and the fact that it has taken over two years for the Government to do anything about it. Is there any particular reason why this is so?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

On the first part of the question, Mr Speaker, the obstruction in Main Street is not substantial and I don't accept that the danger caused by the barrier exceeds the danger caused by the building. Insofar as the second part of the question, I think my answer originally indicated that we are pursuing this matter.

HON P J ISOLA:

May I say that on this side of the House we accept that the barrier is less dangerous than the building but this doesn't really satisfy us at all. May I ask from the Attorney-General for an assurance that there will be no parking allowed next to the barrier and enforced because not only do pedestrians have to go off the pavement there but they also have to go round a car that may be parked there, so will the Attorney-General on the question of the barrier, give the House an assurance that the Police will be asked to make it safe for pedestrians?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, what I will do is to give an assurance that I will ask the Police to look at this desirability of controlling traffic in that area because of the barrier.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Would it be possible to have another barrier making a sort of channel?

MR SPEAKER:

Order. We are not going into the possible solutions of the problem.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, are we going to allow that danger to continue there?

MR SPEAKER:

You have brought to the notice of the House the danger that exists but let us not go into the intricacies of the solution to the problem

HON P J ISOLA:

My Honourable Friend did ask for how long the barrier had been in that position, do we happen to have a date?

HON ATTORNEY--GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I think I answered both to the last questions raised by the Opposition dealing first with the first question, I have already indicated that the Government is taking steps to require an alternative hoarding to be put up. In answer to the second question, I did say at the outset that this barrier was put up in September, 1978.

NO. 19 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state what is the current position with regard to Nos. 197/201 Main Street?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, if I may have leave then to answer the second question first.

The Hon Member will recall that a nuisance order was made by the Supreme Court on 29 October last year. This required the owners within 60 days to repair the building in such a manner as to render any recurrence of the danger unlikely within 5 years, or alternatively to demolish the building.

The owners then took steps to demolish the property to the first floor level, thereby minimising the immediate danger to the public.

In February of this year, it was brought to the notice of my chambers that unauthorised building works were taking place on the premises. These were inspected and condemned as dangerous, and a stoppage order was served.

We are awaiting a report from the Chief Environmental Health Officer and the Surveyor and Planning Secretary. On receipt of this, it is intended to apply to the Supreme Court for further directions.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 19 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Why is it now necessary to have a report from an Environmental Inspector? Surely the Government knew perfectly well in October, when this question was last raised, that the owners of the property had sixty days and the Hon and Learned the Attorney-General did give the House an assurance that appropriate action would be taken if the Court Order was not carried out by the landlord, so I would like to know why is there now a necessity to have a further report, surely Government knew before taking the matter to Court in the first place what was necessary to be done?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, the further report is necessary to assess the implications of the further building that is taking place and before that building started we were not in a position to assess.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Attorney-General, is there not provision under the Public Health Ordinance for the Government to move in on a property which it considers to be in a dangerous state and so forth after giving the owner a reasonable time in which to put things right and I would suggest that 2½ years is plenty of time and then charging the owner for the work done? Isn't there some sort of provision in the Public Health Ordinance for this?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, if I can answer the question, there are three aspects to the matter. One is, of course, that we can go to Court and get a Court Order, the second is that there is provision for the Government itself to take action in cases of urgency and the third aspect is that the Government can reclaim the costs reasonably incurred by it in taking action. This case has had all three elements in it throughout. We have always taken the line, I think, that the responsibility rests with the owner. It is his primary liability. Wherever matters have reached a stage where it has become really dangerous the Government has taken steps to ameliorate the danger. We went to the Supreme Court in October last year to get an Order, the terms of which required to render it safe for five years and we are now in the process of follow up action arising out of that Order. We have not lost sight of the question of expenses, we are in the process of itemising the expenses in a future date and we will be issuing a writ to recover this.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON P J ISOLA

In view of the statement that appeared in the press in early January to the effect that the Consultants of the Government to the Varyl Begg Project would be making proposals for the settlement of this long outstanding matter, can Government state whether:- (a) there has been any actual agreement reached as to liability between the Government, the Builders and the Consultants? (b) when work will actually begin at Varyl Begg Estate and is this dependent on whether there is agreement or not between the parties in dispute on the matter?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, I propose to answer the 2 questions raised within this question in reverse order if I may.

Government decided in principle in January of this year to proceed with the erection of pitched roofs at the Varyl Begg Estate. Since then the preparation of detailed plans and specifications and costing of this work has proceeded. It is anticipated that work will commence at the Estate on the roofs by June.

Agreement has not been reached yet between the parties as to liability. In deciding to proceed with the work on the roofs, the Government has reserved its legal rights. Discussions on the question of liability are likely to be held next month. It should be understood that there is other remedial work to be undertaken at the Estate. Action is also being taken to deal with such work. Discussions on liability will be directed towards a comprehensive resolution of the problem.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 20 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Am I right then, Sir, in saying that the Government is now doing what the Opposition asked the Government to do over two years ago and which the Government said it could not do, and that is to start doing the work and let the liability issue sort itself out later, is that not what the Hon and Learned Attorney-General has just answered?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, if I may reply to the question. The Government is now doing what it considers proper to be done at this stage.

HON P J ISOLA:

But may I ask the Attorney-General, does he not agree with me that what the Government is now doing is what the Opposition asked it to do well over two years ago? Is that not a fact?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I do not agree with the Honourable Member that the idea had merit two years ago. The first thing to be ascertained was what was causing the leaks, and as I think I have said before it wasn't until May or June last year that we were in a position where we felt this had been adequately investigated.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, if it was discovered in May or June why wasn't work started then, or is time not a factor in the Government thinking except when there is an election about?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Time is a factor, we are working as quickly as we can.

HON P J ISOLA:

Am I right in thinking, Sir, that when the Government announced that work would begin in the Spring, that the work that they were referring to is the work that the Hon and Learned the Attorney-General now tells us will start in June, and is June Spring?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, it is the same work. There has been an element of slippage, I agree but it is the same work.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can Government state whether the pitched roofs will allow for laundry to be hung on top of them, are they flattened and will they also include a new floor?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Sir, I can only say that laundry could be put on the pitched roofs at the person's own risk.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, I take it then that the roofs will not be flat. My second question was concerned with the matter will a new floor be included under the pitched roof?



HON ATTORNEY--GENERAL:

No, Mr Speaker, it will be a roof over the existing roof, there won't be a new floor.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 21 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, in view of Government's statement made before and during the Election campaign that work on the roofs of Varyl Begg Estate would commence in the Spring of this year, can Government state in detail and specifically what is the work that will commence and who is to pay for the cost of this work?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the Consultants have designed a pitched roof to be constructed with universal steel beams, aluminium joists and aluminium sheeting.

It is proposed to undertake the conversion to pitched roofs block by block, starting first with the buildings most seriously affected.

The rest of the question has, I think, already been answered in relation to, the previous question (20/80) by the Hon Leader of the Opposition.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 21 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, from what I understood from the previous question, the Government is going to leave till later to discuss the question of liability, can I ask the Government since it appears that the Government will be paying for this work initially, can I ask the Government what steps it is taking to bring this four year dispute to a conclusion? Is the Government proposing to issue legal proceedings, is the Government giving a time limit to the various parties involved before they do, is the Government going to seek arbitration? Does the Honourable and Learned Attorney-General not consider that it is time that the Government gave time limits and decided on what action it is going to take?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, the position is that the Government is determined to proceed with the conversion to the pitched roofs. I have not said at this stage that the Government will pay for the cost of pitched roofs. The present position is that the Government intends before June to have further discussions with the other parties with a view to resolving the matter and that I should stress is a separate matter from its decision to proceed with the roofs but at this stage I cannot really comment further on what the position will be in those negotiations. I will, of course, still be here in May and June to answer further questions on this subject.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, but is it not a fact, Sir, that discussions have been going on as to who is to pay for this for the last four years? Hasn't the Government now, even this Government, come to the conclusion that discussions are not likely to bring a solution and that because discussions are not likely to bring a solution the Government is being forced to do what it said it would not do and that is start work until the liability has been decided?

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, I understand that the order in which these houses or buildings will be repaired is in the order in which they are most seriously affected. Can the Government state which buildings are considered to be most seriously affected?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think I would require notice of that question to enable me to give you a considered answer. What I have said is a statement in principle that the Government would work starting with the most seriously affected building and working down.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the Consultants that are designing these pitched roofs, are they the same Consultants that designed the original blocks?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, the answer is yes.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Government confident that they are not going to make the same mistake as they made in their original design?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The Government is satisfied with the proposals.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I assume that if they are satisfied with the proposal and then the pitched roofs don't work, on this occasion the Government will bear the liability, will it?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, when I said the Government is satisfied with the proposals I mean this, that the Government was satisfied that the proposals seemed reasonable. We will of course hold the parties involved in the preparation of the roofs liable in the normal way but there is no reason at this stage to suppose that the roofs will not be effective.

HON J BOSSANO:

Will the Government on this occasion not repeat the mistake that they made on the last occasion of doing all the roofs before they decide to test whether the new roofs are more effective than the old ones, given that on the last occasion when it looked as if there was a defect in the first block, Mr Speaker, the Government did not agree that this was the case until the whole Estate was finished?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, the considered view of the Government's technical advisers is that the pitched roofs will provide an adequate remedy. Perhaps I could say this without detracting from that, that if the work proceeds building by building it follows, of course, that the first building will be one on which they can see how progress is being made and will give an opportunity to consider the matter as it progresses in case minor matters need remedying.

HON J BOSSANO:

Can I take it then, Mr Speaker, that there will be a period to see the effectiveness of the result on the first building before the second one is proceeded with or not?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

No, Mr Speaker, my comment was qualified by my opening remark, namely, that on the advice that the Government has available, we think that the roofs will be satisfactory.

HON J BOSSANO:

The advice that the Government has available, Mr Speaker, is independent advice to the advice of the Consultants, is that the case, and it concurs with the view of the Consultants, is that a fact?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

We have some advice from other Consultants, we have the opinions of our own Public Works technical men.

HON J BOSSANO:

And they agree, Mr Speaker, with the design produced by the Consultants, is that the case? They do not have any misgivings about any possible improvements that might be required which are not being introduced?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

They raised some points and modifications were made.

HON G T RESTANO:

What is the estimated length of time for the completion of the whole project?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The estimated length of time for all blocks is approximately 18 months but, that may be able to be brought forward if it were possible to proceed on more than one block at a time. The rate is one block per month assuming one crane in use, if two cranes could be made available then it may be possible to work at a rate of two blocks a month which will halve the time, but that is an estimate.

HON G T RESTANO:

Could the Hon and Learned Attorney-General say what the total cost estimated for these pitched roofs will be?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, the plans and specifications for these roofs have been prepared and are in the process of being costed so I am not in a position to say yet.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 22 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can Government state what the cost of putting temporary roofs on each block at Varyl Begg Estate came to?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Temporary roofs have not been put on each block at Varyl Begg Estate. If the Hon Leader of the Opposition is referring to the application of waterproofing material at Varyl Begg Estate carried out last November, then the answer is that the flat roofs of two blocks, Valiant House and Royal Sovereign House were treated with bitumen emulsion and a fibreglass membrane at a total cost of £6,851.

NO. 23 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Does Government propose to provide within the Medical Service for a separate budget to enable Matron to plan ahead the provision of secondment of staff to UK on refresher courses?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Sir, it is established departmental practice for financial provision to be made for staff to be seconded to the United Kingdom hospitals to undergo training courses.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 23 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, does the Government propose to create a budget which will enable the Matron to know the resources available and plan ahead the provision of additional refresher courses to those that have been standard practice in the past?

HON J. B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government at this present moment is in fact satisfied with the present procedure under which provision is made under Subhead 17 dealing with courses of training in the United Kingdom. The Government is satisfied with the present situation.

NO. 24 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is Government increasing the complement of clerical staff at the hospital to enable necessary secretarial help to be available for the nursing office?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Recommendations on this matter, together with other questions connected with the Nursing profession, are currently under consideration.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 24 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister say how much longer they are likely to be under consideration before he is likely to have come up with a policy decision on the matter?

HON J B PEREZ:

I think, Mr Speaker, the Hon Member well knows that this is a matter which is shortly to be discussed at a departmental meeting level. Following the meeting with the Staff Associations the Government will take a decision on the matter.



25 3 80

NO. 25 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is secretarial assistance now being provided for the nursing school at St Bernard's Hospital?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Yes, Sir.

NO. 26 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

When does Government propose to provide for an additional Clerical Officer to cater with the high volume of work in the Health Centre Records Office?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Because of representations about the high volume of work at the Health Centre, the Clerical structure at the Records Office is currently under review.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 26 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, has the matter been under review for some time now, or is the review now starting?

HON J B PEREZ:

As far as I am aware the review is now starting.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, how, in fact, are the records kept at the Health Centre?

MR SPEAKER:

No, next question.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, can I put it this way. I would like to know are the records kept by patient or by . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are talking about staff not how the records are kept. We must not expand the scope of the question. Next question.

NO. 27 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state whether the nurses establishment is now at full-strength?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Yes Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 27 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

So there is no requirement for additional nurses, is that correct?

HON J B PEREZ:

The answer to the question is, yes, Sir, the establishment is now at full-strength.

NO. 28 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Has Government now examined the range of non-nursing duties being carried out by nurses of all grades?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

This question was fully discussed when the 1974 Nurses Agreement was under consideration and the results were incorporated in the Final Agreement. If the Hon Member has any additional information on the subject I would be grateful if he would bring this to my notice.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 28 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Honourable Member not agree that in fact what the 1974 Agreement provides for is a range of nursing duties which are apart from those normally carried out by the grades concerned and that therefore nurses at a given grade get paid an allowance for undertaking duties of a higher grade and that the duties that I am talking about in my question refers to non-nursing duties?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I took the question to mean non-nursing duties in connection with extra duty allowance which is payable to some nurses who undertake work over and above what their United Kingdom counterparts do.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, will the Hon Member look into those duties which are not nursing duties as such and not in fact those duties which are of the higher order of nursing for which people are at present being compensated by an additional allowance?

HON J B PEREZ:

I will do so.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 29 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Has Government taken a decision with regard to the recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee that an Accounting Cadre in the civil service be formed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

No, Sir. The Public Accounts Committee's recommendation has been examined in depth by the Treasury and the Establishment Division. On balance it is considered that the setting up of an Accounting Cadre would be too inflexible an arrangement within so small a Public Service and that the same results might be achieved by less formal means which are being examined.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 29 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, what are these 'less formal means'?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The less formal means would be that one would have specialists in accounting working in departments who would be within the general cadre and who could expect promotion within the general clerical and executive cadre. The experience elsewhere with small services broken up into small cadres is that promotion prospects are restricted and this leads to great discontent in the service and clearly the Government has considered very carefully the recommendation by the Public Accounts Committee and is aiming at achieving the results desired by a slightly different and less formal means.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, may I ask whether this decision was taken after consultation with the Clerical Association?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, no decision has yet been taken. I have merely stated that the Government is considering setting up and clearly before any definitive decision is taken the Staff Associations will be consulted. I would add, Sir, that in our consultations we have, of course, taken the advice of the Principal Auditor.

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, I know it is difficult for the Establishment to accept change especially when change has been recommended by an outside body, but surely the Government must be aware on the effect that lack of accounting expertise is having generally on the efficiency of its administration and of its departments, and surely the Government is aware that the recommendation for the establishment of an Accounting Cadre was put forward in order to try and bring some efficiency into that part of Government administration and will Government not reject this outright unless it has some alternative that will improve the situation?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, sir, this is not a question of the establishment rejecting advice from any quarter whether from inside or outside the service, but merely looking at the practicality of the situation. My personal experience with an Accounting Cadre in a service the size of that in Gibraltar is that after four years it proved totally unworkable and we had to revert to a general cadre with specialists in finance. Clearly, as I indicated in my answer, we have taken seriously the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee and what we are trying to achieve are the same results without a formalised Accounting Cadre.

HON P J ISOLA:

Am I right then in thinking that the Government proposes to try and have specialists in finance and accounting, make arrangements to have specialists not just in the Treasury but throughout the whole spectrum of Government departments?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir.

NO. 30 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

What steps will Government be taking to improve the role and functions of the Audit Section in the light of the representations it has received from GGCA and its specialist adviser Mr Jefferson?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Sir, the functions of the Principal Auditor are prescribed by section 70 of the Constitution. Supplemental provisions are contained in other enactments, principally the Public Finance (Control and Audit) Act 1977.

The GGCA has indicated orally to Government that it intends to submit written representations on the staff structure of the Audit office. As yet they have not been received. The Government will consider them when they are submitted.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 30 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Did the Government, in fact, not receive representations during Mr Jefferson's visit to Gibraltar as to ways in which the carrying out of the function of the Audit section could be improved upon to bring it more into line with United Kingdom practice?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

So far as he advised the GGCA I think yes, the scope of what he advised them on went perhaps rather wider than the staff structure as such but also the manner in which work may be undertaken. That, of course, must remain within the ultimate confines that the functions of the Audit office is laid down constitutionally. As I say, at this stage the fact that the representations are going to be made has been intimated orally and written representations are awaited.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Medical and Health Services say how many patients on average are making use of the Physiotherapy Department weekly as compared to the same time last year and how many qualified Physiotherapists are employed at the moment?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, it could be quite misleading to compare figures for a period of one week only or even longer periods. However, for the first two months of 1979-1980 the relative figures were 303 and 416 per week. Again these figures must be related to time taken in the treatment of individual patients as treatments can vary from 10 minutes to 45 minutes.

In answer to the second part there are two fully qualified Physiotherapists in the Department.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 31 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, does the Government intend taking on any extra Physiotherapists in view of the fact that more and more patients are making use of this department of the hospital?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government at this present moment of time is satisfied that the current work load is adequately catered for by the present two full-time Physiotherapists.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, yet with an increased workload of 25% there is a decrease in the staff of 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %. Until some two months ago the staff and the Physiotherapy Department was 3 qualified Physiotherapists. Is the Government satisfied with this state of affairs?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think the Hon Member is wrong in saying that there is one less Physiotherapist employed at the department. The position was that in 1979 we had in fact two part-timers and one full-time Physiotherapist and the position today in 1980 is that we have two full-time Physiotherapists, so therefore in 1979 there were two part-timers making one body and now we have two full-timers which is two bodies. I would repeat the answer to the first supplementary and that is that Government is satisfied with the present situation. However, I would say that should the workload increase we shall look into the matter further.



HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, is the Government satisfied with the premises at present occupied by the Physiotherapy Department?

MR SPEAKER:

No, let us not expand on the question.

NO. 32 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government state how many of the patients given appointments by the ear, nose and throat specialist during his last two visits to Gibraltar were private patients and how many of the operations performed were not under the Group Practice Medical Scheme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, official records are not kept of private patients seen by the visiting ENT Specialist but from incidental notes taken in the Department on his last visit he saw 38 private patients and operated on 5 of these.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 32 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the Minister says that records are not kept. May I ask who, in fact, makes the appointments for the private patients for the Specialist?

HON J B PEREZ:

The appointments are made at the hospital.

HON G T RESTANO:

By hospital staff, presumably, Mr Speaker?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

How is it, Mr Speaker, that there aren't any records kept if members of the staff in Government employment are, in fact, making these appointments?

HON J B PEREZ:

Because, Mr Speaker, these are private patients which are seen by the ENT Specialist and Government feels that we would not be justified in keeping records of private patients nether would we be justified in disclosing information on private patients seen by the ENT Specialist.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is this the real reason, Mr Speaker, why the information is not made readily available because Government does not consider that it is justified in making this information public?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Sir. I did in my answer to the question of the Hon Member give figures.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, information has been given.

HON G T RESTANO:

Approximate figures.

MR SPEAKER:

To the extent that they are in a position to give the information, they have supplied it.

HON P J ISOLA:

In view of the fact that the visits of the ear, nose and throat Specialist are financed by the Government, isn't it extremely relevant to Government policy on this that the Government should know how many patients are seen by this gentleman during the short time he is in Gibraltar who are private patients and how many are Government patients for the purpose of deciding (a) whether they should continue bringing him out (b) in the question of salary and remuneration that they pay and a lot of other relevant factors? I would have thought, Mr Speaker, that it was extremely important that the Government should have records of that especially if appointments are made by their own staff.

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I did say we keep no official records. I also did say that Government does keep incidental notes on the matter so in answer to the Hon Member I did say 38 private patients and in fact 5 operations.

MR SPEAKER:

What you are being asked now is a simple question. Since as a matter of practice the appointments are made by Government officials in the department, do you feel that records should be kept of these?

HON J B PEREZ:

I have already said no, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Would Government reconsider the position? Is this not rather alarming that a person who is brought to Gibraltar by the Government out of tax payers money and for whom private appointments are made at the hospital, that the Government has no official records of the work done by this gentleman or how the workload is split between private patients and Government patients, is this not a matter of concern to the Government?

HON J B PEREZ:

Sir, my answer to the first part of the question is once again no, Sir. May I, however, point out that general patients are not excluded from treatment in the interest of private patients. In fact, the procedure is that no private patient can be seen until all general patients are seen by the Specialist.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Minister who seems to have the information there, how many patients altogether are seen by the Specialist when he comes to Gibraltar and how long are his visits in Gibraltar?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have already given figures for the private patients. During the Specialist's last visit to Gibraltar he saw 51 non-private patients and he carried out 15 operations.

HON G T RESTANO:

My question did say, Mr Speaker, during his last two visits. I have had the information for one visit, not the previous one.

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, that is why in the answer to the question I said that we do not keep official records and therefore I was not able to find the incidental notes with reference to the ENT Specialist's previous visit, the only information I can give to this House is relating to the last visit.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, this is rather important, is the Minister telling the House that his department doesn't know the number of private patients that were seen by the Government adviser on ear, nose and throat two visits ago, is this the position?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Good lord.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government now amend the appropriate legislation (Education Ordinance of 1974 Part X Health Section 55(1)) in order to allow children in private schools to have free dental service?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Education)

No Sir.

The House is owed an explanation.

When this matter was raised by the Hon and Gallant Major Peliza in December, 1978, I was advised, and so informed the House, that children in private schools are not covered by Section 55(1) of the Education Ordinance which provides that the Director of Education may arrange, insofar as resources permit, for free dental and ophthalmic treatment to be made available to pupils in attendance at Government schools. This is correct. What was overlooked, and has now been brought to my notice, is that, under Section 35 of the Ordinance, authority can be given, by order, for the provisions of the Ordinance relating to medical inspection and treatment of pupils to apply, with such modification as may be prescribed by such order, to all independent schools as if they were Government schools.

It is not therefore necessary to amend the Ordinance in order to provide a free dental service to children in private schools and I apologise for inadvertently misleading the House on the last occasion this matter was raised.

Those Hon Members who followed our election campaign closely will recall that my Hon and Learned Friend the Chief Minister committed himself to looking into this matter. In fulfilling, as we invariably do, our election pledges, I can now inform the House that the necessary steps are being taken to make an order providing for a free dental service to all children in private schools.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 33 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, may I just ask why it is that now the order is going to be made and why was it not made when the original question was asked?

MR SPEAKER:

You have been told in the answer. They misread the Education Ordinance, they thought they needed special legislation, they now realise they can do it by regulation and this is what they are going to do.

HON G T RESTANO:

Yes, but why didn't they do it by regulation then, Mr Speaker?

MR SPEAKER:

Because they misread the Education Ordinance. They have apologised.

HON G T RESTANO:

But, Mr Speaker, at the time it was suggested to the Government to amend the legislation and they said that in principle they would not. Why then did they refuse to amend the legislation and now they are prepared to put in an order. It really makes no difference whether it is an order or an Ordinance.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It was in aiming to fulfil our pledge that we would give this necessary treatment that the whole matter was looked at afresh and the previous oversight of Section 35 in the Ordinance was discovered.

HON P J ISOLA:

What my Hon Friend is asking is not the question of legislation, what he is asking really is if this is thought to be a good thing why wasn't it put right in December, 1978, and not now just after an election? That is what I think he is asking.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Because we have had second thoughts and we are improving on the past situation.

HON P J ISOLA:

May I, Sir, congratulate the Government in fulfilling a promise given in "Face the Public" by the Hon the Chief Minister to one of the questioning members of the public and may I express the hope that the same commitment that he gave . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

Order, Mr Isola, we are making speeches. Next question.

NO. 34 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government be making provision for a separate identifiable budget for library books and other learning material for the nursing school in the financial year 1980/81?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is normal practice for the Principal Tutor to request the provision of books and other learning material for the Nurses Training School and his requirements have invariably been met in full. These bids are itemised departmentally within the relevant subhead of expenditure.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 34 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Does this mean, Mr Speaker, that the Government does not propose to provide for a separate identifiable budget?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

25 3 80

NO. 35 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government consider the possibility of modernising the Maternity Department at St Bernard's Hospital?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, this question is under consideration in connection with the 1981 Development Programme.



25 3 80

NO. 36 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government be making provision in the coming estimates of Expenditure for improvement in the amenities for nursing staff at the Health Centre?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, this matter was raised very recently by a representative of the Nurses Section of the T & G W U and is currently being considered. If it is agreed that certain improvements should be carried out every effort will be made to seek the necessary funds.

NO. 37 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government now make available the 1976 Preece, Cardew and Rider Report on power requirements?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

No, Sir.

The report contains advice and comment on the development of electric power and water supplies up to the year 2000. The information in the report affects Government policies on the priorities to be established in development programme as well as the Government's financial policies, including not only capital expenditure but forecasts of possible increases in the revenue to be obtained from the supply of electricity, and hence also Government budgetary policies. The report must therefore remain confidential to the Government as long as it considers this to be necessary.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 37 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, as the Hon the Chief Minister has mentioned the year 2000, will he take into consideration as to when to release this report the fact that there could be a change of Government before the year 2000 and that other people in the House elected by the people of Gibraltar are entitled to know what are the problems facing Gibraltar as regards power for the year and that it is wrong for the Government to keep this a closely guarded secret?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

In the unlikely event of the Opposition being able in the year 2000 or before that to persuade the electorate that it is fit to take office, the report would still be relevant and they would have the opportunity of reading it then. The Government obtains advice on many matters from Consultants, its own officials and departments and other sources. Consideration of advice is an internal process and whilst the Government is answerable for its own actions and decisions, it is under no obligation to disclose the advice it has receive from any source, nor to say whether or not it has accepted or rejected any such advice. As I have already announced, I intend in due course to approach those on the Opposition bench on the question of a possible adoption of a Committee system. Clearly under such a system reports of this nature would be available to Members of the Opposition serving on a departmental Committee. Under the present system the Government must remain free to decide in each particular case whether or not it will disclose such matters to the Opposition.

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, is the Hon and Learned Chief Minister aware that in the course of debate on power development and indeed in answers to questions, Ministers on that side of the House constantly refer to the Preece, Cardew and Rider report and is he not aware that under Parliamentary practice in the United Kingdom it is not considered proper to refer to reports that have not been laid on the table and that it is impossible for the Opposition to take a constructive . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

Order. That is not correct. The parliamentary practice is that you must not quote from a report.

HON P J ISOLA:

I know the Hon the Chief Minister will rely on technicalities but does he consider it fair, Mr Speaker, to this House and to the people of Gibraltar that a report of such importance and which is constantly referred to by the Government in debate in this House, should not be made available to the Opposition so that they can take what I am sure the Government would like us to take, a constructive approach to power development to the year 2000?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

We hope that Members of my Party will continue to be here by the year 2000 to continue giving the necessary advice.

HON P J ISOLA:

That looks a bit dodgy now, Mr Speaker, judging from the last election results.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, would Government consider revealing that part of the report which is already outdated, like earlier recommendations which are no longer effective?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, for the same reason and an additional one and that is that there have been further reports updating the matter and it would not be fair to look at one part of the report without looking at the others and the whole of them are still under consideration by Government.

NO. 38 OF 1980.

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is Government aware of the frequent leakages occurring at the water tank situated on the south side of the Electricity Generating Station adjacent to the USOC Hockey Pitch?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, no water tank on the South Station leaks since these were internally coated with glass-fibre products a few years ago. It is likely that the Hon Member is referring to sea-water overflowing when one of the header tanks is being filled shortly after an engine has either started or stopped. This may occur for a few minutes until flow rates are stabilised.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 38 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Is the Government aware that it does not occur for a few minutes. I have seen it myself at weekends at USOC Hockey pitch and it goes on for at least half an hour. I have seen this on a distinct number of occasions. It constitutes an eyesore.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Sir, I would like to answer this question in various parts. First of all, the City Electrical Engineer and the Deputy City Electrical Engineer have inspected the area thoroughly and anyway this area is manned on a regular basis and no report of any leakage has been received from the men. Secondly, rain water can accumulate somewhere in the Bastion structure which drips through one of the weep-holes and this could be anywhere on the southern side of the Station. This may account for the water you have seen. Thirdly, the fact that we overfill the engines to some extent, this is in order to ensure that the engine does not run short of water.

NO. 39 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, in view of the problems facing the public with the current power cuts, will Government assign an official to a particular telephone to whom the public may address themselves for their inquiries?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, normally a round-the-clock service to answer consumers' service calls and enquiries is already provided at the Generating Station. Additionally when power cuts are expected, in order to minimise inconvenience to the public, GBC radio and television are asked to co-operate by relaying information. To assign an official to a particular telephone would probably result in that line being continuously jammed by incoming calls.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 39 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, is the Minister not aware that the vast majority of the people of Gibraltar are unaware as to the exact time of the next power cut and as such they have difficulties with cooking and so forth? I ask therefore if the Minister would not be prepared to accept in principle any measure to facilitate the public at large in their inquiries as to the exact time of power cuts?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Sir, we do that. In fact, as I have said in answer to the question, they can ring the Generating Station and we do contact GBC radio and television and ask them to co-operate by relaying information. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to estimate when it is necessary to shut down an engine immediately and this is probably what the Hon Member is referring to. If the Hon Member would care to read my lengthy statement to the House which I made at the last meeting of the last House of Assembly, he will realise that a comprehensive and full answer was given by me to this particular question.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, what is really being asked is that on occasions when there are power cuts there should be a telephone number which people can ring. May I tell the Minister that the number, which is 5957, in the Generating Station, during the recent power cuts one either got the engaged signal or when one actually rang and the telephone was ringing one did not get a reply and this was my experience and the experience of a lot of people and what the question is really asking, Mr Speaker, is that on such occasions somebody, possibly in the Secretariat, should be sitting there to answer the public's inquiries and not be running away from them.

MR SPEAKER:

The answer to that one has been that if such a service were to be given that the same thing would happen, that it would be engaged and that no service would be given. That is what has been said.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, may I say, and it is my own personal experience and people to whom I have talked, who rang this number and got the dialling tone, they got no reply. What the Opposition is suggesting is that in a time of power cuts we know how busy everybody in the Generating Station must be and what we say is that there should be a sort of command post in the Secretariat which gets the information from the Generating Station and gives it to the public who are entitled to know.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Sir, if I may answer that question. The command post can never be in the Secretariat, the command post must be in the switchboard because they are the ones who know what is going on. This is why the number 5957 goes directly to the switchboard and they are able to answer. Unfortunately, a lot of people ring up and this particular number very often is engaged. Similarly, if we put a man there just to answer the phone exactly the same procedure would happen and the lines would continuously be jammed and the public would unfortunately not be kept informed. We do notify GBC radio and television as soon as possible.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government make a comprehensive statement on the state of the engines at the Generating Station and the full reasons for the extensive periods of power cuts that have been experienced throughout Gibraltar recently?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, the reason for the power cuts have already been given wide publicity by the information media from the various Government communiques during the period in question.

At the time of preparation of this question, with the exception of two small engines in the South engine room, the remaining five sets were at present in service.

In the north station, at King's Bastion South engine No 9 is undergoing its regular major overhaul. There have been problems with the foundation of this engine as reported in previous meetings of the House. However, recently core samples have been extracted and these indicate that the concrete is very sound and there is no evidence of deep oil penetration. It is therefore considered that remedial works similar to those carried out recently on No 12 will be possible with the engine in situ. This work will follow on directly after the overhaul is completed.

Engines Nos 10 and 12 are in service and were recently inspected. These inspections established that the engines were in good working order. Engine No 12 will require to have the torsional damper wheel changed as part of normal maintenance at an appropriate moment.

There are no major problems envisaged with engine No 13. On the advice of the manufacturers all the big end bearings had to have their shells replaced following their introduction of a re-designed type.

As announced recently Engine No 11 sustained a failure of its crankshaft and the matter is being investigated with the manufacturers as to the best possible means of restoring this engine.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 40 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I would still like to know the full reasons for the power cuts. Whether the Government had press releases or not, a release in the local press is, I think, neither here nor there, we certainly on the Opposition have never received any of those press releases, so I would like to have in this House an answer to that question.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, it is obvious to anyone that the problems with the power cuts arose as a result of maintenance of No 13 and No 9 engine combined with the breakdown of No 11 engine and, in fact, in the press release which was given out on the 12th March, 1980, regarding the situation at the Generating Station, this was amply covered as well as further press releases dealing with the problems at the Generating Station. Therefore, the fact that power cuts have occurred are really due to the fact that whilst two engines were being overhauled we had the unfortunate experience that No 11 engine developed a broken crankshaft.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, was it entirely and exclusively due to the breaking down of the engines that there were power cuts?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I have already, I think, answered this question. It is not only No 11 engine, it is the fact that two engines were being overhauled at the same time.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Minister, is there any truth in the statement made by the Resident Officer of the Transport and General Workers' Union at the time in which he said that the engines had been overworked, had been overloaded, and that the real reason for power cuts was the lack of capacity at the Station. Is that all wrong, can the Minister tell us that?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I believe that I have answered that question previously regarding the capacity of the engines at King's Bastion North. I did that at the last meeting of the House and I said that the capacity at King's Bastion North was adequate for the needs of Gibraltar.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member has not answered my question which is, is there any truth in the statement made by the Resident Officer of the Transport and General Workers' Union in relation to the reasons for the power cuts? Has the Government got a view on this?

MR SPEAKER:

The answer has been no, there is sufficient capacity. The reasons given are the breakdown of one engine whilst two were being overhauled.



HON P J ISOLA:

Is the Minister then saying that there isn't any truth in the statement made by the Resident Officer of the Transport and General Workers' Union?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, if the Hon Member would care to read press releases, Mr Netto's contribution to this affair was denied publicly and the answer to that is no.

HON G T RESTANO:

What were the reasons for any industrial problems?

MR SPEAKER:

No, next question.

NO. 41 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state, month by month, how much electricity has been either purchased or borrowed from the MOD from September, 1976, to February, 1980?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, yes and no. For reasons of administrative ease, the transfer of electric power between the Gibraltar Government and Ministry of Defence is reconciled on a quarterly basis, and I will give these instead of monthly figures. The position since the beginning of October 1976 has been as follows:-

QUARTER	UNITS IMPORTED BY GIB GOVT	UNITS EXPORTED BY GIB GOVT	BALANCE DURING QUARTER
4/76	223,171	199,345	23,826 in favour of MOD
1/77	584,070	506,600	77,470 - " -
2/77	312,940	272,878	40,052 - " -
3/77	46,958	14,994	31,964 - " -
4/77	159,616	40,828	118,788 - " -
1/78	244,871	47,078	197,793 - " -
2/78	187,805	560,245	372,440 - " of Gib Govt
3/78	1,677,374	110,987	1,566,387 - " of MOD
4/78	377,022	97,055	79,967 - " -
1/79	396,068	587,597	191,529 - " of Gib Govt
2/79	86,020	158,944	72,924 - " -
3/79	568,715	322,957	245,758 - " of MOD
4/79	380,026	99,885	280,141 - " -

As at 31 December 1979 the balance stood at 2,072,809 KWH in favour of the MOD, this amounts to approximately 1.23% of the electricity generated at King's Bastion during the same period. Payment in cash has been effected for 1,900,000 KWH in accordance with a negotiated agreement.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 41 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

What was the amount involved there, can the Minister say?  
What was the payment effected?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

In fact, we did vote it in the House, it was £62,240 and this was paid in three stages.

HON P J ISOLA:

That was the first time that the Gibraltar Government repaid the MOD for electricity in cash rather than in kind, is that so?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, that is so. We did pay the MOD in cash this time and not in kind.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, does that not indicate that there is, in fact, a lack of generating capacity in the Generating Station and that there is some truth . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going back on a question which has been answered. I know you are going to ask whether there is some truth in what Mr Netto has said.

HON P J ISOLA:

Precisely, Mr Speaker. How can the Minister in these circumstances say, in answer to the previous question, that the statement of the Resident Officer of the Transport and General Workers' Union in this regard was wrong?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I have already said that the statement of Mr Jose Netto was wrong. I would like to add that about three-quarter of the units due to the MOD date from the 3rd Quarters of 1978 when No 13 engine was out of commission for a major overhaul and replacement of all connecting rods and No 10 engine was out of commission whilst the foundation was being rebuilt.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 42 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government make a comprehensive statement on the proposed purchase of a five megawatt generator?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, acting on the advice of our Consultants, the five megawatt generator which Government proposes to purchase will be installed as the first unit in the new power station at No 5 Jetty.

A unit of this size cannot and in any case should not be installed at King's Bastion and it is economically and environmentally logical that it should go on the new site.

Preece, Cardew and Rider in consultation with engine suppliers are satisfied that it is feasible to have such a set in operation by the winter of next year, as was stated in the Chief Minister's recent statement on the subject.

Three engineers from Preece, Cardew and Rider visited Gibraltar for several days a fortnight ago, when extensive discussions were held with officials of the Government.

Preece, Cardew and Rider have now been appointed as Consultants for the project and it is expected that tender documents can be prepared in time to meet the programme.

The CEE will be holding a further meeting with Preece, Cardew and Rider in London next week.

It will be clear to everyone that until designs are completed nothing more comprehensive can be said at this stage.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 42 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister explain the reason for a slippage of 6 months on the installation of a new generator as announced by the Chief Minister, not on February 28th in this House but on October 31st in this House? Can the Minister explain for the slippage of 6 months which his statement that it would be installed by the winter of 1981 implied?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I think the Hon Member has got his facts confused. There is no slippage and in answer to his question I have stated - he mentions winter 1981/82 - and I have said that Preece, Cardew and Rider in consultation with engine suppliers are satisfied that it is feasible to have such a set in operation by the winter of next year, this is 1981/82, as was stated in the Chief Minister's recent statement on the subject, therefore, there is no slippage at all.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister if he does not recall that the Hon and Learned Chief Minister said in this House, on the motion for the adjournment on October the 31st, 1979, that he had consulted with the departmental officers of the Engineer's department and that a 5-megawatt generator would be in operation within 18 months which brings us, Mr Speaker, to April of, 1981, and not the winter of, 1981, will the Minister agree that to be a fact? Perhaps I could refresh the memory of the Minister as to what he said in this House on December 5th, 1979.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I maintain that there is no slippage. Work has started and, in fact, there is a motion coming up on this particular subject. Work is progressing on the preparation of documents, site investigations, etc, and this engine will be in commission by the winter of 1981.

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked a simple question. Can you reconcile your statement now that it is going to be ready by the winter of 1981 with the statement made by the Chief Minister that it should be ready by April, 1981 it is as simple as that.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister answer that question before I remind him of what he said on December 5th, 1979, in this House, categorically?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

I beg your pardon, Mr Speaker, could you repeat what you just said?

MR SPEAKER:

What you are being asked is that the Chief Minister made a statement in this House in October 1979 to the effect that this new generator would be installed by April, 1981. You are now saying it will not be operational until October 1981. Can you explain the difference in time?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, that is a difficult question to answer because different manufacturers have got different times of delivery. Some of them can quote delivery within 12 months, others can quote within 18 months and what we want to do, since we have decided and it is a matter of policy to start a new Generating Station, we have decided to go the whole hog and make sure we have enough power for Gibraltar for the future.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

There is a motion about the future and I will make a statement then. I am not prepared to get involved in question time.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I did ask for a comprehensive statement and I would have thought that in the comprehensive statement the House would have been told the reasons for the slippage from 18 months to 2 years of what the Chief Minister said in the House. I must ask the Minister for Municipal Services whether he still stands by what he said in this House on December 5th in answer to Question No 195 of 1979 in which he told the House that three manufacturing companies had been to Gibraltar already and we asked what time limits these companies had given and the Minister answered: "Yes, Mr Speaker, in fact, all of them have and the time concerned is all within the time mentioned by the Chief Minister in his statement to the House at the last meeting." And when he was questioned further, Mr Speaker, and there is a lot I can remind him of, a lot of things he said there, but if I may go to my last supplementary which said: "So the Minister is confident that within 18 months we will have this 5-megawatt generator and he confirms and assures the House that we shall have it, is that the position?" The Minister answered: "The Minister is not only confident, he gives the House every assurance that you will have one." Can I ask the Minister what sort of assurances is he now giving, are they the assurances of the Chief Minister who . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

Order, I will not have a question which is going to last seven minutes, that is making a statement.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask a simple question, is the Minister for Municipal Services confirming in his statement in this House the statement made by the Chief Minister on October 31st, 1979, or the statement made by the Chief Minister in this House on February 28th, 1980, which of the two statements is he confirming because there are six months difference between them?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, in the mounting, design and commissioning of an engine this is something which does always take time. Therefore, it is not as easy as just putting a car in No 5 jetty. This requires some thought, it requires a great deal of work. If the Hon Member cares to call it slippage for publicity purposes as he usually does the fact that he is not electioneering now probably tends to tone him down slightly but I have said that we are proceeding with a new Generating Station and this is what we aim to do, we shall have an engine by the winter of 1981/82, and this is exactly what I have said in the answer to the question. The fact that 18 months was said, 18 months can take anything up to settling down the engine but the commissioning of an engine could take some extra time.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question. We are going to debate this matter and I will allow no further questions.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I give notice that I am thoroughly dissatisfied with the answer and I shall raise this matter on the motion for the adjournment notwithstanding there is a substantive motion.

MR SPEAKER:

Most certainly.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government state how many applicants are on the waiting list to have new telephones installed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, at the time the answer was prepared there were approximately 500 applicants on the waiting list.

I have checked today and the number of applicants is 490.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 43 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Could the Minister state how long will it take, on average, for a subscriber to get a telephone installed?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, this really depends on the availability of cables because in some districts we have no cables and we have been unable to lay new telephones because of this particular fault. One of the areas in which this arises is mainly Catalan Bay where we have some applicants dating back as far as 1976. I am glad to say that the cable in Catalan Bay has been installed, the last section was laid only last week and subscribers are expected to be connected as soon as distribution cables are completed.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

How many subscribers will that involve?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

We have 21 subscribers in Catalan Bay.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So really when the Minister is talking about difficulty with cables it appears to me that there are only 20 affected in that respect or are there other areas which he could specify?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, this is one area which I mentioned as an example. There are obviously other areas which are similarly affected. We are also laying down some development cables, this is what we have done in Catalan Bay, and I am hopeful that during the coming summer months when the maintenance and repair of lines will go down because of the good weather, we shall be able to put in a higher number of telephones that we have been able to put in during the winter months where most of the men have been engaged in repairing existing lines.



HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister say that in fact the delay of all the 400 are due to the cables, if not, how many are due because there is not enough staff to connect them?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

The fact is that we do have some shortage of staff. There are three parts in the Telephone Department which must go hand in hand. First of all is the replacement of cable programme that we have already started and this is progressing at a very, very satisfactory rate. In fact, we have cut down the number of cable faults by 85% in the last year. On the other hand there are telephone installations which we have to do and we have to repair telephones. The other problem which also gives us quite a lot of work is telephone transfers from people who move from one home to another home and this year we have done about 300...

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to review the whole of the work of the department. The question you have been asked is, how long does it take for a new telephone to be installed? It is as simple as that and we do not want to expand beyond the scope of the question.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, for a new telephone to be installed it certainly depends on the area. We give priority to certain cases, medical cases, business applications and certain Government organisations.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

How long are those 500 people who are still on the waiting list likely to wait, any idea at all?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, we hope to install between 320 to 350 telephones in the coming year.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

25 3 80

NC. 44 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Has the report of the British Post Office Consultants on the introduction of International Subscriber Dialling been received?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The report of the British Post Office Consultants has not yet been received. The report is expected at the end of March.

NO. 45 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state how many of the telephone old type lead main cables remain, what areas they service and the estimated programme for their replacement?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

There are 30 lead type main cables still in service. These cables serve all over Gibraltar.

It is envisaged that another five lead cables will be replaced during the next financial year, serving mainly the upper and lower town areas.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 45 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, why only five main cables to be repaired in twelve months, cannot more be repaired?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, in answer to a previous question I said that this was a gradual replacement of telephone cables and I said that we would substitute about five cables a year, therefore, taking about 6 years in the complete replacement of the cable programme.

HON G T RESTANO:

That doesn't answer my question, Mr Speaker, my question is why cannot more be done in one year?

MR SPEAKER:

The answer given is that it is a gradual process and they have scheduled to change five cables a year. Next question.

NO. 46 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state how many public telephone boxes there are and how many of these are in working order?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

There are 21 Public Telephone Boxes in Gibraltar. Eight of these are in working order.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 46 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Does the Government think we need 21 Public Telephone Boxes, Mr Speaker?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, no, I do not think we need 21 Public Telephone Boxes in Gibraltar. Unfortunately these Public Telephone Boxes are extremely prone to vandalism and the policy of the department is to introduce the new electronic type of coin box which is suitable for international calls to be made via the operator and install them at suitable places where they can be looked after, places like the Health Centre, the Hospital, the Airport etc where they will be of great use. It is also thought that some of the Telephone Boxes could well be resited in places where they will not be prone to such vandalism and we hope that we can get the help of the Tenants' Associations as well in this regard.

HON J BOSSANO:

Do I take it, Mr Speaker, that the Government will be doing something shortly to put the ones that are not operational in working order or else do away with them because there seems to be no point in having unused and unusable ones?

NO. 47 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Has Government received any reply from Her Majesty's Government on the question of tuition fees to be paid by our students in the UK as from September, 1980?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Education)

No Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 47 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, what does the Minister propose to do about that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the matter was raised by the Chief Minister on February 20th. The matter was picked up by the Education Department from articles which appeared in the United Kingdom Press on 2nd November, 1979, following the publication of the Government's White Paper on Public Expenditure on 1st November, 1979. The financial implications as it would affect Gibraltar were then looked at by the Department of Education. A detailed memorandum was then sent to the Financial and Development Secretary on 18th December, 1979, and a paper for Council of Ministers on 16th January, 1980, and again on 6th February, 1980, when it was agreed that the Chief Minister should make representations to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. This was done on 20th February, 1980, and as I have already stated no reply has yet been forthcoming.

25 3 80

NO. 48 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, has Government yet engaged a play-leader and if so when can he be expected to arrive and furthermore has the post of trainee play-leader been advertised?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Education)

Sir, Mr Colin James Hooker, formerly an Adventure Playground Leader with Crawley Borough Council at Furnace Green Adventure Playground has been engaged and is expected to arrive in Gibraltar on 25 April, 1980.

The post of Trainee Youth and Community Worker will be advertised shortly with a view to an appointment being made in early May. Part of his duties only will be associated with the Adventure Playground.

25 3 80

NO. 49 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, would Government be prepared to extend the use of the Government Nursery at Hargraves to all working mothers under the same conditions regardless of who their employers are?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Education)

Sir, the Government Nursery already accommodates children of working mothers irrespective of whom their employer may be. At the present time there are 34 children on roll at the Government Nursery of which 14 attend on a full-day basis, 12 for mornings only and 8 for afternoons only. The mothers of 20 of these children are employed by Gibraltar Government, 5 other mothers are employed by MOD and 9 are employed in the private sector.

THE HON A T LODDO

Why were perfectly sound reinforced quarter inch glass panes replaced by plywood boarding external doors and windows in Notre Dame School?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Education)

Only glass panes below approximately 4 ft above floor level have been replaced by plywood boarding at Notre Dame School. This has been done as a safety measure in a situation where small children could quite easily injure themselves if the glass panes were to be broken accidentally. The plywood boarding has yet to be painted and it is intended that this will be done as part of the painting programme during the coming summer.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 50 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, why were they put in in the first place and have been there for 6 years? Wasn't the danger there then?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It has become considered as a recognised possible point of danger to have any glass below 4 ft from the floor and progressively in all schools where there is such glass it will be replaced.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, why were the glass panes, once removed, left lying around on the ground for months until they had to be collected by the caretaker? Some of them were smashed.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am not aware of that but I will look into it.



NO. 51 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say whether all school children who enjoy subsidised bus fares are allowed the same subsidy?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Education)

At the present time all children who are entitled to subsidised bus fares do not enjoy the same subsidy. It was decided last year that the existing transport arrangements be rationalised on the basis of a 50% subsidy to meet the requirements of all children from Varyl Begg who need to attend Bishop Fitzgerald Middle School during the first two years of the Middle School age range, all children from the North Gorge and sponsored children who attend St Christopher's School. In addition it was agreed that the 25% subsidy currently enjoyed by boys of secondary age living south of a line from the bottom of Witham's Road to the Casino should continue but be increased to 50% as soon as financial resources permit. In the case of Catalan Bay currently a bus is hired at the expense of Government for the 40 children or so who attend Middle and Secondary Schools in the town.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 51 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, is the position then that some children receive full subsidy and others only receive half, is that the position?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, some children receive 50%, some get 25% who are going to be increased to 50% as soon as possible, and Catalan Bay gets 100%.

HON P J ISOLA:

That is what I mean, Sir, the position will be that some school children will receive 50% and others will receive 100%. Why is that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The question of the Catalan Bay who get 100%, this is a historical situation, they have acquired rights and the intention will be some time in the future to phase it down to the 50% rate.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, how does one acquire such rights?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

This has been done to my knowledge for at least the last 20 years, since the William's Way Tunnel had to be used.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, does that mean that in 20 years time the other school children will also enjoy a 100% subsidy?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

On condition that there is a landslide like the one near William's Way, it might be considered, yes.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, when will the phasing down be done of the 100%?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

One would hope that this will be done slowly but possibly starting in the next financial year or so?

HON G T RESTANO:

In what manner will this be done?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The new people coming in will probably be only given the 50% subsidy until those who have the 100% have gone away with natural wastage having grown out of their school life.

NO. 52 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Why do student teachers, after qualifying, not get paid until they start work in the Autumn term?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Education)

In accordance with conditions of service applicable to teachers in the UK all newly trained teachers, where they are offered teaching appointments by local education authorities, are appointed with effect from the beginning of the academic year following the completion of their training courses. In keeping with UK practice it was agreed in 1978 that the same conditions of service should apply in Gibraltar. The incremental date for all newly appointed teachers is now 1 September.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 52 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, but on the other hand teachers in the United Kingdom are not obliged to return to their birthplace or the authority which employed them for work whereas here they are, they cannot take employment elsewhere.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Is that a question, Sir, it seems to be a statement? If it is a question may I have it repeated then, please?

HON A T LODDO:

You have compared them with England, when in England they are not compelled to return to teach under the authority with which they are employed.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I don't follow the logic of the question.

MR SPEAKER:

The question that is being asked is that since in Gibraltar they are required to come back to work should this not be a reason why they should be paid as from the time that they qualify? This is the way I understand it.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the situation here is that we employ them from the beginning of the academic year which is the same system as in the United Kingdom. If we are going to have parity with the United Kingdom we must have parity all along the line.

HON P J ISOLA:

I would agree with the Hon Member if that is what he is saying but, surely, if we are to have parity with the United Kingdom and the same conditions of service there shouldn't be a condition imposed on a student who goes to England to train obliging him to come back to Gibraltar and work for that authority and nobody else, that doesn't exist in England so why has Government decided to follow the United Kingdom on that particular point of practice and not on all the others if we are to have similarity?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We follow as near as possible to the United Kingdom practice. Of course, a teacher in the United Kingdom probably costs the local authority £300 or £400 a year whereas here it costs nearly £2000 a year so you can't have absolute parity.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does the Minister consider it fair that a married man, for example, a married student who goes to England to train, comes the end of the summer term, comes back with his wife and child and his pay stops and he can't get another job because on the 1st September he has to work for the Government as he is legally bound to. Shouldn't it be two-way, shouldn't the Government pay him right through from the date the man starts to go to learn his trade because of his commitment to the Government?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It is very seldom to my knowledge, Sir, that we send married men to become teachers. If they get married while they are away they should really face up to the responsibilities in going into the matrimonial state. There have been one or two exceptions where a married man has been granted some measure of allowance in the intervening two months.

NO. 53 OF 1980.

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Education confirm whether University Graduates are denied financial backing for an extra year to enable them to obtain a professional qualification in teaching?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Education)

Sir, students who successfully complete an academic degree course under the Educational Awards Regulations are not automatically granted financial support to enable them to do a post-graduate teaching certificate. The decision as to whether financial support can be given in individual cases depends on a. the availability of financial resources; b. the academic attainment and confidential reports on the students concerned; c. the likelihood of a suitable teaching post being available in our schools on completion of a Post-Graduate Certificate of Education; and d. the extent to which our Teacher Training Scheme already provides for our teacher needs in schools. It should be stressed that the Teacher Training Scheme is specifically designed to recruit and provide local teachers for our schools although from time to time it is necessary to recruit some teachers through the scholarship scheme by providing financial resources for suitably qualified individuals to take the post-graduate teaching certificates.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 53 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, but yet at this point of time in Gibraltar we have a number of expatriates working as teachers in Gibraltar. Surely, if we have the money to pay them, we have money to qualify our own people and have them back in Gibraltar teaching?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The situation is that in many instances people who go on the Scholarship Scheme choose to become graduates in certain disciplines which are not required in our teaching force and even if they were to stay and get their post graduate certificate they would not supplant one of these United Kingdom teachers who is teaching a completely different discipline.

HON J BOSSANO:

Can the Minister say whether when school leavers are deciding between going on a University course or applying for a teacher training course, they are informed that they are at a disadvantage in terms of their prospects of employment as teachers if they choose the University course?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, I believe over recent years they have been told if they go on a Scholarship course their obtaining academic degrees does not automatically qualify them to go on a post graduate course since there may be no teaching vacancy available in the discipline they wish to follow.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is it the case, for example, that there are people today finishing their degree courses who were told initially when they went on their degree courses that by choosing a degree course instead of choosing a teacher training course they were forfeiting their opportunity of becoming teachers, is that the case?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would not like to say that this was definitely done with those people who went three years ago, I believe it has been done at least in the last two years since we have been to some extent suffering almost from a surfeit of teachers especially in certain disciplines, for example, modern languages.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Hon Member agree that if people have chosen to go on a University course under the mistaken impression that their prospects of employment was just as high, that is a fact that should be taken into account at least for those who are finishing this year?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think it is not unfair that it should be taken into account and we will look into it.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, does Government then consider it a desirable aim of policy that graduates who have got a degree and who wish to go and obtain an Education Diploma in the subsequent year, that it is a desirable aim of policy that that should be encouraged, in the proper discipline?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

In the proper discipline, Sir, this is usually given, it is when it is a discipline which is already completely full and for which we have no further need that it is not granted because so to grant would almost imply that a job was going to be available for them at the end.

NO. 54 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Has Government now fully considered the memorandum submitted on April 19th, 1979, by the Tourist Transport Operators?

ANSWERThe Hon the Chief Minister

I have been informed that an appeal is to be lodged against the decision of the Transport Commission of 20 March and I do not therefore propose to say anything on this matter at this stage.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 54 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Hon and Learned the Chief Minister saying that he cannot say whether he has now considered the memorandum that he has had in his possession for 12 months because of an appeal that is being lodged? Surely, the fact that an appeal is being lodged on a particular decision of the Transport Commission cannot preclude the House being informed whether the memorandum has now been fully considered or is still being studied.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The whole question of the memorandum was linked up, by the time it reached the Government, with the pending appeal and therefore we decided not to proceed with it until the appeal was finished. Now that I have been informed officially by the operators that they are going to appeal, I haven't been told for that reason only, I have been told for other reasons by the operators, I do not think it will be in the public interest that I should say anything about a memorandum which has not yet been considered for the reasons I have mentioned.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Hon and Learned Chief Minister in fact referring to an appeal against the recent decision of the Transport Commission for two extra licences, or is he talking about something else?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, it is all linked up. The objectors to the application were the people who made the proposals to which the Hon Member refers and the consideration of that was linked with the application that was made whilst the matter was being considered and we felt that we should not consider it until the appeal had been disposed of. Had we not had official intimation that an appeal was going to be made, the answer that I had prepared for the Hon Member before yesterday afternoon was completely different to the one I am giving him now.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, may I ask the Government, since this memorandum has been submitted to the Government and we in the Opposition have obviously not received it, could the Chief Minister give us more or less an outline of what the memorandum, in fact, has to say?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, it was made public, I think, and if not I shall certainly make it available to Hon Members. I have no difficulty in making a copy available to the Hon Member.

HON G T RESTANO:

Not like the Preece, Cardew and Rider report?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Well, it is not as long as that.



NO. 55 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Can Government state why they find it necessary to make Irish Town and Parliament Lane no parking areas?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

The parking of cars and lorries in Irish Town, Parliament Lane creates a hazard for pedestrians as well as difficulties for the loading and unloading of goods vehicles.

This problem was considered by the Transport Commission on 22 February 1975 and they recommended that:-

- a) Irish Town from its junction with Market Lane, Northwards should be declared a No Parking and No Waiting zone from 9 am to 7 pm (Monday - Friday) and 9 am to 1 pm (Saturdays)
- b) Parking should be allowed on Sundays and Public Holidays
- c) Goods vehicles should be allowed to unload along the whole length of Irish Town, and
- d) Parliament Lane should be similarly decongested.

It was then the opinion of the Transport Commission that the then new area at Montagu Place should accommodate most of the cars hitherto parked in Irish Town and Parliament Lane during the decongestion hours proposed.

At the present time a completely new survey of all traffic parking and No Parking areas in the city is being made by the Police. Much of the city has already been surveyed and this particular area will come under review in due course.

NO. 56 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government take the necessary steps to ensure that the gates at the lower level of Green Lane, behind the Rock Hotel are kept permanently open?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

The gates are the property of the Rock Hotel and define the boundary of their grounds. Consequently, the Government have no jurisdiction over these gates or that part of Green Lane which lies within the boundaries of the Rock Hotel.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 56 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Does the Government not agree that this idea would be worth pursuing since this lane would be not only ideal for walks up the rock and so forth but far more important than that it would provide an extra outlet from the Upper rock and further decongest Willis's Road, Prince Edward's Road and so forth? Is there any reason why Government should not pursue this idea to take possession of that part of Green Lane which at the moment it does not own?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I think the Hon Member has probably misunderstood the answer. That is private property, it forms part of the lease of the Rock Hotel. In fact, I can inform the Hon Member that Service vehicles are allowed access through Green Lane and so are some of the members of the Gibraltar Regiment who live up at Devil's Gap and I do know that residents who have an entry in Gardiner's Road from the rock side find great cooperation from the Rock Hotel who allow them access through their own private land.

HON W T SCOTT:

Is there any right of way along that stretch of road?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I wouldn't know, Sir, it is private property and I wouldn't know about any right of way. As it is private property, there would be no right of access at all if the Rock Hotel did not want to allow access.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government consider looking into the question of making the last owner of a vehicle responsible for its disposal?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

The law on this matter is to be found in the Traffic (Removal of Vehicles) Regulations 1964 Chapter 154 which are fairly lengthy and somewhat complicated. However, Regulation 3(i) already places the responsibility for the removal of a vehicle when the vehicle has broken down on a road (ie a derelict) on the owner, driver or other person in control or in charge of any vehicle.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 57 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Why then do we see so many derelict cars lying about our streets and what is the reason for allowing that to happen?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I suppose the answer is that we live in an affluent society where we have too many cars in Gibraltar. I would like to inform the Hon Member that the answer to the next question will give more information on this matter.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I have a few more supplementaries which I would like to ask, Mr Speaker, but I am quite happy to ask them following the next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state how many derelict cars are in our public thoroughfares and how many have been disposed of in the last week?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

A total of 30 derelicts are at present on our roads. 18 of these have been signed for disposal. The remainder are under investigation. The removal is not done on a weekly basis. The week before last 27 derelict vehicles were removed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 58 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Doesn't the Minister agree that there are a lot of cars lying about which apparently the Police or whoever is responsible for finding out whether they are due for removal or not, are finding difficulty? Would it be possible to make it part of the law that on the granting of a licence a kind of deposit were to be paid by the owner and that would ensure that our roads are not littered as they are with derelict cars which I think the authority responsible is finding impossible to clear?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I don't know, Mr Speaker, if we could incorporate in the law a deposit on somebody for the eventual funeral of his own vehicle because there are people who look after their cars and have a car 15 or 20 years but there are other people, needless to go into detail, that come to Gibraltar, are here for a very short period and use an old banger to get around Gibraltar and then they leave Gibraltar, sometimes even removing the number plates. I would, of course, like to inform the Hon Member, because he is not here all that often, that we do dispose of a tremendous number of derelict cars in Gibraltar, in fact, from 504 right down to this year, so far, 69, so normally, Sir, it is between 400 and 500 on average per annum that we dispose of which is pretty good going.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Doesn't the Minister agree that notwithstanding that there are a lot of cars still lying around which is, in fact, affecting the parking problem. If the Minister would like me to, I could point out to them quite a number that I have seen and I keep seeing whenever I come to Gibraltar. Surely, if there was a deposit the individual concerned just for the sake of getting his deposit back would see that his car was disposed of at the proper time.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I tend to agree with the Hon Member that some people leave their cars parked longer than one would like to see them parked but they may not necessarily be derelict. A derelict is a car which is absolutely abandoned. The fact that a car happens to be parked at a particular place with all the dust and dirt on, if it has a road licence there is very little the Police or anybody can do about it.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, how long has a car to be left abandoned before it is considered a derelict or is it something historical as well?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, I think we can be serious about the matter. Before a car is a derelict it must, of course, have been abandoned and then if the Hon Member reads the Gibraltar Gazette and the local papers he will find that the Police advertise that a particular car, giving all the details, is in such a place and if the registered owner doesn't see to it it would be disposed of and after a time period, I think it is 3 weeks, then the car can be removed.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

If the deposit is not something that the Minister is enamoured with couldn't he think of setting time limits as to the time a car can be left in one place and so ensure that if the car is not moved then it can be assumed that it is derelict?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, I disagree even more with that, Mr Speaker. I don't think that in Great Britain where the Hon Member lives and feels so strongly about, I don't think a deposit is asked in Great Britain for people to dispose of their cars.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I don't think Great Britain has got the problem that we have. I don't think you see derelict cars, they have such a thing as an MOT test.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I heard the Minister saying that the responsibility for the disposal of the car was on the owner, does the owner in fact bear the cost of the removal of the car when the Police removes it and disposes of it?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the answer is yes and no. The Police have the powers under rule 6(1) to charge the removal of a vehicle but it invariably is not done, we consider the cleaning up exercise much more important than obtaining £2 revenue for the removal of a vehicle.

HON G T RESTANO:

Does the Minister not consider that £2 is too low a sum for the cost of the removal?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Obviously, Sir, £2 today would be absolutely ridiculous to charge and no doubt this was in the Traffic Ordinance of 1957, and of course £2 at that time was a reasonable sum.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister consider revising that sum?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

There would be no point, Mr Speaker. If we are not implementing the £2 there is no point of revising it to £200 because probably we still wouldn't implement it, we would much rather dispose of the vehicles without having to search for somebody who has probably left for Northern Ireland.

HON G T RESTANO:

But, Mr Speaker, if the fine were large enough, surely, it would encourage people not to leave derelict cars on the road and the removal and the disposal of them would at least help the Government in recouping the money that it is losing in the disposal of those cars.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

We are not losing any money at all, Mr Speaker, we are just cleaning up.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, would the Government consider the creation of a car pound helpful in the matter or not?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Well, Mr Speaker, of course, the Commissioner of Police has under these regulations the power to remove a car and impound it but we haven't got a pound for it.

HON A J HAYNES:

Wouldn't the creation of a car pound be considered useful?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Well it would be much more expensive, I agree.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So the Government therefore have come to the conclusion there is nothing they can do as with many other things.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, if the Hon Member thinks that disposing of 500 cars per annum isn't good enough then there is nothing I can say that will convince him.

NO. 59 OF 1980.

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government consider making the two-way road into Varyl Begg Estate West, an exit only or entry only highway?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

A detailed survey has already been carried out by the Police who have recommended that the Western Road leading into the Estate should be entry only and that the Eastern Road should be exit only.

This would provide more parking spaces, decongest traffic and make it much safer for the 5,000 residents and in particular for the children at the school.

When minor details have finally been worked out this will be put into operation for a trial period and will be made permanent, if found satisfactory.

SUPPLEMENTARY TC QUESTION NO. 59 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

When does Government propose taking these measures?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Very shortly, Mr Speaker.

HON W T SCOTT:

With no definite time period?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Very shortly, I would say within the next month or so.



THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, can the Minister for Housing and Sport state how many seats on the main stand at the Victoria Stadium are usable, and whether it is Government's intention to replace the seats that have now been missing for many months?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, out of the total of 1472 seats provided for on the Grand Stand in 1975 only 569 seats are usable.

Government does not intend to reprovide similar seats, but will consider, in due course, the provision of other seating which will be less susceptible to vandalism.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 60 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Aren't there people employed in the Stadium to prevent vandalism?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

If we didn't have them, Mr Speaker, then we would be 1472 seats short.

HON P J ISOLA:

Well, Mr Speaker, 900 short is certainly not an achievement to be proud of, is it?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

It isn't, Mr Speaker, but I hope he does not blame the members of the Victoria Stadium. Perhaps the Hon the Leader of the Opposition might like to remind the people who jump over the seats despite the constant supervision of the supervisors and staff of the Stadium.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Haven't we got a rather large Police Force well paid and well trained who can stop this vandalism or are we going to give way all the time?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the Police Force have nothing to do in connection with control of the Victoria Stadium.

MR SPEAKER:

Order, next question.

NO. 61 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Does Government intend to levy fees on individual and/or Associations for the use of facilities at the Victoria Stadium and what are the fees envisaged and can Government explain the basis on which the fees have been assessed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Government intends to introduce a charge for the use of the playing facilities at the Victoria Stadium on a per court per hour basis on similar lines to some Sports Centres in UK. The fees have as yet not been finally agreed to but will in no circumstances be above those in UK.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 61 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, has the Hon the Minister for Housing and Sport consulted all the relevant sporting Associations as to the introduction of this scheme?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

This was done years ago, Mr Speaker.

HON W T SCOTT:

What reaction did the Minister get after consultation?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

We were discussing at the time, Mr Speaker, the question of membership and there was not an adverse reaction.

NO. 62 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government consider the possibility of creating a Sports Council for Gibraltar the members of which will be selected by the various Sports Association and who themselves will decide how Government grants allocated to them are spent?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, Government has for the past two years been considering the possible amalgamation of the Sports Advisory Committee and the Committee appointed to consider applications for financial assistance for Sporting Societies. This is with a view to creating a Sports Council for Gibraltar which will have responsibility for advising Government on sport and facilities also the allocation of grants. Members of the new Sports Council will be appointed by the Minister for Sport as is the case in the UK following consultations with the interested parties concerned.

The allocation of grants will be the responsibility of the Sports Council, but not the way in which such grants are spent by respective Associations.

NO. 63 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government make a statement as to how housing is to be allocated in Gibraltar in the future irrespective of whether the housing concerned is pre-war or post-war housing?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, Government will in the near future be considering a paper containing suggestions submitted by the Housing Allocation Committee with respect to the Committee's terms of reference and the method to be adopted with regard to allocations of Government dwellings.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 63 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister whether a statement will be made on this before any more houses are allocated under the old system?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, we will still continue to use the present set-up and if and when Council of Ministers considers the paper and it is agreed to then of course this system will change, otherwise we will continue to do what we are doing now.

HON P. J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Government whether they are dealing with this as an urgent matter in view of the great dissatisfaction certainly that we found during the election as to the method presently used for allocation of Government houses?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

The allocation of Government houses, Mr Speaker, is conducted by the Housing Allocation Committee and there seems to be no difference to what has been going on for a number of years. I see no matter of urgency as such but, of course, we will try and hasten it as much as possible but it certainly is a matter of top priority.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I think I did hear the Minister say that the proposals were going to come from the Housing Allocation Committee, did I hear him correctly?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

They have come.

HON G T RESTANO:

How can that statement be reconciled with the statement of the Chief Minister at the Ceremonial Opening of the House where he said that the Minister would be coming up with proposals?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Of course, Mr Speaker, that is why I am Minister for Housing, they submit their suggestions to me and it is my duty to take it down to Council of Ministers for collective discussion with my colleagues.

HON G T RESTANO:

Therefore, Mr Speaker, can the Minister say whether the exact proposals of the Housing Allocation Committee have been transmitted to the Council of Ministers?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

The exact proposals have been put on paper for the Council of Ministers to consider.

NO. 64 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government publish a list of all Government houses and flats which were the subject of transfers, temporary or transit homes, or allocation during the last two years?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is regretted that there is not enough staff available to undertake this time-consuming operation when everyone in the Housing Department is fully occupied revising all housing applications prior to implementation of the revised Housing Allocation Scheme.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 64 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, will they not consider giving a similar list but for a shorter period?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I don't think we can entertain anything which entails unnecessary work on an overtaxed Department.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Would he consider the empty houses which are lying there for months on end not an important matter?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

There are no houses lying empty for many months, Mr Speaker.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Well, that doesn't seem to be the opinion of the general public, if I may say so.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Then the general public must be misinformed.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, does not the Government consider the subject of allocations and transfers that have been approved and so forth a matter of considerable public interest to make some effort to publish some list to at least tone down or alleviate the great public concern there is on housing in Gibraltar? Can the Minister not make some effort so that people can see on what basis houses are being allocated or transfers approved and so forth?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I agree there is concern in Gibraltar about housing but it is the lack of housing not a question of providing a list.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, considering the paucity of houses, considering there was only Rosia Dale built in I don't know how many years I find it incredible to believe that there are that many houses for the staff to cater with. Sir, is it not a fact that so few houses have been allocated that in fact this could be done easily and without great effort?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, during the past two years there have been allocations at Varyl Begg, there have been allocations at Rosia Dale, there have been a great number of exchanges and transfers. It would be an exercise which would considerably tax the staff.

HON A J HAYNES:

Would the Minister consider a list of the straight allocations in the last two years?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, we have, as a Government, committed ourselves upon the termination of the allocation at Varyl Begg to publish lists of the allocations as such. That I commit myself to do on completion of the allocations of Varyl Begg Estate.

HON A J HAYNES:

I didn't understand that, could you repeat that?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

That the Government has committed itself on the termination of Varyl Begg allocations, to publish a list of people who have been allocated flats at Varyl Begg, that will be done in due course.

HON A J HAYNES:

As regards Varyl Begg, therefore, there will be the kind of list I require?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, Mr Speaker.

NO. 65 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government publish a list of all unoccupied available Government accommodation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, a list of unoccupied flats cannot be published as these are no longer available having been earmarked for allocation by the Housing Allocation Committee to those applicants whose applications' pointage value as at 31 December, 1979, qualified them for accommodation.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 65 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, there is nothing available or unavailable?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

There is nothing available.



NO. 66 OF 1980

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Has Government cancelled any of its advertising in the United Kingdom and if so for what reasons?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND POSTAL SERVICES

We have cancelled five advertisements scheduled to appear in the last week in March basically for two reasons. Firstly, the coupon response campaign which involved sending Gibraltar information and Tour Operators Brochures cost £2728 more than estimated, secondly we updated the promotional film during the course of the year.

NO. 67 OF 1980

THE HON A T LODDO

In view of the success of the Fun Day held last year, would Government consider reviving the Gibraltar Fair, if not as a Fair, perhaps as a Festival Week?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND POSTAL SERVICES

The Fun Day held last year was not organised by Government. No funds have been provided for a Fair or a Festival Week in the Estimates for 1980/81 but Government will help any organised festival as was done last year.

25 3 80

NC. 68 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government consider improving the amenities at the Air Terminal in time for the Tourist Season?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND POSTAL SERVICES

Yes, Sir. The Public Works Department has already commenced improvements at the Air Terminal.

25 3 80

NO. 69 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Has Government any plans for providing proper facilities for Tourists arriving on Cruise Liners at North Mole as must be available at other Ports in the world?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM AND POSTAL SERVICES

The Government has no immediate plans to provide facilities for cruise passengers at North Mole. However, the future development of tourism both internal and transitory and the required ancillary services are being reviewed in a Port Development Study which is being made in connection with the next Development Programme.

NO. 70 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government consider the possibility of holding a stock of potable water for the exclusive use of shipping?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

No, Sir. In operating our waterworks with the present levels of supply and production we need to retain as much flexibility as possible. It would be impractical to hold stocks of potable water exclusively to supply shipping. A contract has recently been entered into to increase importation of water, and when this is fully operational we do hope to be more able to meet demands made by shipping.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 70 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, is the Government aware that the stoppage of supply of water to shipping even for a period of a month or two months can have quite serious repercussions on the port of Gibraltar and therefore affect the revenues of the colony quite considerably and should not efforts be made to prevent these situations arising?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Every effort is made to supply at least some water to shipping who come in and ask for it. We cannot obviously always give as much as is required. We do appreciate the importance of shipping coming to Gibraltar and that is one of the reasons for this new contract for the importation.

NO. 71 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, would the Minister for Public Works state how much the conversion of Tank Ramp into a road has cost, and when is it proposed to allow its use as such?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, as part of the scheme for the rehabilitation of property at Tank Ramp and to allow access to the site ODM approved the sum of £40,000 for converting the old steps into a roadway. The work to date has been marginally within this figure.

Until the redevelopment is substantially complete and public utility services, water, electricity and telephone ducts are laid it is not practical to open the road to the public.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 71 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister say how long this work has been going on?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

How long has it been going on or how long will it go on for?

HON A T LODDO:

That will come afterwards.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It has been going on since the Tank Ramp steps were made into a road. I cannot remember exactly but I should say it must be 15 to 18 months.

HON A T LODDO:

Has the Minister any idea how much long it is going to take?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, I should think somewhere around November, December this year.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

What is the current position with regard to the Air Terminal Extension Project?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, construction drawings will be completed within the next few weeks.

The production of Bills of Quantities has been programmed as soon as possible thereafter.

Quotations have already been sought for

- (a) the supply and erection of structural steelwork, roofing and cladding
- (b) supply and installation of baggage handling equipment.

Anticipated commencement of work on site 1st September 1980 and 12 month total contract period.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 72 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Wasn't work going to start on this extension in June of last year? I remember the Minister for Economic Development telling us that in one of the budget debates.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, the initial scheme was going to but it had to be altered because it entailed the strengthening of the runway, it was going to be on the Eastern side of the actual present building and that would have entailed a very expensive strengthening of runway and now the alterations will be to the North side of the building.

NO. 73 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government state what its policy for the future is to modernisation of old houses and can they state how many houses will have been modernised between 1st April, 1979, and 31st March, 1980, and the extent of slippage, if any, on the programme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, Government will continue with its policy for the Modernisation of old houses. In the light of recent experiences at Lime Kiln Steps and Tank Ramp, a revised method of approach has been devised as regard the pre-inspection and surveying of properties together with an improved system for inviting tenders.

It is proposed shortly to commence the Modernisation of 7 units at Castle Ramp, Road to the Lines with a further 28 before the end of this development programme, at the same location. Proposed plans are already at various stages of completion for an additional 140 units during the next development programme.

Between 1st April, 1979, and 31st March, 1980, 27 units have been completed. Since the idea of modernisation was put into practice, approval has been granted for 133 units, out of this, 113 will have been completed by the end of this month. Of the remaining 20, work is already in hand on 10 of them, and the remaining 10 are either awaiting preparation of tender documents or decanting.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 73 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Will the Minister not agree that however much modernisation might be considered to be a good thing, the effect of modernisation on housing development in Gibraltar has been disastrous?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, I would not agree to that.

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, will the Minister not agree that a prime site such as Tank Ramp should have been knocked down and a block built there instead of the sort of single storey, whatever it is, modernisation that is going on there? Could not many more people have been accommodated in a block there, for example, than the few that will be accommodated as a result of modernisation?



HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

At much more expenses, I suppose, anything could be done.

HON P J ISOLA:

But will the Minister not agree that the Tank Ramp area which is just single storey ramshackle huts almost, should have been designated for redevelopment of modern housing?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think the Tank Ramp redevelopment, Sir, is modernising some houses and building some new houses. I do not agree that it was a prime site, it is a very difficult location, very difficult for the contractor who is working there.

HON P J ISOLA:

In view of the fact that the Government has built a road to make it easy, does not the Government consider that the building of a road to enable the modernisation to take place would have made much easier the construction of much needed new housing in Gibraltar?

MR SPEAKER:

You may answer if you wish but we are departing from the question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister explain the difference in costing between modernised flats and units as in Varyl Begg? The implications, Sir, as I understood it was that modernisation plans were less expensive than blocks. Can he therefore explain this with facts and figures, can he tell us how much it costs to modernise a house as opposed to a unit in a block?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Although I should ask for separate notice, Sir, modernisation is costing between £13,000 and £18,000 and new flats are costing about £40,000.

NO. 74 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government agree that there should be no repetition in the future of new Housing Units being handed over without floor tiles unless tenants are compensated in lieu?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

No, Sir.

In order to reduce building costs, various conditions were imposed by ODA one of them being that all floor tiling to dwellings should be omitted with the exception of bathrooms and kitchens. This condition was justified by the fact that ODA representatives in the course of their visit had observed that tenants of new flats were either:-

- a. removing PVC floor tiling and replacing with ceramic or other superior quality floor finishes (parquet);
- b. laying lino over new PVC tiles;
- c. laying carpet over new PVC tiles.

In view of the above it was considered that tenants would be provided with a level screeded floor and they should take it upon themselves to finish the floors to their own requirements.

An exception to the above condition was made by Government in the case of Bedsitters where the question of hardship was taken into account. All bedsitters are being tiled with PVC throughout.

To compensate the tenants in lieu, would be to defeat the object of the exercise.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 74 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister confirm that this in fact is a departure of Government policy over at least the last 30 years?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, it is a departure. Government is not forced to continue with the same conditions all the time, this was something that was suggested, almost imposed, by ODA and Government accepted it.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, since the main reason for the flats being handed over without tiles seems to be that the tenants themselves have altered the tiles that had already been placed by the Government, would it not be a sensible suggestion to compensate the tenants to the extent of the cost of the tiles that would have been put there in the first place, helping them towards the cost of putting whatever flooring they wish?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It would be very difficult to work out compensation depending on the means of the tenant but to some extent the tenant is compensated in the rent that is charged which is probably a little lower without tiles than if it had tiles since the rent is based to some extent on the actual cost of construction.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister say what sort of differential in the rent he is talking about?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think I need notice of that question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government report progress on the Housing Development at St Joseph's and the exact position in relation to the phase?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Mr Speaker, with your permission I propose to answer this question and No 76 together if the Hon Member approves.

Sir, acceptance of both tenders is open to the end of the month before which date they will be awarded

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 75 & NO. 76 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can I ask, is the St Jago's area going to be put to any other use temporarily?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

You mean the St Jago's old school building? Yes, that is being used as a temporary hostel for labour.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is that going to be a temporary hostel for labour for a particular project?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, the Girls' Comprehensive School.

HON P J ISOLA:

But isn't this subject to redevelopment as well?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Not at the moment. The area that is going to be redeveloped is completely separate from the actual school area.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can Government assure the House that the use of the old St Jago's School, what is left of it, as temporary accommodation will not in any way slow up any other project in the Development Programme?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, it will not slow it up.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

25 3 80

NO. 76 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state whether it has now accepted a tender for the Housing Development at St Jago's and when is work expected to commence on this Development?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Answered together with Question No. 75 of 1980.

25 3 80

NO. 77 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state why work has been stopped on the new road being constructed between Willis's Road and Tankerville?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, as I already stated earlier in reply to Question No 71 no further roadworks can be carried out until the public utility services have been laid. It would be unwise to lay the final surface before the water services, electricity and telephone ducts are in place. Furthermore whilst the re-development of Tank Ramp is progressing a considerable amount of construction traffic is moving on this road with possible damage to its wearing surface. The road will not be completed until the building works are finished and the already mentioned services are finalised.

NO. 78 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, can Government explain why the toilets at Little Bay were not available to the public at all during the holiday weekend recently thus making it extremely inconvenient for the large number of people that went there?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, in anticipation of the bathing season the changing rooms at Little Bay are undergoing extensive repairs and could not be opened on the weekend of 8th to 10th March inclusive.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 78 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

I take it, Sir, that they will be ready shortly?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

They should be ready for the beginning of the bathing season.

HON A J HAYNES:

Which is?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

About the middle of May.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister what is the nature of the extensive repairs being done because I was there myself and I saw no visible sign of any repairs of any kind going on there?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I understand that the toilets had to be refurbished, new tiling, the whole place decorated throughout, that is the normal repairs that are done.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government state the position with regard to its road resurfacing programme and inform the House of what roads have in fact been resurfaced between 1st April, 1979, and 29th February, 1980?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the asphalt plant at Catalan Bay was extensively damaged by a rock fall on 21 March 1979 and a number of spare parts had to be brought from the manufacturers.

Repairs were not completed until the end of May 1979 thus considerable slippage in the resurfacing programme occurred.

The main emphasis was on the construction of additional car parking areas at Moorish Castle Estate, Waterport, South Flat Bastion Road and Catalan Bay where considerable surfacing has been carried out.

Roads resurfaced during the current financial year are two sections of Line Wall Road and Scud Hill.

Resurfacing work has also been carried out in school playgrounds, speed ramps at Glacis, Laguna Estate and Viaduct Bridge.

A large number of service trenches have also been surfaced with asphalt.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 79 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is the Minister aware that one of the reasons why Gibraltar looks so dirty is perhaps because of the state of our roads and couldn't a bigger effort be made to do this resurfacing?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think one of the reasons that Gibraltar looks so dirty is that the general public throw litter all over the place.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Isn't it a fact that it looks grubby when you are walking along the roads in Gibraltar, precisely because of the state of the roads themselves?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, I don't necessarily agree with that, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.



NO. 80 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

When does Government propose to commence cleaning the beaches as well as preparing other facilities for the Summer months?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The beaches are already being cleaned and the work of doing-up the changing rooms on some of the beaches, as well as at Montagu, has also commenced.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 80 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Will they be ready for the Easter Season?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We will do our best to have some of them available for Easter but of course this depends on the easterly wind as it brings up a lot of rubbish on to the beaches if we have a storm and then of course it makes it very difficult to get it clean in time. We will do our best if we have a fine Easter to have as many facilities available as possible.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I think the Minister referred to the actual changing rooms and so on and I can't see how that is affected. With regard to changing rooms and other conveniences as my Hon Friend pointed out before, wouldn't it be better if a start on the redecorating and cleaning up generally could be made earlier?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We could always take this into account in future years. I don't think this year it is specifically aimed at Easter, I think the aim is to have it ready for the beginning of the bathing season which is the 15th of May.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Couldn't we have the bathing season brought forward slightly. It would appear that people are already using the beaches and that it is one of the biggest attractions to tourists, couldn't the Minister reconsider that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We always try to help on a fine weekend in winter but you cannot guarantee the weather even at the 15th of May.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will Government make the effort to have at least toilet facilities available to the public at the beaches during Easter especially if the weather is fine so that people who go to the beaches in large numbers on holiday weekends at least have that facility even if they have to put up with dirty beaches and so forth?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, we will do our best.

HON A J HAYNES:

How does Government propose to clean the beaches?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Well, a man goes round with a little brush and a little stick and picks up all the little pieces.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, I ask this question because one often finds that the beaches are dirty even after they have been cleaned. What methods are used and are these methods effective?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The normal cleaning of the beaches is to remove as much debris that is lying around especially what has been brought in by the sea itself and to generally get the area looking neat and tidy. One of the things along Eastern Beach is that the wall is usually painted, I would not agree that after the beaches have been cleaned they still look dirty. I think beaches in Gibraltar tend to have a rather dirty looking atmosphere because if you inspect the sand carefully there are a lot of little black stones amongst the sand which gives it a rather dirty colour, it is not the silver sand of perhaps Benidorm etc, but I would not accept that the beaches are dirty.

HON A J HAYNES:

There are also cigarette ends in the sand.

MR SPEAKER:

Order, we are not going into the details of how to clean beaches. Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

When does Government propose to commence works at the north end of Camp Bay to make it safe for the public as well as clean?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

A very small area of the promenade at the extreme north end of Camp Bay has been fenced off from the public for several years due to the danger of rock falls in this area.

The face of the rock above this isolated area is badly cracked and it would be unwise to allow public access for safety reasons.

It would be extremely difficult and expensive to make this area 100% safe since there could be no guarantee that further rock-falls would not occur.

The area is kept as clean as practicable.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 81 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Wasn't work started last August on that north face?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Is Government satisfied that all specifications with particular regard to the supply of materials have been strictly adhered to by the Contractors in the Development Programme?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, as far as Government is aware all specifications with particular regard to materials are being strictly adhered to by Contractors in the Development Programme Projects.

The PWD has a laboratory where certain materials are tested regularly and vigorously in order to ensure that they conform to specification. There has been two cases recently where Government has rejected basic building materials such as bricks and cement.

There is a standard clause built into the tender and contract documents which allows alternative materials (equal and approved) to be used in lieu of the specified product. When such cases arise the materials and specifications are examined by the professional staff before substitution is approved.

25 3 80

NO. 83 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government state what is the estimated schedule for the completion of the new PWD Garage and the demolition of the existing one?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

It is anticipated, Sir, that the project should be substantially complete by June 1980 when the transfer from the existing Garage can commence.

The demolition of the existing Garage is planned for September 1980 as part of the Girls' Comprehensive School project.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 83 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

The Government is absolutely sure now that there will be no change of venue?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir.

25 3 80

NO. 84 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government state what is the current position with regard to the filling in between Nos. 2 and 3 Jetties?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the project has run approximately 30% of its contract period and it is estimated that it is 30% complete.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 84 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Can the Minister give an indication of when it might be completed?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Late December, 1980, Sir.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state for how long work has been going on in tiling the pavement at the North East end of Rosia Road, what is the square area completed so far and at what cost?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, I would refer the Hon Member to my reply to his question No 206 of 1979. Works had stopped at that time and it was stated that, if possible, further works would be carried out so that pedestrians could cross the road away from the bend in the road.

These additional works started on 18 February and finished on 14 March 1980 and a further 100 sq yds, 400 18" x 18" tiles were laid. The total area of paving is therefore 175 sq yds. As stated in my earlier reply these works were charged to the General Road Maintenance Vote and an exact breakdown of cost is not possible but the cost of the latter work would be in the region of £1400.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 85 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Isn't this the sort of kind of work that could be given out to piece work perhaps and reduce the cost?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, the cost of laying 175 sq yds is approximately £2400 hence the cost per sq yd for labour and material is of the order of £14 per sq yd. Indications are that the current prices for this work if carried out by a private contractor would be of the order of £18 per sq yd. If this is done on piece work, Sir, I don't think there would be very much saving.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Hon Minister explain again the figures, how many tiles are laid per day?

MR SPEAKER:

I do not think Ministers are expected to have those details at hand.

HON A J HAYNES:

If he would give me the facts I would work it out.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I will send you a letter, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, I ask this because I feel that the number of tiles laid per day is remarkably few and considering the number of men working there it is preposterous that that should be the result.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think there is only one man working there.

HON A J HAYNES:

I have seen personally more than one man working there.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Take my word that I have seen more than one and two and even four.



NO. 86 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

In view of the process that the Tower Blocks will be submitted to in the final treatment what has been the cost of the temporary treatment of flint-coating that has been applied?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the cost of the weather proofing treatment and redecoration of the Tower Blocks will be £106,879.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 86 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Is this work now complete?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Not quite, there is a fraction more to do.

HON W T SCOTT:

Can the Minister state what was the original cost at tendering time if the projected final cost is £106,879?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think that was the tender price, Sir.

NO. 87 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

When is the final treatment to the Tower Blocks to be applied and what is the likely cost of such treatment?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

It is not yet known when the eventual treatment will be carried out. The Building Research Establishment is assisting in this matter and recommendations as to suitable treatments are being awaited. Until more specific information is at hand it will not be possible to assess an order of cost.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 87 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Does the Government have any idea when it will be in a position to examine the recommendations or when the recommendations will be submitted?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I understand there are three specialist firms in this. One of the firms is sending somebody out in the next two weeks to have a look at it and the other two firms will probably come within the next two months. After that we will assess the costings that they give us.

HON W T SCOTT:

Does Government have absolutely no idea at the moment what the final cost of the treatment would be?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I have already said that, Sir.

25 3 80

NO. 88 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government consider declaring the roads at Varyl Begg Estate as public highway so as to be able to make those roads subject to the same laws as those affecting other roads in Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Yes, Sir.

NO. 89 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government ascertain and report what has been the total revenue from the sale of sand since the commissioning of the project on the East side and what have been the costs in wages/salaries etc since that date?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the Gibraltar Quarry Company Ltd operates as a private company and the data which has been requested is not available to Government.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 89 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, isn't that a rather strange position coming from the Chairman of the Company?

MR SPEAKER:

I think I have ruled on this one once before. The Minister is answerable for his Ministerial responsibilities and not as Chairman of any particular firm.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am questioning, Mr Speaker, the answer. The Minister was asked whether he would 'ascertain and report'. His answer has been that the information is not available to the Government and my supplementary is, how can that be if he is the Chairman of that Company?

MR SPEAKER:

The answer to that one must be, and I think I must rule on this one, that he is not entitled to part with information which he has exclusively as Chairman of the Company and not as part of his Ministerial responsibility.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister, is the position then that the Gibraltar Quarry Company is unwilling to give that information to the Government unlike, for example, the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation which is another independent body but always seems to be willing to give its information so that the Chief Minister can answer questions on its behalf in this House? Is the position that the Gibraltar Quarry Company refuses to give that information to the Government?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think, Sir, I have said that the attitude is that this should be treated as a nationalised company and that the accounts will be laid on the table every year as such. I believe the accounts for the first six months are at the moment in the course of preparation and it is quite possible that an exception can be made and the first six months accounts can be laid on the table for information of Members.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Minister if he does not consider the position of this so-called nationalised industry in Gibraltar to be rather different to the big nationalised industries in England where the Chairman, for example, is not a Minister in the Government? Is it such a difficult process for the Minister to ask the Gibraltar Quarry Company; "Can you please give us these figures, I have been asked about this in the House." Is it so difficult to do that and for the Quarry Company to cooperate?

MR SPEAKER:

Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition might wish to ask whether such information has been requested from the Company.

HON P J ISOLA:

Has the Minister, in fact, asked the Quarry Company to give this information so that he can reply to the question?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, it is a question of principle. If the Quarry Company operates as a private company it has the same rights as any other private company. I don't think the Government will be entitled to go to any private company in Gibraltar and say: "Let us have your figures for the last six months or last year." It is a question of principle, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the Minister saying that this company which is chaired by himself, a Minister of the Government and the other directors are three Government employees, should be treated exactly the same as any other private company?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir.

NO. 90 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

What further progress has been made on the Lime Kiln Steps Development particularly with Phase 2 of the project?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the further progress made on the two phases is as follows:-

We call them Phase 1 and Phase 1A, Sir.

Phase 1

13 of the units are almost complete but the occupation of these dwellings is dependent upon the installation of the new sewer together with the replacement of water mains, electric and telephone mains and the formation of a new entrance to the site from Lopez Ramp. Due to the delays encountered by the Contractor in obtaining some materials and specialized plant it is unlikely that work on the new services and entrance will commence until mid-May 1980. Occupation of the new units will therefore not be possible until mid-August 1980 at the earliest.

Phase 1A

The Contract officially commenced on 1 February 1980 and the demolition works are well in hand. It has been necessary to redesign completely two of the five blocks, embodied under this Phase, as new buildings owing to their structural instability. This has delayed this project somewhat. Problems encountered in obtaining specialized plant/materials etc by the Contractor as mentioned before have also contributed to these delays and it is now anticipated that this Phase will not be completed until July 1982.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 90 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Can the Minister state if there are any people still living in the areas of development in Lime Kiln Steps?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Not in the area that is being redeveloped, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister not agree that in the light of the difficulties being experienced it might be prudent at some stage to question the continued wisdom of pressing on with modernisation rather than with pulling down all buildings and replacing them with new construction?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The whole position, Sir, depends on once one gets the property free of tenants and one can start investigating, if the main structural walls are good then obviously modernisation is a good scheme, if the main structural walls are unstable then it is obviously better to knock the whole thing down and start again from scratch, but you cannot say before you actually investigate once the tenants are out and you can rip off floor boards etc, what is going to be the position.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Minister not agree, Mr Speaker, that in the light of the experience that has been had to date for the modernisation programme, it might be prudent to take a second look at it?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We found with Phase 1, Sir, that the walls were in good condition and we have been able to do quite a good job there. It is Phase 1A which is a different area although in the same general area where we have found that the walls have been unstable.

NO. 91 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government state what progress has been made on the deep drilling for water?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, a total of eight boreholds (seven straight down and one at an incline) have now been drilled. Preparations are being made to drill two further inclined boreholes - which after test pumping should give the necessary parameters required to assess whether water of good quality can be economically abstracted. Work and expenditure are as programmed.

Results are still being assessed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 91 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Has there been any particular success at Hay's Level?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The greatest success has been at the inclined hole at Orion where a total of 150 metres has been done and we were getting yield not of the best quality water but of water which possibly could be used for blending at a rate of about 30 gallons a minute.



THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government give the figures and cost for water production from available sources for the months of October, 1979, to February, 1980, and state what the stocks were on the 29th February?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Figures of water production from available sources for months of October, 1979, to February, 1980, are as follows:-

MONTH	Rain- fall M <sup>3</sup>	Wells M <sup>3</sup>	NF Distiller M <sup>3</sup>	VTE Distiller M <sup>3</sup>	Importa- tion M <sup>3</sup>	Total Produc- tion M <sup>3</sup>
Oct 1979	17433	11231	463	22252	15375	66754
Nov 1979	738	11624	17937	19021	11513	60833
Dec 1979	1848	12801	14930	Nil	13539	43118
Jan 1980	10953	13693	11829	Nil	9052	45527
Feb 1980	11278	14243	Nil	Nil	13454	38975

The stock on 29 2 80 stood at 39593 M<sup>3</sup> (8.71 Million Gallons).

Total production costs are normally worked out over one financial year when capital charges and other overheads can be correctly apportioned and an accurate cost per M<sup>3</sup> obtained. The estimated operational costs for 1979/80 were given in answer to question No 142 of 31 10 79.

At present the estimated operating costs for 1980/81 are as follows:-

Rainfall	£0.33
Wells	£0.45
Importation	£1.84
NF Distiller	£2.43
VTE Distiller	£2.20

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 92 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister say why the VTE Distiller produced no water for 3 months between December and February?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Because it is on its annual overhaul which takes approximately 3 to 4 months. It should come back in April.

HON G T RESTANO:

Since it has produced nothing since December to February, that is 3 months, how is it that it will only be coming back into force in April?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

March is the fourth month.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I am glad to see that the cost of water of the Distiller has gone down by 57p. What is the cause for that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Because the engineers concerned did a considerable amount of experimenting and managed to improve the yield from around 45% to 70%.

HON G T RESTANO:

I certainly congratulate him on that, Mr Speaker. Can the Minister say how the increases in the rainfall, wells and the NF Distiller, how they are computed, is this salaries?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

It is mainly as far as the rainfall, wells and importation, the increase in salaries, as far as the Distillers it is salaries and cost of fuel.

NO. 93 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, can Government say when the refurbishing of the public conveniences at Market Place will be finally completed, and how much will be the eventual cost as opposed to the estimated cost?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, work was scheduled for completion on 21 March 1980 and I believe it was done.

The estimated cost of providing two additional shower cubicles and internal redecoration was £2000.

Actual cost was £1995.

However additional work to that previously included in the estimate has been carried out. A third shower cubicle has been provided, the entire electrical installation has been renewed, the floor of the men's conveniences has been re-tiled, the Spanish tile roof has undergone extensive repairs. The cost of this additional work is in the order of £1300 and has been charged to Head 20 Item 16 (Toilet and Public baths). This additional work would have had to be done in any event.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 93 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, in fact, the works were only completed yesterday and the showers in those conveniences are not provided with curtains and when anybody showers the water gushes out under the door, is that what the Minister understands by completed?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I will look into the question of curtains, I am very grateful for the three-day slippage that you inform me of.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I had been given to understand that this job was supposed to take six weeks and it was started in October.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I have been given to understand that it was scheduled for completion on the 21st March, Sir.

NO. 94 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government consider the creation of an attendance centre for juvenile offenders?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the Attendance Centre Rules made in 1961 under the Criminal Justice Administration Ordinance already provide for the establishment of an Attendance Centre. The Fire Station at Grand Parade is the appointed place for the reception of persons of not less than 12 years of age but under 21, and the Chief Fire Officer is the officer in charge of the Centre.

In 1975 the Criminal Justice Administration Ordinance, was amended to enable the officer in charge, in appropriate cases, to require the offender to carry out supervised activities at some place other than the Attendance Centre. In this connection the Youth and Career Service has in the past been designated for this purpose.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 94 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, would the Minister not consider the creation of the use of a building exclusively as an Attendance Centre as desirable?

HON A J CANEPA:

Not having regard to the incidence of orders, I might inform the Hon Member that no Attendance Centre orders have been made during the last two years.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, perhaps this is connected with the fact there is no recognised or established Attendance Centre.

HON A J CANEPA:

There is a recognised Centre as I have said, Mr Speaker, it is the Fire Station and that is the Centre designated by the Court.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, would the Minister not agree then that it is desirable to have a proper Attendance Centre, a building exclusively for the use as an Attendance Centre especially in the light of growing juvenile delinquency throughout the world?

HON A J CANEPA:

But fortunately, Mr Speaker, not in Gibraltar to the same extent as in the rest of the world.

HON A J HAYNES:

Would he consider it desirable, Sir?

HON A J CANEPA:

A lot of things are desirable, Mr Speaker, but they are not essential.

NO. 95 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government consider amending legislation to provide for higher benefits for persons in receipt of Disability Pensions which have not been increased for very many years?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, I presume that the question refers to Disablement Pensions payable under the Employment Injuries Insurance Ordinance, and in that case, Sir, I should point out that the rates of benefits under this Ordinance are increased periodically, in the same way as Social Insurance benefits. However, the rate of disablement or industrial death pension applicable in any particular case is not increased after it has been awarded. At the time the award is made, if the degree of disablement is assessed at 35% or more, and it is considered by the Medical Board that it will last for not less than 7 years, the beneficiary may elect to receive a gratuity instead of a pension.

To increase the pension subsequently would bring the complication that it would be unfair on the person who had opted for the gratuity.

The matter raised by the Hon Questioner will be looked into. It could mean that the option to receive a gratuity would have to be abolished. I would invite the Hon Questioner to give further thought to the matter in the light of my reply and let me know what further views he may have.

NO. 96 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government provide for an increase in Family Allowance in July this year?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

I think, Mr Speaker, that the Honourable Mr Bossano has been asking this question at least since 1973 at the pre-budget session and always getting the same answer.

This matter will be considered by Government in the context of its deliberations on whatever budget proposals it will be presenting to this House later in these proceedings.

I cannot therefore give a reply at this stage.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 96 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Government agree, however, that they should not be inhibited from increasing the Family Allowances in Gibraltar by the reactionary policies of the Conservative Government in the United Kingdom?

THE HON W T SCOTT

How often does the Manpower Planning Committee meet and what significant alterations has it made over the last three years in the proposed figures and more particularly what is the projected list of figures under the distinct trade classification for the next year?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The Manpower Planning Committee established under the Control of Employment Ordinance meets at least quarterly, to examine and keep under review the employment situation in Gibraltar and to make recommendations as to the maximum number of permits which should be issued in respect of particular industries for the ensuing 3 months.

During the past 3 years the total permissible quota for employment permits, in respect of persons who are subject to the Ordinance, has been increased by 305, from 3385 to 3690. During this period the actual number of permits in issue has increased by 211. The most significant change has taken place in the building industry, where there has been an increase of about 210 employment permits and for which there is still provision in the quota for about a further 100.

The present approved quota for the period ending 30 April, 1980, is due to be reviewed again when the Manpower Planning Committee meets in 2 week's time.



NO. 98 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government amend the appropriate legislation so that old age pensioners living on their own may have their Television Licences at reduced fees as well as their Telephone Rentals, Electricity and Water charges?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, in the first place, in order to answer this question, I would need to know what the Hon Questioner regards as an Old Age Pensioner. Is it any person over pensionable age or only a person receiving an Old Age Pension under the Social Insurance Ordinance? And whatever the answer to this may be, is it suggested that the reduced charges for television licences, telephones, electricity and water should apply irrespective of means?

In so far as needy elderly persons living on their own and receiving Supplementary Benefits are concerned, their rates of benefit include an element to cover electricity and water costs. In addition they receive a telephone allowance which is increased periodically to take account of increases in telephone rentals. At present the allowance is equivalent to half of the actual rental.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 98 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Does not the Government think it a more equitable manner of subsidising them by having a reduced fee payable rather than to have them being subject to financial supplementary benefits?

HON A J CANEPA:

Subsidising who, Mr Speaker, the old age pensioners or the people on supplementary benefits?

HON W T SCOTT:

The people under the subject matter of the question.

MR SPEAKER:

I think the Minister has quite rightly stated that you must clarify who you mean. You are being asked to qualify and to explain what you mean by the term old age pensioner.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I was talking about old age pensioners generally. Any person who is in receipt of an old age pension.

MR SPEAKER:

Have you any answer to give?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Mr Speaker, I stick to the answer I have given.

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government make available the statistics it has in its possession with respect to pensioners in the distinct categories and also those persons of pensionable age who are either in receipt of a part pension or no pension at all and will Government also make available those figures which it has estimates as being an approximate number of elderly people not registered with it, that might be entitled to a pension should the Social Insurance Ordinance be such as to make the awarding of pensions (SIP) universal to Gibraltarians?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the approximate numbers of persons receiving statutory pensions from the Department of Labour and Social Security are as follows:

Contributory Old Age Pension	: 2,200
Non-Contributory Elderly Persons Pension	: 930
Transitional Retirement Pension	: 70

There are also about 200 persons of pensionable age receiving Supplementary Benefits, of whom a very small handful are entitled to one of the above pensions but at a rate less than their Supplementary Benefit entitlement.

Of the 2,200 in receipt of Old Age Pension about 600 are receiving reduced pensions at various rates, depending on the deficiency in their records of contributions, I am afraid that I cannot estimate with any degree of accuracy how many persons of pensionable age there may be without any pension of any kind, but their number is not likely to be significant.

I find the last part of the question impossible to answer because of the way it is put and I should point out that elderly persons are not required to register with the Department. For example - in the first place, the Hon Member mentions Gibraltarians only. There are many other persons in Gibraltar who are not Gibraltarians. Even if we consider Gibraltarians only, is it suggested that they should receive a full Old Age Pension irrespective of whether or not they have been residing and/or working in Gibraltar for all or part of their working lives?

I have said on many occasions - both in this House and outside - that this is an extremely complex matter which, apart from its financial aspects, goes to the very roots of any social insurance scheme.

NO. 100 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government give a breakdown of the unemployment figures in the different categories as at 29th February, 1980?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The figures at the end of February 1980 were as follows:-

			<u>SUB-TOTAL</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<u>BRITISH</u>				
Adults	: Males	56		
	Females	<u>36</u>	92	
Juveniles	: Males	5		
	Females	<u>20</u>	25	117
<u>ALIENS</u>				
Males	:	38		
Females	:	<u>6</u>	44	<u>44</u>
				<u>161</u>

Eight girls and two boys school leavers included.

NO. 107 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is Government satisfied that the Construction Industry Training Centre is being fully utilised by both official employers and the private sector?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, Government is fully satisfied with the use which is being made of the Construction Industry Training Centre. The other Official Employer which makes use of the Centre is the Property Services Agency and which shares the Centre's running costs in proportion to the use made of it - which at present is about 30%. This lower proportion is due to the running down of the PSA's directly employed labour force, which has led to their sending fewer apprentices and trainees to the Centre.

The private sector of the Construction Industry, unfortunately, does not make much use of the training facilities at the Centre, in spite of an offer made a few years ago, and which is always open. No charge is made for the occasional apprentice or trainee which the private sector sends to the Centre, the cost of whose training is borne by the Government of Gibraltar.

In addition to training construction trade apprentices and labourers to craft standard for the PWD and PSA, the Centre's facilities are also used in other respects, such as for trade-testing craftsmen, arranging for group visits by school children to the working environment during their last two years at school, running short courses for supervisors and on specific subjects such as scaffolding, safety at work, etc.

NO. 102 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state what are its latest proposals for development at Catalan Bay?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, Government now proposes to erect 12 dwellings at Catalan Bay at the northern end of the Village. Work would start during the 1980/81 financial year.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 102 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I am pleased to hear that Government has decided to double the construction there in this Development Programme. May I ask why it is that the full amount of sixteen dwellings cannot be done during this year?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I don't think the Government has decided to double the number of flats, I think Mr Serfaty gave the figure of ten flats as the total required at Catalan Bay in December, 1979, and he said that the Government would endeavour to provide this. This was in answer to question No. 219.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, if the present Minister for Economic Development looks carefully at that reply of his predecessor he will see that what was said was: "These considerations have dictated the Government's proposals for the construction of six dwellings at Catalan Bay under the current Development Programme." I think I was quite correct in saying that I was glad that Government had doubled that. Why is it not possible to do the sixteen?

HON A J CANEPA:

Because the plans have been designed for twelve. You could build thirty, no doubt, if you were to build eight, nine or ten storeys, but this is a reasonable number of flats that can be provided on that site as cleared at the moment.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, how many floors will this development have?

HON A J CANEPA:

Four floors.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would it not be possible, Mr Speaker, to have built a block high enough so that there would be an entrance from the top end of Sir Herbert Miles Road as well as from Catalan Bay Village?

HON A J CANEPA:

It may well be the case, Mr Speaker, it might be possible given the necessary labour, given the necessary funds, no doubt, but there are priorities and there are constraints.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would it not be desirable, Mr Speaker, in order to try and solve once and for all the whole rehousing problems in that area?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Sir, the housing problem at Catalan Bay cannot be solved at the expense of the rest of the community, it must keep reasonable pace with new housing in the rest of town.

HON G T RESTANO:

I agree with that, Mr Speaker, but on the other hand there is not a large amount of space available in Catalan Bay so once, I would have thought, space was available it should be used to its optimum use.

HON A J CANEPA:

I think that this is making reasonable use of the space available there as a first phase.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, would not the estimated cost of the Catalan Bay housing as set down in the approved estimates of 1979/80 of £120,000 indicate that the project was only for six houses originally as agreed and approved by Government?

HON A J CANEPA:

I don't know, Mr Speaker, whether that was for the whole of the project or whether there was a balance to carry forward. If it was for the whole of the project that would indicate, I imagine, about 6 units.

NO. 103 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, does Government have any intentions to develop Jumper's Bastion or put it to salutary use?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, there are no plans at present for developing either North or South Jumpers. In the case of South Jumpers, the accommodation, which is below ground, is excessively damp and cannot be used because of its extremely dilapidated condition. The cost of rehabilitating these casemates would be high and un-economic.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 103 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

May I ask, Mr Speaker, what those costs would be?

HON A J CANEPA:

I do not have the information, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

In that case, Mr Speaker, if he doesn't have the information how can he say the cost is too high?

HON A J CANEPA:

That is the technical advice which is given, Mr Speaker.



25 3 80

NO. 104 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, can Government give an assurance that land made available for development as garages for buses and lorries in the industrial area will not be used for any other purpose?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, I can confirm that as a matter of general principle Government gives the most careful scrutiny to any change-of-use application. This applies a fortiori to applications affecting land allocated for specific purposes.

NO. 105 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government make an open area available for the parking of lorries and trailers and prohibit the indiscriminate parking of these as now occurs which contributes so much to the untidy appearance of Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The short answer to the first part of the question is that there is no longer any open area that could be considered for this purpose. Land has always been in short supply in Gibraltar and available resources have been absorbed by succeeding Development Programmes.

The "sixty foot strip" next to the Incinerator at Devil's Tower Road has been earmarked as a small lorry park.

Control of parking, of course, is a Police matter and the Police Force is empowered to take action in appropriate cases.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 105 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, it appears that now lorries and trailers are parked indiscriminately along Winston Churchill Avenue between the pedestrian crossing and the Cross of Sacrifice and is that not a hazard for other traffic and for the people in the area?

HON A J CANEPA:

I would agree with the Hon Member that this is a hazard, Mr Speaker, I think it is a matter for the Police or perhaps my colleague the Minister with the responsibility for traffic could bring this to the attention of the Police.

NO. 106 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, is it still Government's intention to have a multi-storey car park built at the married quarters site at Casemates if and when the property is taken over by the Gibraltar Government?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, there has been no change in Government's thinking on the future of the Casemates Married Quarters site. The intention is still to make the site available when it can be released for redevelopment as a multi-storey car park with an element of commercial and business usage to ensure that the project is economically viable.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 106 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister not agree that to have a multi-storey car park right at the beginning of Main Street would not be a very desirable thing?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think, Mr Speaker, that that is an ideal site, it is a site which is earmarked for that purpose in the city plan and no objections that I can recall were raised. I would imagine that having regard to the site in question it is ideal. You do want a car park of this nature, a multi-storey car park, I would say, on what I would call the periphery of the town centre.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I agree that the approximate area is an ideal place to have a multi-storey car park but multi-storey car parks are rather ugly buildings and I would have thought perhaps an area in, for example, opposite Ocean Heights which is as close to the centre as necessary and with easy access, would have been preferable rather than cluttering up the beginning of Main Street with an ugly building.

HON A J CANEPA:

I don't think, Mr Speaker, it need necessarily be ugly. I think the façade on the Main Street side would have shops and perhaps offices and entrance to the car park would be at Line Wall.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister have a look at the project?

HON A J CANEPA:

If, hopefully, the project does get off the ground I am sure that the Chief Planning Officer will advise the Development and Planning Commission very carefully in order to ensure that the building is as attractive as it can reasonably be made.

25 3 80

NO. 107 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is the planned handover of the Dockyard and Technical College proceeding to the original schedule?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Education)

Yes, Sir. The transfer of management is still scheduled to take place in September 1981 and discussions on this are continuing with the UK Government.

NO. 108 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Does Government have any intention of taking over the land and buildings known as the Fleet Pavilion and if so to what use will it be put and will Government further state whether it has applied for the release of any other property or site adjacent or near to the Fleet Pavilion?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, Government has no contingency plans for taking over the Fleet Pavilion since no indication has ever been given that it would be released by the Ministry of Defence as surplus to requirement.

The possibility of converting No 2 Naval Ground into a car park has been raised with MOD's representatives in the Development and Planning Commission. The impression gathered is that there would be no MOD objection to such a proposal if the playing facilities available at this ground, or indeed at both playing fields, were reprovided. This could be done by suitable reclamation or by providing a playing deck above the car park. Either solution would be bound to involve substantial expenditure.

25 3 80

NO. 109 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government state what is the current position with regard to the future of USOC?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, it is understood that the Ministry of Defence is still considering the use to which the former USOC Club House will be put. May I add that the sporting facilities continue to be available.

NO. 110 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government consider utilising the area known as the "Jungle" to create more parking spaces thereby alleviating the parking problem in general for the residents of Moorish Castle and also clear part of the area and make it usable for children as a playground?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, some 20 extra parking spaces have been provided at Moorish Castle during the current financial year and the marking of parking bays has been effected. This has greatly improved the situation.

Approaches are currently being made to MOD for the release of further land in that area for use as car parks and plans are ready to effect this work if the land is released.

Access to the "Jungle" area is through Castle Communication, which is extremely narrow. In order to allow traffic to use this access freely a considerable amount of rock blasting to widen the road would be necessary. Any car parking scheme at this site would therefore be very expensive, and is considered impractical.

Government has considered the possibility of converting the area for leisure purposes and a playground could be included, but costs so to do are very high and the scheme has been allotted a low priority.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 110 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

With reference to that part of the question dealing with the children's playground, has Government solicited the help or the advice of certain Youth Clubs in Gibraltar?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Not at this stage, Sir, we would do if we actually intended to go ahead to build a playground up that area.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, with reference to the part of the question about alleviating the parking problem, is Government satisfied that all the garages allocated in the Estate are, in fact, being used as garages and not for some other purpose?



HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

From my rather scanty local knowledge of the area, I think there is at least one garage which is not being used as a garage, I believe it is used as a shop and I think they have a trade licence to do so but I am not very acquainted with that situation at all.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister look into this and, perhaps, let me know? Does he think it desirable that garages should be used for any purpose other than a garage?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am willing to look into it, Sir, but I believe that there is some demand for the need which this shop serves which is fruit and vegetables in that area.

NO. 111 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Has Government ascertained what were the causes of the oil infiltration in the Harbour recently, what measures it took to disperse this oil and what further measures it envisages taking to obviate similar conditions arising again?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to reply to questions No 111 and No 112 together.

The causes of the oil pollution are unknown; no oil slicks were reported entering the Harbour and no pollution of Port waters exists, other than in the vicinity of the Camber and the Calpe Rowing Club.

The Camber is only slightly polluted whereas the sea at the Calpe Rowing Club has a thick film of oil, specially in the slipway area. When this was notified to the Port Department, the City Fire Brigade were immediately informed and both areas were treated with dispersants. Since the first report, the situation has not worsened.

There has been no spillage in the Harbour and it is presumed that the oil has infiltrated during a westerly blow.

Other than spraying the area with dispersant, there is virtually nothing else that can be done. During daylight hours, visual watch for oil slicks is maintained from the Port Department Lookout situated at Western Arm.

When oil slicks are sighted their location is communicated to the Dockyard Fire Brigade, who deal with them prior to their entering Harbour. During the hours of darkness it is impossible to maintain a watch.

It was at one stage suggested that oil in the vicinity of the Gibraltar Yacht Club was possibly caused by a leakage in the oil supply line from Coaling Island to King's Bastion. The roadway was dug but no trace of oil or leakage was found.

As regards taking any further measures, it must be stressed that we can only rely on visual sightings and treatment being given immediately. In this context £3000 is provided for dispersants in the Estimates of the City Fire Brigade. The Dockyard Fire Brigade also keep stocks of dispersants.

Apart from the presence of oil in the waters in the areas stated and the reported soiling of Pleasure Boats, no other damage is known to have been caused.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS 111 AND 112 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Has Government received any claims by the boat owners and if so what is the extent?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, if I may, perhaps, answer that question. There is one claim which was made some time ago on behalf of the Yacht Club. Whether or not this relates to oil which appeared in January of this year, whether or not that is the same oil is a matter which is undetermined but there has been one claim made by the Yacht Club in respect of oil which was in the waters around the Yacht Club as far back, indeed, as July of last year and that is a claim which is being dealt with by my Chambers and Government. I should, perhaps, add that liability is not accepted in respect of that claim.

25 3 80

NO. 112 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government state the extent of the damage caused by the recent oil spilling in the Harbour?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Answered together with Question No. 111 of 1980.

NO. 113 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government take steps to ensure that the number of berthing facilities for small yachts and pleasure craft are not reduced even temporarily by developments in the Port area?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, yachts berthing within the Commercial Port of Gibraltar do so only when berths are available and always on two hours notice, as the primary responsibility of the Port Authorities lies with commercial ships.

At present yachts are berthed at Sheppard's Yacht Marina and in the Destroyer Pens, the former being a private Marina, and the latter within Admiralty waters.

A second Marina will be operational shortly, which will be capable of berthing approximately 180 yachts. It will be equipped with all the ancillary facilities required by yachtsmen.

The Destroyer Pens are at present catering for 31 yachts, which could easily be absorbed by the two Marinas.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 113 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, I take it that the answer is no, then?

HON A J CANEPA:

You are perfectly correct.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the Hon Member aware that the Camber could be developed to take far many more yachts?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am aware, Mr Speaker, of the fact that additional pontoons and other moorings have been provided within the Camber recently.

HON A J HAYNES:

Have they been completed recently?

HON A J CANEPA:

This has been a subject which has been under consideration in the Development and Planning Commission over the last two years or so and in fact the chains were made available by the Ministry of Defence to lay them at the bottom of the sea in order to provide the necessary moorings.

HON A J HAYNES:

Yes, but have they been laid?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am not sure what the state of play of that is, Mr Speaker, I would require separate notice of that question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, does the Minister consider it desirable for yachts coming in as they do now from the Atlantic after the March equinox to find that there is no reduction in berthing facilities? Does he consider it desirable to have these yachts and if so will the Minister take steps to make sure that they will be berthed?

HON A J CANEPA:

I consider it desirable that the number of berths should not be reduced but I consider it absolutely essential that the necessary development that is required at the Port for the economic benefit of Gibraltar is not impeded by a few yachts which could otherwise be berthed at the new Marina which, as I say, will open shortly and I mean shortly within the next few months.

HON A J HAYNES:

Months is the period we are talking about, Sir. The point is that would it not have been desirable to have the Camber development completed before the Destroyer Pens were evacuated or emptied?

HON A J CANEPA:

The Destroyer Pens are going to be required by the Government before the year is out and therefore it may become necessary for those yachts to be moved elsewhere. It becomes an absolutely essential matter that the Government should have No 4 jetty available for commercial use in the Port.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, without going into the benefits to Gibraltar of the Port Development as opposed to the possible benefits from yachts, I ask the Minister that he will ensure that the Camber and every other facility will be made available to yachts so that there is no decrease in the number of berthing facilities available.

HON A J CANEPA:

I cannot give such assurances, Mr Speaker. I think the development which is necessary in the commercial port cannot be held up by the requirements of a few yachts.

HON J BOSSANO:

Could I ask the Minister how the development of the expansion of Sheppard's Marina will affect the use of that area at present by small fishing boats owned by local residents? This is the area next to Sheppard's Marina, not the new Marina, the existing Marina which I understand is due to be developed next to the Gifmac Ice Factory around that area at Waterport.

HON A J CANEPA:

I am trying to cast my memory back to matters that have come to the Development and Planning Commission with which I have not dealt directly but as far as I can recall I remember there was a request by the operators of Sheppard's Marina for a certain area which they required in order to carry out further expansion and my understanding, again quoting from memory, was that that request was refused. I don't think that the Government was in a position to make that available as there was a continuing use for it.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Minister agree that if the situation arose as a result of that request for the need to evacuate that area of all the small craft presently using it that he should consult with representatives of the people involved?

HON A J CANEPA:

I know that there is constant consultation with <sup>the</sup> Small Boat Owners Association, the Government consulted them, in fact, only a week or ten days ago. Last Tuesday there was a meeting with the Small Boat Owners Association so they are kept fully consulted.

NO. 114 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, would Government consider implementing a Gibraltar Summer time by advancing the clock by one hour during the Summer period?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, this matter was considered in depth last year after consultation with interested parties, including Government Departments, the Chamber of Commerce, the Hotels Association, the Gibraltar Travel Agents Association, the Gibraltar Taxi Association and the Trade Unions. The Government appreciated that an additional hour of daylight on summer evenings would be generally welcome from the point of view of leisure activities. The Government also recognised, however, that there would be certain disadvantages in making the change, particularly in relation to the time available for shopping by day-trippers to Gibraltar. While it was not possible to quantify the economic disadvantages which would ensue from a change, it was considered that, in the present economic situation, it would be preferable to take no action which might prejudice an important source of revenue.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 114 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Does this mean that because of day-trippers the community will not have an extra hour of daylight?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, it is much wider than that, with great respect. First of all, I would like to say that we are always prepared to look at this if new arguments are produced and, in fact, we had the advice of all the people and it took quite an exercise to come to this decision. In the first place, sailings of ferry with Morocco cannot be changed, one hour shopping time would be lost, 25,000 day excursionists visited Gibraltar in 1978 and spent £650,000, so that is a factor which we have taken into account. The Chamber of Commerce is against the change on these grounds as well as the Hotel Association and the Association for Travel Agents unless the Mons Calpe traffic is not affected. The Gibraltar Taxi Association are against it if it is going to reduce the number of tourists and, naturally, the Trade Unions are generally in favour, I have a completely open mind, we did a big exercise, it is too late now to do it this year but we would have to review the matter if additional evidence is produced next year.



HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, this is exactly the same that was said last year. The Government answered last year that they would consider introducing it as an experiment this year. This question is being asked in March, is it not amazing that because the boats can't change their time or the aeroplane can't change their times, and I would have thought this was a simple matter, that people who work in offices late and who could have this extra hour and enable them to go to the beach and enjoy the pleasures of summer will be deprived of it, and I would have thought that shop hours could be altered too to suit the new hours. It is no use the Chief Minister saying that they will consider it again next year, that is what was said last year. Why doesn't the Government have a go at trying something new?

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, on the question of these day-trippers, these day-trippers are not affected.

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going to debate the matter. We are going to ask questions.

HON A T LODDO:

The day-trippers cannot be affected because in any case the Chamber of Commerce always applies for permission for shops to remain open.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

If the Hon Member would give way before he proceeds, I will explain that I think he is on the wrong tack. It is not that it will be impossible because the shops are not opened, it is because if they keep to their time-tables, the visitors would be here in Gibraltar one hour less.

MR SPEAKER:

It is the difference in time between Morocco and Gibraltar.

HON A T LODDO:

That time-table can be changed.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

They will not change it.

HON. P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, may I suggest to the Chief Minister that he considers licensing of transportation between Gibraltar and Tangier in that case because in the same way as a scheduled airline change their time-table at whim to suit their convenience it is time that the convenience of the people of Gibraltar was taken into account.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It is the economic interest of the people of Gibraltar that we are taking into account which leads to the convenience of the people of Gibraltar.

NO. 115 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, in view of the fact that the Chief Minister stated publicly in the pre-election programme "Face the public" that his Government had been in consultation and correspondence with the presently engaged Paediatrician for 18 months would he not agree that he misled the House in opposing and defeating an Opposition motion in the last House of Assembly asking for the appointment of a Paediatrician?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, the Government's attitude in this matter has been consistent throughout. Before the question of engaging a full-time paediatrician was first raised by the Hon Member in February, 1979, the Minister for Medical and Health Services had arranged, as announced in a Press Release in August, 1978, to have the question of paediatric needs studied by the King's College Research Unit. The advice given at that stage was that a team of paediatric consultants should visit Gibraltar four times a year and that, after a year's trial, a further assessment should be made.

The report on this assessment, received on 2 November, 1979, recommended that a Community Paediatrician should be recruited to carry out specific functions, in accordance with the particular requirements of the situation in Gibraltar, which were set out in detail.

By adopting this course of action, rather than being rushed into a snap decision to engage a full-time paediatrician, the Government obtained two significant advantages. In the first place, the special needs of the situation in Gibraltar, as assessed over a period of a year by a team of no less than four consultants, were built into the functions of the post. Secondly, as a result of their close interest and connection with Gibraltar over that period of a year, the King's College Research Unit subsequently placed all their paediatric facilities at Gibraltar's disposal and are willing to arrange further visits by their paediatric specialists as and when these are requested by our own Consultant Paediatrician.

When the Government opposed and defeated in this House, on 1 November, 1979, the Opposition motion that immediate steps should be taken to implement a full-time paediatric service in Gibraltar, it did so because, as it had already made perfectly clear, it was awaiting advice from the Research Unit, advice which, as it happened, arrived on the following day and was immediately acted upon.

Sir, it has seemed to me necessary to explain, yet again, the Government's consistent policy on this issue and the reasons why we opposed the motion - all of which are set out in the Hansard. Insofar as my statement in the pre-election programme was concerned, I said nothing new. I said in the debate on the motion in November last year that people had shown an interest in the possible job of paediatrician and that this was a matter for the Public Service Commission. When the Research Unit's advice was received, the post was advertised and a selection was made.

Sir, for almost a year, the Hon Member failed to shake the Government off the course which it had set itself - on a matter taken up on the Minister's initiative and not that of the Hon Member. He failed furthermore to make political capital out of his campaign on this subject. Now that the matter has been resolved by the Government, in a manner which is to the best advantage of the Paediatric Service and which would not otherwise have been possible, the Hon Member raises it yet again. In doing so he suggests that I have deliberately misled the House. This is a most serious allegation which is completely unjustified and which I repudiate. It is also my view, Sir, that to flog a dead horse is an abuse of the procedures of this House.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 115 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the Chief Minister says that the Minister for Medical and Health Services first started his investigation of the matter in August 1978, yet the Minister during the debate which he has mentioned said that he had only gone into this after Professor Jolly had come to Gibraltar and Professor Jolly came to Gibraltar at the end of September of 1978, so which of the two statements do I accept?

MR SPEAKER:

I gave a lot of thought as to whether I should allow this question. I allowed it so that you could be given an explanation. You have been given an answer and I will not allow debate as to what was said and what was done. You are free to seek information but we have got to be careful not to fall into the temptation of debating the subject.

HON G T RESTANO:

I just wanted to clarify that point, that the previous Minister for Medical and Health Services seemed to mention a different date to the one mentioned by the Chief Minister and I wondered which of the two statements was the one I could keep.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, I am not prepared to answer any supplementaries on my statement.

HON P. J ISOLA:

Does the statement that the Chief Minister had been in consultation and correspondence with the presently engaged paediatrician for 18 months, does that explain why it was that the paediatrician's family came to Gibraltar, settled down and his children went to school long before the Government made the policy decision . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

No, I will not allow that question.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

In any case, there is one thing wrong. The Hon Leader of the Opposition has attributed to me having said something about him which I didn't say.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am sorry I thought he had said it. That remark was not made by the Chief Minister then?

MR SPEAKER:

It has been clearly stated by the Chief Minister in his statement that it was only after the report was accepted that the matter was referred to the Public Service Commission and the post advertised.

HON P J ISOLA:

I do not think he has denied that he said in the programme that he had been in consultation and correspondence.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Not I, the Government.

HON P J ISOLA:

That is not denied?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That there had been contact with an applicant, yes, of course.

HON P J ISOLA:

What I am asking is does that explain why it was that the applicant and his family came to Gibraltar long before the Government made a decision to employ a paediatrician?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government support the idea of having a Gibraltar Centre in the United Kingdom and if so in what way do they envisage they could help in making this project materialize?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, the Government has noted with interest the reports on the Press Conference held by Mr Albert Poggio on behalf of the Association of Gibraltarians in the United Kingdom - the Gibraltar Group. I personally welcome this move to reactivate the Association and hope that their efforts will command general support from Gibraltarians both here and abroad. It has been stated that the Gibraltar Government will be approached for assistance but no such approach has yet been made. Only when the Government is asked for specific ways in which it might be able to help will it be possible to consider what might be done. While I think that the Gibraltar Group in the United Kingdom is a very desirable manifestation of our identity as a people, even among those who are not living in Gibraltar - or perhaps particularly among those who are not living in Gibraltar - I believe that this kind of movement, if it is to succeed, must do so substantially on the voluntary efforts of those interested and concerned. The Government is certainly sympathetic to these efforts but it would be wrong to make promises of assistance before a specific request is received and can be considered. Even then, such a request will have to be weighed very carefully against other pressing demands on the public purse. The Government will, of course, have to be satisfied, bearing in mind in particular that, as stated by one of the Trustees, the Group has been inactive for two years, that the project will be viable, lasting and well administered.

As I have said, this kind of movement depends essentially on the support of a large number of people and I would like to take this opportunity to urge all Gibraltarians, here and abroad, to show their support by contributing to the Group's financial target.

NO. 117 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government consider publishing a pamphlet on Gibraltar similar to that produced by the Gibraltar Branch of the European Movement for distribution in influential circles in Britain and other countries of the European Economic Communities and Commonwealth?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, a written statement of the views of the people of Gibraltar is in preparation for use by the delegation from Gibraltar to the European Parliament which, as announced last week, will be taking place in April. The Government will consider publishing this statement for general distribution.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 117 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Will it be published in the form similar to the leaflet where there are some pictures and illustrations, in order to make the person looking at it interested in the subject?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

We shall try to do that.

25 3 80

NO. 118 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

When is it expected that GBC will be fully operational from Mercury House?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Work on the conversion of part of Mercury House is proceeding according to schedule and, as envisaged, GBC/TV will be able to start operating from there in July this year.

The transfer of GBC Radio will then follow and I am informed that GBC should be fully operational from Mercury House by the end of this year.



25 3 80

NO. 119 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government consider re-opening talks with the Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation for the purpose of permitting the proceedings of the House to be broadcast?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, in reply to Question 290/78 in the last House I stated, after consultation with GBC, that it would be desirable to defer consideration of the question of broadcasting the meetings of the House until GBC, who had other pressing commitments, were in a better position to pursue the matter.

I am now pleased to inform the House that, as the move to Mercury House is progressing satisfactorily, GBC have agreed that it will be possible to continue discussion of this matter in the very near future.

MR SPEAKER:

May I perhaps add to that answer that I have received a letter from GBC about two days ago saying that they are now in a position to consider broadcasting and asking for suggestions and that it is my intention to write to both the Chief Minister and the Leader of the Opposition suggesting that a sub-committee be appointed to study the matter.

25 3 80

NO. 120 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Will Government give consideration to amending the appropriate legislation so that persons who at Election time are away from Gibraltar such as students and holiday-makers will be able to vote by post?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Yes, Sir.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

MEETING OF 17TH JULY 1980

QUESTIONS

AND

ANSWERS

121 to 223

17 7 80

NO. 121 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government consider the introduction of amending legislation so as to make it compulsory for drivers of vehicles to have their blood groups recorded on their driving licences?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission I will deal with this Question and Question No 126 from the Hon A T Loddó at the same time.

The format of the Gibraltar Driving Licence follows the Model Driving Permit as set out in Annex 9 of the United Nations Convention on road traffic. This does not provide any information on blood groups and distinguishes the different categories of vehicles which the holder is authorised to drive. If the UN format were changed the Government would clearly consider similar changes in the Gibraltar form of licence.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 121 AND 126 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I fully accept that perhaps they want to stick to the format, but would Government consider encouraging drivers to have something with the licence which could give details such as blood group and perhaps if they have any heart condition and things like that which would be very, very useful in case of an accident, particularly, I think, if the frontier opens and they find themselves across the border.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, certainly the Government would be prepared to consider this but it would have to be a voluntary matter and not a matter that persons are required to do.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Perhaps, Mr Speaker, if it cannot be made compulsory perhaps it could be encouraged.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I am grateful for the information as to the law as promulgated by the United Nations but my point in raising this question is that the law in the United Kingdom, on which we like to base ourselves, is that a holder of a 'B' licence is entitled to ride a moped or a similar vehicle under 50 cc capacity and not only that but any holder of a learner's licence, a provisional licence, as from the age of 16 is allowed to drive an under 50 cc. Would Government consider changing the law here in Gibraltar?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I discussed this question with the staff responsible, the Motor Car Examiners, and it is considered that in the traffic conditions in Gibraltar that a separate test for a moped is necessary. We considered it very carefully and on balance this is the view accepted by the Government.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

I would have thought, Mr Speaker, that in England it is much more necessary than in Gibraltar.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but we are not going to go into that. Next question.

NO. 122 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Mr Speaker, can Government estimate what loss in revenue results to the Gibraltar Government and to commercial interests generally as a consequence of the Shell bunkering lighter being withdrawn from service for three weeks?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, no. I regret that it is not possible for the Government to provide the information requested by the Honourable Member. It would be necessary to establish how many ships if any do not call at Gibraltar because of the absence of lighter facilities. This information simply cannot be ascertained.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 122 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I do take it that Government is aware that it does result in loss?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, there is a certain loss both to Government in terms of the bunkering fees loss and also, of course, to Shell.

HON A J HAYNES:

But if Government is aware that it is incurring the loss, surely it should do something to prevent it in the future?

MR SPEAKER:

We must not go beyond the scope of the question. It is not Government's responsibility to provide the service. The question has been allowed because it relates to the loss of revenue and on that score you can ask what you like but no further.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is not the majority of bunkering in the Port taken from lighters? Is the Financial and Development Secretary aware?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, my understanding is that quite a proportion of vessels come in and take the fuel alongside, or can come alongside, in an emergency they can do so. The problem here in ascertaining the information required is that a notice is put out to Lloyds that for a certain period bunkering will not be possible here because the bunkering vessel is being renovated and we have no idea how many ships that would have come in, in fact, go past Gibraltar.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, as this is, I would have thought, a vital service that the Port gives, should not the Government approach the company concerned to have a replacement lighter available for what amounts to almost 1/12th of the year in view of the repercussions it has on the Port, generally, as a Port that gives service and prides itself on giving excellent services to shipping. Is this not rather like, I would suggest, Gibraltar Airways when it withdraws its aircraft from the Tangier run for a month? Is it not the case and in most parts of the world other facilities are given by the company that has it? Does not Government consider it essential to ensure that that service is available to the Port throughout the year and will Government take some action on the matter?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, we understand from the company concerned that a relief lighter is not easily obtainable and that the cost would be so high that it would be uneconomic to bring it in for so short a period.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, it is not a question of buying one, it is a question of chartering one for the period in question, I would have thought, and if it proves a little more expensive than not having a lighter at all, should not the company concerned consider the fact that it has a monopoly in the Port and that as a monopoly holder of a service in the Port it owes a duty to the Port?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am afraid that the Hon Leader of the Opposition misunderstood my reply. I did not say that acquiring a second lighter but that a relief lighter, ie the cost of bringing a lighter from elsewhere into Gibraltar for three weeks would be so high that it would be uneconomic.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, that doesn't really answer my question which is that the company concerned, should it not consider the fact that in view of its unique situation it should provide this service throughout the year even if it costs money to provide it in view of the fact that it has the compensating benefit of having a monopoly situation throughout the year?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I note the point made by the Hon Member and we will discuss it with the company.

NO. 123 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can Government now state the final figures for recurrent revenue and recurrent expenditure for the year 1979 to 1980 and can the Government state the actual balance on the Consolidated Fund as at 31st March, 1980?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the accounts for the year ending 31st March, 1980, have not yet been closed and it is therefore not possible to state the final figures for recurrent revenue and recurrent expenditure or the actual balance on the consolidated fund on that date. However, the latest figures available, which are still subject to adjustment and audit are:-

Recurrent revenue	£31,971,093
Recurrent expenditure	28,780,242
Balance of consolidated fund	4,035,596

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 123 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, am I right in saying that the recurrent revenue fell short by about £200,000 to that estimated, that the recurrent expenditure also fell short to that estimated? I cannot understand the final figure.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, may I possibly assist the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition. Recurrent revenue was down by £188,000 on the revised estimates. Recurrent expenditure was £640,000 below the revised estimates and the balance of the Consolidated Fund was £400,000 above the revised estimates.

HON P J ISOLA:

The reason why I asked, Mr Speaker, is that in page 5 of the approved estimates recurrent expenditure is put £28,221,700 and the figure the Hon the Financial and Development Secretary has given is £500,000 in excess to that, £28,780,242, and therefore I couldn't understand how he had his Consolidated Fund figure of £4,000,000. Perhaps the approved estimates are wrong, I don't know.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, the revised figure in the recurrent expenditure 1979/80 £28.221m and the recurrent expenditure where it probably arises is that the figures that I have quoted include budgetary contributions for potable water and housing fund, this will make the difference.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.



17 7 80

NO. 124 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, will Government take action to alleviate the position of MOD pensioners resident in Gibraltar whose MOD pensions suffer tax both in the United Kingdom and in Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, under Section 30 of the Income Tax Ordinance all tax payers, including MOD pensioners, ordinarily resident in Gibraltar who receive in Gibraltar income accruing in and derived from the United Kingdom are eligible for relief on any tax paid in the United Kingdom.

The relief is the lower of the two rates of tax on the income.

In effect the amount of tax actually paid by the tax payer is the higher of the two tax rates. If the Gibraltar rate is higher than that of the United Kingdom the relief given is the amount of tax paid to the United Kingdom authorities. If the United Kingdom tax is higher than that in Gibraltar, no tax would be payable in Gibraltar.

NO. 125 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government state the final amount actually spent on the development programme under the different heads of expenditure in the Improvement and Development Funds numbered 101 to 113 head by head between 1st April, 1979, and 31st March, 1980?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the accounts for the year ended 31 March, 1980, have not yet been closed. Final figures are not therefore available. However, subject to any adjustments and audit the figures now stand as follows:

	£
HEAD 101 Housing	1,367,800
102 Schools	445,959
103 Tourist Development	39,316
104 Miscellaneous Projects	896,674
105 General Services	223,000
106 Government Offices and Buildings	273,878
107 Port Development	687,613
108 Marina Development	29,294
109 Public Lighting	6,576
110 Electricity Service	127,119
111 Potable Water	206,379
112 Telephone	136,622
113 Police	-
Total	<u><u>4,440,230</u></u>

17 7 80

NO. 126 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

· Would Government consider amending the law so that holders of a 'B' licence are allowed to drive a moped or similar vehicles under 50 cc capacity?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

(Answered together with Question No. 121 of 1980).

NO. 127 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, can Government state the amounts in electricity, water and telephone bills which have been outstanding for over 12 months?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, I regret that the information requested cannot be readily provided until such time as all billing is computerised. The computer would then need to complete a normal cycle of 12 months before it could produce the information. To produce details in respect of non-computerised accounts would be time consuming as well as expensive in terms of labour. What is more important, it would slow down the rate of progress on the whole computerisation exercise and also the follow up of unpaid bills.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 127 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, has Government no idea at all how much money is owing to it by consumers who have not paid their bills for over 12 months? Is there no monitoring of unpaid bills?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir, there is monitoring of unpaid bills and we know the amounts outstanding but we do not know the amounts that are outstanding for a year, because when the amounts outstanding were put on to the computer from the card that we used previously, a total sum was put in and it is not possible to break that down.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I seem to remember the Honourable Member saying that reminders were sent out to people who had not paid their bills after 3 months and possibly after 6 months action might be taken. Well, if there are accounts outstanding for over 12 months, what is the Government doing about it to try and recoup that money?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, the Accountant-General has been in touch with persons who have bills outstanding for a long period, not necessarily up to one year, and has warned them that unless bills are paid then the supplies will be cut off. In fact, as a result of this we have had a large number of payments on outstanding bills.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, have in fact any accounts been closed because of non payment of bills?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 128 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, is Government aware that electricity and water bills for charges covering from February have not been sent to some consumers?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the electricity and water bills for February, March and April, 1980, have been issued. The bills for May, 1980, are now being processed.

Certain bills may not have been issued because the consumer was not at home when the meter reader called. Such consumers receive a note asking them to complete details of the latest reading or to contact the billing section to arrange a mutually convenient time for the meter reader to call again.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 128 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, are there many of such accounts?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I don't know.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I don't know if this question is entirely in order or not but can the Government state or confirm, in fact, that if bills for February are in receipt in July, what is the usual period that they take for bills to be sent? Are they sent within 3 weeks, 2 months, 3 months?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I think, Sir, that the answer to that question was implicit in the first part of my reply. The bills for May, 1980, are now being processed, in fact, they will go out in July. Once we have all the bills on the computer we should be able to issue them within a week of the end of the month.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17 7 80

NO. 129 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, is Government aware that some electricity bills sent for the months of March and April did not have the date of reading on the bills and that the FCA rate was not inserted although charged for?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the computer has been programmed to insert the dates of reading and FCA rates in the electricity and water bills. This accounts for 70% of all electricity and water bills issued. On the non computerised bills the dates of reading and FCA rates are inserted by hand. I regret that the odd bill may have slipped through without these details having been included. In such cases the relevant information will be provided by the billing section on request.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 129 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, would Government ensure that this does not occur again because it seems to me that if bills are received without having this information all it leads to is perhaps a delay in payment and certainly even more work to the department concerned?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to give the assurance sought by the Hon Member but there is a factor of human error where we have very young clerical assistants completing these bills in difficult circumstances of work and one cannot say that it will never happen again. Clerly we will try to avoid it.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 130 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, would Government ensure that provisions are included in the new Banking Ordinance prohibiting banks from charging fees for effecting standing Bankers Orders from and to accounts within their own bank, bearing in mind that such a service is not charged for by UK banks when the recipients have accounts in their banks?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, the new banking legislation will be designed to safeguard the interests of depositors and of the community as a whole, and to cover the broader aspects of banking business generally. It is not considered appropriate for the Government to intervene, by way of legislation, in the level of charges raised by banks for their services.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 130 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, Would the Government be prepared to approach the banks and ask them if they would waive these charges in these particular circumstances?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, if the Government considered that the charges were inordinate it would be prepared to discuss with the banks.

HON G T RESTANO:

No, Mr Speaker, the point was not whether the charges were inordinate or not but that they certainly do not conform with the practice in the United Kingdom.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, unfortunately we have been unable to obtain by the date of this meeting particulars of United Kingdom bank charges. The point is that even when a Bankers Order is within the same branch there is a cost, an administrative cost, there is the cost of making changes in the ledger, of writing to both the person who has made the order and the receiver of the funds informing him that the money has been transferred. This is done by post so there is a postal charge as well. Furthermore, when a bank takes on a responsibility for a Bankers Order it also becomes liable for any effects that may flow if the Bankers Order is not based on the United Kingdom .....



MR SPEAKER:

I hate to interrupt but we must not get too involved with the workings of the bank, it is a matter of whether the charge should or should not be made or whether the Government is prepared to do something about it.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Hon Member not confirm whether under existing legislation of Consumer Protection, in fact, this is not an area that should be as subject to examination as any other area where a service is being provided and should not be overcharged for?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 131 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, would Government consider introducing legislation to prevent young children from handling speed boats unless they are accompanied by adults?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the Government does in fact have under consideration the question whether there should be age restrictions on persons in charge of speed boats. Although so far there have been very few complaints about the handling of speed boats by young persons, the numbers of such craft are increasing, particularly for water skiing and it is felt that some controls may be desirable.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 131 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, when will this consideration be given? When will the legislation be brought to the House?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The matter is under consideration. As to when the legislation will be ready, I am afraid at this stage I cannot say.

HON G T RESTANO:

Will it cover this summer period, Mr Speaker?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

No, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 132 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government give consideration to amending the Pensions Ordinance to allow some of the years of service of Sister Cruz RMN to count as pensionable service in the light of the circumstances surrounding the break in service?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the answer is no. Miss Cruz resigned voluntarily from Government service in March, 1956. She was employed again by the Government from 1 March, 1960. Regulation 16(1) of the Pensions Regulations only allows for continuous service to reckon as qualifying for pensionable service and specifically provides that any break due to voluntary resignation shall be disregarded. Miss Cruz has given meritorious service to the nursing profession in Gibraltar but I nevertheless regret that it would not be proper to amend the Pensions legislation to suit an individual case in this respect, particularly where these provisions have been applied in all similar cases of voluntary resignation and subsequent re-employment.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 132 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, will the Hon Member confirm that Miss Cruz was not paid a gratuity in 1956 when she resigned and she has been offered in 1980 the money she would have received in 1956 had it been paid at its due moment when the value of that money is significantly less than it was, is the Hon Member aware of that particular detail?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, it is regretted that the situation is as the Hon Member has said.

HON J BOSSANO:

And is the Hon Member also aware that during the period that he mentioned of break, 1956 to 1960, Sister Cruz in fact was training in UK and had her passage to UK paid although the training in UK was not at Government expense, is he aware of that?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, Government is aware of that situation.

HON J BOSSANO:

And is the Hon Member aware of the fact that there has been previous individual amendments to the Pensions Ordinance because of particular circumstances and is this not a case that is creating a precedent and will he in the light of that be prepared to give

some consideration to perhaps making provision for some of the years if not all, in view of the two elements that I have mentioned, Mr Speaker, which I think are unique?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, each case is considered on its merit and each case has to be looked at within the context of its particular facts. In the same way as other special legislation has been done in respect of other persons the matter will be considered in the case of Miss Cruz.

HON J BOSSANO:

I think the answer is that they will give further consideration to the matter or is it still no?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The answer as far as I am concerned at the moment is still no, but of course matters can always be re-considered from time to time.

HON J BOSSANO:

The answer is a qualified yes, I take it.

MR SPEAKER:

That depends on whether you are an optimist or a pessimist.

17 7 80

NO. 133 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how many cases of contravention of the Animals and Birds Ordinance in respect of wildlife preservation have come up in Court within the last five years?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, four cases are known to have been taken to court during that period, one each in 1976, 1978, 1979 and 1980.

Convictions were obtained in all four cases.

Fines of £10 were imposed in the first three cases and £40 in the fourth case.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 133 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, would the Hon the Attorney-General state what the cases were for actually, was it birds, stealing eggs or what was it?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am afraid at this stage I cannot say.

NO. 134 OF 1980

GRAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

What is the present position concerning Nos 197/201 Main Street?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member will recall that after the Government obtained a Supreme Court nuisance order last year, the owner took steps to demolish the property to first floor level thus minimising the immediate danger, and that subsequently a stoppage order was served on him after he sought to carry out unauthorised building works.

No further building work was undertaken by the owner. The premises were however inspected by a structural engineer and an environmental health officer who consider that it remains a nuisance.

The owner has submitted plans for further work for Government's approval. These are being considered.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 134 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

If there is still a nuisance there, is Government doing anything to ensure that it is abated within a reasonable time or are we in for another 2 years of that horrific sight?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I cannot answer that question, I will require notice.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, but if it is a nuisance surely it has to be abated.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Yes, and I am sure that the Chief Environmental Health Officer has got his eye on it but what the stage of play is I don't know.

17 7 80

NO. 135 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Can Government state why it is that the Companies Registry and Supreme Court are under-staffed and is Government taking any action in this respect?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the workload in the Supreme Court, including the Registries, has been examined by Staff Inspection, as a result of which the staffing of the Department is to be increased by one Higher Executive Officer, one Executive Officer and one Clerical Officer.

NO. 136 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state whether professionals employed full-time with the Public Works Department are allowed to undertake private work and if so under what conditions?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, all Civil Servants, including the professional staff employed in the Public Works and other departments, are required under the Government's General Orders to seek the Government's permission before undertaking paid employment in a private capacity.

All applications received are considered on their merits within the guide-lines laid down by the General Order which provides that permission will not be given to Senior Officers except in very exceptional circumstances, and that the work to be undertaken is not of an undignified nature or likely to prejudice the performance of the officer's official duties.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 136 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, may I know how many professionals have been given permission by the Government to undertake private work?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I would require notice of that.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I would have thought that arises quite clearly out of the question.

HON W T SCOTT:

Can Government state if it has received any application which it has subsequently refused?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Again I require notice.



HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask the Hon and Learned the Attorney-General, in respect of professionals in the Public Works Department is permission given generally to do private work according to their profession or is it necessary for them to apply in respect of each assignment or each job or private work that they are asked to undertake?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

It must be in respect of each job that they are asked to undertake.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 137 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Mr Speaker, will Government report their decision as regards modernising the Maternity Department at St Bernard's Hospital, and what will the modernisation if implemented consist of?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Sir, as I stated in my answer to question No. 38 of 1980, the modernisation of the Maternity Department is still under consideration in connection with the 1981 development programme.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 137 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, can we have an indication as to when this consideration is likely to be?

MR SPEAKER:

With due respect, did you say No. 38 of 1980?

HON J B PEREZ:

No. 38 of 1980.

MR SPEAKER:

I think that No. 38 of 1980 does not refer to this.

HON J B PEREZ:

No. 31, Mr Speaker.

HON A J HAYNES:

How long does Government plan to leave it in a sort of cloud of it is being considered? Is there any indication that it is going to be decided or what?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, the next Development Programme commences in April of next year and we have as yet no date for the talks to be held.

HON A J HAYNES:

Does that mean that you won't consider it until April of next year or that plans will be ready by April?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I said the matter is being at present considered but no final decision has yet been taken.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I think the Hon Minister said Question No. 31. I think he was mistaken yet again, I think he is referring to Question No. 35.

MR SPEAKER:

I did not question the fact that it could be Question No. 31 because it did refer to the Medical and Health Services and I wasn't prepared to read all the answers and supplementaries. What number did you say it was?

HON J B PEREZ:

It is Question No. 35.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Hon Member say whether the Government has decided as a matter of policy to modernise the Maternity Department and to put plans forward in the 1981 Development Programme or is it still considering whether it does or does not modernise the Maternity Department as part of the 1981 programme? I would have thought they would have come to a view about this already, if not there is bound to be slippage in the 1981 Development Programme.

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, the matter is being considered at present by the forward planning committee.

HON P J ISOLA:

Therefore the Government has not yet made up its mind whether it will modernise the Maternity Department or not?

HON J B PEREZ:

I have already stated, Mr Speaker, that no final decision has yet been taken.

HON P J ISOLA:

So it has not made up its mind, is that the position, it may not be included in the Development Programme of 1981?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I am the Chairman of the forward planning committee so perhaps I can throw some light on this. The position is that the Working Party of technical officials who are working on the costings and on the plans for the next Development Programme have not yet costed the modernisation plan in respect of the Maternity Wing. When the cost is known, if it is found to be considerable, the Government would consider including it in the Development Programme to be discussed with Her Majesty's Government before April, 1981. However, if the figure involved were not to be very high the Government might decide to fund it locally under the Improvement and Development Fund. So until we have a figure as to the cost involved, which I hope to have after the summer, we will not be in a position to take a final decision. At the moment it is in the draft programme and it has been assigned some priority but no final decision has been taken.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the Member in a position to answer the second part of my question which is what will the modernisation, if implemented, consist of?

HON A J CANEPA:

That is for my colleague to answer.

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, no final decision as such has been taken on what type of modernisation will be involved as a whole. We have just put draft proposals, eg, new waiting room and reception areas, but all these are being costed at the moment.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, if I have an idea of what it is they have in mind for the Maternity Department then I will wait patiently but if I feel that what they have in mind anyway is not satisfactory, I would rather start complaining about it now and not wait until some time in 1990 or whatever.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 138 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

What success has Government met with in pressing for an alternative hoarding to be erected outside premises 197/201 Main Street?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, since service of the stoppage order, the owner has not yet proceeded with remedial works. He has however submitted plans for such works to the Surveyor and Planning Secretary which are being considered.

At present it is considered that the temporary barrier is both adequate and an improvement on the previous arrangements but the Government will take steps to require more suitable hoarding to be erected before further demolition or building work proceeds.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 138 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Does Government believe that this time they are going to be successful?

MR SPEAKER:

Are you asking a question as to whether the repairs are going to be adequate because we are talking about the hoarding and nothing else.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Very well, Mr Speaker, I will limit it to the hoarding.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I see no reason why we should not be successful.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Since the Government has failed in the past is it not more reasonable to believe that they will be unsuccessful?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17 7 80

NO. 139 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say whether there has been any increase in the number of patients making use of the Physiotherapy Department?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, no, Sir. There has been no increase.

NO. 140 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, is Government satisfied that the present premises occupied by the Physiotherapy Department are adequate?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government is perfectly satisfied that adequate coverage is being given to the present physiotherapy requirements in the premises currently occupied by that department.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 140 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, Government is obviously also aware that the workload in the Physiotherapy Department has increased over the last year by 25% and the Physiotherapy Department still is the same size, so how can they be satisfied with the present premises when the staff is not?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, all I can say is that Government is perfectly satisfied with the present premises.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 141 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, would Government state whether it levies any charge on visiting specialists using the facilities of the Hospital and its staff when attending their private patients?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, no, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 141 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Government consider making a levy for the use of the hospital facilities by the visiting specialists?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I will inform the Hon Member that charges although not levied on the visiting specialists are in fact levied on the private patients themselves which accounts for a substantial amount of revenue to Government at the end of the year.

HON G T RESTANO:

I would like an explanation of that, Mr Speaker. If a private patient sees a specialist surely he pays the specialist and not the Government?

MR SPEAKER:

We may be talking at cross purposes. What the Minister says is if the result of the consultation is that the patient has to go to hospital, then the patient pays the hospital fees.

HON J B PEREZ:

It also includes things like X-rays and laboratory fees.

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked whether any charge is made to the specialist for consultancies which have been held in the hospital premises, irrespective of any other charges you would have made for any services as a result of the consultancy?

HON J B PEREZ:

I have said, no, Sir.



HON G T RESTANO:

I have asked the Government would they reconsider and make a levy?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir; I do not see the need to reconsider this position. The Government is quite satisfied with the present arrangements that the Government has with visiting specialists and let me say, Mr Speaker, that the work is of extreme value to Gibraltarians and we are very happy with the work that the visiting specialists are carrying out in the hospital.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I think the principle here is that somebody is making money privately on Government premises. I have nothing to say against what the Minister has said in praise of the specialists but I think, in principle, Government should not allow its premises to be used without levying a charge to somebody who is going to charge privately.

HON J B PEREZ:

Let me just add, Mr Speaker, that the agreement reached with the specialists is that they have in fact the same facilities like all our other consultants.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 142 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government make arrangements so that one doctor at the Health Centre is available daily to deal exclusively with patients in urgent need of assistance?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, there are six doctors available at the Health Centre daily and despite the appointments system, urgent cases are seen as necessary.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 142 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, that is not my understanding. Would the Minister ensure that all persons who go to the Health Centre for urgent cases, that have not had the time, obviously to make an appointment are seen immediately?

HON J B PEREZ:

That is, in fact, the case today, Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 143 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government consider installing a telephone at the mortuary at St Bernard's Hospital?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

No, Sir. There is a telephone at the Porters' Lodge for the use of visitors to hospital.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 143 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Government not consider that the relatives of a deceased person who need to make arrangements, funeral arrangements and so on, and who at the same time would want to accompany their relatives in the mortuary, would it not be compassionate for the Government to let them have a telephone next to the mortuary rather than having them go all the way round to the Porters' Lodge?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is precisely for the reasons given by the Hon Member, for compassion and understanding of relatives, that I do not consider that a telephone should be placed at the mortuary.

HON G T RESTANO:

So this is the Minister's own personal opinion, Mr Speaker, or has he taken advice from anybody who has been affected?

HON J B PEREZ:

Let us put it this way, the Government does not consider it necessary to provide a telephone at the mortuary, there is one at the Porters' Lodge.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Would Government implement a system whereby cardiograms and analyses can be taken at the Health Centre?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Sir, facilities for cardiograms are available and utilised at the Health Centre. Analyses are invariably carried out in the Laboratory at St Bernard's Hospital.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 114 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

But would it not be possible for the analyses to be collected at the Health Centre where the patients go in any case and be sent by the Government up to the laboratory?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, the point is that the word analyses is extremely wide and I was not sure what the Hon Member was referring to by analyses. If he has a particular point in mind he can ask me now and I will give him the information later, such as collection of specimens, eg. Some are collected, in fact, at the Health Centre but obviously the tests are carried out at the laboratory at St Bernard's Hospital.

HON G T RESTANO:

Well, Mr Speaker, for example, blood tests. A person who needs a blood test is told to go to the Hospital by the Health Centre. He goes to the Health Centre and then he is told that he needs a blood test and he is told to go up to the Hospital. Would it not be an added service for that patient to have the blood tests taken at the Health Centre?

MR SPEAKER:

Let us clear this point so that we do not talk at cross purposes. What you are saying is that the specimen should be taken at the Health Centre with a view to being sent to the laboratory. It is not being suggested that the actual analyses should be done at the Health Centre.

HON J B PEREZ:

As I said, Mr Speaker, I will look this matter up on what the Hon Member has said and I will provide him with the answer.

17 7 80

NO. 145 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government explain how patients records are kept at the Health Centre?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, a separate record of each patient is contained in an indexed envelope filed in numerical order and cross-referenced alphabetically.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 145 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Is it not a fact, Mr Speaker, that some of these records are indexed by doctors?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Sir.

17 7 80

NO. 146 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

How many stalls at the Public Markets are either empty or being used as stores and how many persons are on the waiting list for stalls?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, only two daily poultry stalls and one double fruit and vegetable monthly stall are empty, out of a total of twelve daily and 35 monthly stalls. Five single fruit and vegetable monthly stalls and a single charcuterie stall for which there are no applicants are being used as food stores.

There is only one application on the waiting list and this is for a flower stall of which there are two and both are in use.

17 7 80

NO. 147 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Has the report of the British Post Office Consultants on the introduction of International Subscriber Dialling now been received and if so would Government state what recommendations were tendered?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, I gave notice on 4<sup>th</sup> July that I would be making a statement on this matter and I shall be dealing with this question in that statement.

MR SPEAKER:

On the clear understanding that supplementaries will be asked when the statement is made as in question time.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Sir.

NO. 148 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Is Government satisfied that there is sufficient fire fighting equipment at the Yacht Bunkering Station?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Government is satisfied with the amount of fire fighting equipment at the Yacht Bunkering Station.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 148 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Can the Minister say what equipment is there at the moment?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, the fire fighting equipment at the installation is 1 X 180 feet hose reel, 4 X 20 pounds dry powder extinguishers and 1 cubic yard of dry sand.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, how can the Minister say that he is satisfied that the fire fighting equipment is sufficient when it was insufficient to put out a fire in a yacht there fairly recently?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, let me say that the requirements under Section 11 of the City Fire Brigade and Fire Services Ordinance 1976, abatement of fire hazards, were issued to Shell on the 1st August, 1978. These requirements were complied with in full and the first petroleum licence was issued on the 21st July, 1979. It was renewed on the 1st April, 1980, after being inspected on the 21st February, 1980, when all conditions of the existing licence were in order.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I am very grateful for that reply but of course that reply has nothing to do with the question that I asked.

MR SPEAKER:

The Minister has said that the person giving the service is complying with the requirements of the law as far as fire fighting is concerned and therefore he is satisfied with the fire fighting equipment at the Yacht Bunkering Station.



HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, can the Hon Member confirm that the yacht mentioned by my friend was in fact dealt with by fire fighting equipment other than that available at the Bunkering Station?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I believe there was some assistance mainly in taking the yacht away from the proximity of the Shell Bunkering Station.

HON G T RESTANO:

Does that not imply, Mr Speaker, or indicate that the fire fighting equipment at the Bunkering Station was not adequate?

MR SPEAKER:

No, I am not allowing this supplementary. The Minister has given an answer to your question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I'm not certain that the answer is clear. Was fire fighting equipment, other than that at the station, used? I'm not questioning whether, in fact, other people came in to help, I want to know whether other fire fighting equipment was used on that occasion?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, with all due respect to the Hon Member, this is a completely different question and I require notice of the question before I can answer it.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, I entirely agree. Next question.

NO. 149 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state what are the times available to the general public to book trunk calls at the City Hall?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, a Hall Porter is on duty at the City Hall every day from 08.00 to 21.00 hours for the booking of trunk calls. However, bookings are only accepted till 20.30 hours, to allow the operator time to connect the call(s) before the City Hall closes. After 21.00 hours, urgent calls may be placed from the Police Station at Waterport.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 149 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is this not a departure from last year when the Hall was open until 11.30 pm?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, yes, this is a slight departure because my last answer to the question which Mr Restano put on the 26th February, 1979, which was Question 77 of 1979, said that the last call could be placed at 11.30 pm so that the call would be in by 12.00. Unfortunately, we have found out that the demand is not there between 9.00 pm and 12.00 o'clock at night, the men who are well over 60 are reluctant to stay there alone during this period of time and there is at the moment a shortage of staff.

HON G T RESTANO:

When was this new procedure implemented, Mr Speaker?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, sir, I am not quite sure of the actual date of the implementation of the procedure but if the Hon Mr Restano is willing I can find out and let him know as soon as I have the actual figure.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister aware that, in fact, some persons have been turned back at 5.45 pm and told that at 6.00 pm the City Hall is closed for trunk calls? Would this be an exceptional case or would this be a regular case?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, Sir, this could well be an exceptional case depending on sick leave of the individual which is sometimes unavoidable at the time, but the fact still remains that if there is an urgent call this can be placed from the Police Station at Waterport.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will Government consider keeping the City Hall open to its old hours of 11.30 pm on days when visiting naval ships are in Gibraltar on which occasions I understand there are long queues for calls by visiting sailors in ships to their families in the United Kingdom? Is there not a case for keeping the City Hall open late on occasions when visiting naval ships, especially when there are a number of them coming to Gibraltar?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, as the Hon Member quite rightly points out the Government will look into it. Unfortunately, there are large numbers of security problems involved as these members of the public generally tend to be somewhat under the weather, not to say drunk, and this is late at night and there is an elderly man having to deal with 20 or 30 men of this type. Certainly I shall look into this and I shall let the Hon Member know.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17 7 80

NO. 150 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government undertake a study to determine if the use of solar energy can be economically employed in Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, the most successful application of solar energy hitherto has been in the field of water heating and a number of brand products are already in service in many parts of the world.

The space required to install the solar panels can present problems in high density and high rise buildings and this would certainly be the case in Gibraltar.

Nevertheless, the Government through the Public Works Department have already obtained the equipment to set up a pilot solar water heating installation at the Boys' Comprehensive School, where it can be monitored to establish its performance under local conditions.

One difficulty already envisaged is the fact that solar water heating requires to be backed up by electrical power. Quite logically more electrical power will be required in the winter and the widespread use of solar heating, while beneficial for energy conservation, could adversely affect load factors of electricity generating plant to an unacceptable extent. This could create further problems.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 150 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

I am much pleased, Mr Speaker, to hear that the Government have taken measures to introduce a pilot scheme but I must take exception to what the Hon Minister has just said in increased load because the increased load we have nowadays in any case even with water heating. Surely, the introduction of solar energy by heating panels to water heaters would surely diminish that load and in any event, Mr Speaker, could I ask the Government if indeed that pilot scheme which presumably they are going to implement very shortly at the Boys' Comprehensive School, if they find that it is of benefit to Gibraltar given the problems that we have with power generation, they would seriously consider implementing some form of solar energy even if it is exclusive to water heating in the 1981 development programme in particular to housing should it be acceptable in areas of less density.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I thank the Hon Member for his comments and though I take some of them I would like to let him know that in the United Kingdom the introduction of communal water heating by solar energy using an underground tank at a housing development was abandoned. This project was abandoned as this was of no use and certainly did not produce enough heat. It may be that under different conditions, ie Gibraltar, different results may arise. Finally, let me say that the electrical power generation from solar energy is in its very early stage and will take many more years before it becomes a viable proposition.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is this pilot scheme in the Boys' Comprehensive the only study on solar energy in Gibraltar at the moment?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, we have considered the use of solar energy for our distilling plant and we understood that Malta was using it. I got in contact with the Minister of Public Works in Malta and I was informed that they did a feasibility study and found that it was not practical. I have since written to them and asked them to let us have a look at their feasibility study to see if anything can be used from it for Gibraltar but it does appear that if Malta which gets perhaps more sunshine than us find that it is not practical, it is probably not practical in Gibraltar as well.

NO. 151 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government make a comprehensive statement with respect to its future policy on the education of children for whom they are responsible outside Government schools and in particular the education of local children in MOD schools?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Sir, during the Autumn Term 1979 Government considered a recommendation contained in the Third Report of the Expenditure Committee that the sponsorship scheme, which provides for non-entitled children to attend Services Schools at the expense of Government, be phased out commencing in September, 1980. A final decision was deferred, however, pending consideration of representations made to Government on the matter and an examination of a possible agreement between MOD and Government on the provision for the education of protestant children, following the opening of the Services Schools in 1969 and 1971 respectively. After detailed consideration of the background to this matter it has been agreed that the sponsorship scheme should be continued after September 1980 in accordance with an original agreement between MOD and the Government dated February 1966 in which MOD undertook to make provision for a maximum of 90 children in the Services Schools to be admitted at the expense of Gibraltar Government as part of a controlled sponsorship scheme.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 151 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, we welcome that statement because the Minister will recall that at the Budget meeting of the House we were concerned on this side of the House that the Government was welshing on an agreement it had made and was not honouring an agreement it had made with regard to children from the Church of England, residents who wished to continue their education in MOD schools. I note the agreement was dated 1966, can we take it therefore that this policy which was announced before of phasing out the education of local Church of England children residents in Gibraltar in the MOD schools is no longer policy and that we are back on the agreement of 1966, is that the position?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, the policy has been phased out.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 152 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, is Government satisfied with the staffing position in the schools for September, 1980?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Sir, with the exception of just one outstanding appointment, all teaching vacancies which have arisen for September 1980 have now been satisfactorily filled either by local students returning from training, by the appointment or extension of appointment of contract teachers, or by the recruitment of suitably qualified staff locally. An advertisement has been placed locally for a qualified teacher of English at secondary level and it is hoped to make a suitable appointment shortly. It is not envisaged that there will be any staffing difficulties in our schools when the Autumn Term commences in September, 1980.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 152 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask on that, Mr Speaker, is the satisfactory staffing position in September, 1980, due partly to the fact that people who wish to complete the B.Ed course in England are being made to return?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

That has nothing to do with it, it is the people who are actually coming back to Gibraltar.

NO. 153 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr. Speaker, will Government review as a matter of urgency its policy in relation to B.Ed completion courses for Gibraltar students studying in the UK?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Sir, all teacher trainees undertaking formal courses of teacher training in the UK now complete a B.Ed degree. Entry to the old Certificate in Education Course has now been phased out entirely. There is also provision, however, for the B.Ed degree to be converted into a B.Ed (Hons) degree, as an additional year over and above the basic three-year course. This fourth year B.Ed (Hons) course is essentially academic in nature and present Government policy has been determined, therefore, with the specialist teacher in mind. This approach is entirely in accordance with the present policy of ODA on this matter where teacher trainees are financed under the Technical Co-operation Scheme. It is considered far more appropriate for teachers who intend to specialise and who in the main will work at secondary level to be given the opportunity of doing an academic fourth year of training and students who have clearly indicated throughout their course of training that they intend to teach in a specialised subject area up to 'A' level have consequently been given priority in terms of financial support for an additional year of training. It is not felt appropriate to review this policy at this stage.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 153 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, actually what I was trying to point out or draw out is the position of graduates, University graduates. Are they being allowed to do that extra year to get their B.Ed, not teacher training.

MR SPEAKER:

I am not quite sure, if they are graduates they must have their B.Ed. Next question.



THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government state the scope and extent of the work undertaken by the playleader and can Government state whether it has appointed a trainee playleader?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

The playleader recruited in the UK for a one-year contract period in Gibraltar is essentially here to advise Government on the provision of an adventure playground and to supervise the planning and establishment of the facilities, including the necessary requirements to train a locally appointed Youth and Community Worker who will eventually have responsibility for the supervision of the playground facilities in due course as part of his/her overall responsibilities within the Youth and Careers/Community Office. There has been some delay in the planning of the adventure playground due to the consideration now being given to the siting of this facility but it is hoped to progress the matter as soon as a decision on the site has been made and an advertisement for the appointment of the local Youth and Community Worker will then appear in the press.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION No.154 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, then I take it that it is not going to be for a trainee playleader but for a Youth and Community Worker and the playleader part is only part of the responsibility of this post?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

The post which will be advertised for the locally entered chap when the UK contract finishes is to give the Youth and Community Officer more flexibility because there will be periods when the playground is not used during school hours, for example and therefore we have the flexibility to move him into other areas of work within the Youth Community Service. If we employ him purely on the playground thing then he won't be working for 8 or 9 hours of the day.

HON P J ISOLA:

How long has the play leader in fact been here and is he fully employed without an adventure playground to work on?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Yes, Sir, he had been here for about two months and he is employed in studying the project and also in fact doing community work. He is a very experienced man and he does community work at night with our own Careers Officers.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I understand that but he was brought here mainly to start off the adventure playground. Can the Minister tell us what changes there are that he will in fact start the adventure playground before his year is terminated?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Yes, before he leaves he will start training youth and if it is necessary we might extend his contract.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does the Minister envisage that need arising because it does seem to me odd that the Government brings a playleader to start the adventure playground and he goes without the adventure playground site even being known.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

He hasn't gone yet.

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked whether the adventure playground will be available within the period of time envisaged.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I have said so already.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17 7 80

NO. 155 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, now that Gibraltar students have achieved parity in fees level with the UK has Government considered bringing into line the Gibraltar system for grant allocation and the determination of parental contribution with the UK?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Mr Speaker, I gave notice on 9 July that I would be making a statement on Educational Awards Regulations and I shall be dealing with this question in that statement.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 155 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, no doubt my asking the question prompted the Minister's reply.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I had no idea of the Hon Member's question when I gave you notice of my statement.

NO. 156 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government publish a list of the number of housing units to be completed this year, giving details of the type of accommodation ie 2 person bedsit or 2 bedroom flat etc and a list of their whereabouts?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the number of housing units expected to be completed this year is as follows:-

TANK RAMP Total 16

Modernised units

2/2RKB

3/3RKB

1/8RKB Completed November,  
1980New Units

1/1RKB

3/2RKB

6/4RKB

WILLIS'S AREA

Modernised Units total 9

1/3 WILLIS'S PASSAGE17 WILLIS'S ROAD

2/3RKB

1/4RKB

13/15 WILLIS'S PASSAGE

2 B/S

2/2RKB Completed August,  
1980

1/3RKB

23/25 WILLIS'S PASSAGE

1/2RKB

WHITE STORE New Units Total 16

8 B/S

8/3RKB Completed August,  
1980LIME KILN STEPS PHASE IModernised Units Total 12

5 B/S

2/2RKB Completed October,  
1980

5/3RKB

LIME KILN STEPS PHASE IA

2/3RKB

2/2RKB Completed December,  
1980

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 156 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Can you give me the overall total of units?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

57, Sir,

HON A J HAYNES:

Can you state how many people those 57 units will ideally occupy?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That will depend entirely on the family composition, eg, a bed-sitter might be for a single person or it might be for a married couple, I can't really say.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I understand when you've got a 2 bedroomed flat you are talking of one double bedroom for two people and the other bedroom, a single bedroom for one person.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I'm afraid I couldn't give that information, Sir, eg the 8 RKB might take 9 people it may take 15 people, I have really no idea, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Do I understand then the Government designed these flats without having any idea of what the optimum number for a flat was?

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going to go into these details now. It will also depend on the way that the allocation is made and that is not his responsibility. You are asking a question to which you have been given an answer, the number of units and when they are going to be completed and their whereabouts. You have been given the answer to that.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I take that but unfortunately I am not very good at mathematics and all the rest, Sir, and I haven't had time to work out from the answer.....

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but you must not expect Government to do your work.

HON A J HAYNES:

No, but the point is, Sir, surely if Government knows how many units there are to be completed and we know the composition of the units.

MR SPEAKER:

You have been given the composition, you can do your computation yourself. Information readily available should not be asked.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does not the Minister agree that only 16 new housing units of which 8 are studios is an extremely small number of housing units for his Department to complete in the course of one year? Can I take it that there will be a great other number of new housing units that possibly will not be completed by the 31st of March, 1980, but which will be very near completion by that date?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I have taken this year, Sir, to mean by the end of December, 1980.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, but even by the end of December, 1980, can I ask the same question, does he not consider it a very small number of new housing units to produce by that time considering that 8 of them are studios?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The number of new units actually, Sir, from what I said was 26 not 16. There are, of course, many other on-going projects but they will not come to fruition before December, 1980.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is there not a difference between the figures quoted for the units to be completed this year and those quoted earlier on at the Ceremonial Speech of the Chief Minister and so forth?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think you will find that the number quoted in the opening speech was 57.

HON A J HAYNES:

But, Mr Speaker, is Government not aware that if one talks of building 80 units and in the past these units will almost all take at least a 2-children family, then if Government is building flats which are bedsits and are not designed to take a couple with their two children and they say they are building 50 units, the impression the public gets is that they are getting 50 families off the waiting list and surely Government wouldn't want to mislead people to think that those units are all going to take a family.....

MR SPEAKER:

We must have a question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Well, doesn't Government think it is advisable to make it crystal clear how many people are going to be catered for when they give a list of housing to be completed in one year?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think, Sir, that we should have had separate notice for a question of that complication but I would point out that as far as Public Works are concerned they consult with the Housing Department to see what make-up of housing is required and, of course, where a bedsitter is being provided this can often accommodate a single person or perhaps a married couple who at the moment are occupying a larger flat of 3 or 4 rooms, then that larger flat becomes vacant and can take a family with children etc. It doesn't mean to say that because you are making a bedsit you are going to cram in a family with 2 or 3 children into it.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, could I ask for enlightenment on this. As I understand the answer of the Minister, there were 16 new housing units at White Stores, can he tell us where the other 10 housing units are?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, I said at Tank Ramp there were 1/1RKB, 3/2RKB and 6/4RKB.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is that not Tank Ramp development, is that not modernisation?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, it's partly modernisation and partly new construction.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, can I refer the Minister to the Ceremonial Opening speech at page 5 where in the penultimate paragraph the Chief Minister said: "With the coming financial year we have to finalise construction of 66 units".

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, that is why I specifically stated that I took the end of this year to be December, 1980, the financial year end in March, 1981.

HON A J HAYNES:

So you've got till March to complete another 12 or 13.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, it would appear that out of the 57 new units, there are 26 new ones leaving a balance of 31 modernised units. What is the extent of the number of homes or units existing prior to modernisation that will now be occupied by 31 housing units?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I may be able to give the Hon Member some information. In the case of Tank Ramp we decanted less people than we will be eventually permitted to put back into houses that will satisfy them according to their family composition, it has been a benefit in that instance.

HON W T SCOTT:

That really doesn't answer my question, Mr Speaker, because before a question was refused to be answered asked by my Hon Colleague on my right as to actual people, the composition, how many people per unit. I'm asking the question of per unit not people. How many units have the 31 modernised units replaced, units not people?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That is a very difficult one to answer off the cuff, I would need separate knowledge of that question, I can only comment that when you do a modernisation, in some instances you cannibalise what you have got but depending on what you actually provide in the end, you may start with 4 three-roomed flats and you might finish up with 5 bedsitters and 3 two-roomed flats, it varies around. Obviously, the new flats have far better facilities than the old ones such as bathrooms and reasonable kitchens, etc.

HON W T SCOTT:

Yes, I am aware of that, Mr Speaker, but what I am really trying to get at is where if in remodernisation we are actually diminishing the housing problem.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Yes, we are.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.



17 7 80

NO. 157 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Mr Speaker, what plans does Government have for the development of Town Range for new housing and how far as these advanced?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, Government has no immediate plans for the development of Town Range for new housing.

There are sufficient sites elsewhere in Gibraltar that can be used for new housing for the next four years.

NO. 158 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Mr Speaker, Will Government reveal the latest waiting list figures for housing and will Government reveal the figures of homeless people in Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, There were 1800 applicants on the waiting list as at the end of June, 1980.

There are several social cases claiming 'homelessness' which the Department or the Housing Scheme cannot accept as such, some of these being families that moved into a hotel with full advance knowledge that they had to vacate the accommodation by a given date. In other instances homelessness is by way of voluntary departure. Homeless cases as such are those who find themselves homeless by way of disaster or who are evicted by a Court order for which they are not to blame.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 158 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

It doesn't answer the question, Mr Speaker, what is the figure?

HON H J ZAMMIT:

Of social cases?

HON A J HAYNES:

Of homeless people?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

There are no homeless people as far as Government is concerned.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, the Hon the Minister for Housing said there were 1800 applicants. Are there 1800 application of 1800 individuals?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Applications.

HON W T SCOTT:

We are now talking about 1800 families?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, not applicants.

HON A J HAYNES:

Has there been a down trend in the waiting list figures in the last 4 years?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Sir, there has been a increase and in fact we are finding that more and more people who were normally residents in UK now wish to come back and there is an increase, if anything.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, can I have a fuller explanation as to why the figure isn't going down?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Well, the figure isn't going down for a number of reasons. First, that people obviously aspire to a better standard of living, young families want their independence, and rightly so, and therefore the demand is always greater.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Mr Speaker, Will Government state whether all the flats at Varyl Begg Estate have now been allocated and if not, then why and will Government give a list of those unallocated flats at Varyl Begg?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Yes, Sir. The 29 flats in question at Varyl Begg have not yet been offered as they are not ready for occupation. However all prospective tenants have received letters explaining that they have qualified for one of these flats which will be offered to them when ready.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 159 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

What stops them being ready, Sir?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

There are not ready, they have defects.

HON A J HAYNES:

They have been built?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Of course they have been built, they have been standing there since 1973 or 1974.

HON A J HAYNES:

I see, so we've got defects going back to 1973 or 1974 and prospective tenants waiting that long?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, this is at Varyl Begg, no, Sir, not waiting that long. These people were informed of their allocation in the last few months.

HON W T SCOTT:

Is Government saying, Mr Speaker, that these 29 homes have defects and they haven't been given out and the ones that have been given out do not have any defects?

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going to go into that under any circumstances.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I understand then that these flats were built in 1973/74?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, I refer, of course, to Varyl Begg, Mr Speaker, that there are 29 flats in Varyl Begg all round the different blocks.

HON A J HAYNES:

29 flats at Varyl Begg which are empty?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Unoccupied.

MR SPEAKER:

Available for allocation.

HON A J HAYNES:

And these have been available for allocation since 1973?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Sir.

HON A J HAYNES:

Could you clarify this?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I think I ought to. There are some of these houses, it may be recalled - The Hon Member was not then a Member of this House - some of these houses on the top floor of the 4 blocks which we held vacant for some time pending the Consultants' report, we were advised subsequently that we could allocate these houses but attempt to retain the top floor flats vacant as some of these suffered severe water penetration. Notwithstanding that, Mr Speaker, although we have not told individual people that they have been offered or they will be moving in to, for argument sake, say, 21 Royal Sovereign House, it is earmarked and the houses at Varyl Begg have all been now allocated to these 29 people who have so been informed.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, if I can refer the Hon Member back to question No 64/1980. In the supplementaries at page 1, Major Peliza said: "Will he consider the empty houses which are lying there for months on end not an important matter?". And the Member said: "There are no houses lying empty for many months, Mr Speaker". Major Peliza then answered; "Well, that does not seem to be the opinion of the general public if I may say so". Then the answer was: "The general public must be misinformed".

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Was that referring to Varyl Begg?

HON A J HAYNES:

The question asked for a list of flats which were subject of transfers, temporary or transit homes, etc. and the answer being: "Mr Speaker, Sir, it is regretted that there is not enough staff available to undertake this time-consuming operation when everyone in the Housing Department is fully occupied revising all the housing applications prior to implementation of the revised Housing Allocation Scheme". And then I asked: "Sir, will they not consider giving a list for a shorter period?" And the answer was: "I don't think that we can entertain anything which entails unnecessary work to an overtaxed Department". So when the question from Major Peliza was brought in as to empty houses lying for months there had been no reference to Varyl Begg.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but what is the question?

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, is there any discrepancy between what the Minister was saying then is that there are no houses lying empty for many months and that the general public must be misinformed and the information we have now received that there are 29 which have or haven't, I am not sure yet, been lying empty since 1973/74?

MR SPEAKER:

The Minister has made it quite clear that these houses have not been lying empty since 1973/74.

HON A J HAYNES:

Have any of them been lying empty for months?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Certainly.

HON A J HAYNES:

Well, how many?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, there have been instances where we have had to bring people out of these particular flats in some cases because of penetration of water or flooding and they've had to be moved to alternative accommodation at Varyl Begg, that could be an instance that could have occurred 6 weeks ago. The top floor flats, of course, have never been occupied. It will be recalled that the Phase 6 of Varyl Begg, the last 4 blocks at Varyl Begg, should have been allocated in September, 1976, which I think all Members are fully aware of. They eventually were occupied I think some time in October/November, 1979. Those are the ones that have been held back

because of the eventual fixing up of the pitched roofs and were advised not to put people at the top floor flats because we didn't know exactly what was going to happen with the repair of the flat roofs there. The top floor flats invariable have water penetration!

MR SPEAKER:

Let us talk about figures and dates. How many flats have been unoccupied and how long for, that is what we are interested in.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

In Varyl Begg there are 29 flats. I would, of course, like to refer the Hon Member to the question he has referred to from the Hon and Gallant Major Peliza. I think the question then was how many flats in concerning modernisation were lying dormant, not Varyl Begg.

ME SPEAKER:

Next question.

17 7 80

NO. 160 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, Is Government now in a position to publish a list of all Government houses and flats which were allocated in the last two years excluding transfers or allocations to temporary or transit homes?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Sir, 12 Bedsitters at Glacis plus 42 other post-war flats have been allocated to tenants who had to be decanted under the requirements of the Modernisation Programme during the past two years, and 30 flats at Rosia Dale (Phase 1) to applicants on the medical and priority lists.



NO. 161 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, why has Government seen fit to deny any financial assistance to the Gibraltar Junior Football League?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is not the case, the G.J.F.L. has received financial assistance from Government over the past years as follows:

1975/76 - £115

1976/77 - £200

1977/78 - £300

1978/79 - £300

1978/80 - £300

Grants will be considered for 1980/81 when applications are called for The G.J.F.L. should apply to the G.F.A., the Governing Body of Football, to whom an annual grant is invariably made.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 161 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is not the Minister begging the question here because is it not a fact that the Gibraltar Football Association is dissatisfied with the size of their grant so they are hardly in a position to give any money to the G.J.F.L. and is the Minister not obviously aware of this fact and does the Minister not consider it a great tragedy that a venture of such great importance to our young people in Gibraltar going to New York should have received from the Government nothing more than a letter from the Chief Minister with a plaque?

MR SPEAKER:

We are talking about financial grants and nothing else.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, I was written to about their going away and I wasn't asked for one penny and it was as a gesture, because they informed me, that I told them that they might be taking a plaque. I think that has done more harm than good to the people who want to support these people to tray and throw the question of the plaque into this matter.

MR SPEAKER:

Well, it is not relevant in any case.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is it not a fact that the Chief Minister presides over a Government that has collective responsibility and is it not a fact that the Minister for Sport was asked for financial assistance for this venture as long ago as 3 months and that the Gibraltar Junior Football League got no reply except an oral reply at a dinner dance and is that a satisfactory situation?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Let me start by saying, Mr Speaker, that I am somewhat surprised because the question as framed did not ask me at all as to why Government had not assisted the Gibraltar Junior Football League on its American trip. I have been asked as to why they had been denied financial assistance and I have proved that Government has not denied financial assistance. Mr Speaker, the question raised by the Hon Leader of the Opposition as to how can the GFA being dissatisfied with the grant that Government provides it was quite a volte face of what I heard here some years ago when I was accused of only helping football and ignoring all other sport. However, Mr Speaker, let me just remind the Hon Leader of the Opposition that football since 1974 to 1979/80, excluding, of course, this year's vote, has been afforded the sum, that is including grants and underwriting losses out of public funds, the sum of £18,818, and if I may, by way of comparison, that the football allege that the hockey get everything, hockey have taken away £17,763. Mr Speaker, I would say this much, that the GFA have never ever complained to me of lack of co-operation from Government on financial assistance. This has only become evident in the past couple of years due to a Member of .....

MR SPEAKER:

Order, we are not going to make speeches. You have given your answer to the question.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, is it not a fact that the majority of the funds given to the GFA has been underwriting losses in respect of teams who were brought to Gibraltar at the instigation and with the active assistance of the Minister? That is one question. The other question is, does the Minister not consider that there is a great difference between the G.F.A. and helping young people who are school children under the age of 16 to do a trip to New York? Does he not consider there is a great difference?

MR SPEAKER:

I entirely agree with the Leader of the Opposition and that is why all these supplementaries are completely and utterly out of order. Let us come back to the original question and any supplementaries which are relevant. If there are any questions to be asked on financial assistance to the Gibraltar Junior Football League they are completely in order, not otherwise.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am going to ask why the Government has not given financial assistance to the Gibraltar Junior Football League which was sought from the Government 3 months ago in writing and to which the Government never bothered to reply except for an oral reply at a dinner dance?

MR SPEAKER:

Let us have an answer to that.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the Gibraltar Junior Football League applied in February this year saying that they were going to New York to attend a football tournament organised by the Hicksville American Football Club. I am fully aware and I was fully aware that the invitation had come from a gentleman who was sponsoring through a local company in Gibraltar every single penny, that is, air trips, including may I say dressing up from blazers right the way through to overnight stay in London, to being put up at Holiday Inns in America .....

MR SPEAKER:

Order, I will not have it. You have been asked a simple question. Did you receive an application for assistance and did you give any assistance?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Very good, Sir, I will reply to the question very briefly I did not agree and it is Government's policy that we do not provide financial assistance for teams be they young, old, hockey, football, or anything else, to people other than those who obtain admission into a tournament organised by an international governing body. There have been many teams leaving Gibraltar and they have not asked for financial assistance, they go because they want to go not because they have to go, Mr Speaker.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, the Minister has not answered my question which is why he did not give a reply for three months to a written application?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, it is not so that they did not get a reply, I told the Chairman that the matter had to be considered by a Committee and the Committee was not formalised as yet and therefore his annual grant will be considered by the Committee in conjunction with the G.F.A. but certainly not for a trip to America.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is it because the Minister was against the trip to America?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I would like to inform the Member that I instigated the trip to America.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker could I ask the Minister, in view of the fact that he instigated the trip to America, could I ask the Minister if he is not aware that apart from a generous donation from a very generous firm who helped considerably, trade in Gibraltar helped considerably, people, parents and so forth and does the Government not consider that the tax payers would have willingly agreed for a grant to be made by Government?

MR SPEAKER:

No, order. You have been given a straight answer which I think is a very clear answer. Government will not consider applications for teams representing Gibraltar and not sent by private institutions and individuals, it is as simple as that.

HON P J ISOLA:

May I then state on this side of the House that we thoroughly disagree with the policy of the Government that obviously does not encourage young people in Gibraltar to compete outside Gibraltar.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I would like to say something to the Hon Minister. It would appear, rising in value from 1975 right up to 1980, from £115 to £300 has been given annually particularly to the Gibraltar Junior Football League. So I understand from the Minister's answers there is no question of this year and in subsequent years of money being given directly to the G.J.F.L. I wonder, being consistent with the Minister's statement, I think it was in the estimates or debate on the budget, of his idea of introducing a Sports Council which I understand has not only not been constituted but obviously has not met, why this decision not to give money to the G.J.F.L. has been taken because I would have thought that that was a decision to be taken by the Sports Council and not by the Minister.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I have to answer this in two parts. Firstly, this policy decision was not taken purely by Government it was a decision taken by the Committee appointed to consider financial assistance to sporting organisations, it was taken 2 years ago, and in fact, the G.J.F.L. was so informed that they had to apply to the governing body of sport. That was not Government but I don't think, Mr Speaker, that any Government or any Minister or any member to do as they wish, I am not trying to insinuate anything wrong, without responsibility and that is where he who pays the piper calls the tune, Government lays its policy down and administers its money because it has to answer to the people as to how the money is spent.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, with due respect to the Hon Member, I don't think he has really answered my question.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, he has most certainly answered your question.

HON W T SCOTT:

May I ask another one?

MR SPEAKER:

I will tell you how he has answered your question. He has said that a decision not to grant direct aid to the Gibraltar Junior Football League was taken by the Committee that considers grants and not by them guided by Government policy. That has been the answer.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask, Mr Speaker, whether the Minister can assure us that the £300 for 1979/80 were actually paid to the Gibraltar Junior Football League?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, Sir,

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government reconsider its policy for charging fees to users of the Victoria Stadium?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker Government has given serious thought to the need to introduce charges for use of playing facilities at the Victoria Stadium as is done in Sports Centres in the United Kingdom.

It is intended to introduce these charges on or about 1st October 1980. Government does not consider it necessary to reconsider its policy.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 162 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, can we have a more specific answer as to Government policy?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

They will have to pay for the facilities.

HON W T SCOTT:

The actual charges that are going to be levied and so forth?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No as yet, Mr Speaker.

HON W T SCOTT:

When will Government be in a position to do this prior to October?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

The moment the Sports Council is constituted we will make that public, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will the Government take the views of the Sports Council into account in relation to charging users?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

We will certainly listen to their views, Mr Speaker, and I think the following question which refers to the terms of reference of the Sports Committee will, of course, be sought but I would remind Members that in previous questions on this subject I have said that the then Sports Advisory Committee were certainly consulted.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, when does Government intend constituting the Sports Council and can Government state what its terms of reference will be?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, The Gibraltar Sports Committee will be constituted in the very near future. Its terms of reference will be:-

- (i) To advise the Government on the improvement of sporting facilities in Gibraltar generally.
- (ii) To receive and consider representations from sporting organisations in Gibraltar with a view to such improvements.
- (iii) To consider applications for financial assistance from sporting organisations.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 163 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA;

Will it be part of the duties of the Sports Council to allocate funds provided by the Government to sporting associations without interference from the Minister?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

The Minister will be chairing this Committee and as it is tax payers money there will be Government policy as to the issuing of public funds.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, Mr Speaker, the Government will decide what funds are made available to the Council but will the Council have the right to determine, as a Council, with the Minister having a vote, how those funds are allocated to sport otherwise it is a farce.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, Mr Speaker, otherwise there would be no Committee, it would be the Minister alone.

HON P J ISOLA:

Well, is the answer yes?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Of course, Mr Speaker, part of the terms of reference is to consider applications for financial assistance from sporting organisations.



HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, who will be included in the Sports Council?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the members of the Sports Committee, as is done in UK, have been invited to participate by myself, they have accepted, Sir, and the list is now in Secretariat with Establishment or the legal side in drafting the terms of reference.

HON G T RESTANO:

Did the Minister say that the different associations have been invited to send nominations?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, not send nominations, no, they are appointed by me. Members are appointed by the Minister for Sport as is done in UK. I would like to say, Sir, that every single member on that Committee is concerned one way or another and in some instances in more than one way with the functioning and the facilities afforded particularly at the Victoria Stadium.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is it not a fact that in the United Kingdom the Minister before appointing members to the Sports Council consults the associations involved and the sports involved as to the particular people they would like to see nominated to the Council, is that not the usual procedure in all Government Committees in the United Kingdom and in Gibraltar?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

According to a letter which a very prominent Member of the D.P.B.G. wrote to the Sports Council, I think you will find that the Minister for Sport appoints and in fact it goes further and that is why I am not calling it, Sir, a Sports Council but a Sports Committee because in a Sports Council the members are not drawn from sporting organisations, they are absolutely independent and have nothing to do with sport.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the Minister telling the House that he has not had consultations with the different sporting associations in Gibraltar as to who should be nominated to the Sports Council, is that what he is telling us?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I am not saying that I have not had consultation with the

Sports Associations. I had consultations with the then Sports Advisory Committee on which there was a representative of every single association.

HON P J ISOLA:

But does not the Minister consider that it is the wrong footing to get a new Sports Committee going if all he is doing is getting advice from the previous one? Does he not consider it desirable and eminently reasonable that he should have consulted the various sporting associations who are involved in sport today as to the sort of people they would like to see on this Committee or is this going to be another dictatorship?

HON H J ZALMITT:

Mr Speaker, as I said earlier on every single member of the now defunct Sports Advisory Committee represented an association and in some cases more than one association. They have all been consulted Mr Speaker.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can I ask then what is the purpose of a new Committee when all he has done is consult the defunct Committee?

MR SPEAKER:

No, next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, has Government now considered other seating arrangements for the Victoria Stadium which would be less susceptible to vandalism?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Yes, Sir, Government has already considered alternative seating for the Grand Stand at the Victoria Stadium. It is thought that wooden benches would be less susceptible to vandalism.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 164 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, when will these wooden benches be provided?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr. Speaker, the question is, has Government considered and the answer is we have considered, it is certainly not in this year's estimates.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does the Minister not agree that these benches should be operational before you start charging people for using the facilities at the Victoria Stadium?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Sir, probably if we would have charged for the facilities we would have found that vandalism at the Stadium wouldn't be so severe.

MR SPEAKER:

Next Question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, what reduction in rents were made in the Rosia Dale development to compensate for floor tiles not having been laid?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Sir, rents are assessed on living area and no reduction in rents has been made because these floors were not covered with tiles. Notwithstanding this, Rosia Dale rents are still subsidised.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 165 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, that is indirect contradiction with what the Minister for Public Works replied to me in March, when he said .....

MR SPEAKER:

Which question?

HON G T RESTANO:

It is question No 74 of 1980 on the question of the tiles. When I asked the Minister what sort of differential in rent he was talking about, he was talking about compensation depending on the means of tenants but to some extent the tenants is compensated in the rent.

MR SPEAKER:

Yes, but I think that referred to bedsitters only.

HON G T RESTANO:

To those that had not had floor tiles.

MR SPEAKER:

"An exception to the above condition was made by Government in the case of bedsitters where the question of hardship was taken into account."

HON G T RESTANO:

It referred to those flats which had not had floor tiles laid and the Minister said that "the tenant is compensated in the rent that

is charged which is probably a little lower without tiles". Now the Minister for Housing says that there is no difference, can I know who is accurate and who is not accurate?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I think, Mr Speaker, one cannot take in isolation a sentence. What was said generally there was that the added increase of cost in laying tiles and I seem to remember that we had explained that our experience was that where we had laid grey tiles, people wanted pink tiles, where we had laid pink tiles people wanted grey tiles. Living area is how Government assesses its rent, not whether we have wooden roofs or tiles or carpet or lino.

HON G T RESTANO:

Again a complete contradiction from the other Minister who said that "the rent is based to some extent on the actual cost of construction". I still want to know, Mr Speaker, whether in fact what I was told last time was correct ie. that the rent is probably a little lower without tiles or whether it is not correct which is what the Minister for Housing is now saying.

MR SPEAKER:

I think one must assume that it is lower due to the fact that the cost of construction is less.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, some of those flats I think were not tiled and some were.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, none of them were tiled.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how long has the barrier in Cornwall's Lane been up and given the fact that this is one of the busiest intersections of our City, can Government say when this lane will enjoy a free flow of traffic?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, on the 15 February, 1980, the Public Health Department informed the occupiers of 9 Cornwall's Lane that there was a danger of falling masonry due to a faulty roof. On the 9 April, Public Health Department sent a warning letter to the occupiers to carry out repairs. They failed to carry out such repairs and they were summonsed. The Company was fined £20 on the 11 July 1980. and the Court ordered that repairs be carried out within 45 days.

Traffic is flowing along that part of Cornwall's Lane.

The scaffolding is 23 feet long. The width of the road left for the flow of traffic is 7'9" at one end and 6'8" at the other end.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.166 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

It does not give much room if there is a pedestrian as well as a car, does it, Mr Speaker, to go through?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government state whether they are satisfied with the Traffic (Motor Vehicles) (Construction and Use) Regulations or does Government not agree that these Regulations should be revised to bring them up to date with United Kingdom and European standards?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Mr Speaker, Sir, the revision of certain aspects of the Traffic (Motor Vehicles) (Construction and Use) Regulations is currently under consideration.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 167 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, for how long has this been under consideration?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I don't know, I wouldn't like to give a particular date, about a year or so.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister aware that the changes in European and English Regulations took place about 8 years ago?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I don't know Mr Speaker, that in Europe it was changed 8 years ago. I cannot even recall if Britain was in the Common Market 8 years ago. Normally we are in line with UK not with Europe.

HON A J HAYNES:

There are EEC directives on the matter and I know of one which states that the exhaust cylinder should be pointing down to the ground which is what they've discovered is the best for pollution dispersant as opposed to pointing to the rear and a measure to change something like that doesn't that take 8 years surely, Sir?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the question was very wide and one didn't know exactly what particular section or requirements the Questioner had in mind. The traffic (Motor Vehicles) (Construction and Use) Regulations deals with bits and pieces of a motor vehicle to its actual disposal

and removal. It is quite extensive, Mr Speaker, and therefore it was impossible to be able to decipher with clarity what the Honourable Member wanted answered. I can assure the Honourable Member that, of course, we are looking at these things, such as falling in line with European requirements.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.



THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government explain the shortage of 12p stamps and why these can no longer be purchased over the counter?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, Sir, the shortage of 12p stamps was foreseen by Government, but taking into account that a review of postal charges will become operative on 1 August 1980, it was considered advisable not to order a reprint of these stamps which would not only have created additional and unnecessary expenditure but could also have an adverse effect among collectors.

Limited quantities of 12p stamps may still be obtained over the counter. I propose to make a statement about the review of charges later in the proceedings, Mr Speaker.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 168 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask in connection with the review of charges that the Honourable Member is going to make, will there be stamps available for those charges over the counter?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I think it is implicit that we haven't got 12p it is because we have made provision for the necessary increase.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, have any approaches been made by Government to any Associations to arrange Fun Fairs this summer?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

No, Sir, but as I said in answer to Question No.67 of 1980 at the meeting of the House on 25 March, 1980, Government would help any organised festival as was done last year. Indeed, the sum of £3,000 was granted towards the organisation of the Gibraltar Song Festival held last May.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Mr Speaker, has Government any immediate plans of providing facilities for tourists arriving on Cruise Liners at North Mole and if so then what type of facilities are envisaged?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

No, Sir, Government has no immediate plans for providing such facilities. I would, however, like to refer to my answer to a similar question (No 69 of 1980) at the meeting of the House on 25 March, 1980.

This matter will be considered in conjunction with the Port Development Study now being conducted.

NO 171 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government do something about the sewers in Camp Bay which seem to emit dangerous and unhealthy smells throughout the area?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, during desilting works on the Main Sewer in the Camp Bay/Rosia, it was necessary to leave certain manholes open to allow ventilation of the sewer before work can commence. These works have now been suspended until the Autumn. This is the procedure followed in previous years.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.171 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker this smell is present at the moment. Is the Government doing anything about it, just closing the sewers up and that is it?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

As far as I know there is no smell at the moment but I will look into it if you assure me there is.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Is it a fact that some public toilets in the City have been closed down and what is the reason for this?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, one public toilet, by the Theatre Royal, has been closed. This toilet required almost complete re-building and it was felt that the use made of it by the public did not justify the expense plus the added annual cost of an attendant.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.172 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is the Minister aware that will the possible influx of thousands of visitors there would be in need for such facilities if the visitors are going to think highly of Gibraltar?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There are plenty of toilets at the Piazza and the distance is not all that far.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

So the Minister feels that there are enough toilet facilities even if the visitor population of Gibraltar is increased to the number that the Government seems to foresee?

HON M K FEATHERSONTE:

I know when one is hard pressed one would like a toilet at every street corner but I think the number of toilets in Gibraltar is quite adequate and possibly greater than in the United Kingdom.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Is Government taking any action to put right and repair the great number of pot holes all over Gibraltar especially in Main Street?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, sections of Main Street have already been resurfaced and further sections are programmed once certain paving and kerbing works are completed. In the meantime these areas are regularly patched until the complete resurfacing works can be undertaken.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION No. 173 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is the Minister satisfied with the progress of patching and resurfacing?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I know the roads section tries to keep up with this, sometimes we are rather short of manpower but we are keeping it as much under control as we can.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is the Minister satisfied with productivity and not just manpower?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state whether the Public Works Department Garage is now completed having regard to the statement made in the House by the Minister in March, 1980?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, work on this Contract is not yet complete. The Contractor has suffered delays in supply of materials from UK, and has also had difficulties in obtaining Craftsmen.

There have been certain extensions to the contract in a number of items - outside toilet, extra windows/ventilation, compressed air line - at the request of Union representative. These have caused further delay.

It is now hoped that the main handover will take place in August.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 174 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

When, if the Minister can answer this question will demolition start?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The demolition of the other one will take place as soon as the equipment in the old garage has been transferred to the new one, this should take approximately 6 to 8 weeks.

NO 175 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, In view of the fact that Spring has now passed can Government explain why no work has commenced on the roofs at the Varyl Begg Estate and when does Government now expect that work will commence and has Government yet appointed contractors to do such work?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, plans and specifications for the construction of pitched roofs at the Varyl Begg Estate have been completed, and the Government has been advised on their cost. Up to date schedules of consequential damage to and other defects in the buildings have also been supplied to the consultant, except in the case of a small number of apartments to which, as yet, my department has been unable to obtain access because of the absence of the tenants when calls have been made. The Government's consultants and contractors have been and are conferring on the costs of and programme for the construction of the pitched roofs. Steps have been taken to expedite delivery of materials. The Government has not appointed a new contractor.

These matters have taken longer than was anticipated. I am not yet in a position to give a specific date for commencement of work at the estate. Although the matter has proceeded more slowly than Government would have wished, progress is being made.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 175 OF 1980

MR SPEAKER:

May I remind Hon Members that there is a motion on this subject and we must not anticipate. I am, of course, not saying that no supplementaries should be asked.

HON P J ISOLA:

I am not going to anticipate the motion Mr Speaker but does the Minister not realise that he is not really answering my question having regard to what was said by the Hon and Learned Attorney-General in March, what was said by the Government itself in January and what was said by the Government itself in December in public statements. Why is it that the Government is still not in a position to commence works on the pitched roofs despite the assurances it gave in December, January and March?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think, Sir, as I already said, the matter has proceeded more slowly than Government would have wished. This has not been entirely in Government's hands it has been in the hands of the consultants and the contractors and it has not gone as fast as we would have wished but progress is being made.



HON P J ISOLA:

If this is the case can the Minister state why these assurances have been given in this House and is he not making a mockery of the House, if assurances are made about when work will commence and then not even contractors have been appointed? Who is going to do the work, can the Minister say that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, it is not a question of making a mockery of the House, far be it for me to ever indulge in such a sort of thing, but I do think, Sir, that we are making rather a mockery of the procedure of the House if we are going to anticipate at question time everything that is going to be said in the debate.

MR SPEAKER:

No, you are being asked a straight-forward question. As the House has been given assurance on different occasions, why have these assurances not materialised.

HON M K FEATHERSONTE:

The assurances were made in good faith on the information supplied to Government at the time. If that information has subsequently proved wrong it is not really to be laid at Government's door.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister, if he is to defend his assertion of good faith, can the Minister tell this House today July the 17th, not who is going to pay for the work but who is actually going to do the work on the pitched roofs?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would think, Sir, that the way all negotiations are going it is going to be the contractor who originally did the roofs wrongly.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is the position then that the Government will not proceed with the work on the pitched roofs until the question of liability has been worked out?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Well, if that is the case, Mr Speaker, what stopped the contractor starting work today, can the Minister tell us that?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There has to be before the contractor is given the 100% go-ahead at least agreement between the consultants and the contractors on what the cost is going to be otherwise you are giving a blank cheque to a contractor. I think at the moment there is some difference between the consultants' estimate of the cost and the contractors' estimate.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean, Sir, that the Government still doesn't know despite statements it has made to this effect in the House, still doesn't know the cost of the remedial measures that have to be carried out?

HON A J HAYNES:

Can Government, after making this assertion that the time limit was made in good faith, can he explain how they expected to start in June without appointing contractors, whether the information was investigated fully to make sure that it was not just a white elephant? How can they defend that position?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Very simply, Sir, if you have a consultant and you are speaking to him in February or January and you say "what has got to be done before we can start work?" and he says; "We have to do the drawings, we have to cost them and we have to agree the cost with the contractors", and you say to the consultant; "And how long will this take?" and he says; "three months", then you accept his word and if, in fact, it turns out to be 6 months you have accepted his word in good faith and have passed that information on.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, may I ask what was the reason for the delay?

MR SPEAKER:

It has been given.

HON G T RESTANO:

The Minister says that the reason was beyond his control, what was the reason?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think the reason has been that the preparations of the working drawings and the calculations of the cost has taken longer than was anticipated.

HON A J HAYNES:

Weren't we given in March of this year an assurance that the plans had been finished?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think in March this year we were still talking that it had to be costed.

HON P J ISOLA:

The Attorney-General did say that the plans and specifications had been prepared and were in the process of being costed, that is what he said.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON P J ISOLA

Mr Speaker, can Government state what progress, if any, has been made in the apportionment of liability in respect of the remedial measures that have to be carried out to Varyl Begg Estate and is Government in a position to state the total cost of these remedial measures?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Mr Speaker, as stated in answer to question No.175, the Government has been advised on the cost of erecting pitched roofs at the Estate and schedules of known consequential damage and other defects are with the consultants for advice. These matters are being discussed between the consultant/the contractor. The apportionment of costs for the remedial measure has not yet been determined and the Government is not ready at this stage to state the total cost of the remedial measures.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 176 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Am I right in thinking then, Mr Speaker, that work is not likely to commence until liability has been apportioned and the total cost of these remedial measures have been agreed with the contractors who are an interested party in the negotiations, is that the position?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL:

No, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Well, can the Hon and Learned Attorney-General tell us whether there has been any agreement of any kind, in principle, to any apportionment of liability since this started in 1976?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL:

The matter is in the course of without prejudice consultations between the consultants and the contractors and at this stage I cannot comment further on the apportionment of liability.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Hon and Learned Attorney-General say how Government proposes to commence work on the remedial measures without apportionment having taken place? Has Government got ideas on this?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL:

One will have to wait for the outcome of the exact total costs which are assessed.

HON P J ISOLA:

But is the Hon and Learned Attorney-General aware that his predecessor in this House in March told us that work would commence in June? Is it not a fact, therefore, the Government is no more ready to commence work in June than it was in March than it was in January than it was in December, and when will it be ready to commence work?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL:

The Hon the Minister for Public Works has explained how in good faith one gives dates on the information given to one by consultants. The consultants' estimated time has not proved good but that really is no fault of ours.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is it the position that now that the electoral pressures are over, we are back to the good old days as far as Varyl Begg Estate of talk and talk and talk and no action?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL:

No, Sir, there is a continued without prejudice negotiations going on all the time.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Hon and Learned Attorney General identify to the House the period of time since these without prejudice negotiations commenced?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL:

Not exactly.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is it not a fact that he goes back some four years and does Government not consider this an inordinate time to delay procedures?

HON ATTORNEY GENERAL:

No, Sir.

NO 177 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government look into the possibility of planting some areas in the Glacis Estate in consultation with the Tenants' Association in order to improve the appearance of the Estate?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Some areas of Glacis Estate along Winston Churchill Avenue have already been planted this year though unfortunately some of these plants have since been vandalised. The possibility of planting other areas within the estate has been discussed with the Tenants' Association and is scheduled to be done progressively in the coming months.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.177 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister say once the areas are planted does the Government retain responsibility for the upkeep of the areas or is this something that the tenants are expected to do?

HON M K FEATHERSONTE:

Sir, the Government will maintain the responsibility but, of course, they would request the Tenants' Associations to help as much as possible to see they are not vandalised etc.

NO 178 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether the bedsitters at Prince Edward's Road are on schedule and if not the reason for the delay?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the contract at Prince Edward's Road should have been completed in the first week of December 1979.

The contract is now estimated to be completed by the first week of October 1980 - 42 weeks after original completion date.

The contractor for the site is Whatlings (Overseas) ltd.

Of these 42 weeks' delay the contractor has been awarded extensions of time amounting to 29 weeks 1½ days. This has been awarded for factors outside the control of the contractor. These are as follows:

Water main and Sewer diversion which had not been anticipated.

7 weeks

Redesign of foundations due to unforeseen soil conditions

14 weeks

The remaining 7 weeks 1½ days have been due to such factors as

- inclement weather

- Diversion of Electricity mains
- Additional work to North Gable
- delay in gaining access to rear of site
- Deeper excavations required
- Delay in supplying setting out drawings.

NO 179 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, is Government now in a position to inform this House as to when the final treatment to the Tower Blocks will be applied and the cost thereof?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the matter is now being thoroughly investigated and it is hoped that specialised treatment to the Tower Blocks will commence in 1983. The cost at present is not known.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 179 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

May I ask the Minister, Mr Speaker, why it will take as long as 1983 before any effective measures will be taken?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We are not quite sure yet which method will be done but the schedule actually is that two floors will be done possibly next year in the materials that should be approved. This will then be given one winter to see how it works. If that is satisfactory then a whole face will be done the following year and if that is satisfactory then the whole of the Tower Blocks will be done in the third year.

HON W T SCOTT:

I would have thought, Mr Speaker, that the Government having solicited the advice of three specialist firms in this, would have been able to have come up with a solution without necessarily waiting further until such time as a field test can be carried out on two floors.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We are at present in contact with the Building Research Establishment analysing various solutions to the problem which have been put forward by firms specialising in the treatment of rain penetration. We have already sent one of our engineers to England and Scotland to view areas, Tower Blocks in particular, which have been so treated and the result has not been what one might call 100% but they are being evaluated and we will then eventually come to the decision as to which method we will try in Gibraltar, but it has been suggested by the specialist firms themselves that it should be done in the three stages that I have mentioned. We have applied Flinkcote to the Tower Blocks so they should be reasonably good until 1983 anyway.

HON W T SCOTT:

When does the Government expect that it will have a projected final cost for this operation?



HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would think that with the different analyses being done by the building cost when we determine on a specific firm we will then know what it is, I should hope within 3 to 4 months.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, did not the Minister estimate the cost at £1m per block?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, I did say £1m, in fact, one of the firms that did supply an estimate to us gave us somewhat around that figure but since we are projecting until 1983, I don't want to be too accurate.

HON G T RESTANO:

In other words, because the works are not being done soon, if the estimate of £1m per block about 18 months ago stated by the Minister was a correct figure we may well be getting into £2½m per block if we leave it until 1983. Would the Minister say whether this is a correct estimation or not?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would think that would be an over exaggeration, Sir. The estimates that we have got at the moment from one firm, and I've mentioned there are two other firms in it, was a period up to 1983 and it came to just over £1m including the whole of the future projection but of course the other firms may come up with different figures.

HON G T RESTANO:

I think it is very important. That £1m quotation was estimated until 1983?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, it was thought that the three stages put together would total something just over £1m.

HON G T RESTANO:

With the work commencing when, Mr Speaker?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

With some of the work commencing on two floors next year, a whole  
face the following year and the rest in 1983.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17 7 80

NO 180 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Can Government now say whether it is prepared to lay the first six months accounts of the Gibraltar Quarry Company Limited on the table for the information of Members?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Yes Sir, after perusal by the Board of Directors, the accounts will be presented at the next meeting of the House of Assembly.

17 7 80

NO 181 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is Government now in a position to determine whether water of good quality can be economically abstracted from deep drilling operations?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, drilling operations at the last exploratory borehole were completed on Saturday 12 July 1980.

In order to determine accurately whether water of good quality can be economically abstracted from those exploratory drilling sites where water has been found, it is necessary to carry out prolonged pumping tests over at least a year to cover all seasonal variations in water level and quality. Catchment studies will also be carried out during this time in order to ascertain the rate at which the aquifer is replenished.

So far tests show that the water obtained has double the maximum permissible amount of salt and can, therefore, only be used for blending.

NO 182 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, can Government state what is the position with regard to the water cisterns at both Coelho House and Anderson House?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the position of the water cisterns at Coelho House and Anderson House is as follows:-

COELHO HOUSE

In the course of converting wash-house into bedsitters four years ago, it was found necessary to discontinue the water supply service from the underground water tank.

ANDERSON HOUSE

The water cistern at Anderson House has to be emptied and cleaned. There is a backlog on this type of work and Anderson House is now 4th on the priority list.

NO 183 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government consider the installation of a communal aerial system at Coelho House and Anderson House?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the installation of communal TV aerial system at Coelho House and Anderson House has been studied in depth and is not considered practical.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.163 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Is Government aware of the particular nature of the housing units at both Coelho House and Anderson House where the tenants are access to the roof thereby not making television aerial installations available to them?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, Government is aware of that but it is still possible to put television aerials outside windows etc as has been done in many other blocks. I would also mention that in areas where we do have communal aerials, firstly, they don't give very good results, secondly, people afterwards go and put their own aerials to get second channels, Morocco, VHF and what have you.

NO 184 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government state what roads have been resurfaced since February/March of this year?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the following roads have been resurfaced since February 1980.

Corral Road (Part)

Main Street (Cathedral Square to Convent)

Cross of Sacrifice

New Marina Ring-Road

Car Part at Eastern Beach

Over 800 tons of asphalt have been manufactured and laid by hand.

NO. 185 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir will Government confirm that sand is still being imported into Gibraltar and does Government not think that the extent of the originally planned winning of sand from the Upper Rock as undertaken by the Gibraltar Quarry Company Limited, a public Company, falls short of the targets envisaged?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Yes, Sir, sand is still being imported. I would remind the Hon Member that in a statement in the House I said that the Gibraltar Quarry Company would not have a monopoly in this commodity.

To the second part of the question, it is agreed that the extent of the sand obtained at present falls short of the targets envisaged.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 185 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

What measures does Government propose to take to ensure that the production of sand does not fall short of that originally envisaged?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, Government is dealing with the consultants with a view to a satisfactory solution that would then enable the Quarry Company to carry out operations as envisaged by the consultants in their original report.

HON W T SCOTT:

For how long has this on-going consultancy been taking place since the original construction of that sand winning plant?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think the basic position is that the Quarry Company expected to be handed over a going concern. That has not yet taken place and the consultants are still investigating to see how they can make it give the results that they had originally promised.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Can the Minister state where the fault lies, why it is that the system doesn't seem to be working?



HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Where the fault lies basically is that the sand does not come from top to bottom down the chute. It seems to be the impression of Government that the consultants did not investigate the situation sufficiently before they proposed the chute in the position and at the angles at which it has been erected.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Will the consultants therefore have to foot the bill for the extra work and delay in the availability of the sand?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I have been in touch with the Attorney-General who informs me that it is very possible that we will have to sue the consultants in due course.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Will the matter be dealt with a little bit faster than the Varyl Begg affair?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I sincerely hope so.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO 186 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, can Government give an assurance to this House that the area known as the wasteground at Laguna Estate will not be used for a car or coach parking if and when the frontier opens?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the question whether the waste ground at Laguna Estate is to be used as a coach parking area is still under consideration by Government.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 186 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Why does it take so long to consider these matters? I would have thought it was a fairly simple issue.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, the issue is so simple that the friends across the way have not yet decided when they are going to open the gates so that we will know how many coaches are actually going to come in. When they do make up their minds, if they ever do, and if the gates actually do open and the number of coaches coming in can be calculated and ascertained then Government will be in a stronger position to say; "Yes, there is need of this area for a coaching car park, or no, there is no need for it".

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the position then that whether it is used for coach parking or not will depend on whether coaches come in and is that not begging the question that that area should not be used for parking but should be used for leisure purposes?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think the Hon Member is quite right when he says that it is a question of whether coaches come in or not, yes indeed, it is the question.

HON P J ISOLA:

So is the position of the Government that if coaches come in the area will be used for parking?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Not necessarily. One needs to know how many coaches are going to come in. If only a very small quantity come in that can be accommodated somewhere else then obviously another place may be found for them but if, as has been anticipated by some people, the number of coaches may be in the range of twenty to thirty per day then that would seem to be a prime area for this.

HON P J ISOLA:

In other words what the Government is saying is that if the coaches come into Gibraltar that area will be used as parking.

MR SPEAKER:

I think the Government has said that when they are in a position to gauge the requirements for parking areas for coaches then they will have to take a decision as to whether to use this particular area for parking.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, there are a number of considerations if the frontier were to open and a quantity of coaches were to come in. The first consideration, of course, is that one doesn't want to be very unco-operative and say coaches have got to park themselves so far away that people have to walk an inordinate distance to get into town. On the same terms one doesn't want the coaches to come right into the town area where they will create considerable traffic and other problems so one has to find a happy medium to the two situations. This area does seem to be one of the more suitable areas that might be available but until such coaches do come Government does not yet wish to make its mind up definitely that that area will become a coach parking area.

HON P J ISOLA:

It is not clear from the line of answer of the Minister that the Government will use it as a parking area and cannot Government consider the idea of the coaches travelling along Queensway and dropping passengers near the town and then carrying on to Rosia and park there, what is the problem there?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

This is one of the considerations that has been put but it has been very strongly felt by all the authorities that to have coaches going past Waterport Fountain, going along Queensway which is going to be a very congested road, much more congested than it is already and it is already reasonably congested, and to go all the way to Roasia, will be an extremely difficult thing to do and should be avoided if possible. If the Honourable Member will assure me that twenty-five coaches will be coming then Government would be in a quicker position to make its mind up but until they do come the situation must remain under consideration.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will the Government bear in mind that there is extremely strong feelings, justifiably so, that present leisure areas in the community of Gibraltar should not be in any way diminished for this purpose even if as a result there may be a certain amount of inconvenience to certain authorities or others, that the governing factor in Governments' mind should be not to give up the leisure spaces which are open and easy to convert but do a bit of thinking and determine to use other spaces?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think one of the things that is motivating the Government's mind is the whole question of the economical and political survival of Gibraltar and all things have to be taken into account not just one point which is quite a valid point that the Hon Member mentions.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will the Government bear in mind that the economic, social and political survival of Gibraltar depends fundamentally on the provision of reasonable leisure areas and social areas for the people of Gibraltar within Gibraltar?

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not expand the orbit of the question.

HON G T RESTANO:

Doesn't Government consider it highly undesirable to have a coach park in the middle of a housing estate?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I wouldn't say that it is in the middle of a housing estate and I often wonder to myself that if before that area had become a tentative adventure playground it had been thrown open as a general car parking area whether it would not have been filled by cars possibly by the very residents of that estate.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, that seems to be a question answered by another question because the Minister is asking what would have happened if, but I am saying that that site is surrounded, is in the middle of a building estate, in fact, two building estates, it has the Glacis on the one side and the Laguna on the other side with the road in between, and if that is not in the middle of two housing estates, and I repeat the question, does the Government not consider that it is highly undesirable to have coach parks in the middle of housing estates?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Perhaps it might be less desirable to have the same coaches going all the way through town, disturbing every area of town that they would go past on their way to Rosia.

HON G T RESTANO:

Well, may I ask, Mr Speaker, what disturbance there would be for these coaches to go down Queensway?

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going to go into that.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I would like to ask another one relating to my Honourable Colleague on my right and that is if it might not be in the middle of a housing estate, surely, it is adjacent to a Junior and Middle school?

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, before we carry on. I am rather worried that it has taken the Spanish Government 11 years up to now to decide to open the frontier if it takes another 11 years will this wasteground not be put to any use at all for 11 years?

MR SPEAKER:

That is another question.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I don't think my question has been answered.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I thought it was a rhetorical question and I wasn't taking any further notice of it.

HON W T SCOTT:

Could I ask it again, Mr Speaker?

MR SPEAKER:

No, I don't think you are going to get an answer.

NO 187 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, when was the plastic grass removed from outside the Health Centre, and does Government intend doing anything to embellish this area?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the Plastic grass was remove just over a year ago. Government intends to landscape the area in question. Work is already in hand on the renewal of the adjoining pavement.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 187 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, seeing that the project is under way, could I make a suggestion, and that is that some park benches be provided along that place considering that it is the entrance to town?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The suggestion is fully taken up, Sir, and we will look into it.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government give the figures and cost for water production from available sources for the months of March 1980, to June, 1980, and state what the stocks were on the 30 June?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

MONTH	MARCH 1980 PRODUCTION 3 M	APRIL 1980 PRODUCTION 3 M	MAY 1980 PRODUCTION 3 M	JUNE 1980 PRODUCTION 3 M
Rainfall	14131	2766	6784	513
Wells	14053	11633	9130	8658
N F Distiller	9858	15875	8947	Annual Maintenance
VTE Distiller	Annual Maintenance	5044	23444	31005
Imported	13865	13115	19634	34215

Stocks of Potable Water on 30 June 1980 stood at 56,593 cubic metres (12.45 million gallons).

There is no change in the estimated operating costs for water production from those given in answer to question No 92 of 1980.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.188 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, can the Hon Member say why there seems to be an improvement in the production of the VTE Distiller?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There has been a very considerable improvement in the production of the VTE Distiller which is now working at any where between 75% and 85% of its rated efficiency. This, I think, has been due to efforts of the engineers and all the staff at the VTE Distiller in effecting a number of modifications and I think they should be congratulated for their good work.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.



NO.189 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker is Government aware that all public clocks are either in need of refurbishing or not keeping proper time or both and does Government propose to do anything about this?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Public clocks are wound twice weekly by Public Works personnel. The clocks at Market Place had not been wound recently as the special ladder used was broken and a replacement was being obtained. However, the clock has now been wound with the assistance of ladders provided by the City Fire Brigade.

The maintenance of public clocks is carried out by a private firm and we are advised that with the exception of the Market Place clock, the rest are keeping proper time. Now that it has been wound, this clock, the rest are keeping proper time. Now that it has been wound, this clock should also keep good time.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.189 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I will assure the Minister that the clock of the House of Assembly Building is 3 minutes slow, that the clock at Moorish Castle, which has 3 faces and not 4, is not only 5 minutes fast but you can't read the numbers on the clock face and the clock at the Market Place might now be keeping time but the hands of the clock resemble those of a windmill more than those of a clock unless they were straightened out at the same time that the clock was wound up.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Well, Sir, if the 3 minutes slow are added to the 5 minutes fast perhaps they will compensate. I will inform the firm that checks this to see if they can get them to keep exactly the time as given by our good lady in the Telephone Department and I will try to see that the Castle clock's hands are made a little more distinct.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, this is of vital importance because if the frontier opens the tourists coming in will be confused enough with the one hour's difference without having to tot up the minutes.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO 190 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Mr Speaker, Sir, what steps does Government intend taking to reduce the health hazard at the lower level of Keys Promenade emanating from the rainwater outlet pipes?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, PWD is not aware of any health hazard at Keys Promenade due to rainwater outlet pipes, especially since very little rain falls during the summer bathing season. Perhaps the Hon Member is referring to the DOE distiller outlet, which is on the MOD section of the promenade and not under PWD control. DOE have already been contacted in this respect.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.190 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

I am referring, Mr Speaker, to the shoreline below the Keys Promenade, that lido, and on the wall behind the lido there are pipes which unfortunately the users of the lido in the summer months appear to deposit some of their rubbish. This leads in time, particularly in the summer months, to vermin, cockroaches, and so forth.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think those are the DOE distiller pipes but we will check on it and we will approach DOE once again to see if they can be kept clean.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO 191 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

What is Government policy towards the removal of chicken runs in populated areas?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Sir, Government policy has been and still is to remove chicken runs in populated areas. For this purpose a sum of £2000 has been approved in the current financial year. The matter is of grave concern to the health authorities and an attempt is being made in consultation with housing Tenants' Association to remove them.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 191 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is the Government considering taking preventive action so that we haven't got to spend £2000 perhaps every year to remove them?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, Sir, this is being considered.

NO 192 OF 1980

.ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Considering that it is now thirteen months since the Air Terminal extension project was due to have commenced, can this House be informed how soon it will be before the project is commenced?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the Air Terminal Extension had to be completely redesigned from an apron front extension eastwards to a northwards linear extension due to high MOD apron reprovisioning costs.

The new design is now finalised and agreed with all departments, working drawings and structural drawings are in hand and Bills of Quantities proceeding. Structural steelwork, cladding and roofing have been ordered, a letter of intent has been issued for the baggage racetrack and quotations have been received for the perimeter glazing and ventilation equipment. The anticipated tender date is hoped to be September 1980.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION No 192 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Has the Minister in the new plans for this terminal building included a rotary luggage collection in it or something better than the present system which is awful.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, that is the thing that I commented was a baggage reactrack. It's a round and round caroussel similar to the ones that one sees in London Airport.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO 193 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Mr Speaker, will Government explain why it has not implemented a one way entry system into the Varyl Begg Estate?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the existing entrance road to Varyl Begg Estate was designed as a two-way road and is perfectly adequate for two-way traffic provided cars are not parked on the double yellow lines at the entrance of the Estate.

With the proposed re-sitting of the Police/Customs post to a new position at the present Port Office, this section of Waterport Road would be outside the Customs controlled area.

The temporary contractors' northern entrance to Varyl Begg has very poor visibility, and would be inside the new Customs area, which is undesirable.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 193 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, in answer to a question asked by me in March of the year the Hon Minister for Housing and Sport said that a detailed survey had already been carried out by the Police who had recommended that the western road leading into the estate would be entry only and that the eastern road should be exit and on further questioning the Hon Mr Zammit said that this would be implemented very shortly within the next month or so, that is Question 59 of 1980.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, it is agreed that that was said but I think due account had not been taken by the Police at that time of the requirements of the Customs authorities who obviously would not like to continue having Varyl Begg Estate inside a Customs control area.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO 194 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Having regard to statements made recently by the conservationists, has Government any plans to put the area known as the Jungle to better use than at present and has Government made any progress in obtaining the release of adjacent land from the MOD?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, Government as early as January this year was looking into the possibility of making use of the area known as the 'Jungle'. Preliminary investigations and costings have already been carried out, including the annual recurrent costs. A decision will be made in time for the 1981/82 Estimates. All the land involved is already the property of the Gibraltar Government.

NO 195 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government consider the amendment of the Town Planning Ordinance so as to make it obligatory for the Development and Planning Commission to give public notice of matters it will consider which affect the public interest so that re-representation can be made by groups or parties affected prior to the hearing of the application for planning permission?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE ANDLABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. Speaker, I would like to answer questions 195 and 196 jointly.

Sir, the Government is prepared to consider amending the Town Planning Ordinance in order to allow greater public participation on specific building applications. I should point out that public participation in the overall City Plan was provided for in 1976 and will also feature in the revision of the Gibraltar City Plan in 1981.

I should however make the reservation that there may be practical and administrative difficulties, as well as disagreements as to what constitutes the public interest.

As regards the suggestion that the DPC should sit in public it is important to bear in mind that planning committees in the UK consist of members of all political parties represented in local Government, whereas that is not the case in Gibraltar, despite invitations issued by the Government in the past to Opposition Members.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 196 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I think I welcome that answer, I think it is a move in the right direction. Obviously, would not the Minister agree that it would be for the Development and Planning Commission to made a judgement as to what is clearly a matter of public interest and what is really a matter of private sectional interests and although I appreciate the problems this might involve, does he not consider it desirable that that responsibility should remain square on the shoulders of the DPC?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am very grateful for that question, Mr Speaker, I am glad to see that the Hon Questioner is stressing the fact that ultimate responsibility should lie with the Commission and on that basis I think we might be able to make progress.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17 7 80

NO 196 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government consider amending the Town Planning Legislation so as to make it obligatory for the Development and Planning Commission to sit in public when considering applications that are clearly of public interest?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

(Answered together with Question No.195 of 1980)



NO 197 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state the present position as regards the improvement of passenger facilities at Waterport?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, the improvements to the Customs Hall at Waterport should be completed by early next week. They include not only renovations and repainting of the Hall but also improved facilities for the clearance of passengers.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government consider forming a Committee to advise them on the need of an attendance centre for juvenile offenders or some other type of rehabilitation centre for Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE ANDLABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, as will have been gathered from my replies to the Hon Member's question No 94 of 25.3.80, and supplementaries thereto, to answer is 'No', Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 198 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, if I can detail those supplementaries. When asked whether it would be desirable to create an Attendance Centre the answer was: "A lot of things are desirable, Mr Speaker, but they are not essential". Do I take therefore that only essential things are done by this Government?

HON A J CANEPA:

Sir, the policy is that having regard to the incidence of Attendance Centre orders, namely, none in the past 2½ years, the use of a building exclusively as an Attendance Centre with a need to engage suitable staff is not warranted at present.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, which came first the chicken or the egg? How can a Court send you to an Attendance Centre when there isn't one?

HON A J CANEPA:

There is one, Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member is ignorant of the fact that the City Fire Station is the appointed Attendance Centre.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I am well aware of this and this is what he told us last time. Does the Hon Member think a part-time Fireman is going to really answer the needs of society today? There are some people who require attendance and as such I wouldn't like Government to commit themselves to spending the money now but I would ask them at least to appoint a Committee to find out whether it is desirable. Why should the Minister decide on the spur of the moment that it is desirable but not essential? Why doesn't he leave the committee to decide?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I don't decide on the spur of the moment. I am elected to exercise certain functions as Minister for Labour, I have a number of advisors in the Department of Labour and Social Security who are to a greater or lesser extent experts in the field of social problems and it is on the basis of that advice that I act accordingly and I advise the Government accordingly and I formulate with the help of the Government policy.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, was there not at one time a Committee working along these lines in the 1960's?

HON A J CANEPA:

I was a teacher in the 1960s, Mr Speaker, I think the Hon Member was a young man in very short pants and the answer is that I don't know.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, what are in fact the facilities at the Fire Station for this type of juvenile offenders?

HON A J CANEPA:

The procedure, Mr Speaker, is that the City Fire Station is appointed Centre for the reception of persons who are aged between 12 and 20 and it is the Chief Fire Officer who is designated as the officer in charge of the Centre. He could require the offender, however, to carry out supervised activities at some other place and for this purpose the Youth and Careers Service has been designated in the past and could be in certain circumstances a rather more adequate venue having regard to the facilities there and to the greater expertise in social work of the staff of the Youth and Careers Office, but the fact remains that for 2½ years no attendance orders have been made. It is not the Department of Labour and Social Security that makes an attendance order it is the Court that make attendance orders and I am not aware that the Chief Justice or the legal profession as such, the Magistrate or Members of the Bar as such, as an association, consider this to be a pressing need.

HON G T RESTANO:

Just one very quick question straight away, Mr Speaker. Since the Minister has said that should certain duties be assigned to the offender by the Chief Fire Officer, these offenders must go to a more adequate, I think, was the word that he used.....

HON A J CANEPA:

No, if the Chief Fire Officer should consider that in any particular

case the kind of supervision that can be exercised at the Fire Station might not meet the circumstances of that particular young person, then he can designate the Youth and Careers Office as rather more suitable.

HON G T RESTANO:

I will go back to the original question. What in fact are the facilities there, what is the form for any juvenile offender who is sent to the Fire Station?

HON A J CANEPA:

The young person would be required to report there on appointed hours and do work under supervision and involve himself in the activities at the Fire Station, work and recreation, leisure activities as well. The intention is to keep him in a supervised environment.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Chief Fire Officer in any way trained in this sort of work? Certainly there are officers in other departments who are specifically trained. Is the Chief Officer trained and if so in what way?

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to go beyond the scope of the question. The question reads "Will Government consider forming a Committee to advise them on the need of an Attendance Centre for juvenile offenders or some other type of rehabilitation", and now we are going into the present system.

HON G T RESTANO:

May I just ask this, Mr Speaker, because the answer to that question was no because there were facilities at the Fire Station.....

MR SPEAKER:

The answer was that there is no need and then as a result of that it was asked what happens now when someone is sent to the Fire Station.

HON G T RESTANO:

All I am asking is what training is there at the Fire Station to look after these offenders?

MR SPEAKER:

And the answer has been that he is given general work under supervision.

HON G T RESTANO:

With training or without training, Mr Speaker, that is what I am trying to find out?

MR SPEAKER:

I will allow a quick answer and nothing else.

HON A J CANEPA:

I am not aware that the present Chief Fire Officer, I say that advisedly because I think his predecessor has a particular interest in this field, I am not aware whether the present Chief Fire Officer has any particular training but his predecessor certainly had.

NO 199 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government disclose the present berthing capacity of the Camber and will Government state whether there has been any improvement in its capacity in the last 12 months and if so when?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE ANDLABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, When the Camber was handed over to the Gibraltar Government in January 1978, 120 boats were officially moored there. There are now 206 boats with approximately another 40 berths still to be allocated. This has been made possible through a programme aimed at approximately doubling the berthing capacity. Berths are allocated 5 or 6 at a time, and once the boats have been properly moored another allocation is made.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.199 OF 1980

HAN A J HAYNES:

When were these berths made available?

HON A J CANEPA:

I cannot specify dates as to when 5 or 6 berths are made available and when another 5 or 6 are made available. I have been able to deal with the question in broad terms and point out that over a period of just over 2 years the berthing capacity at Camber has been progressively doubled.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir Will Government give a full explanation of the Port development feasibility study?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, I will refer the Honourable Member, to the statement that I made during the last Budget session when, inter alia, I explained that the Government of Gibraltar was preparing to commission a firm of suitably qualified consultants to make detailed recommendations for the phased development of the Port up to the year 2000. The study would cover all important aspects of the Port and its role in the development of the economy by way of industrialisation plans, potential projects, the possible establishment of a free trade zone, the planned development of utilities, particularly power and water, the future development of tourism, the potential for freight transshipment and the Port's position vis a vis Spain and the EEC. The study would also entail the forecasting of external trade patterns, shipping movements, the type and size of vessels calling, the demand for Port Services and the effect of competition from other Ports. The Consultants would also look at existing buildings, equipment and infrastructure, the size and structure of the existing labour force and the administrative arrangements at the Port.

I can now further inform the House, that, since then, PEIDA (Planning Economic Industrial Development Advisers) in association with Wallace Evans and Partners have been appointed as consultants for the study. As I mentioned at a Press Conference on 4th July, 1980, the Government has been working on detailed plans and proposals in connection with preparations for the next Development Programme and the Port has commanded serious attention and high priority. The possibilities and the alternatives for development of the Port are wide ranging and likely to involve substantial capital expenditure. The study will emphasize the economic and planning aspects and these, in turn, will determine the engineering solutions. Finally, I should add that the study is being financed by the Government, (it will be noted from the schedule of supplementary estimates No 1 of 1980/81 that the cost is £90,000) and it is envisaged that it will be completed over the next six months and a final report submitted by January 1981.

NO 201 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, is Government satisfied with the general state of the Port especially as regards the manner in which container and beer barrels are at present being stored or parked?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, the short answer is 'No, Sir'. Having appreciated the problems connected with containerisation and the limited space available for commercial operations the Government has undertaken the present Port Development programme, whereby the space between Jetties No 2 and 3 is being filled in to provide a stacking area for containers.

Because of this project, which it is expected will be completed at the end of the year, the area of the Port has been further reduced temporarily. However although conditions at present are far from satisfactory, the Government believes that the resultant gain in stacking space will considerably alleviate the present situation. With regard to empty beer barrels, these are stacked out of the traffic flow between No 1 Jetty and the Western Arm awaiting shipment.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 201 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

But is Government certain that the best use of space has been made?

HON A J CANEPA:

We think so, Sir, we have no reason to believe that we are not making the best use of the limited space available.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, may I ask why is it that nowadays beer barrels are stacked in the Port? In the past they were not stacked there, they used to be loaded at the last moment and not left there for weeks on end. Why is it that now they are allowed to be stacked there?

HON A J CANEPA:

I don't know when that policy was introduced, Mr Speaker, I don't know whether the position was ever different in the past. As I said in my main answer they are really there awaiting shipment. I can look into it but I don't know that it would be a better solution to bring them back again. I doubt whether that would be any more convenient particularly having regard to the problems at the Viaduct Bridge, I wouldn't think so.



HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, it is not a question of bringing them in to take them out again. Those beer barrels, presumably, are empty beer barrels, they have already been imported, they have been used and now they have been stacked in the Port area awaiting shipment. In the past from what I understand and what I remember, too, beer barrels were only taken to the Port at the time of shipment and not just allowed to be stacked for weeks on end after they have been used in town. Perhaps the Minister could have a look at that and give me a reply.

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I will have a look at that.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Is it a fact that Old Age Pensioners who may require to use the ambulance service for going to Hospital for treatment are charged for this service?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTHSERVICES

No, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 202 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

The Minister has said no, Sir. Is the position then that any old age pensioner who requires the ambulance service is taken to hospital free of any charge?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, Sir.

17 7 80

NO 203 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, Now that GBC have moved from Wellington Front will Government proceed actively to allocate areas in Wellington Front for Youth Clubs, Associations and other organisations in need of premises?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND

LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the allocation of Wellington Front is being actively considered by the Development and Planning Commission now that GBC are moving from Wellington Front. The Commission has requested that a study that was carried out just over a year ago to identify the requirements of Youth Clubs and other associations should be brought up to date. Once this has been submitted, the Commission will make recommendations to Government.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 203 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, would not that be for example an ideal proceeding for the Development and Planning Commission to hold in public to hear views of affected parties and so forth?

HON A J CANEPA:

We certainly have to hear views because there are very many prospective applicants. There are a lot of people particularly those in the old Command Education Centre, who are after those premises. This is why I say that the matter has to be updated because the position has changed in the last year or so, I think there is now even greater demand.

NO 204 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state what arrangements have been made to pay Social Security Benefits to Campo Area pensioners?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, In order that the Department of Labour and Social Security may be able to cope with the large number of Campo Area pensioners who are expected to come to Gibraltar to collect their social insurance benefits when the frontier opens, Government is making available additional offices on the ground floor of the Key and Anchor premises (the Old Garrison Recreation Rooms) for which some additional staff will be required.

This is intended as a temporary measure until the permanent requirements can be assessed in the light of experience over a period after the opening of the frontier.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 204 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

What I would like to know, Mr Speaker, is in fact what arrangements have been made between the Government of Gibraltar and the Spanish Government for paying Social Security Benefits?

HON A J CANEPA:

That would be telling.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the answer then that no arrangements have been made or that Government has made arrangements but is unwilling to divulge the nature of those arrangements?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, the fact is, Mr Speaker, that once the frontier opens regardless of any discussions on the wider issues of the old age pensions of Spanish nationals, the fact of the matter is that people living in the vicinity of Gibraltar in the Campo Area will be able to come in to Gibraltar and apply, if they meet the necessary conditions, apply for an old age pension and that application will have to be investigated and assessed and there is nothing to stop that happening once the frontier opens and these people are allowed in and I think we have to be ready to meet that situation and that has got nothing to do with the other wider and more fundamental issues.

HON J BOSSANO:

So the fact is then, Mr Speaker, that the Government is acting on the assumption that it may be faced with a number of applications but it isn't that there have been specific arrangements to make payments to a certain number of people?

HON A J CANEPA:

That is correct.

HON J BOSSANO:

And can the Government say just how big they estimate the potential demand could be?

HON A J CANEPA:

The number of pensioners expected could be up to 4,000.

HON J BOSSANO:

And is this on the basis of their employment record in Gibraltar prior to the closing of the frontier?

HON A J CANEPA:

It is on that basis and on the basis of benefits payable pre-1969.

HON P J ISOLA:

What is the cost of the work that has been done at the Key and Anchor premises?

HON A J CANEPA:

The adaptation of the premises is estimated at just over £6,000. The provision of office furniture about £1,700.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could the Government not have found a slightly better site than an area which is part really of a leisure and recreational complex, for this?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, this has been the subject of very close study. The General Division, Government Secretariat, together with the Department of Labour and Social Security have really been looking around very carefully for premises to meet the situation. We certainly would not be able to cope at College Lane and we were looking for premises perhaps in a more northerly direction but the fact of the matter is really that there are none available and what

we are endeavouring to do in using these premises is to make sure that the work that is done there is really minimal and does not in any way destroy the character of what I agree with the Hon Member is a rather beautiful building which has great potential and we want to make certain that this doesn't happen so we are providing just the bare minimum facilities which are going to be the provision of counters, neon lighting and toilet facilities and nothing else, we are not going to alter the character of those rooms at all.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, may I ask the Minister. The people who will be able to claim these benefits, will they be able to claim them from a current date or will they be able to claim the benefits for all the period that they have not been able to come to Gibraltar because the frontier has been closed?

HON A J CANEPA:

The law provides for payment to be made to those people who are entitled to benefits over the previous twelve months. In other words, that meets the situation of a pensioner who may be slightly over 65 when he first applies for an old age pension he may be 65 years and a few months, well, he can have it back-dated up to the time when he was 65 in that case, should he be, say, aged over 66 he will be entitled to payment of benefits for the previous 52 weeks.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO 205 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Mr Speaker, will Government consider bringing into line those elderly persons, living on their own and in receipt of Old Age Pensions or Elderly Persons Pensions, with the benefits given, such as help with telephone rentals, with elderly persons living on their own and in receipt of Supplementary Benefits?

ANSWER

THE HON. THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, I do not understand in what way - other than with assistance towards telephone rentals - the Hon Questioner is suggesting that all elderly persons should be brought into line with those in receipt of Supplementary Benefits.

With regard to telephone rentals, I have already explained - in reply to Question No 98 of 25.3.80 - that elderly persons living on their own and in receipt of Supplementary Benefits receive an allowance of half of the rental. I cannot see my way to extending this also the persons in receipt of Old Age Pension or Elderly Persons Pension, as these pensions are payable irrespective of income. Unless elderly persons qualify for Supplementary Benefits it must be assumed that no real hardship exists. In many cases, such pensioners could well be better off than wage-earners with family responsibilities.

Sir, once again I would ask the Hon Questioner to try to be more specific as to his intentions when asking about matters of this nature.

THE HON W T SCOTT

Mr Speaker, is Government aware of the inordinate queues that elderly persons are subjected to when collecting their pensions and what does Government propose to do to alleviate this situation?

ANSWER

THE HON MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND LABOUR AND  
AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the Hon Member does not specify who are the pensioners whom he has in mind, or where the queues are.

If he is referring to the Department of Labour & Social Security, I can say that Government is aware that queues do form up of pensioners calling to collect their social security pensions. I feel, however, that by using the words "inordinate" and "subjected", he may be over-stating the case.

In fact, much of the trouble lies in that most pensioners want to collect their pensions on the first or second day of the week, and early at that within a peak period of about 2 hours, so that unless there was a small army of paying cashiers (and this is assuming that there was space for them, which there is not) some queues are inevitable at these peak periods. At other times the queues, if any, are no longer than one would sometimes find at say a bank.

In fairness to the young lady cashiers, I must say that the complaints occasionally received from those who have had to queue up are far outnumbered by the complimentary remarks received on the quickness and efficiency with which they pay out the pensions.

If, on the other hand, the Hon Member is referring to those persons in receipt of pensions paid by the Treasury, I am informed that of a total of 721 pensioners, 183 receive payment through the banks. Payment of the remaining 538 is staggered as follows, in order to avoid their having to wait unduly;

200 Police and industrial-grade pensioners are paid at the Statistics Office one working day before the normal day of paying other pensions:

138 other Government pensioners are paid at the end of the month, also at the Statistics Office;

176 Pensioners' paid on behalf of H M Government are paid at the Treasury cash office; and a further 24 ex-City Council pensioners are paid weekly, also at the cash office, on Fridays.



I am not aware that any of these pensioners are subjected to inordinate queueing-up, but it is well known that a number of them like to queue up outside the paying office well before opening time. There is nothing that anyone can do to prevent this, which is really quite unnecessary and which may have given a wrong impression to the Hon Questioner. In any case, I should point out that any pensioner who wishes to avoid having to queue up at all has only to ask the Accountant General to pay him through the bank, where no doubt he may have to queue even longer.

NO 207 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Mr Speaker, Sir, has Government recently allocated any land to commercial enterprises in the Port area?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the only land recently allocated to a commercial enterprise in the Port area has been to the Gibraltar Cold Stores Ltd in respect of an area 70 ft. in length to the south of their existing premises on the Western Arm of the North Mole. The allocation was made necessary in order to allow the lessees of the existing building to comply with certain Public Health requirements which have been outstanding for some time.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO.207 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Is there any truth in the rumour that certain areas within just West of the Queen's Stores have been given to another commercial enterprise?

HON A J CANEPA:

I did not take the Queen's Sores or the Bonded Stores, Mr Speaker, under the definition of land. The Bonded Stores could be regarded more as premises and not land, this is why I limited my answer to the Gibraltar Cold Stores Ltd.

HON W T SCOTT:

Is the Minister able to answer that question or would he require notice?

HON A J CANEPA:

I will answer it, Mr Speaker, yes. The other premises which have been recently allocated in the Bonded Stores are part of the Stores which will become surplus to the Revenue Department which it is inteded in fact, it has been earmarked for them, for allocation to the Gibraltar Underwater Contractors for a term of 30 years on completion of major structural alterations. There is also a smaller area measuring approximately 3,000 sq ft. which has been offered to Mobil Oil (Gibraltar) Ltd. on the basis of a lease for 21 years and in both cases they are firms which have very strong Port connections.

HON W T SCOTT:

Does Government not think it advisable that this land should have gone out to tender rather than negotiated it with one particular commercial concern and in any event, Mr Speaker, the experts undertaking the Port feasibility study might well decide that this is not consistent with their recommendations?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, as regards the latter point, the feasibility study, this is a matter which has been in hand well before that. As regards other interests I think I should point out that we are dealing in both cases with firms which are giving an important public service. The Gibraltar Underwater Contractors I think are an important element in the economy of Gibraltar and they are giving up other premises which they now have and which is going to enable their site to be cleared and to put by the Government to alternative use. In the case of Mobil Oil Gibraltar Ltd, they have succeeded on the basis of this offer in having the Port of Gibraltar upgraded in status by Mobil Oil Ltd which will be of great economic benefit to Gibraltar because ships will be able to come and be supplied with oil, fuels and lubricants which otherwise they would not be able to provide. As I say, Mr Speaker, they are two firms which have got strong and long connections with the Port and important elements, I would say, in the Gibraltar economy and for these reasons the Government considered in the public interest that it should make these allocations.

HON W T SCOTT:

Has the Government charged the commercial rent in this arrangement?

HON A J CANEPA:

Very much so; Mr Speaker.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Hon Member saying that the Gibraltar Underwater Contractors have been offered storage space for the next 30 years for all their derelict vehicles and scrap that they have at the entrance to Veryl Begg?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, they have been offered this space for the development of their business and for which they will have to spend a great deal of money. I can assure the Hon Member the question of clearing the area is very much of a sore point.

HON P J ISOLA:

Would Government give an assurance to the House that it will not allocate any more land or areas even to the Algeciras Ferry, if it comes on, in the Port area except on a very, very temporary basis till they find out the results of the feasibility study on which they are spending £100,000?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, I think I can give that assurance having regard to the fact that we expect to have the feasibility study within six months, but, of course, the Government cannot bind itself not to have to make allocations may be even direct allocations in the Port area if that is in the public interest.

HON P J ISOLA:

Ye, but the Minister has noticed that I have said "except on a very temporary basis."

HON A J CANEPA:

I think the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is making a valid point and I can fully go along with that.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON W T SCOTT

Mr Speaker, can Government give a breakdown of unemployment figures in the different categories as at 31st May 1980?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the figures at the end of May, 1980, were as follows:-

<u>BRITISH</u>				<u>TOTAL</u>
Adults	:	Males	60	
		Females	<u>33</u>	93
Juveniles	:	Males	7	
		Females	<u>26</u>	33
				126
 <u>ALIENS</u>				
Males	:		23	
Females	:		4	27
				<u>27</u>
				<u>153</u>

NO 209 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, Can Government give a full explanation of its policy with respect to the development of Parson's Lodge for the construction of an hotel involving as this does in the process the inevitable demolition of an historic site?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE ANDLABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, Parson's Lodge was earmarked as a site for an hotel in 1969.

The Victorian battery on the site is not included in the schedule of ancient monuments of the Museum and Antiquities Ordinance.

The Gibraltar land use map of March 1969, Drg No TP/53/69G, which was available to the general public, designated this site for an hotel.

The land use proposals of the 1976 Gibraltar City Plan designated this site for residential and seafaring activities. The 1976 Gibraltar City Plan was exhibited to the public for the period of two months. No objections were then raised by any individual or society to the proposed land use at Parson's Lodge. In proceeding with negotiations for the building of an hotel in Parson's Lodge Government is therefore pursuing the policy which has been consistently followed as from 1969. Insofar as the 18th century fortification walls are concerned, the DPC has laid down a requirement that these should be preserved.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 209 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I agree with the Minister that no representations were made by any society at the time, the reason being that there wasn't a Conservation society at the time but surely the fact that there is an awareness now, an awareness that didn't spring up overnight, over Parson's Lodge, an awareness of our heritage, if it wasn't taken into consideration before because it wasn't there now that it is there it should be taken into consideration.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, my information is that successive Chief Planning Officers over the years have not considered the Victorian Battery at Parson's Lodge to be part of our heritage to the same extent as other historical sites and buildings.

HON A J HAYNES:

Did the Minister say that it is desirable to have historic preservation but not essential?

HON A J CANEPA:

Is he really expecting an answer, Mr Speaker?

HON A T LODDO:

Were the Planning Officers who were not concerned about Parson's Lodge and this type of Battery any authority on historical monuments or were they more interested in building a concrete jungle?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, the Museum Committee where I think that there are a number of people who over the years have been very concerned about the heritage of Gibraltar and who although they are laymen have acquired a certain expertise in this field through their interest in these matters over a long period of time; have not pressed very strongly for the inclusion of Parson's Lodge as a historic monument other than recently when they submitted Parson's Lodge in a list of 148 items which they would like to see now included in an amended schedule to the Ordinance. The Development and Planning Commission was able to agree to 146 of these items and there was a commitment in respect of another site to consult the Museum Committee if further consideration was given to the development of this other site but with regard to Parson's Lodge, as I think the Hon Member will have gathered from correspondence in the newspapers, the Museum Committee as a whole do not feel very strongly about Parson's Lodge and I am not aware that this kind of Victorian architecture has been very highly rated until very recently. For instance, you could not compare, I understand, and I am not an expert here but I have to take advice, you could not compare Victorian architecture, say, with Regency architecture and it is only recently that Victorian Societies have been formed and are agitating in the United Kingdom for certain conservationist policies to be adopted which in the past people were not very bothered about because the Victorian era was not an era that was particularly marked as being progressive in the field of architecture. That is my understanding as a layman of the situation and these are the considerations, I think, that as Chairman of the Commission I have to weigh up with other factors.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I am not an architect either but the way I understand it, Parson's Lodge is Victorian in military architecture and is only one of two remaining batteries of its kind in the world. I can understand for us pressing for the other battery wherever it is to be demolished so that we would have the only one but I cannot understand for us to want to demolish our own.

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to debate this matter.

HON A J HAYNES:

What is Regency architecture?

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going to have a session on architecture.

HON G T RESTANO:

The Minister said that the Museum Committee had put forward a list of 148 items to be included in the ancient monuments list and that only two had been left out, presumably Parson's Lodge was one of them, can I have confirmation of this, and if so did Government refuse to include Parson's Lodge in this new list by the Museum Committee because it had committed itself to development with the Developers?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, I think it is fair to say that it was the Commission because the question of the inclusion of Parson's Lodge or otherwise in this list has not yet been put to Government, it is the Commission only what have been looking at these proposals and they have not yet been submitted to Council of Ministers.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is it not a sorry state of affairs that the man in charge of preserving our historic heritage talks of Regency architecture and so forth?

MR SPEAKER:

I beg your pardon, what was the question?

HON A J HAYNES:

Does the Hon Member consider himself in any way qualified to decide what is historically worth preserving?

MR SPEAKER:

No, next question.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I haven't quite finished on that one. Was this project ever put out to tender, Mr Speaker? Was the hotel development project ever put out to tender?

HON A J CANEPA:

Ever, yes.



HON G T RESTANO:

On what date, Mr Speaker, when?

HON A J CANEPA:

Well before my time in the mid-60's, I believe.

HON G T RESTANO:

I take it then, Mr Speaker, that these present developers were those who tendered in 1960 and were presumably given a tender, then, is this what the Minister is saying?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, there were no takers at the time.

HON G T RESTANO:

So the tender was left open is that the answer? May I ask why it was not put out to tender?

HON A J CANEPA:

Once, Mr Speaker, something is put out to tender and no tenders are received, I understand it is the practice subsequently if approached by interested developers and you can investigate and negotiate their interest, to go ahead and proceed on that basis. It has been done with other developments in the past in Gibraltar, notably, Both Worlds.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, a difference of 20 years is what we are talking about and I think it is absolutely ludicrous for the Minister to get up and say that because a tender was put out 20 years ago and nobody took it up at that particular time when in those days, of course, the frontier was open and the circumstances in Gibraltar were quite different, I think it is absolutely ludicrous.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, if the Hon Member will give way. I did not say 20 years ago I did not say 1960 I said in the mid-60's after the frontier restrictions started.

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to debate this question.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, can I ask whether in fact the situation is that there is now a specific commitment to that development and a time limit to it or are the developers going to be allowed to keep that place for as long as they want without developing it?

HON A J CANEPA:

The position, Mr Speaker, is the Government has given the developer a letter of intent and conditions have been specified. I am anticipating really an answer to a question that is to come. He is being given a limited period to produce a feasibility study to satisfy the Government about his sources of finance and so on and a number of other conditions which the Government has to be satisfied with, quite apart from the planning aspect of it, before the matter will go any further.

HON MAJOR F J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, the Minister said that round about the middle 60's it went to tender. Would the Minister state when, in fact, they were approached by this company?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I would need separate notice of this question.

MR. SPEAKER:

You are being asked whether you know the date of the approach made by the present developer.

HON A J CANEPA:

The present developer?

MR SPEAKER:

Yes.

HON A J CANEPA:

The present developer and another developer, expressed an interest about 2 or 3 years ago and both of them were given an opportunity to submit proposals within a limited period of time and one of them did not and he fell out and the present developer has continued to show an interest. Subject to correction I would say this was about 2 years ago.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Bearing in mind, Mr Speaker, that obviously there was a renewed interest for that site since two developers were interested, wouldn't it have been, I think, fairer to put this site to tender?

HON A J CANEPA:

That is a matter of judgement, Mr Speaker, having regard to the closed frontier situation 2 years ago and having regard to the fact that for over a decade no one had expressed any interest, if 2

people come along and show an interest you give them an opportunity to see to what extent they can follow up their interest and come up with something definite.

HON MAJOR R J FELIZA:

If there is no way of reversing the situation, will the Minister make sure that we haven't got a repetition of Engineer House?

HON A J CANEPA:

The situation is not the same at all, Mr Speaker, Parson's Lodge is Government's property, Engineer House never has been and it will become now shortly we hope as a result of the funds that we are voting for later on in this proceedings. The Chief Minister is making a statement about Engineer House, the two are not comparable.

HON MAJOR R J FELIZA:

Well, all I am saying is that I hope we won't have a repetition, that's all.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO 210 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, how long ago was permission granted for the development of the Maida Vale as an hotel?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the plan for a proposed hotel at Maida Vale were first approved in July 1962.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 210 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, presumably this is a case of mid-60's as well and may I ask why is the hotel not being built?

HON A J CANEPA:

I understand, Mr Speaker, that the proposals never materialised owing to the sudden change in the economic climate which was brought about by the Spanish restrictions.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, has there been any penalty imposed on the developer for the non-development of this property?

HON A J CANEPA:

I do not have that information, Mr Speaker, I would require separate notice.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, what are the plans for that area?

HON A J CANEPA:

It's impossible, Mr Speaker, we are not computers. The Chief Minister has been in Government for longer than I have, he cannot remember and he has a fairly good memory for these things. I honestly don't know what the Hon Members opposite expect.

MR SPEAKER:

The answer is that you require notice.

HON A J CANEPA:

One requires notice. If they want to put specific questions on all these other side issues they will be answered, but they must give notice.

HON P J ISOLA:

With respect to the Hon Member if a question is asked, "How long ago was permission granted for the development of the Maida Vale as an hotel?", the obvious next question is going to be why hasn't it been built. I would have thought he would have had some information on that.

HON A J CANEPA:

I have given the answer Mr Speaker.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, but surely the Government should have handy what the land position is, does it belong to the Government?

HON A J CANEPA:

The position at the moment is that the matter is presently under negotiation.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does the land belong to the Government now or does it belong to somebody else?

HON A J CANEPA:

Whether they were given a lease, I honestly don't know what the position is.

HON G T RESTANO:

If the Government propose to ensure that development was made there hasn't Government got any powers to do so? Under what conditions was permission granted for the development of Maida Vale?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think that in the present negotiations that is a matter which is being looked into in respect of the latest proposals which they have submitted and which have been approved, in principle, by the Development and Planning Commission.

HON G T RESTANO:

So new proposals have been put for Maiãa Vale, I see.

HON A J CANEPA:

Well, originally, in fact, there was another company which entered into an agreement for a lease before the days that I have given, on the 1st of July 1961, and their licence expired but in the case of the current negotiations it is the same company which has had that land for some years.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO 211 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, when awarding a tender for development does Government take into account the origins of the capital to be invested in the project and did the Government take this factor into consideration when taking its decision in respect of the development at Parson's Lodge?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, before awarding a tender for development, Government looks closely into the commercial viability of a project and will wish to satisfy itself that the proposed source and method of financing are satisfactory.

In the case of the development at Parson's Lodge, the developers have been asked to submit within a period of six months a feasibility study for consideration by Government.

The result of this study will be considered carefully by Government and if it is not satisfied with the sources and method of financing and other related factors it will be at liberty to deal with the site as it may deem fit.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 211 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, can the Minister inform the House of the origins of the capital?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I am not involved in the negotiations with the developer, the Financial and Development Secretary is, and I don't know whether he has ascertained as yet the origin of the capital.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, may I ask the Hon Financial and Development Secretary whether he can acquaint this House with the origins of the capital to be invested in this project?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The origins of the capital have yet to be disclosed to the Government. One of the requirements in the letter of intent was that when the developer comes back to Government he should satisfy that he has the capital to develop it and he will have to disclose where it is coming from.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, were the origins, in fact, not published by, I think, a representative of the developers in a local newspaper?

MR SPEAKER:

That is another matter. The Government can only answer on the information that they have.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is this developer a local company, a company registered or incorporated in Gibraltar or is it an outside company?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

As far as I am aware, Mr Speaker, it is a local company. Exactly who the directors are or who owns the share capital, I don't know.

HON A J CANEPA:

Development Security Ltd are a local company.

HON J BOSSANO:

And if that Company was being used as a vehicle to invest Spanish capital in Gibraltar I take it the Financial and Development Secretary would be in a position to find out, wouldn't he?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the developers will have to disclose where they are borrowing money, which banks are behind it and all thing being equal one would be able to tell where the money is coming from. On the other hand it is not unusual for loans to pass through a number of hands and it might be difficult to ascertain exactly where the money is coming from.

HON J BOSSANO:

I am talking about control and ownership rather than money, Mr Speaker. I am talking about capital being up because after all if it is a question of borrowing money then obviously the money can be borrowed here and the person doing the lending here can borrow some where else. I think in terms of investment one talks really of if not a controlling investment certainly the type of investment that can exercise pressure on policies rather than simply loans that have to be repaid.



HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think that I can assure the House that before any lease is granted that Government would look carefully at the ownership of the company.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government state what it is proposed to do with the Old Grammar School Building?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the Old Grammar School building is being converted to accommodate St Mary's Middle School which is on split sites at Johnstone's Passage and Castle Road.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 212 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, when will the Middle School be ready for occupation?

HON A J CANEPA:

The conversion is going to be carried out in phases, Mr Speaker. I cannot give a date, if the funds are very substantial it may have to be included in the next development programme.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, since this project has been in hand since 1978 when in fact the Government said that it would be for a Middle School and nothing seems to have been done about it, may I ask again, when will we be able to see some form of occupation for Schools?

HON A J CANEPA:

The project has not been in hand since 1978 in the sense that funds have been allocated for it, Mr Speaker, it doesn't figure in the current development Programme which runs from April 1978, to March 1981, we propose to include it in the next development programme. This is the intention at the moment, it is there, it is being studied and if it is done in phases, if the total cost involved again is not very great, the Government will have to decide depending on the expense of financial assistance from the United Kingdom whether it should be funded locally or whether specific provision should be made in the next development programme. It may depend on the policy of the United Kingdom with regard to provision of funds for schooling and so on.

HON G T RESTANO:

Does that mean, Mr Speaker, that until at least 1981 onwards we shall see no progress or no works at all being carried out at the Grammar School? Will it be left derelict?

HON A J CANEPA:

Well, having regard to the fact, Mr Speaker, that if you miss the boat, as it were, in September of one year then you are virtually committed to September the following year and certainly there isn't any chance, I understand, that even the first phase will be put in hand before September, 1980, so I think the Hon Member is probably quite right.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister aware that a number of parents of children who will be attending the school have already been advised by the Headteacher that they are to take their children to Sacred Heart Terrace on the 2nd of September?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, on Tuesday afternoon at Catalan Bay the Headteacher informed me accordingly. She also informed me that she had spoken to the Hon Mr Loddo about it.

HON A T LODDO:

Precisely, and the Hon Mr Loddo then obviously knows what he is talking about. The Headteacher, Mr Speaker, was assured that the school would be ready for occupation in September and not only that but she was told to pack all the equipment and have it ready.

MR SPEAKER:

Now you are making a statement. What are you asking?

HON A T LODDO:

Is it a fact that the Headteacher was told that the school would be ready for occupation in part - the South wing - and that she was told to get all the equipment and books packed and ready for removal?

MR SPEAKER:

It doesn't arise from the question but if you want to give a quick answer you are free to do so.

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, I am not in charge of the Education Department and I don't know what the teacher was told.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, perhaps the Minister for Education could answer that one?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO 213 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, has Government shown any interest in acquiring the old Line Wall School building?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, Government has not shown any interest in acquiring the old Line Wall School building.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 213 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, considering what the Minister was saying a few moments ago about his lack of success in finding the right sort of accommodation for the payment of Social Security and so on and that he had to take up this leisure site, the old Garrison Leisure Centre, the Key and Anchor Club, surely a building in the middle of Gibraltar when the Government seems to be so lacking in space would have been obvious for the Government to acquire. May I ask why the Government hasn't shown any interest in acquiring this place?

HON A J CANEPA:

Sir, we are talking of a property which is held on a free-hold basis by the Christian Brothers and which I think is likely to be the subject of competitive tenders. It is a trust property and I think the property as a whole is likely to be put out to tender and it may command a very high price.

HON G T RESTANO:

But perhaps when it was first acquired it may well have been acquired at a very low price.

MR SPEAKER:

No, it happens to be private property.

HON G T RESTANO:

Yes, Mr Speaker, but in answer to what he has just said that it will command a high price I think perhaps it may have been acquired at a very good price because it was going to go for education in Gibraltar but that apart, surely, even the Government might consider tendering for that site.

HON A J CANEPA:

When the time comes, perhaps, the matter can be considered.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the building being put to any use at all?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am informed by the Chief Minister that at present there is a caretaker living there and virtually occupying half the building and there are problems in moving him out and this is why it hasn't been put out for sale.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Government not agree that notwithstanding the fact that the property may be privately owned, in a place as small as Gibraltar the Government has got an overall responsibility to see that the available buildings and spaces are put to good use and not simply left empty for years on end because they happen to be owned by somebody?

HON A J CANEPA:

I would agree with that, we cannot nationalise the building and we have taken some measures in this House to try and prevent this sort of situation by at least ensuring that the people concerned pay rates and so on which was not the practice in the past.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, have the Landlords been approached in any way by the Government?

MR SPEAKER:

No, they have said they have shown no interest. Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Can Government state whether they have received an indication from the MOD as to when the Married Quarters Site at Casemates will be handed over?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the MOD have agreed to hand over the Married Officers Quarters site at Casemates subject to the reprovisioning of the 7 quarters which are presently in occupation. These have been included in the first phase of the MOD building programme but it is not known at this juncture when the first phase will commence.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 214 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

So since the Government has a proposal to build a multi-storey car park there, has it no idea when such a project can begin to be built?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, because it is dependent on when the MOD get the go-ahead from the United Kingdom Treasury, when the funds are provided, for them to build their own Quarters in order to vacate those seven Quarters. In fact, I can inform the Hon Member the matter was discussed last Friday in the Development and Planning Commission and the Regional Estate Surveyor was not able to give any firmer indications than that.

HON G T RESTANO:

As I take it, the position has changed slightly since about a year ago when I think we were told that the Government, if they wanted to take over this site, would have to reprovide the six or seven quarters there.

HON A J CANEPA:

The Government will have to make itself responsible for reprovisioning, that doesn't mean that the Government will pay. A developer who could be interested in developing that site would have to meet the cost of reprovisioning.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the Minister saying that the person who redevelops or the Government will have to meet the cost of what the MOD decides to spend on seven quarters when it decides to spend it?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Sir, that will not be the situation because the extent of betterment, a betterment element will have to be taken into account in arriving at the cost of reprovisioning because the likelihood is that the MOD will in the next building programme build seven quarters which will be of superior quality to the ones at Casematés.

HON P J ISOLA:

And the Government have to pay for the cost.

HON A J CANEPA:

Not the Government, the Government would only have to pay for the cost if it did not succeed in finding a developer that was interested in actually taking over that site, for instance, to use those seven quarters as housing but I don't think we would do that, what we would want would be a developer to move in, develop the site as has been indicated beforehand and make himself responsible for reprovisioning to the MOD less the betterment element.

HON P J ISOLA:

What stops the Government now from inviting tenders for the redevelopment of that site subject to those conditions?

HON A J CANEPA:

That is a very good question, Mr Speaker. The go-ahead from the Ministry of Defence is a matter which I recall distinctly the Chief Minister put to an Under Secretary who was here three months ago. It was a point that was put to them that it would be of great assistance, of great help, if they were able to give us a firm indication because then we would be in a position to put the site out to development subject to these conditions and with a definite time-scale but they are not in a position to indicate when the first phase will actually commence. The indications are that it might be within the next 12 or 18 months but who can say with the changing economic situation in the United Kingdom?

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, it is a very big site, of course, inside. In the meantime would it not be possible to make use of all the space which is not used in there, on a temporary basis, of course, for a car park?

HON A J CANEPA:

It would be possible if the Ministry of Defence said yes but if only the Hon Member were to know the problems that we are having in acquiring sites from the MOD for car parking, he would think again.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is the Minister saying that he has asked to use this area as a temporary car park until such time as the Government will take over the whole area?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, we have asked for other areas and I am not going to go any further.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.



NO 215 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

What plans does Government have for the Key and Anchor Club both in the short and long term?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, as I have already explained in answer to Question 204, in the short term it is proposed to use part of the Key and Anchor Club for the payment of pensions to persons in the Campo Area. The first floor is presently being used as an extension to the Bishop Fitzgerald School and the use of the remainder of the accommodation at ground floor level, where library books are at present stores, is under consideration. The long term use of this building is still to be determined.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 215 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, in what Committee or in what place is the matter being considered at the moment in the long term?

HON A J CANEPA:

The long term use of this I think will be a matter for the Development and Planning Commission to make recommendations to the Government.

HON G T RESTANO:

Will this also be considered as a matter of interest which the public should be informed about before any decision is taken?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think it is a matter of great interest. The Key and Anchor Club as a whole is a lovely building, I think it has enormous potential touristic, recreational and it is, of course of great interest but we are not in a position really to take a view at this moment because we anticipate, for instance, that the school will be requiring the premises they are occupying there for some time and we are in no position really to make any recommendations to Government.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is Government aware whether at any stage the Spanish Government have indicated that they expect Spanish Trade Unions to be allowed to operate in Gibraltar in the event of the restrictions being lifted?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, with your permission I will deal with this question and with question No. 220 at the same time. Mr Speaker Sir, the details of the discussions between the British and Spanish Governments since the Lisbon meeting on 10 April, concerning all of which the Gibraltar Government have either participated or have been kept fully informed, are and must remain confidential, at least for the time being. I cannot therefore answer either of the two questions.

In so far as Question 216 is concerned, however, I would say that the views of the Gibraltar Trades Council and of TGWU Headquarters in Britain on the question of Spanish Trade Unions operating in Gibraltar, which, broadly speaking, are shared by the Gibraltar Government, are, of course, well known to the British Government.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 216 AND 220 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Hon and Learned the Chief Minister saying that because he considers the discussions surrounding the Lisbon Agreement to be confidential, he cannot say whether the Spanish Government wish Spanish Trade Unions to be operating in Gibraltar or is he saying that he doesn't know whether they wish it?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I say that I cannot give any information of what has happened. It would be very easy fishing for answers in putting hypothetical questions some of which might hit the target but if one is going to be able to continue to be consulted in this matter for the time being at least it is impossible to give any information.

HON J BOSSANO:

Regarding Question 220, in fact, the Hon and Learned Chief Minister will no doubt be aware that it has been publicly denied by the Foreign Office that Lord Carrington, in fact, had indicated that he would not hold meetings with Señor Oreja about Gibraltar until after the removal of the restrictions. Is the Hon and Learned Chief Minister saying that he is not in a position because of the confidentiality to either confirm the denial of the Foreign Office or deny the denial of the Foreign Office?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

If, in fact, there have been a denial by the Foreign Office I don't see why I should be asked a question here, the Foreign Office know better.

HON J BOSSANO:

I see. Would the Hon and Learned Chief Minister agree that if other people in Gibraltar have been given this information there is no reason why it shouldn't be made available to Members of the House of Assembly and, indeed, to the public at large if it is indeed the case that other people in Gibraltar besides himself have been told this officially?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

As far as I am concerned the information which is given either to me and or the Leader of the Opposition and the Members of Gibraltar Council are not disclosed to anybody else.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Hon and Learned Chief Minister agree with me that if indeed it is the case that the subject matter of Question 220 has been communicated to other people in Gibraltar then there is no reason why it should continue to be cloaked in this confidentiality to which he attaches so much importance?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

If it has been communicated to somebody else in breach of confidence then as far as I am concerned I am not responsible for it. If it has been communicated in confidence and has been repeated, again, I am not responsible, all I can say is that the information I have which is confidential cannot be disclosed by me.

HON J BOSSANO:

I accept that, Mr Speaker, but I am asking him if in fact it appears that information like this can be made available to whoever the authorities in Gibraltar think fit or the British Government think fit, would the Hon and Learned Chief Minister not agree with me that either something is being told to him in confidence and being kept away from the rest of us, or there should not be privileged groups who share his confidence and are very limited in their range, would he not agree with that?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It is a highly hypothetical question and I think under the Standing Orders you do not answer hypothetical questions.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, then will the Hon and Learned Chief Minister state whether if in fact he is able to establish, that is not a hypothetical situation, if he is able to establish that other

people besides the Government of Gibraltar and the Council of Ministers have been made aware.....

MR SPEAKER:

I will allow a question to be asked to the Chief Minister as to whether he is aware that this particular information has been disclosed but no further.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I am not aware. If the Hon Member has any information which I don't know has been passed to somebody I don't know has passed I would be very happy to know.

HON J BOSSANO:

Well, Mr Speaker, if I make the Hon and Learned Chief Minister aware of this would he then consider that perhaps the confidentiality need not necessarily cover this item because it is already beyond the limits which he described before of himself and the Council of Ministers and would he perhaps then reconsider whether he would then be in a position to make public what information he has on the subject matter?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

But if it has been made public it is no use my making it public and if in fact other people know about it, well, they know about it. The point is that if I make any comments on it shall also give an indication in case the hypothetical is just hypothetical, he would be able to get some information and I think he knows me better than to try and get it in that rather subtle way.

MR SPEAKER:

I do not think we are going to get any further on this.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, perhaps if you would allow me to give a hypothetical example to elucidate the question I'm trying to get the Hon and Learned Chief Minister to answer. Would he agree with me if, for example, he discovers.....

MR SPEAKER:

No, that is hypothetical. If you can say to the Chief Minister and give him that piece of information, is it a fact that the information was disclosed to Mr so and so, then that is not hypothetical.

Next question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state what security measures are taken to prevent foreign pleasure or other craft from landing at Gibraltar without permission and will Government further state if it is satisfied that such precautions are sufficient?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, foreign craft are normally met on arrival by Customs and Police and Port Officers and are cleared inwards. There is an obligation on such vessels to meet these requirements.

The Police maintain a 24 hours a day patrol of the coast line by police launch and also maintain land patrols on the coast line by patrol cars and motor cycles. The Customs Department also patrols the Waterfront and the Port Department lookout keeps the Police and Customs informed of movements. The public also play a useful role in alerting the Police to landing by foreigners.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 217 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, if the precautions were as satisfactory as the Hon Attorney-General would have us believe, then we would not have unauthorised landings which have even given rise to comment of the Magistrate in the Court, so that answer about the satisfactory situation cannot possibly be accurate.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Given Gibraltar's position and coastline, it is not possible to prevent every unlawful landing but up to the present time the measures in force have been adequate.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Does Government intend making the area adjacent to the north face distiller available to caravans permanently?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the possibility of making available part of the Slaughter House site to a local caravanning and camping club has been favourably considered by the Development and Planning Commission. No final decision has as yet been taken pending the outcome of other developments.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 218 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Is this in any way related to the area above Catalan Bay?

HON A J CANEPA:

Above Catalan Bay, no, Sir. The Slaughter House site is the area to the right at the entrance of Eastern Beach.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Yes, what I mean is are the caravanners, shall we say, related to that site?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, not at all.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

It is not a way of decanting the area above Catalan Bay which I suppose the Government will very soon want to make use of?

HON A J CANEPA:

No, Sir.

NO 219 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government state on what grounds and on whose advice and request was the responsibility for the security of HM Dockyard handed over from the Gibraltar Police Force to the Gibraltar Security Police?

ANSWERTHE HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, in view of the increased tasks which would fall on the Gibraltar Police following the prospective re-opening of the frontier, the Government asked the Ministry of Defence in late April to agree to take over responsibility for static guard duties carried out for the Ministry of Defence by the Gibraltar Police, from the date of the reopening of the frontier. The Ministry of Defence subsequently decided, in May, to resume complete responsibility for policing the Dockyard and other MOD installations in Gibraltar, and to use the Gibraltar Security Police for this purpose.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 219 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Would the Hon and Learned Attorney-General not agree that the decision made as early as April was, perhaps, a little ill-advised having regard to the cost to the Gibraltar revenues of such a move which I understand to be from the estimates in the region of £850,000, and would it not have been wiser to have made that decision or made that request once the frontier opened?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

That may be a matter of hindsight really. Of course, the figure of £850,000 is a very bold figure but does not include the positive side of things which are saving on overtime, pensions which the Ministry of Overseas Development will continue to pay and perhaps related matters which my Friend the Financial and Development Secretary is in a better position to give to this House.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, this is not a matter of hindsight. Is it not a fact that before taking a decision which involves inevitably quite a serious financial loss to the revenues or serious financial cost, that decision should perhaps have been held back a bit, not hindsight but normal practice or normal prudence would have demanded it should have been held back until one knew that the extra Police let loose especially in the higher echelons of the Police were going to be used.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, if I may answer that question. First of all, I

would like to make it clear to the House that it was open to the Ministry of Defence at any time to end the agreement entered into between the Ministry of Defence and the Government in 1947 whereby the Government provided Police at the Dockyard. Secondly, when the question of possibly relieving certain of the posts at the Dockyard was raised, the Ministry of Defence carried out a wide survey of their needs and costing and they themselves decided that they wished to bring the arrangement to an end. It is true as the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition has said that £850,000 in the revenue estimates is the Ministry Overseas Development share of the Police. Of this amount we shall still continue to receive about £100,000 a year, possibly more, in respect of pensions of police and also we shall have savings in the order of £150,000 a year on overtime, it could be higher than that, it is still difficult to work the exact figures out but of course in the event of the frontier opening then the whole of the Police will be taken up and we shall be back into a situation where the Police will be working overtime. At the moment Police overtime has come down and all overtime for parades, rest days, public holidays, special events, etc., has been finished and the only overtime being worked now is six hours a week by the Force and we are aiming to reduce that in consultation with the Police Council to four hours a week by the end of this month. However, I would re-emphasise that this is a matter for the Ministry of Defence; they could at any time having discussed it with Government, end the agreement.

HON. P J ISOLA:

But, Mr Speaker, this, apparently, was requested by the Gibraltar Government and what is the position, may I ask, with regard to senior staff in the Police Force whose responsibility it was to supervise the Dockyard area, what are they doing now?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I think perhaps the answer given by the Hon and Learned Attorney-General may not have been appreciated on the other side. When the Government asked for certain static posts to be replaced so that we would get a handful of policing that really had nothing to do with subsequent events when the MOD decided to take it all away.

HON P J ISOLA:

But was not the request made by the Gibraltar Government to the Ministry of Defence to take over responsibility for the security of the Dockyard?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Only a handful of static posts.



HON W T SCOTT:

Can the Hon and Learned Chief Minister or the Hon Attorney-General define what is meant by static posts?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

In very rough terms those posts which are of a sentry nature, in other words, they are not on the beat, the policeman is not patrolling, but is rather in a cubby hole ie. at the entrance to the tunnels, etc., which is certainly not what a policeman has been trained for.

HON P J ISOLA:

But the fact is that the request from the Gibraltar Government is involving us in additional expenditure of £600,000.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I am sorry but I must clear up this matter because it is not the case. One, in the question of obtaining a few policemen more in anticipation of possible arrangements and civilianisation of some posts in order to save public funds, the other thing was the decision taken later by the Ministry of Defence to bring to an end the agreement of the amalgamation of 1947. That was not sought by the Government.

HON J BOSSANO:

If the Government required more policemen because the frontier was going to open and the policemen that the Government had employed on MOD duties were being paid for by MOD, there was nothing to stop the Government employing more policemen.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The point about that is that first of all there had been talks a little before about the fact that these static posts really having regard to the relative salaries of policemen could be more easily supervised by less trained people and, secondly, that what we wanted was a small number of already trained policemen to get into the Force, but that is one item which would have made very little difference to the estimates, it would have been a matter of four or five posts. The decision to withdraw from the amalgamation was a decision taken by the Ministry of Defence.

HON J BOSSANO:

But, Mr Speaker, surely the explanation the Hon and Learned Chief Minister has given does not in fact explain the decision to reduce the number of policemen allocated to MOD duties which is

apparently the decision that initiated the process whereby in the end the MOD said it did not want the police at all because .....

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

That is not the case.

HON J BOSSANO:

Was the first move made by the Gibraltar Government or by the MOD?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

No, this has been a year ago before there was any question of the opening of the frontier, in the process of civilianisation. A year ago it was thought that we wanted some more Policemen in the Force and the MOD thought that they could take over the static post which didn't require any trained people. That has nothing whatever to do with the subsequent decision of the MOD to replace the whole of the Police Force in the Dockyard by Security Police.

HON P J ISOLA:

I would not be fair to the Chief Minister if I didn't say that my information on this comes from a very high source in the Ministry of Defence that the request, in fact, came from the Gibraltar Government, I don't know whether it was the Governor or somebody else, but from the Gibraltar Government and that following the request four days later an advert was put in the newspaper by the Ministry of Defence for Gibraltar Security Police. That is my information.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Gibraltar Ministers have had nothing to do with that decision.

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, my I say that I am very surprised about that in view of the fact the Gibraltar Ministers and this House is responsible for what is spent out of the funds of Gibraltar.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I am as surprised as you are.

HON P J ISOLA:

I hope the Chief Minister does something about it because the net result is that it costing us £600,000 a year.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, can the Chief Minister state whether in fact they tried to resist the effort of the MOD to undo themselves of the Police?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I am not prepared to disclose more than is absolutely necessary not to carry the can for what I am not responsible.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is this confidential as well? I am prepared to make my information available in exchange for the one everybody else has got, Mr Speaker. Is the Chief Minister going to investigate, in fact, the accuracy for the information the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition has given.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Of course, I will, very much so.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17 7 80

NO 220 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state whether they were informed prior to June 9th that Lord Carrington would hold no further meetings with Senor Oreja until after the removal of the Spanish restrictions against Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

(Answered together with Question No.216 of 1980).

NO 221 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government consider changing GBC-Radio transmission to the VHF/FM wavebands?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, with your permission I will answer Questions 221 and 222 together. Before doing so, I must point out that the Board of GBC is responsible for the policy to be adopted by the Corporation in providing sound and television services. I think we must be careful to avoid creating a situation in which it might appear that the Government is answerable to the House on matters which are the responsibility of the Board. To do so could well be held to prejudice the independence of the Board.

2. I must qualify this by adding that, when a policy decision made by the Board involves the provision of additional funds, the Government, and indeed the House, must clearly consider, on its merits, any request for such funds. This consideration is relevant to Question 221 insofar as the provision of VHF/FM service requires additional funds for a transmitter. The Government has already agreed to a request by GBC that funds should be made available for this service. It is expected that transmissions on the VHF/FM waveband, in stereophonic sound will commence in September or October in addition to the existing transmissions of the AM waveband.

3. Insofar as Question 222 is concerned, no request for funds has been received from GBC. The Hon Member, as indeed any member of the public, is, of course, free to approach GBC with any suggestion he may wish to make about the services it provides.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 221 AND 222 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

I am much obliged, Mr Speaker, and perhaps I will make myself available to GBC, particularly on the Radio side since I have certain information that perhaps this House might not be aware of which perhaps might not be advisable to disclose at this stage.

HON P J ISOLA:

On the question of GBC, may I say to the Chief Minister in answer to the general principles that he has referred to and the question of the independence of GBC, may I say that we do feel from this side of the House that GBC should be independent but for GBC to be truly independent it must be able to exist on a fixed sum given to it by the Government and must not be coming to the Government every so often for extra funds to meet this or to meet that. Would the Chief Minister not agree that its very independence is then very much in question relying if it must do on the good will of the Government in the first instance and of the House in the second instance?

MR SPEAKER:

When I was considering whether to allow these questions or not I had to bear in mind one particular principle on the asking of questions. I am not so much concerned as to whether GBC is independent but as to whether Government is responsible to answer the question which is being asked. Questions can only be addressed to Government on matters for which they are responsible so we must not look at it from the independence of the GBC as to whether Government is responsible to answer questions on GBC. To the extent, and I entirely concur with what the Chief Minister has said, to the extent that funds are voted in this House for the purpose of enabling GBC to operate, I think it is proper that Government should be answerable to questions but one must draw a very fine distinction at times.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, I think, perhaps, my answer may have been misinterpreted by the Hon Leader of the Opposition because, in fact, the provision of subsidies to GBC is worked out at the time of the estimates between the Treasury and the Management of the GBC and the elected Government have nothing to do with the matter other than to look through them after they have been worked out and approve them. In the case of the particular item of the VHF/FM, additional funds being required, these have been used out of surplus funds from last year and they have been authorised to expend money that was surplus in last year's accounts so that they have not really come for money, they have told us that they were buying this.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, if there are surplus funds from last year why should they require to get the authorisation of the Government to use it?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Because they are refundable to the Gibraltar Government because what we have to pay is the difference between their income and what we provide and if their income is more than was anticipated that money should go back into the coffers of the Government as I hope Members opposite will agree.

HON P J ISOLA:

Well, Mr Speaker, in those circumstances how can it be said that this service can be independent, it cannot be independent.

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to debate that now. Next question.

17 7 80

NO 222 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, Does Government not consider it advisable that where possible, both technically and financially, news programmes from the BBC other than its world service programme should be relayed by GBC-Radio?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

(Anasered together with Question No 221 of 1980).

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, taking into account Government's subsidy to GBC would it undertake to ascertain that GBC is not contravening its charter by the sale, in competition with local traders, of T-shirts?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government is advised that GBC is not contravening any statutory provisions by its sale of T-shirts.

2. It had, however, been reported to me that GBC might lose advertising revenue as a result of its sale of T-shirts and, because the finances of the Corporation are, of course, a matter of concern to the Government, I wrote to the Chairman of the Board on 19 June asking him for information about the expected proceeds of the sales and about any financial loss which might be suffered as the result of a withdrawal of advertising.
3. In order to clarify this matter, I wish to inform the House of the main points in the Chairman's reply.
4. 200 T-shirts were bought from a local trader at market prices and no profit was made. There was no attempt to compete with local traders. The object was to achieve publicity for GBC, in a manner similar to that adopted by other Broadcasting organisations in order to augment its audience and, in particular, to promote the new GBC Logo. The BBC, among others, regularly carries out promotion campaigns of this nature with the object of reducing their dependence on public funds. The question of the sale of T-shirts was raised with the GBC by the Board of the Chamber of Commerce who, the Chairman of the Board of GBC informs me, fully understood and accepted the Corporation's motives and explanations.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO 223 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, can we have an assurance that there will not be a continuous repetition of this sort of operation?

HON CHIEF MINISTER

I can give no such assurance, it is a matter for the Board.

HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, will the Hon and Learned Member not agree that if we are all so concerned that GBC should be self-financing maybe they can become self-financing by selling T-shirts.



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

MEETING OF 4 NOVEMBER 1980

QUESTIONS

AND

ANSWERS

224 to 325

4.11.80

NO. 224 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, will Government give the same consideration on Tax Allowances to parents of students receiving full time private education in Gibraltar as they give to parents of students receiving full time private education in the United Kingdom?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Sir, the Government will consider this proposal in the context of an in-depth study into all aspects of income tax legislation which is currently in hand. Members may recall that the Government's intention to undertake this study was announced by the Chief Minister during the course of the last Budget Session of the House. It is expected that the study will be completed in time to enable the Government to take the necessary decisions in connection with the 1981/82 Budget.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 244 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Will the Hon Member confirm that the in-depth study, as far as it relates to this point, will also be looking at whether there is justification for giving tax allowances even to parents who have got their children studying full-time in the United Kingdom?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the in-depth study will take account of all aspects including that mentioned by the Hon Member.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

4.11.80

NO. 225 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state whether it has now reinsured its own insurance risks?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the existing arrangements for the insurance of Government property are currently under review, following a recommendation of the Crown Agents. The review includes consideration of a comprehensive report produced by Alexander Howden Brokers Limited following their survey of the properties involved. The report suggests a number of options for the insurance of Government property, including reinsurance through the operation of a Government owned captive insurance company which would have to be established for that purpose.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 225 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, how long has the report been available to Government?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

The report was received on the 25th of September, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

4.11.80

NO. 226 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government consider the introduction of legislation to provide for the control, licensing and regulation of Amusement Arcades?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Yes, Sir, the criteria for control are being examined as a matter of urgency.

4.11.80

NO. 227 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state what is the estimated expenditure so far in connection with the anticipated removal of the restrictions by Spain?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, of the £250,000 voted by the House under Head 104 of the Improvement and Development Fund £80,879 has been spent. A further sum of £11,288 has been spent from the Consolidated Fund by the Police and Customs Departments.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 227 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Does Government anticipate spending the whole of the £ $\frac{1}{2}$ m that was laid down in the Improvement and Development Fund in the current financial year?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Not at present.

4.11.80

NO. 228 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, is Government satisfied with the present facilities at the Arrival Hall at Waterport?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, with your leave I would like to reply to questions Nos. 228 and 229 together.

NO. 229 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Is Government aware of the chaos that invariably ensues with passengers disembarking from the Tangier Ferry and is Government taking appropriate action to provide adequate arrangements for Customs and Immigration procedures so that particularly tourists do not get a bad impression of Gibraltar from the moment they step on the Rock?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

No, Sir, Government is not satisfied with the facilities available for passengers disembarking from ferries at the Waterport. The facilities have recently been improved by structural alterations and the introduction of a modified clearway which has speeded up the clearance of passengers without baggage. Additional minor improvements are possible and will be made. But adequate facilities can only be provided at a new and larger ferry terminal. The width of the present jetty and size and nature of the building which is not purpose built limit the scope for improvements. The provision of a new ferry terminal and the cost is being studied by the Port consultants.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 228 AND 229 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Since this will probably take a decade, if not more, before we see that, couldn't Government do something to really make it easier than it is now for tourists to get through to Gibraltar? Mr Speaker, I wonder whether the Government which obviously says they are not satisfied with what is going on there now and obviously this has been going on for a number of years, Mr Speaker, can't they really get down and do something?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, one of the problems is that the present building is not wide enough to take more than the four customs benches for examinations and when you get in a ferry with a lot of passengers with baggage, you cannot take more than four lines. If we had a wider building we could take up to eight which is what we would like to do. We must examine the baggage of passengers coming through, mainly because of drug smuggling.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

But surely, Mr Speaker, couldn't the procedure be done in some other way instead of people rushing down all at once? Perhaps it could be arranged that a number of people would come down from the ship at a time, something like that, to prevent the chaos, or are we going to wait, Mr Speaker, until there is a change of Government for that to be put right?

MR SPEAKER:

What you are being asked is a simple question. Can Government take any action to ameliorate the situation.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, as I said in answer to the original question, the Government is looking at additional improvements that we can make but to get a major improvement we need a new Customs Hall.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is it suggested that in order to have major improvements the actual jetty will have to be widened to house a new Customs Hall?

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to get involved into how the matter is going to be resolved.

HON P J ISOLA:

Well, Mr Speaker, it is arising out of the statement by the Hon Member that it was going to be referred to the Port Committee.

MR SPEAKER:

The answer has been a simple one, the matter has been referred to the Port Consultants and they will come up with a solution, that is all that has been said.

HON P J ISOLA:

What I am asking, Mr Speaker, is what other solution is there to a wider Customs Hall in the restricted area than widening the jetty and if the Government intend to give that consideration, Mr Speaker, would that not be an absurd waste of public funds?

MR SPEAKER:

Order, we are not going to deviate, that will have to await the report from the consultants.

HON G T RESTANO:

Does Government not agree that part of the chaos is because passengers disembark from the vehicular exit rather than through the passenger gangway and if this is so could that practice not be stopped?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, that is a matter for the shipping company. The Government has from time to time had words with the shipping company and we will pursue it further. This is all part of the additional modifications which we have in mind.



HON P J ISOLA:

Does not the Government agree that what is really required is advice from the Customs and Immigration Authorities in England rather than advice from Port Consultants?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, we have all the advice we want from Customs and Immigration in the United Kingdom.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if the perfumery shop haphazardly set up in the Departure Lounge at the Air Terminal was put up for tender and if Government has any plans for making it into a proper shop?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the temporary duty-paid sales outlet in question was not put out to tender but allocated to the three licensees of the existing shops in the hall on the basis of a joint venture.

The plans of the proposed extension to the Air Terminal building will provide for two small cubicles in the enlarged Departure Lounge for the sale of a limited range of duty free goods. One of these will be put out to tender. The temporary counter will be removed when the permanent facilities have been provided.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 230 OF 1980

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Isn't it, Mr Speaker, a very bad precedent for a shop of that nature to be allowed to operate without first putting it out to tender and perhaps when the matter comes to tender considering all the aspects of the people tendering?

MR SPEAKER:

Do I understand that this is a duty-paid shop, not a duty-free?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

It is duty-paid, Sir. The three firms engaged in the joint venture which have this small stall at the moment, had been operating in the Air Terminal since 1959 and with the opening of a duty-free shop within the Air Terminal itself, it was found that their trade fell off enormously because many persons were under the impression that the duty-free shop within the Air Terminal included such things as perfumery, watches and the like which one can get at an ordinary Air Terminal before departure and in the circumstances it was agreed, as an exceptional measure and a short term measure, that the three shops could form a consortium to go within the Air Terminal.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, whilst I don't necessarily disagree with the reasons for granting the permit to whoever may be operating there now, my question still is, Mr Speaker, isn't it a bad precedent and shouldn't the whole matter be considered when the tender was considered, not before, and isn't it really arbitrary in some respects?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, that is a matter of opinion.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, could I have an assurance from the Financial and Development Secretary that when the new Terminal Building is built, that it will be for tender, the people who can sell in the Departure Lounge, can we have that assurance first?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think I said that it would provide for two small cubicles, one of these will be put out to tender and the second will be rented to the present consortium at the same rent as the one which is put out to tender, ie the highest rent from those put out to tender.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, if this is going to be a duty-free shop, Mr Speaker, doesn't the whole aspect of the trading change completely and doesn't the rent . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

Order, we are not going to go around in circles. I think the explanation has been given as to why it is now a duty-paid shop. The Hon the Financial and Development Secretary has said that due to loss of trade by the existing shop they have allowed the people who got the concession to sell duty-paid until such time as the matter is put right. We have been given an explanation.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, will the Financial and Development Secretary not agree that the Government has been a party or is a party to what is basically deception of the travelling public who are now buying perfumery in the Departure Lounge in the mistaken belief that it is duty-free goods that they are buying?

MR SPEAKER:

I am not allowing that question. The original question has been a very explicit one, was it put out to tender, no more no less, and that is what we are talking about. Next question.

NO. 231 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government explain fully the position with regard to the sale of perfumery and beauty products from the Airport Departure Lounge?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the counter in the Departure Lounge is a temporary sales outlet for certain duty-paid goods and is operated by the licensees of the three shops in the main concourse. Permission to do so was given in reply to their representations that their sales had been seriously affected over the years and had reached rock bottom since the introduction of duty-free facilities at the Air Terminal which led outgoing passengers to believe that they could make all their purchases in the Departure Lounge.

This temporary arrangement will come to an end as soon as the proposed extension to the Air Terminal Building has been completed (or earlier if the works so require).

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 231 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Government not agree that passengers would normally assume that the goods sold within the Departure Lounge would be duty-free instead of duty-paid?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, there is a saying, if I may use it in the House, caveat emptor, every buyer in every area where you go and buy things you've got to make sure what you are buying and this is for the travelling public.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is this the only Airport in the whole of Europe that has a duty-paid shop within the Departure Lounge of an Airport?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I have no idea, Mr Speaker, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

What I would like the Government to do, Mr Speaker, in order that passengers may not be deceived is that a sign be put up over that shop making it quite clear that it is duty-paid goods which are being sold and not duty-free.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have noted the Hon Member's suggestion.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, this is a very important matter for the good name of Gibraltar. This is the only Departure Lounge in the world that has a duty-paid shop.

MR SPEAKER:

Order, I will not allow statements.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can we have, Mr Speaker, an assurance that they will not continue to be a party to deception of the travelling public by putting a notice in the Departure Lounge warning travellers that the goods being sold there are duty-paid goods and not duty-free?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government is not a party to deliberate deception and as I have said we have noted the points made by the Hon Members.

HON MAJOR R J PELTZA:

Mr Speaker, isn't it very probable that any person leaving Gibraltar through that Air Terminal will naturally assume, as this is the practice in every other Airport, that what he is buying there is duty-free?

MR SPEAKER:

Order, next question.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, may I ask the Financial and Development Secretary and indeed the Government, is their position that they are not prepared to give the assurance that I have sought on this matter?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, we are prepared to look at it, we are not prepared to give assurances every time Hon Members opposite ask for them.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does not the Chief Minister agree that this is a matter of the good name of Gibraltar and not just the individual's benefit?

MR SPEAKER:

Order.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Government agree, Mr Speaker, that in fact whether the goods sold in the Air Terminal in Gibraltar or in any other Terminal is duty-free or not, the price charged by the people who sell those goods does not necessarily reflect the price at which the goods are bought duty-free?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, I agree entirely with what the Hon Member has said.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Government further agree then, that if there are goods to be sold duty-free in order to give the advantage to the travelling public and ensure that they are not deceived, there should also be price control to ensure that the benefit of not paying duty is passed on to the customer and not retained by the person owning the shop?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, yes, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

4.11.80

NO. 232 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can Government state how many television licences remained unpaid for the years 1978 and 1979 and what proportion this was of the total number of television licences in Gibraltar?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, all licences expire on the 30th September of each year. For the years ended 30th September 1979 and 30th September, 1980, the number of licences remaining unpaid are 19 and 398 respectively. This represents 0.3% and 5.92% of the total number of licences payable for these years.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, is Government satisfied that the law preventing minors from entering Cinemas to view X-Films is being properly enforced?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Yes, Sir. The category allocated to the film is displayed on posters and included in press notices that advertise such films.

It is the duty of the cinema management to ensure that minors are not admitted to cinemas when the classification prohibits their admission. Police observation does not reveal any flagrant breaches of the law. No complaints have been received from the public in recent months.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 233 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, what sort of vigilance is kept by the Police?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, obviously the Police do not keep the cinemas under constant vigilance because the law provides that it is the primary duty of the management, but they do keep it under observation from time to time and one of the indications, I think, as to whether the law was being complied with and whether or not greater vigilance would be necessary would be the number of complaints and there have been, as I have said, very few complaints.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am surprised at that, Mr Speaker, because from my information there is a certain amount of this going on. Does the Government at any time have consultations with the management of those establishments?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Frankly, Mr Speaker, I don't know but if anybody has a complaint the correct thing to do is to make the complaint to the Police.



4.11.80

NO. 234 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, has Government decided whether or not to introduce legislation to prevent young children from handling speedboats unless they are accompanied by adults?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, the Government has already decided, in principle, that there is a need to introduce legislation controlling the use of speedboats by children. It is hoped to enact the necessary legislation before next summer.

4.11.80

NO. 235 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government state how many professionals employed full-time by the Public Works Department have applied and how many have been given permission to undertake private work and on how many occasions?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, during the last ten years, three professional officers have applied for such permission.

One has applied several times (the latest occasion being this year) to write articles for the press. On each occasion permission was given.

The second officer who also applied this year, subsequently withdrew his application.

The third officer applied for and was granted permission in 1972 to undertake a specific task of a professional nature.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 235 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is Government satisfied that these are the only professionals who are, in fact, carrying out private work?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, Government has no specific knowledge of any other professionals who are doing so. The question of the enforcement of the General Order and the Regulation which cover this topic has been under consideration and, indeed, a new General Order has been drafted. It is with the Union for consultation and it is intended to enact it shortly.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, does that mean that the Department itself have no knowledge of professionals carrying out private work?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, no, Sir. There have been complaints from time to time by the public but the Department has no specific complaints relating to professional officers in the Public Works Department.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, is the Hon Attorney-General therefore saying that the Government is not aware of any professionals within the Public Works Department undertaking work other than those three instances?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I think I have made myself clear. The Government has had no specific complaints. I should think the fact that the Government was examining the General Order in the manner I have indicated and was redrafting it with a view, I might add, to enforcing the requirements rather more strictly, would indicate that in general terms Government is concerned that there should be a tightening up.

NO. 236 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government give consideration to amending the Pensions Ordinance to allow the years of service of Mr Clive Power, ex-Environmental Health Officer, to count as pensionable service in the light of the circumstances surrounding his break in service?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

No, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 236 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, is the Hon Member aware that the break in service of Mr Clive Power was only two months and that when he did have his break in service he was under severe emotional mental strain?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

No, Sir, I am not aware of that. The evidence I have is that Mr Power when he resigned was quite well aware of what he was doing, indeed, some efforts were made to dissuade him from resigning and the consequences were explained to him and he was quite aware of those consequences.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, does not Government consider it rather unfair that where a man caught up in the circumstances of Mr Clive Power, where his break in service is, perhaps, weeks, having served already in the Government for a substantial number of years, being re-employed by Government in another capacity, when he becomes of pensionable age, in essence, he will have served perhaps 30 years of service with a break of three weeks in between but, effectively, he will have served his 30 years and yet only 15 of which will be accountable as pensionable? Isn't there any morality there?

MR SPEAKER:

No, it is a matter of opinion and you do not have to answer that.

HON W T SCOTT:

Will Government change its policy? If this is the stated policy of Government, would Government change its policy?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The legislation reflects the policy and I take one of the purposes of the policy to be to encourage continuity. The Government will not change its policy. I may add that I question, not as a matter of the business of the House but as a matter of policy, whether individual cases like this should be really discussed while the officer is still serving.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the position then that if somebody who has done 30 years of total service to the Government he will be deprived of a pension merely because of two months break in service during that time? Is that Government policy and is that moral, that is an opinion I am asking for?

MR SPEAKER:

No, you are not entitled to ask that.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I cannot give an opinion, Mr Speaker. but that is the law.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask, is that Government policy then, I will drop the last bit?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I can only say that is the law.

HON P J ISOLA:

And that is Government policy then, is it?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

As I have said before, that is the law.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, isn't it possible to legislate for one particular pensioner and in view of the circumstances couldn't something be done in this particular case?

MR SPEAKER:

You have been told that it cannot be done. This has been the original answer. Next question.

NO. 237 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Has Government now considered the case of Sister Cruz with a view to introducing amending legislation to allow some of her years of service to reckon for pension purposes?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the Government has considered this case. The House was informed of its decision in answer to question No. 132 by the Hon Member at the Meeting held in July this year.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 237 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, will the Hon Member confirm that the final answer to a long list of supplementaries was that the matter would be considered again and can he tell me what happened since July?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I don't think it is quite correct, if I may say so, to say that the final answer was that the matter would be considered again. I think the record will show that the answer was; "No, but of course matters are always open to reconsideration".

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, if it is always open to reconsideration, can he say whether he has used that opening to reconsider the matter?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, the Government sees no reason to reconsider this case.

HON J BOSSANO:

Well then, Mr Speaker, if the Hon Member says that the Government sees no reason now to reconsider this case, can he tell me how he saw a reason in July when he said that the matter was always open to reconsideration?

MR SPEAKER:

Government in July said that it would be prepared to reconsider the matter and the answer is that they have reconsidered it and they are not prepared to do anything.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the answer is that they have not reconsidered it, that is the answer.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, if I can clarify the position. In July of this year the Government said no. If the Government said no there was no reason for passing that legislation and the person who stood in this place said that of course the matter could always be reconsidered. There was no commitment to reconsider and the Government sees no reason for reconsidering this case.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, will the Hon Member confirm that in July, in answer to a final supplementary asking the Hon Member whether he would give further consideration or whether it was still no, the answer given at the time was that at the moment it was still no but it could still be reconsidered from time to time and in answer to a further question, Mr Speaker, where I said whether the answer was a qualified yes, I would point out that your own interpretation of the events was that that depended on whether one was an optimist or a pessimist but if the House will recall and if the Hon Member will confirm, the situation, I think, was left with an impression created that a second look would be taken at the case. It would appear from what the Hon Member is telling me now that a second look has not been taken at the case and that the situation is unchanged since July.

MR SPEAKER:

I think the answer that the Hon Member gave to a supplementary from Mr Bossano was, after having said no several times; "The answer as far as I am concerned at the moment is still no but, of course, matters can always be reconsidered from time to time".

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, the operative word is 'can'. There wasn't a commitment to reconsider but, in fact, I am quite happy to say why.

MR SPEAKER:

As a matter of fact Mr Bossano then said; "The answer is a qualified yes, I take it" and I said; "That depends on whether you are an optimist or a pessimist".

NO. 238 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state whether they are satisfied that the Traffic (Motor Vehicles) (Construction and Use) Regulations comply with EEC directives and regulations?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

The Traffic (Motor Vehicles) (Construction and Use) Regulations were made in 1958.

I am aware of at least one Community Regulation and 43 directives that bear on the construction or use of motor vehicles, although my Hon and Learned Friend may be aware of others. They deal with a variety of matters including safety of occupants and environmental considerations.

Strictly speaking, as he will appreciate, a Community Regulation applies directly in Gibraltar. Our own regulations must be read subject to it. It would however be good drafting practice, for the sake of clarity and convenience, to express our legislation so as not to have the appearance of a conflict.

I cannot say that I am satisfied that our regulations comply in all respects with Community directives. Given our resources, we would have to rely heavily on United Kingdom precedents in implementing the directives.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 238 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, do I understand correctly that, in fact, when one reads the Traffic Ordinance one ignores it and one interprets in its place the EEC directive?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, not in the case of a directive but in the case of a regulation the effect of any Community regulation is that it applies directly in the territories concerned and so the law must be read subject to it but in the case of a directive it lays down a course of action which it is for the territory to implement by its own legislation or by its own needs.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I am not sure I quite understand it. If one reads therefore that an exhaust pipe should point to the rear, say, according to Gibraltar law, then in fact it doesn't mean that at all, you just refer to an EEC directive or regulation which you don't have at hand and you have got to work out that it has got to point at some other direction. Is that a satisfactory state of affairs, or not?



HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, can I make two points. First of all, the Hon Member must distinguish, and I'm sure the Member is capable of distinguishing between a regulation and a directive. The second point I would like to make, Mr Speaker, is that I have given my view as to whether it is a satisfactory state of affairs.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, if one has to distinguish between directives and regulations then when one has referred to the particular section in the Ordinance then one has to work out whether the EEC regulation or directive is of a mandatory or an optional nature and then decide whether Gibraltar law is applicable, and who on earth is going to enforce this?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I have already said that obviously it is good practice for clarity and convenience, for our regulations to be in harmony with the EEC requirements.

HON A J HAYNES:

This sounds very plausible from the Attorney-General but is he aware that the man involved in implementing this law totally disregards EEC directives and regulations and in my opinion they have told me that though they know of their existence that they ignore them because they are not Gibraltar law and this implies to me, Mr Speaker, that either these men have not been informed by the Attorney-General on this complicated way of approaching our law or that this is just a new turn of affairs.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I am not aware of that. I did not actually take the question to refer to the practice in the Traffic Ordinance. Obviously it is in the public interest that the law should be in harmony with the Community laws. The point I have made and I think you must make allowances for it, is that it is a very big task and we have limited resources.

HON A J HAYNES:

If I can refer to Question No. 167 of the last Meeting of this House when I asked the question: "Will Government state whether they are satisfied with the regulations and does Government not agree that these should be revised to bring them up to date?"

MR SPEAKER:

We are not going to argue, with due respect. You have asked whether Government is satisfied and you have been told that Government is reasonably satisfied.

HON A J HAYNES:

But I was also told last time that they were satisfied that these regulations had been looked at with all due . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

What are you asking?

HON A J HAYNES:

Does not Government agree, for once, that some can be changed without any major task, like an exhaust doesn't have to point to the rear, that is a fairly minor amendment, and yet the non-implementation of such an amendment, I suppose, Mr Speaker, will the Government not agree, involves considerable cost . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

We must not make statements.

HON A J HAYNES:

Will they agree that some parts of that Ordinance can be changed with great ease and without any cost?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I agree that one should work towards implementing these regulations. I think one would have to work according to priorities but I will give no commitment whatsoever, with my present resources, as to how quickly that can be done.

4.11.80

NO. 239 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government give a full and detailed explanation of the agreement which it has recently reached with the consultants and the contractors of Varyl Begg which will lead to the repair of the roofs and consequential faults of the Estate?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, I propose to make a statement concerning this matter during the course of the present Meeting.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 239 OF 1980

MR SPEAKER:

Does that mean that you will give full details when you make your statement to the extent that you will be asked supplementaries as if it were a reply to the question? In other words, you are not replying to this question because you will do so when you make your statement and you will be asked questions then.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I have given notice that I wish to make a statement on the subject of the legal position concerning the dispute at Varyl Begg. I would make a statement which would answer to the extent that I will be prepared to answer this question and if there are points for clarification I will be happy to answer them. I did say, Mr Speaker, that the statement would answer to the extent that I would be prepared to answer this present question.

MR SPEAKER:

Certainly. Next question.

NO. 240 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state when it proposes to provide for the Clinical Instructor post in the Medical Department?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, the provision of the Clinical Instructor post is being dealt with by the Government in conjunction with a general re-appraisal of the staffing needs in the nursing grades. This has necessarily delayed the creation of the particular post but I am assured that the reappraisal will soon be completed and the results implemented without delay.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 240 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Government aware that a commitment was given to the staff side that the post would be filled without delay when the Tutor post became vacant in the early part of this year?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am not aware of this commitment which the Hon Member refers to. I knew he was going to raise it, I tried to check it up but I cannot give him any satisfaction. Let me reassure the Hon Mr Bossano that I share the same concern as he does in connection with this particular post and that as I have replied to the original question, I will do my utmost to ensure that it will be done as soon as possible.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, will the Hon Member look further into the original commitment and into the reasons why, in fact, the staff side felt that the filling of this post was more important, in terms of providing a necessary gap in the education of student nurses, than in fact the Tutor post if one had to choose between the two? Will he look into that aspect which is the crucial point of filling this post and take that into account?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I already looked into that particular point raised by the Hon Member and it appears that what he is referring to is that at the staff meeting between the official side and the staff side in connection with the setting up of the other post which Mr Cumming took over and is now in Manchester, I have looked into that but the Establishment Officer does not confirm the commitment. However, let me reassure the Member that this matter is being dealt with without any further delay.

NO. 241 OF 1980

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, has Government now considered whether specimens for analyses can be taken at the Health Centre and then sent to the Laboratory?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Yes, Sir. My enquiries have revealed that the present system of taking samples at St Bernard's Hospital is satisfactory. The Government is convinced that the taking of specimens at the Health Centre would not materially improve the service to the public.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 241 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, on what assumption or on what basis does the Hon Member say that the service would not be improved if this were done?

HON J B PEREZ:

I can explain that quite easily, Mr Speaker. Let us suppose that Mr Restano were to go to the Health Centre to a particular doctor, whereby the doctor would say that he required an analysis or blood sample to be taken, let us say, for cholesterol or for sugar content in the blood, that sample cannot be taken there and then for the simple reason that when you take a blood sample you have to be, not on a diet but a sort of a fast, so therefore in the case of Mr Restano you would be asked, in fact, to go back the next day early in the morning, not to have anything to eat and then a sample would be taken, so that is why it is useless since it has no real improvement to the public.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister not agree that the Health Centre is much more accessible than St Bernard's Hospital and it is much easier for people to come back and have their specimens taken at the Health Centre rather than having to go all the way up to St Bernard's Hospital?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Mr Speaker, I can't agree with that because it would benefit slightly people living in the Laguna Estate area or Catalan Bay but one must also consider the people at Flat Bastion Road and Moorish Castle Estate. There is another point which I think I must mention and that is that I believe that the whole thing should be centralised, as it is, at St Bernard's and that is my answer.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, when the Minister mentions Flat Bastion Road, is he not taking into account that the Health Centre is much more central for the three largest building Estates in Gibraltar, Varyl Begg, Laguna and Glacis?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 242 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government not agree that the Laboratory at St Bernard's Hospital is lacking in some modern essential equipment?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, Government does not agree that the Laboratory at St Bernard's Hospital is lacking in any modern essential equipment.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 242 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Minister not agree that a new flame ~~ph~~<sup>fl</sup>otometer is required?

MR SPEAKER:

Is anyone technically qualified to answer that question?

HON J B PEREZ:

All I can say in reply to the Hon Member is that I did not know he had involved himself in the medical field but the point is that I have to rely on the advice I am given by the Director and in fact the Head of that particular Department, the Pathologist and the City Analyst. The advice that I have had from them is no, that they have got very good equipment. I can look into the flame ~~ph~~<sup>fl</sup>otometer or whatever it is.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is the Minister aware that the flame ~~ph~~<sup>fl</sup>otometer is well over 20 years old and often does not work?

MR SPEAKER:

Order.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I think it is important.

HON J B PEREZ:

I will look into the flame ~~ph~~<sup>fl</sup>otometer.

MR SPEAKER:

The important thing is to know whether the Laboratory is well equipped and you have been told it is. We are not going to go into individual items of equipment.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, a piece of equipment which is 20 years old can hardly be the subject of self congratulation, can it?

HON J B PEREZ:

I have not accepted that this equipment is 20 years old.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the Minister has said that there is no essential equipment lacking, is there a coulter counter?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I did look that one up for the Hon Member before coming to the House and the advice that I have from the Director and from the Pathologist and City Analyst who after all is the man who works there and I think knows more about it than I do or the Hon Member on that side, is that it is not an essential piece of equipment.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, was there a coulter counter not once upon a time ordered by the Department?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I really don't know. All I can tell the Hon Member is that it is not an essential piece of equipment.

HON G T RESTANO:

I agree, Mr Speaker, the Minister doesn't seem to know anything at all about the Laboratory or the Health Centre.

MR SPEAKER:

Order. Next question.



4.11.80

NO. 243 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state why the Hospital Laundry was closed down several years ago, and will it carry out a feasibility study of the operation once again of such a Laundry?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Hospital Laundry was closed down on the 30 September, 1969, when the service provided was found to be both unsatisfactory and uneconomical.

The answer to the second part of the Hon Member's question is yes, Sir.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Sir, will Government state why there is no Family Planning Clinic in Gibraltar and furthermore whether there are Doctors qualified to do Family Planning in the Health Centre?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Sir, Government does not consider it essential to include a Family Planning Clinic as part of the Medical Services provided under the Group Practice Medical Scheme. The answer to the second part of the Hon Member's question is yes, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 244 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the Minister has said that he doesn't consider this service essential but will he not consider . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

No, the Minister has said the Government does not consider it essential to have a Clinic.

HON G T RESTANO:

I thought he said essential, I thought he used the word essential.

MR SPEAKER:

"Government does not consider it essential to include a Family Planning Clinic as part of the Medical Services".

HON G T RESTANO:

I was coming on to that. He says it is not essential but would he not agree that it would be a good thing to have such a Clinic?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can we have a reason, Mr Speaker?

HON J B PEREZ:

I don't think it is essential, I don't think it is justified. I think we have a very stable population in Gibraltar and there is no cause for concern.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is this not a service which normally is available in most Hospitals in the United Kingdom?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, one thing is the service which is being provided and another thing is a Family Planning Clinic, let us get the two things correct. I do not agree that a Family Planning Clinic is essential in Gibraltar.

HON G T RESTANO:

The question was, Mr Speaker, would he not agree that there is a Family Planning Clinic in every Hospital in the United Kingdom?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, I cannot agree to that.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Hon Member saying that a Family Planning Service, as opposed to a Clinic, is already being provided?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, Mr Speaker, there is no objection to patients getting advice from the doctors at the Health Centre on Family Planning matters, what I don't think is essential is to set up an actual Clinic for Family Planning.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 245 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government explain why doctors at the Health Centre do not have telephone connections in their personal offices?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Sir, attempts in the past to have telephone connections in the doctors' personal offices have proved negative owing to failure among the doctors themselves to reach unanimous agreement. Unanimity was, however, achieved recently and the matter was referred to the Telephone Department on 15 October.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 245 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Has the Minister any idea when the Telephones will be installed?

HON J B PEREZ:

No, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can he find out, Mr Speaker?

HON J B PEREZ:

I have already told the Hon Member that the matter was referred to the Telephone Department on 15 October and we are just awaiting the Telephone Department to instal it.

4.11.80

NO. 246 OF 1980

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, would Government confirm whether appointments can be made at the Health Centre by telephone?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Yes, Sir. This was proposed by doctors at a meeting recently with the Director and implemented approximately four weeks' ago.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 246 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Is it possible, Mr Speaker, to advertise that service so that the public is aware that they can telephone for appointments?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the setting up of the appointments by telephone was in fact on a trial basis because we may have problems with the staff, we are not sure if the present staff can cope with all the appointments being made by telephone and that is why during the first few months it is being spread by word of mouth in order to enable us to be able to see how we can cope with this situation.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can I take it then, Mr Speaker, that sometime in December the Government will have made a decision as to whether or not to leave that service on a permanent basis?

HON J B PEREZ:

Yes, it also happens that the present set-up at the Health Centre is shortly due to be staff inspected as well. It may be December or it may be before but I really cannot give you a commitment as to time. All I can say is that it is really on a trial basis and so far it is working quite well but there is a question of staff involved, obviously.

4.11.80

NO. 247 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government investigate the possibility of including dental treatment as part of the Health Service?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, this matter has already been partially looked at and I am continuing investigations.

However, it should not be overlooked that dental treatment is already provided for children of school age and persons on Supplementary Benefits. Currently a second Dental Surgeon is being recruited.

4.11.80

NO. 248 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government investigate the possibility of extending the District Nursing Scheme to all patients within the Group Practice Medical Scheme who may require this service?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Sir, the District Nursing Scheme caters for patients in receipt of Supplementary Benefits and Government has no plans to extend this service.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 248 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is Government aware of the anomaly that exists in a situation where a patient requiring nursing care at home is unable to obtain it because in fact they have got sufficient income not to qualify for Supplementary Benefits but not necessarily are any better off than someone on Supplementary Benefits?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have not received any complaints of this nature. Let me add one thing for the benefit of the Hon Member and that is that the door is not closed and if he should like to meet me and make representations to me I will be very pleased to meet him and consider the matters he may raise.

4.11.80

NO. 249 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Does Government consider that 6 Doctors are sufficient for the Health Centre?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Sir, the provision of an additional doctor is currently under consideration.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 249 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

When will Government come to a final decision on that?

HON J B PEREZ:

I cannot give an answer to that question, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

Will it be this year, will it be next year, will it be in three years time?

HON J B PEREZ:

I cannot give him a time.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is it under consideration because the Government considers that 6 doctors are insufficient for the Health Centre?

HON J B PEREZ:

The matter has not yet gone to Council of Ministers for a decision.

HON P J ISOLA:

Who has decided that it is worthy of consideration?

HON J B PEREZ:

I have.

HON P J ISOLA:

Therefore, does the Minister agree that 6 doctors are not sufficient for the Health Centre?



HON J B PEREZ:

There are certain aspects of this particular question, whether 6, that crops up in this particular question. There are certain problems in connection with prisoners and I am also considering whether it would be beneficial to the health service as a whole to have 7 instead of 6 but the initiative has come from me.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Mr Speaker, since obviously the Minister considers that there might be a need for this and this is so much connected with the well being of the people of Gibraltar, couldn't the Minister give a target date by which time he will have decided?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I am surprised to get that question from the Hon Member since he was at one time Chief Minister and he knows what the procedure is for papers to be submitted to Council of Ministers.

HON MAJOR R J PELIZA:

Surely, Mr Speaker, it should not take more than three months at the most?

HON J B PEREZ:

I have not said whether it is going to be three months, a year, or two, all I have said is that I cannot give a time.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will the Government not agree that for the Opposition to ask this Government for target dates in any matter is quite unreasonable?

MR SPEAKER:

Order, next question.

4.11.80

NO. 250 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, are discharge summaries on patients admitted to St Bernard's Hospital sent to the Doctors who referred them there in the first place?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Yes, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 250 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

In every case, Mr Speaker?

HON J B PEREZ:

As far as I am aware, yes, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

Well, that is certainly not my information, Mr Speaker. I would ask the Minister to look into this.

HON J B PEREZ:

Any cases where this has not been done should be brought to my notice and I shall be very happy to investigate.

4.11.80

NO. 251 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

In view of the many applicants on the waiting list for telephones and the many more on the housing waiting list does Government not consider that to provide for only 2,000 new extra lines is serious underestimation?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

No, Sir. 1,500 spare lines are available at present. It is expected that these will have been taken up by 1983 when, on the completion of the new extension to the telephone exchange, 2,000 spare lines will become available. If the present rate of applications for new connections continues, and there is no reason to suppose otherwise, these 2,000 lines will have been taken up by 1987/88 by which time further extension is planned.

4.11.80

NO. 252 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government inform this House as to the reasons why the City Fire Brigade has not issued the relevant certificate for the Cottage for Handicapped Children in Montagu Place?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Fire Inspection Officer, after inspecting the premises, recommended that the ceiling, which is lined with three ply boards, should be re-lined with an incombustible material. This work is being done and a certificate will be issued by the Secretary of the Development and Planning Commission once the Chief Fire Officer is satisfied that his recommendation has been complied with.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 252 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Does Government have any idea when this will be effected?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, no, this is a private undertaking and Government has no idea as to when this will be done.

HON W T SCOTT:

This is important, I think, Mr Speaker, can Government confirm that had that building been occupied by Government and had it not been a private concern, those fire prevention requirements would not have been necessary?

MR SPEAKER:

No, that is a hypothetical question. Next question.

4.11.80

NO. 253 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, what progress can Government report on the solar panel intended for installation at the Boys' Comprehensive School?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, brackets are under production for the panel and ancillary equipment but the erection and installation will only be commenced on receipt of the Thermo Relay from UK.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 253 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

When does Government expect receipt of the thermo relay?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The thermo relay has been on order for some time, we hope it will arrive shortly.

HON W T SCOTT:

Can the Government say, Mr Speaker, whether in answer to question No. 150 of 1980, the Hon the Minister for Public Works said that he was expecting the results of a feasibility study in Malta which he had asked for, has he, in fact, received that yet?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

No, Sir, this has not yet come.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government state how many hours of power cuts there have been in the different districts during the months of July, August, September and October this year?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Yes, from July to October the total number of hours during which each district has had the supply of electricity curtailed are as follows:-

DISTRICT	HOURS	MINUTES
1	45	50
2	43	41
3	48	10
4	51	50
6	38	30
7	43	38
8	48	11
9	47	09
10	23	37
11	49	16

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 254 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Minister not agree that this is a deplorable state of affairs?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, there is a motion on this later on in this meeting and I believe this is simply just a matter of opinion.

MR SPEAKER:

You have been asked a question which you may answer but there is no reason why you should.

HON G T RESTANO:

I would like an answer if I may, Mr Speaker. I will repeat it, does Government not consider that this is a deplorable state of affairs?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, certainly this is regrettable but it has been necessary.

HON P J ISOLA:

What was it that made it necessary, Mr Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

We are not going to discuss that now. Next question.

NO. 255 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state if the purchase of the four skid-mounted generating sets figured in the Preece, Cardew and Rider Report?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Sir, with your permission I will answer Questions 255, 256 and 257 during the course of the debate on the motion of which notice has already been given.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 255 OF 1980

MR SPEAKER:

On statements one is allowed to do that, on a motion, that is a completely different matter. You are being asked questions, if you want to give an answer you are free to do so but not otherwise. It is one thing to say that you are going to make a statement and therefore you are prepared to answer supplementaries on the statement as if they were the answers to the questions you are being asked, it is another matter to say that you will deal with the subject of the questions in the debate, that is your prerogative in any event, but questions are being asked and you are not required to give an answer but you are required to reply as you think best.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, as I have said in reply to this particular question, these questions will be answered . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

No, we will now deal with Question No. 255, that is what you are being asked and you will give whatever answer you like to this question.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Sir, I would like to say that it was certainly my view whether there is a directive or not, that it would anticipate a very wide ranging debate to start giving particulars at this stage and therefore it would be much neater and better if all the matters could be dealt within the debate. On that basis I have advised the Minister not to answer the question.

MR SPEAKER:

The answer the Minister gives to the question is another matter. If he says he will not answer this question because it is going to anticipate, he is quite free to give that answer.



HON P J ISOLA:

Mr. Speaker, is not the Hon and Learned Chief Minister, with the long experience he has in this House, is he not departing from precedent in refusing to allow a Minister to give information in answer to a question and say; "Well, you are going to have it in the debate". Supposing the motion on the debate was withdrawn, what would happen then?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Well, if we get notice of withdrawal we will immediately this afternoon answer the questions with full details.

MR SPEAKER:

Order, we are not going to discuss the matter of procedure and practice, that is my prerogative. It is the prerogative of Members in the Opposition to ask questions and it is the right and responsibility of Government to answer them. The manner in which they answer questions is a matter for Government exclusively. Whether it is a satisfactory answer it is for the Opposition to decide and to take action on but they are not bound to give the information if they do not choose to do so.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, Mr Speaker, but if the Government takes that attitude the Opposition has to take an attitude as to whether there is any use in their attending meetings of the House called by the Leader of the House if the Government refuses to give a simple answer. This question can be answered by a simple yes or no and the Chief Minister refuses to allow his Minister to give that answer, that is unconstitutional and against established principles.

MR SPEAKER:

Order, in the first instance the Chief Minister has not refused to do anything, he has given an answer himself, secondly, there is nothing unconstitutional, that I can vouch and rule on.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, the same logic cannot apply to the next question where we are asked to say; "Will Government make a full and comprehensive statement covering the events leading to the acquisition and installation of the four skid generators and including cost". The element of time in this House is of essence, too. If we are going to have a full debate on the question of the motion which has got three prongs to it and we are going to give full account of that, first of all we would be wasting time here giving that information and, secondly, it would take away the essence of the debate in order to anticipate all this.

MR SPEAKER:

Gentlemen, I am not going to agree or disagree with either of you.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I am giving the reasons for the suggestion that this is unconstitutional. It is perfectly proper, it is not unconstitutional, it can only impress the people who don't know anything about that to say that it is unconstitutional, it is nonsense.

MR SPEAKER:

No, it is not nonsense but it is not unconstitutional either.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, the Hon and Learned Chief Minister has said it is proper but it is perfectly improper, Mr Speaker, may I say why in a moment, because the Chief Minister is giving his reasons which have no foundation whatever. In a debate on a motion, Mr Speaker, one speaker will only have one chance to speak and therefore it will not be possible to question the Minister on aspects of the events leading up to the installation of the skid-mounted generating sets.

MR SPEAKER:

Order. The indications of the attitude taken by Government are for the Opposition to gauge and to judge and to act upon but we are not going to debate the rights or wrongs of the attitude being taken. We will now call the next question.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can I ask the Minister to state categorically whether he is not prepared to tell this House at this stage whether the answer is yes or no? He is refusing to do this, is that the position?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, for the reasons given by the Chief Minister I will answer Question 255, as I have already said, during the course of the debate.

MR SPEAKER:

No, you will not answer Question No. 255 during the course of the debate, you will deal with the matter raised in the question during the debate.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is the position then that the Government will only answer questions that suits them to answer, is that the position? If that is the position, Mr Speaker, there is not much point in us staying here.

MR SPEAKER:

Order, may I ask the Opposition to consider their position before they are tempted to walk out of the Chamber which is, of course, their prerogative. Questions will be called and if the questioner is not here to ask that question the matter will be dealt with according to the procedures and practice of this House. Next question.

4.11.80

NO 256 OF 1980

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government make a full and comprehensive statement covering the events leading up to the acquisition and installation of the four skid generators and including costs?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

(Answered together with Question Nos 255, 257).

THE HON G T RESTANO

Does Government still intend to purchase a 5 mgw generator for the Electricity Department which, according to the Chief Minister's statement of the 1st November 1979, was supposed to arrive on about May 1981, and if so, when will that set arrive in Gibraltar and furthermore where will it be installed?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

(Answered together with Question Nos 255, 256).

4.11.80

No. 258 of 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government not agree that the method used for the recruitment of cleaners for the Department of Education was unusual and will Government make a statement?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

The Hon Member is no doubt referring to the recent meeting held at the John Mackintosh Hall where a ballot was held to draw up a list of supply charwomen. In view of the number of ladies who were interested - 63 - the method used was considered to be the fairest and so did most of the women who attended the ballot.

4.11.80

NO 259 OF 1980

THE HON A T LODDO

Will Government consider granting the same subsidy to all children in respect of school transport?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

At the present time it is Government policy to subsidise school transport for children who live in designated areas and who have to travel longer distances to school than the majority of children. Subsidised transport applies to Catalan Bay children of middle and secondary age, Varyl Begg children who attend Bishop Fitzgerald Middle School in the first two years only, secondary boys attending Bayside Comprehensive School who live south of a line from the bottom of Witham's Road to the Casino and children of all ages living at North Gorge following the temporary transfer of families from the town to the old Philipino Hostel. A subsidy is also provided for a small number of children who attend St Christopher's School at Europa Point under the sponsorship scheme. It is not felt justifiable to extend subsidised school transport to other areas of the town where the children have to travel relatively short distances to school.

4.11.80

NO 260 OF 1980

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government confirm that pupils of the Boys' Comprehensive School are not using the sporting facilities at the Victoria Stadium and can Government give an explanation?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

"The School is now using the Victoria Stadium. The Stadium was being re-surfaced and the works took ten days longer than anticipated. All the facilities (except the hockey pitch) were available as from 25 October and the school was to revert to using the Eastern entrance to the playing fields. A problem then arose about access to the stadium from the school. This was discussed at a meeting held last week at which agreement was reached on access, on the early provision of a zebra crossing and on ways of increasing the time allocated to this school."

4.11.80

No. 261 of 1980

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say when the figure of 267 teachers as constituting the full complement in the teaching staff in Government schools will be arrived at?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

The total number of teachers employed by the Department of Education at present is 279. The Government and the GTA agreed in 1978 that the aim should be to achieve a complement of 267 qualified Teachers. This is likely to occur by 1982 when students currently in training return to Gibraltar.

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4.11.80

No. 262 of 1980

THE HON A T LODDO

What provision has Government made for nursery education in future?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

At the present time there is one Government Nursery School with a full-time equivalent of approximately 25 children on roll. This Nursery School is located on the ground floor of the Teachers' Centre building at Hargrave's Ramp and it is planned to extend the nursery facilities as soon as alternative accommodation can be found for the Teachers' Centre.

In addition it is planned to open a new nursery unit in accommodation on the Varyl Begg Estate currently used by St Paul's First School pending completion of their new building. It is hoped that this can be brought into operation by about Easter 1981.

Further plans for the extension of nursery education will depend essentially on accommodation and/or financial considerations.

4.11.80

NO 263 OF 1980

THE HON A T LODDO

Is Government making any provision for nursery teachers as distinct to nursery assistants?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

At the present time there is one nursery assistant at the Government Nursery School and one other student still in training in the UK. Qualified Nursery Teachers are available already in our first schools and the present provision for teacher training will enable young girls leaving school to take up teacher training courses in the UK with a special emphasis on nursery teaching. It is hoped that the teachers in charge of Government Nurseries in the future will all be qualified nursery teachers with the additional help being provided by nursery assistants.

THE HON A T LODDO

Will Government make a statement with respect to its policy to reduce grants to students undergoing teacher training?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Maintenance grants to all students undertaking higher education courses in the UK have now been brought into line with the Educational Awards Regulations. In the past at a time when there was an urgent need for people to train as teachers the old teacher training scheme was established and based on maintenance grant levels related to the Technical Co-operation Scheme administered by ODA. Over the years fewer and fewer teachers have been financed under the TC scheme although the maintenance grants provided by Government have remained the same as those of the scheme. There is no longer an urgent need for students to train as teachers and consequently it was felt appropriate to make the same financial provision for all students in Gibraltar and teacher training is now a part of the Educational Awards Regulations.

NO. 265 OF 1980THE HON A T LODDO

Does Government not consider it highly advisable that Gibraltar be provided with an Educational Psychologist?

WRITTEN ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

It is highly desirable to have available the services of an Educational Psychologist but on the UK ratio of Educational Psychologists to pupils in school which is 1 : 10,000, there would be need for only a part-time appointment for our schools. At the present time there are two students who are due to complete the long training process in 1983 and 1984 respectively and it is hoped that they will then provide the Educational Psychologist input required in the future although this may be on the basis of a joint appointment as Teacher/Educational Psychologist. In the meantime the Community Paediatrician has already offered to help wherever he can and in addition the services of an Educational Psychologist from the UK can be used in conjunction with regular visits of specialist medical staff.

4.11.80

NO 266 OF 1980

THE HON A T LODDO

Will Government confirm that no hot showers exist at the Girls' Comprehensive School and will Government take steps to instal same?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

The only showers available at the Girls' Comprehensive School are those installed in the St Joseph's Annexe at the John Mackintosh Hall and these are not connected to a hot water supply. As the Girls' School is likely to be transferred to new premises in 1982 it is not felt appropriate to put in hand at this stage the installation of a hot water supply to the existing shower facilities in the John Mackintosh Hall.

THE HON A T LODDO

When will the posts of Principal and Senior members of staff for the Technical College be advertised?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Government is due to consider a detailed report on the future organisation of further education within the next week or so and it is hoped that the posts of Principal and senior members of staff for the new College of Further Education can then be advertised later in November.

4.11.80

NO. 268 OF 1980

THE HON A T LODDO

Will the Technical College continue to have access to the sea once handed over to Government?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

The Technical College has never had a right of access to the sea as the waterfront has always been MOD property. At the time that the site and building were being examined with a view to the transfer of the Technical College to Government and its re-organisation as a College of Further Education, which is now to take place in September 1981, MOD felt it necessary to clearly demarcate the site of the Technical College as opposed to the water front and in subsequent negotiations there has always been a clear distinction made between the site of the Technical College and the water front in relation to access to the sea.

4.11.80

NO 269 OF 1980

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state whether or not Casola Building has been condemned as unfit for human habitation?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING & SPORT

This building has not been declared to be unfit for human habitation. Four tenements have recently been declared unfit by the Public Health Department. The tenants of two tenements declared unsafe by PWD were decanted.



4.11.80

NO. 270 OF 1980

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state the number of people housed in Tank Ramp, Willis's area, White Stores, and Lime Kiln Steps before the modernisation projects?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING & SPORT

The number of families who were housed and have subsequently been decanted from the undermentioned areas in connection with the modernisation programme is as follows:-

Tank Ramp	11 families
Willis's Area	13 families
Lime Kiln Steps	19 families

2. White Stores were administered by the Department of Labour and Social Security as a hostel for foreign workers and no decanting by the Housing Department was required.

4.11.80

No. 271 of 1980

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state the number of people to be housed in the 57 units to be completed by the end of December, 1980, and listed in answer to question No 156 of 1980?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Out of the 57 units scheduled to be completed before the end of December 1980, 3 have been completed and occupied at 1/3 Willis's Passage, 5 at 23/25 Willis's Passage and 2 at Lime Kiln Steps (Phase 1). A total of 27 persons have been accommodated therein.

It is expected that the 16 new units at the White Stores and the 6 modernised units at Tank Ramp will be ready for occupation in December 1980 and the new units at Tank Ramp in March 1981.

Of the remaining units at Lime Kiln Steps (Phase 1) 8 should be ready by December 1980 subject to work required to sewage system and the other two will not be available until phase 1A is ready in February 1982.

It is however impossible to say exactly how many people will be accommodated until these units are actually occupied.

4.11.80

No. 272 of 1980

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government reveal the latest waiting list figures for housing, and will Government publish a list of the first hundred applicants in the various units of housing?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

There are approximately 1700 applicants in the Waiting List. A card is kept for each applicant, which contains all the information related to his case, pointage and requirement and these are contained in different boxes according to requirement. Waiting lists are not kept for the simple reason that pointages fluctuate from day to day and could well tend to mislead people. Waiting lists would have to be drawn up almost daily in order to convey the exact position and correct information.

4.11.80

NO 273 OF 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government state the reasons behind the refurbishing of several unoccupied units in the Town Range Transit Centre?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING & SPORT

To accommodate families which the Housing Advisory Committee has recommended should be accommodated in pre-war accommodation, on social grounds.

NO. 274 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Mr Speaker, can Government state when the Housing Allocation Committee is next due to meet and when the last meeting took place?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Yes, Sir. The Housing Allocation Committee last met on the 26 August, 1980, and the next meeting has been convened for the 18 November, 1980.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 274 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, can the Hon Member say whether the timing of meetings of the Housing Allocation Committee is primarily determined by the availability of housing or are there other considerations affecting the timings?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

All in all, Sir, the meetings of the Housing Allocation Committee is, of course, the prerogative of the Chairman of the Housing Allocation Committee which meets, obviously, for the allocation of houses when available but there are, of course, other considerations that the Housing Allocation Committee has to meet for. For instance, the final implementation of the Housing Special Powers Ordinance or a revision of the Housing Allocation Scheme but normally they do meet on allocation of houses.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Minister not agree, Mr Speaker, that it would be desirable, in view of the fact that some housing applicants are told by his Department that they have to await a decision of the Housing Allocation Committee that there should, if possible, be prior notice of when the next meeting is likely to take place so that people, in fact, are not kept calling the Department from week to week to find out whether the Committee has met or not?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, Mr Speaker, I would certainly agree that there are problems of course because the Housing Allocation Committee consists of members who are there on a voluntary basis and it is not infrequent to find that for one reason or other in their own personal activities it is sometimes impossible to group them together at a given time. Their work is very commendable and I think they do meet as regularly as is required. However, I am not very sure if the Hon Member is accurately informed as to whether the advice is from the Housing Allocation Committee or the Housing Advisory Committee.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, subject to my information being accurate, would the Hon Member agree with me that if in fact a housing applicant is told that his case is awaiting a decision of the Housing Allocation Committee, it would be preferable if, after consultation with the Committee, the system would be that some indication can be given to the applicant within what time this is likely to take place in order not to keep the housing applicant anxiously calling the Department almost on a daily basis to see whether the Committee has met? Would he not agree that it is in everybodys interest that this change should be introduced if it is possible for the Committee to do so when he consults it?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I think I am convinced, Sir, that the Hon Member does now refer to the Housing Advisory Committee because the Housing Advisory Committee is a Committee that meets possibly every 15 days or every month but as the Hon Member is fully aware, we receive some 300 medical certificates monthly, on average, and it is that that has to be referred to the Housing Advisory Committee for the granting of several points. I do not think that people are told that their housing decision is ultimately in the Housing Allocation Committee purely because there isn't the allocation that I would tend to gather from the information the Hon Member is offering at this stage, so I think it is the Housing Advisory Committee and I would say, Sir, that they do meet every 15 days or so, again when convenient, because one of the members happens to be a doctor who is quite busy.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, will the Hon Member agree then that if I obtained confirmation of the accuracy of the information, he will investigate the matter along the lines that I have suggested?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Very much so, Sir.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government give a breakdown of how the £150,000 in the Tourist Office vote of the 1980/81 Estimates, Head 24, Sub-Head 14, are being spent and if any supplementary provisions are in mind to counteract the expected decrease in the number of tourists coming to Gibraltar this winter season?

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(POSTPONED TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE HOUSE)

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government give details of the contract of sale and installation with the company supplying the figures for the Gallery, the Moorish Castle and St. Michael's Cave, indicating particularly the terms of payment?

WRITTEN ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING & SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

The Government's initial cost of the permanent exhibitions at St Michael's Cave, Upper Galleries and Tower of Homage was £20,000, payable as follows:

£2,500 on signature of contract (14.1.80)  
£7,500 on delivery of the models (9.6.80)  
£10,000 payable by 31. December 1980

Extra charges on the entrance fees to the sites were introduced when the exhibitions were installed, and once the £20,000 is recouped (estimated to be about mid January 1981) the firm which supplied and installed the exhibition will partake as follows:

First year	35% of the extra charges
Second year	30% of the extra charges
Third year	20% of the extra charges
Fourth year	15% of the extra charges

After the fourth year all profits from the exhibition will revert to Government.

The firm will also participate on a 5% commission basis on the net profit made by Government on the commercialisation of souvenir articles produced in connection with the exhibition after the £20,000 has been recouped. A tender for this commercialisation was awarded to a local firm, and it is expected that these items will be on the market in the near future.

The Gibraltar Tourist Office is responsible for all administration in running the exhibition, including publicity, and the name of the firm is to appear on all publicity and merchandising material pertaining to the exhibition.

A maintenance agreement will be entered into after the four year period with Bermans providing the personnel (travelling expenses for the Gibraltar Tourist Office Account).



4.11.80

No. 277 of 1980

THE HON A J HAYNES

In view of the historic and natural beauty of Lower St Michael's Cave, a veritable part of the heritage of Gibraltar, will Government make appropriate representations to ensure that there is proper control of the Cave and thus prevent any further vandalism of which Lower St Michael's Cave appears to be a constant victim?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(in the absence of the Minister for  
Tourism and Postal Services)

Lower St Michael's Cave is presently under Ministry of Defence Management and is not the responsibility of the Government. I will however bring your question to the notice of Fortress Headquarters.

4.11.80

NO 278 OF 1980

THE HON R J PELIZA

Will Government install stamp vending machines at the Post Office in Main Street to provide a 24-hour service and to reduce the length of the queues at the stamp counters during peak sales hours?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

There are, already, two stamp vending machines installed in the foyer of the Post Office in Main Street and they are accessible to the public on a 24 hour basis. These machines were installed early in 1977 and they replaced the old coil-stamp dispensers which had been in service for many years. Each machine consists of two mechanisms which allows for the vending of booklets of separate values. One machine dispenses booklets of 20p value and the other of 10p and 30p. Each storage column holds stacks of 180 booklets. The machines, which are very much used by the public, are replenished frequently during the day. They are restocked at 5.00pm each day. During weekends, officers of the Post Office ensure that the machines are stocked. At least three calls are made on Saturdays and Sundays (and on Public Holidays) for that purpose, on payment of minimal overtime i.e. one hour for each day. In order to offer an improved service two additional stamp-vending machines are being acquired. Quotations were asked for in April, 1980 and delivery is expected in December.

4.11.80

NO 279 OF 1980

The Hon A T Loddo

Will Government state why the Victoria Stadium outdoor playing facilities were not available in Mid-October this year as in previous years?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

The outdoor playing facilities were not available in Mid-October this year because major resurfacing was being carried out to all the playing areas.

4.11.80

No. 280 of 1980

THE HON A T LODDO

Will Government not admit that by not allowing the GFA to charge for admittance until the impasse recharges is resolved, it is losing revenue?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Sir, Government has decided that until the question of charges at the Victoria Stadium Sports Centre has been finalised, the playing facilities will be made available free of charge but no association using the facilities will be allowed to charge for admission other than for international events.

In the case of the GFA, the only association who charged spectators for admittance to local competitive matches, the loss of possible revenue to Government averages out at some £18 per week during the football season.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government make arrangements for lorries and trailers to be parked in specified areas and not allowed to park in places where they obstruct traffic and spoil the amenities of the area?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING & SPORT

There are no specially designated parking places for lorries and trailers in Gibraltar. Lorries and trailers are specifically prohibited from parking in designated car parks and thus the only places they can park are on private land or the public thoroughfare. Owners and drivers are encouraged to park their vehicles sensibly by not causing obstruction or danger, and leave them facing in the right direction so at night reflectors are visible.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what definite plans they have for coping with the expected increase in vehicular traffic if and when the frontier gates are opened by the Spanish Government?

WRITTEN ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

If and when the frontier gates are opened by the Spanish Government, the Gibraltar Government plans to take the following action to meet the increase in vehicular traffic:

- (a) Traffic lights will be installed at the junction of Sir Winston Churchill Avenue, Smith Dorrien Avenue and Corral Road. The latter will be a one-way road from below Smith Dorrien Bridge in a northerly direction.
- (b) Traffic lights will be installed at Waterport roundabout.
- (c) There will be road markings around the Sundial roundabout at Sir Winston Churchill Avenue and into Devil's Tower Road and Bayside Road to facilitate traffic movement.
- (d) The northerly direction side of the dual carriageway from the Sundial to the frontier will be marked in two lanes, ie, traffic travelling to Spain and traffic travelling to the Airport, into British Lines Road and into the RAF housing complex at Western Beach.
- (e) Holding areas will be provided at British Lines Road for :
  - (1) 4 queues of private vehicles travelling into Spain totalling some 200 vehicles.
  - (2) A bus holding area
  - (3) A taxi holding area.
- (f) Large Pullman type coaches will not be allowed to traffic within the City Walls.

4.11.80

NO. 283 OF 1980

THE HON P J ISOLA

Do films shown in Spanish in Gibraltar undergo any censorship in the same way as films in English do?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

At present powers exist under the Entertainments Ordinance to ask for a preview only of those films classified 'X' by the British Board of Film Censors.

However by way of agreement with local exhibitors there are occasions when a Spanish film is viewed and, again by agreement, the film may be withdrawn.

4.11.80

No 284 of 1980

THE HON P J ISOLA

Does Government not consider that some posters advertising "X" films in Gibraltar are offensive and obscene and is Government powerless in the matter?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING  
AND SPORT

Exhibitors normally exercise control over the posters of "X" films and those concerned with allowing such films often impose a condition that certain posters should not be published. I should point out however that Under (Part 8) of the Criminal Offences Ordinance any person publishing any article which is considered offensive and obscene may be committing an offence.



4.11.80

NO. 285 OF 1980  
THE HON P J ISOLA

Now that there can be no doubt that Government has broken its promises to the Tenants of Varyl Begg that work on the roofs of the Estate would commence at first in Spring and then in Summer, will Government make a clear and concise statement of the position in relation to the Varyl Begg situation and inform the House as to the reasons why no work has yet commenced on the pitched roofs?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The Attorney General will be making a detailed statement to the House on this subject.

NO. - 286 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state what delay, if any, there is in the completion of the Lime Kiln Steps modernisation project?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Yes, Sir. This scheme has been extended to include a second phase. Twelve out of the fourteen units in the first phase were completed in June, 1980, but four of these cannot be occupied until services sewage and electricity are laid and the remaining six until Phase 1A of the works are complete. Two flats are at present occupied.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 286 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, when is the second phase likely to be completed so that the ones that have been ready since June can in fact be taken into occupation?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I should think, Sir, about February, 1982, Sir.

HON J BOSSANO:

1982, Mr Speaker. Doesn't the Minister consider that it is a long time to have houses completed and not available for occupation and wasn't this taken into account in the original planning of the two phases?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The position is two-fold, Sir. First of all, it is a very difficult site and to do phase 1A all the scaffolding tends to interfere very considerably with the approaches to the first phase. At the same time there is quite a lot of dust and nuisance value and the scaffolding also means you can't even open the windows. The second point, Sir, is that when we started this modernisation, we did not know to the full extent what was the condition of the buildings and we have found that they are in a far worse condition than we had anticipated, so much so that some of the buildings have actually had to be demolished and be rebuilt from scratch. This has put back the period of getting everything ready by six months or so and that is why we do not think we will be finished before February, 1982.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Minister not agree that in view of the lack of work in the construction industry, generally, it would be opportune to try and get the contractor to put extra labour on this particular project and accelerate it so that he can make use of the houses he has already got completed?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I see that there is some consideration for that to be done but I think the site is so difficult that you cannot put very many more people onto the site by the actual physical constraints. The actual passageway up to the top part where they are working and if the Member would like to come and visit the site with me sometime I would be happy to take him round, does make it very difficult. If you put a lot of extra men there they are really not going to be able to do very much more than is being done at the moment.

4.11.80

NO. 287 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state when the bedsitters under construction at Prince Edward's Road are now expected to be completed?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

In December 1980, Sir.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state what is the cost of reclamation per square foot of land produced:

- a) next to the Viaduct Distiller,
- b) in the new container base?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, with regard to the area:-

## A) Next to the Viaduct Distiller -

The cost is of the order of £0.46 ft<sup>2</sup> of unconsolidated ground, only suitable for very light temporary structure at this stage, or more permanent building if piling or heavy raft construction is used.

The above relates to present conditions. Reclamation in deeper water and changes in the availability of debris can significantly alter these costs.

## B) At the new container Berth -

The cost is of the order of £14.80 per square foot if the berthing structure is included, but £7.40 per square foot for land created without any containment or protection.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 288 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Hon Member agree that if the order of costs next to the Viaduct Distiller is in the region of the figure he has mentioned or slightly above that figure, there is a case of Government considering having a permanent reclamation programme and investigating what other areas can be reclaimed to produce land at what must be considered a relatively cheap price?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, I quite agree, Sir, but I think this area next to the Viaduct Distiller which can extend right out to the Varyl Begg Estate, will keep any tipping that is available going for at least the next 5 to 10 years.

4.11.80

NO. 289 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is Government satisfied that there is no danger of landslide from the manner in which sand is being removed by the Gibraltar Quarry Company?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the sand is being removed with care, with the ultimate intention of road widening.

The present excavation is exposing an old or original face as evidenced by the markings cut into it. Hence the situation is reverting to a form which possibly existed before the road was built.

A careful check is being maintained on the exposed face and it is unlikely that a landslide will occur.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 289 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Will the Hon Member not agree that the question of the likelihood of it happening is not enough to reassure completely people on the area and that it would be desirable that there should be a guarantee from him that the Government will keep a constant watch on the situation to eliminate every possibility however unlikely?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, I am happy to give that guarantee. A constant watch is being maintained all the time now. What is actually being removed is loose sand that has slipped down and has covered the old face, so they are not actually cutting into the solid face at all.

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is Government satisfied with the trading position of the Gibraltar Quarry Company Ltd as reflected in the accounts laid on the table and, if not, what steps does Government intend taking to substantially improve its trading position?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Government is fully aware of the problems which the Gibraltar Quarry Company has been facing and of its trading position as reflected in the Company's accounts which have been tabled earlier in this meeting. The sand-winning project, funded by ODA grant aid, has so far failed to operate in the manner envisaged by the consultants. Government is looking to the consultants to put matters right at their own expense and this is being done.

The Gibraltar Quarry Company, in taking over an operation that was not working effectively, has incurred substantial expenses in the process of supplying sand which would not have arisen had it been handed over as a going concern. The Consultants have assured Government that they will succeed in getting the sand to slide down the chute from the top right down to the hoppers at the bottom and when this is done the Company's trading position will be improved to the extent of making it a financially viable venture, which is what the Consultants had undertaken to do in the first place.

4.11.80

No. 291 of 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is Government now in a position to sue the consultants appointed by them for the sand reclamation project on the east side?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The Government has taken legal advice on the matter, and has further action under consideration.



4.11.80

NO. 292 OF 1980

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government act promptly in getting the area of the Boys' Comprehensive School cleaned up and embellished so that the students feel pride for their school premises, if for no other reason?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

There have been a number of works in progress in this area recently, ie the new Marina, Bayside Pumping Station, new sewer and water mains. These works are now nearing completion and a general clean up of the area including the removal of numbers of derelict vehicles in the vicinity has commenced. Reinstatement of excavation damage to the road has almost been completed and laying of a pavement in the North Side is due to be started next week. A scheme for embellishing the access roads is also being prepared for inclusion in next year's Draft Estimates. Final resurfacing will not be carried out until the Marina Project is finished, otherwise heavy construction traffic might damage the wearing surface.

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government sponsor District Committees to embellish our town which is giving a greater impression of decadence month by month?

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(POSTPONED TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE HOUSE)

No. 294 of 1980

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government give a full and detailed account of the repairs or works recommended to be carried out during the last two years by the Environmental Health Department with respect to Casola Buildings?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

This is a matter on which I will comment during my intervention in the debate on the motion on Casola's buildings of which notice has been given.

NO 295 OF 1980THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government give the figures and costs for water production from available sources for the months of July, August and September 1980 and state what the stocks were at 30 September 1980?

WRITTEN ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The figures for Water Production from available sources for the months of July, August and September are as follows:

SOURCE	JULY M <sup>3</sup>	AUGUST M <sup>3</sup>	SEPTEMBER M <sup>3</sup>
RAINFALL	-	-	-
WELLS	(1.73) 7898	(1.92) 8739	(2.22) 10086
NF DISTILLER	ANNUAL MAINTENANCE	ANNUAL MAINTENANCE	ANNUAL MAINTENANCE
VTE DISTILLER	(4.86) 22100	(4.60) 20924	(5.07) 23040
IMPORTATION	(6.57) 29867	(6.65) 30248	(8.51) 38679

Stocks at the end of September were 44,263m<sup>3</sup> (9.73 million gallons).

At present the estimated operating costs are as follows:-

RAINFALL	£0.37/m <sup>3</sup>
WELLS	£0.51/m <sup>3</sup>
IMPORTATION	£2.16/m <sup>3</sup>
NF DISTILLER	£2.53/m <sup>3</sup>
VTE DISTILLER	£2.29/m <sup>3</sup>

4.11.80

No. 296 of 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

Can Government confirm that water is still being abstracted from exploratory boreholes in the deep drilling operation and can Government state when it envisages it will be in a position to determine whether water of good quality can be economically abstracted and can Government also state the total cost to date of this deep drilling operation?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

After the initial short duration pumping test no further water has been abstracted from the exploratory boreholes. It is envisaged that long term pumping tests will begin in late November or early December when special apparatus, being prepared by the Institute of Geological Sciences for monitoring various tests parameters, is expected to arrive. In the meantime an interim report of the deep drilling operation has been received and a programme for catchment study and analysis of water seeping through various tunnels is in progress. The bulk of the costs of the exploration is due to the actual drilling operations which has already been concluded. The total cost to date is £259,899 thanks to ODA Development Grant.

4.11.80

NO 297 OF 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

What further progress can Government report on the barrier at Cornwall's Lane having regard to the information given to this House in July, 1980?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

The time allowed by the Nuisance Order expired on 22 September and, as is customary, a warning letter informing the owner that further legal proceedings would follow if nothing was done to repair the roof in question was sent on 17 October.

Since the risk of a masonry fall still exists, the barrier is being maintained until effective repairs are carried out.

4.11.80

No. 298 of 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

Can Government state what is currently being undertaken by the Public Works Department at the Piazzella at Governor's Parade and at what cost?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

At the request of the residents living in the properties surrounding the Piazzella at Governor's Parade, Government agreed to construct two small benches and a flowerbed in an attempt to stop the area being used as a football ground. "No Ball Playing" signs have also been erected.

4.11.80

No. 299 of 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

Is Government now in a position to state when the water cistern at Anderson House will be emptied and cleaned?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Work on the emptying and cleaning of the water cistern at Anderson House is presently being carried out and is expected to be completed by next week.



4.11.80

NO 300 OF 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

What further progress can Government inform this House on with respect to the paving of Rosia Road?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The paving and other works at the east side of Rosia Road is being undertaken in stages. The first stage of paving was commenced last year when a token vote of £1,000 was provided in the estimates. A further token sum of £2,000 was provided in the 1980/81 Estimates of which £1,022 has been expended to date.

A scheme has been prepared for the construction of parking bays on the wider sections of the pavement to the south of the present works. It is intended to include the scheme in the 1981/82 Draft Estimates.

4.11.80

NO 301 OF 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government consider paving the west side of South Barrack Road, opposite the Barracks, and provide better public lighting along that stretch?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

In 1977/78 some new paving works were carried out on this stretch of road in conjunction with the extra parking bays provided outside South Pavillion. This new pavement was carried northwards from South Pavillion to a point where the road became too narrow to continue with the pavement and allow for two way traffic.

The City Electrical Engineer has a scheme under consideration for improving the street lighting but unfortunately there are several schemes with a much higher priority.

4.11.80

No. 302 of 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

Can Government now state whether the Public Works Department Garage is completed with respect to the information given to this House in July, 1980?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

This project has been troubled by delays caused by late shipment of essential materials and fittings, difficulties in the supply of concrete and the Contractor encountering problems with recruitment of skilled labour/tradesmen. It is now hoped that it will be handed over to Government as substantially complete next month.

4.11.80

NO 303 OF 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

Can Government explain why tenders for the extension of the Air Terminal have not yet been advertised?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

It is anticipated that this project will be put out to tender in January 1981. Structural and working drawings prepared by PWD are completed as far as possible.

Drawings by steelwork, roofing and cladding specialists are now being finalised. The PWD project architect held a co-ordination meeting on 7 October in London with the Contractors involved to expedite this matter.

Bills of quantities are well under way but delayed due to information awaited from finalisation of specialist drawings.

Various items, however, have now been ordered or are in the process of being ordered to minimise material delivery delays during the contract period.

THE HON A T LODDO

Having regard to the recent tender notice on the refurbishing of the Middle School at the Old Grammar School site, will Government confirm that it still envisages part of this school to be ready for occupation in March, 1981?

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(POSTPONED TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE HOUSE)

4.11.80

No. 305 of 1980

The Hon Major R J Peliza

Can Government make a special effort to clean and tidy up Gibraltar commencing by instituting an effective system for disposing of derelict vehicles?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The Chief Minister is making a statement on the first part of the question with regard to derelict cars.

The system for disposing of them has already been improved and 63 vehicles have been removed during October and up to the time of preparation of this reply. The intensive campaign continues. A total of 470 has been disposed of so far this year.

4.11.80

NO 306 OF 1980

THE HON G T RESTANO

Is Government satisfied that No. 5 Jetty is sufficiently solid to withstand the continuous vibrations of a Generating Station?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The foundations of the new generating station will be designed by the successful contractor, subject to approval by the Consultant. The load from the generators and the vibrations during operation will be transmitted into the engine bed and through piling to the underlying strata.

Only the loading of the power station building other than the engine beds will be carried by the jetty structure.

4.11.80

No. 307 of 1980

THE HON G T RESTANO

What are Government's plans for the small area south of the new Casemates Development Project?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

The land to the south of the Casemates Development Project is part of the area leased to the developers. Its use is limited to providing a private car park for the tenants of Casemates House.



4.11.80

NO 308 OF 1980

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state when development at Catalan Bay will commence?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

It is intended to commence the development at Catalan Bay consisting of 12 flats in January 1981.

4.11.80

NO 309 OF 1980

THE HON W T SCOTT

Can Government give a breakdown of unemployment figures in the different categories as at 30 September 1980?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The figures at the end of September 1980 were as follows:-

BRITISH:			TOTAL
Adults	Males	59	96
	Females	<u>37</u>	
Juvéniles	Males	24	67
	Females	<u>43</u>	
ALIENS:			
S	Males	76	78
	Females	<u>2</u>	
			<u>241</u>

4.11.80

NO 310 OF 1980

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state whether the persons in charge of the present Attendance Centre are properly trained or qualified persons?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE  
AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

I am not aware that it is necessary for a person in charge of an Attendance Centre to have any specific training or qualifications.

4.11.80

No. 311 of 1980

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Is Government conscious of the fact that tourists disembarking from cruise liners become disillusioned with their visit to Gibraltar with their first and last impression of the disordered state of the wharfage area they have to pass on their way to the Town Centre and on their return to their ship and do they propose to put this matter right?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
TRADE AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The fact that cruise liners berth at the commercial port, where commercial activities are undertaken must necessarily mean that the area cannot be made as attractive as one would wish. The present exceptional situation, which the Hon Member refers to as "disordered", and which is confined to the commercial port area, is of course due to the extensive development of the port now being undertaken and which all will recognise as essential. I should point out, however that the whole length of the roadway from the Flying Angel Club to town is clear of obstructions and eyesores.

The situation generally will be greatly improved when the development is completed. The Consultants carrying out the Port Feasibility Study have been asked to look into the question of a passenger terminal.

4.11.80

NO 312 OF 1980

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state for how long empty beer barrels have been allowed to be stacked in the Port area?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE  
AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Empty beer barrels have always been stacked within the port area prior to shipment. They were previously stowed at the southern end of No 1 Jetty, out of the public eye. Owing to the re-shuffling of berths required as a result of the development of the port, it has been necessary to allow barrels to be stowed between berths 3E and 4. Once the new container terminal is in operation, it should be possible to re-site the storage area for the barrels out of public view. Allowing barrels to be stacked in the Port area shortly before shipment enables ships to turn around more quickly.

4.11.80

NO 313 OF 1980

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state their reasons for allowing the conditions at the Port to deteriorate to such an extent that working conditions have become dangerous?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE &  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

I do not accept that the Government has allowed the conditions at the port to deteriorate in the manner suggested. Certain unavoidable difficulties have arisen as a result of the port development at present being carried out which, as I have previously said, all concerned surely recognise as essential and which will be overcome when the development is completed.

The question of working conditions is one of the many aspects of the port being examined by the Consultants carrying out the Port Feasibility Study.

4.11.80

NO 314 OF 1980

THE HON MAJOR R J FELIZA

Could Government give urgent attention to providing adequate parking space for taxis at Waterport when waiting for the arrival of tourists?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
TRADE AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Arrangements are being made to transfer Gibraltar Underwater Contractors Limited from their present Waterport site to within the Revenue enclosure wharf. This will provide additional space for the parking of taxis.

In addition, the matter is being studied by the Consultants who will report on the future development of the Port, including the question of ferry services.

4.11.80

NO 315 OF 1980

THE HON P J ISOLA

Why has Government not yet prepared plans and put out to tender a site for development as a multi-storey car park?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
TRADE AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The preparation of plans for a multi-storeyed car park and invitation to tender must necessarily be governed by the availability of a suitable site. As the House is aware from my reply to Question 214 at the last sitting of the House, Government has been considering designating the site of the Married Officers Quarters at Casemates for this purpose but this was dependent on the reprovisioning of seven quarters before the site could be released by the Ministry of Defence. I am glad to say that the MOD has agreed to the site being advertised as a preliminary to the selection of a suitable developer and it is expected that once the potential disposal of the site has been formally approved in accordance with Section 75 of the Constitution an advertisement will appear in the press within the next few weeks, possibly later this month.



THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if there are buildings in Old Naval Hospital Road which were given planning permission on condition that they provided a specified number of garage spaces and has this been complied with and are these spaces being put to their intended use?

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(POSTPONED TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE HOUSE)

4.11.80

NO 317 OF 1980

THE HON P J ISOLA

What plans does Government have for the development of the Old Command Education Office, Cornwall's Parade situate as it is in a prime position in the City?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE  
AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Various proposals have been considered over the past for the redevelopment of the Old Command Education Centre in terms of optimum benefits consistent with good planning principles. The options are restricted by the property's location in a densely built-up residential area and the desirability of retaining a rather attractive facade to Cornwall's Parade.

This property is extensively dealt with in "The Approach and Proposals" section of the Gibraltar City Plan in terms of conservation within an area of quality and character requiring protection and enhancement.

The Development & Planning Commission is currently considering development proposals for the conversion of the property into Government offices. This would entail the demolition of the buildings damaged by fire together with the complex of single storey structures at the rear of the site and the retention of the main building fronting Cornwall's Parade.

4.11.80

No. 318 of 1980

THE HON. W. T. SCOTT

Will Government explain its policy with respect to the recent official notice advertising tenders for three plots of land near Buena Vista for private development?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON. THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
TRADE AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The policy of the Government has always been and continues to be to encourage and facilitate development in the private as well as the public sector. Where land is involved, priority of allocation must necessarily be accorded to public needs but provided these needs are not prejudiced land is also made available whenever possible to private interests for residential or other purposes for which there is a demand to supplement Government's own development programmes.

The Buena Vista Cottage site was such an occasion and should result in the erection of a limited number of houses without any cost to public funds.

THE HON A T LODDO

What are the plans for the area known as Maida Vale?

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(POSTPONED TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE HOUSE)

4.11.80

NO 320 OF 1980

THE HON A T LODDO

Has there been any penalty imposed on the developers of Maida Vale for the non-development of this property?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, I propose to answer this question together with Question No. 319. The site at Maida Vale has a long and chequered history. It was originally put out to tender in March 1957 as the result of an application made by a local firm for the land. The tender was on the basis of a 99 year lease preceded by a building licence.

No tenders were received and direct negotiations then proceeded with the Company which had initiated the proposals to build an hotel on the site. An agreement was eventually entered into with this firm in March 1958 on the same conditions as in the tender notice. This provided that failure to erect the hotel as approved within the period stipulated would enable the Governor, as landlord, to re-enter upon the site and terminate the agreement. In that event the landlord would, if he decided to complete the hotel, pay compensation equalling three quarters of the amount spent by the Company on the site.

The Company was unable to comply with its obligations and was allowed to assign its interest subject to the payment of a penalty of £2,000 and to a new completion date fixed for 31 December 1963. This new Company, in turn, was unable to discharge its obligations (having inter alia paid only a half of the penalty) but the Administration was unable to take advantage of its power to resume possession as it was not in a position to meet the Company's claim for compensation which amounted to £50,000.

The assignees eventually went into liquidation but the site continued to be occupied by the first Company as the main or sole creditors of the other Company.

These are the bare bones of a complicated sequence of events. The position was, however, not allowed to rest inactive and attempts continued to be made over the years to reach a satisfactory conclusion which would ensure that the hotel was completed.

This has been Government's main concern but, understandably, financial and other factors over the last few years have militated against an early or facile solution. The latest position is that the developers engaged a leading firm of consultants last year to undertake a feasibility study on the prospects for a self-catering apartment hotel in line with modern trends. As is to be expected the current cost of erecting such a building must be considered in terms of economic viability and, in the light of the uncertainties as to the future, any quick decision on the part of the developers must unfortunately be ruled out. Further approaches by the developers to Government are expected.

I am sorry that it has been necessary to give this rather long answer but I felt that without such a recital it would not have been possible to give the information required.

4.11.80

No. 321 of 1980

THE HON A J HAYNES

What is the present position as regards the development of Engineer House?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
TRADE AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The development of Engineer House has been included in the draft Development Programme for 1981/4. This project will consist of the construction of 36 flats for allocation by the Housing Department.

NO 322 OF 1980THE HON A HAYNES

Can Government state what were the Public Health requirements that justified the allocation by the Government to a private company on the North Mole of a substantial additional area to their premises which now seem to comprise double the existing area previously held by this company?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Notice was served by the Chief Public Health Inspector (as he was then styled) on Gibraltar Cold Stores Ltd in September 1978 indicating that certain provisions of the Food Hygiene Regulations were being contravened. These breaches included an item relating to the fabric of the building and read as follows:-

"Portions of the insulation to the walls and ceilings of the Chambers have fallen and hence they are not in good order, repair or condition. The floor to one of the Chambers is not in good order, repair and condition."

The condition of the building, which included cracks in the roof membrane, therefore called for major repairs requiring the closing down of the bulk of the store with a consequential loss of 75% of the available storage area and a considerable reduction in the stocks of refrigerated foods in Gibraltar.

The reason for the allocation of the additional seventy feet was therefore twofold. Firstly, it would enable the Company, without affecting local stocks, to:-

- a. defrost its biggest Chamber, to repair the floor and renew the insulation;
- b. comply with the Food Hygiene Regulations.

Secondly, and in the longer term, it would provide the Company with more storage accommodation to cope with increased demands for frozen foods which could not be met with its existing storage capacity.

4.11.80

NO 323 OF 1980

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state the present position as regards their efforts to obtain Jetty No 4 from MOD?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The Government expects that No 4 Jetty will come under the jurisdiction of the Port Department at the end of the year, or possibly before then, subject to satisfactory negotiations of the terms of transfer. It is my understanding that the shed on No 4 Jetty has been virtually vacated by PSTO(N) in anticipation of this event. It is also expected that the Jetty will come over to the Government without incumbrance so that the extra berths which will thus be at the disposal of the Captain of the Port will be available for the discharge and handling of cargo which is the overriding pressing need at the Port.



4.11.80

No. 324 of 1980

THE HON A T LODDO

Is Government now in a position to allocate accommodation at Wellington Front to Youth Associations and other clubs and will Government proceed to do this without further delay so that on the final vacation of Wellington Front by GBC the premises are put to good use without delay?

WRITTEN ANSWER.

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
TRADE AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Government is not yet in a position to allocate the remaining accommodation at Wellington Front, the bulk of which is still occupied by the Public Works Department and by GBC. There is a considerable number of possible candidates for the rooms available including the Telephone Department. In view of the nature of the accommodation and the lack of sanitary facilities the difficulties which these have presented to the Development and Planning Commission have made it necessary for further investigations to be carried out before recommendations can be made to the Government. I may add that the Commission has been informed that the accommodation occupied by GBC cannot be released until early next year whilst the ability of the Public Works Department to release their vaults will depend on their being able to implement the planned centralisation of their stores. I naturally agree that it would be desirable for the allocation to be completed before the accommodation becomes available and the Commission has this very much in mind.

4.11.80

No. 325 of 1980

THE HON P J ISOLA

Can Government give any explanation for the delay in the transfer of the Radio Station at Wellington Front to Broadcasting House and can Government state what is holding things up?

WRITTEN ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Tests have revealed that the existing structure of the building in the area of the Radio Studio, is not as soundproof as had been expected. Steps are being taken to put in hand improvements, but as these involve the importation of special acoustic materials, there has been some delay, and present indications are that these will not arrive in Gibraltar before the end of the year.

Every effort is however being made to expedite matters.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

MEETING OF 17 DECEMBER 1980

**QUESTIONS**  
AND  
**ANSWERS**

326 to 406

17.12.80

NO. 275 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government give a breakdown of how the £150,000 in the Tourist Office vote of the 1980/81 Estimates, Head 24, Sub-Head 14, are being spent and if any supplementary provisions are in mind to counteract the expected decrease in the number of tourists coming to Gibraltar this winter season?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN

17.12.80

NO. 293 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Will Government sponsor District Committees to embellish our town which is giving a greater impression of decadence month by month?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN

17.12.80

NO. 304 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, having regard to the recent tender notice on the refurbishing of the Middle School at the Old Grammar School site, will Government confirm that it still envisages part of this school to be ready for occupation in March, 1981?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, it is anticipated that the Phase 1 project at Sacred Heart School, ie the repairs and minor alterations to the South Wing, together with the provision of a temporary toilet block which has already gone out to tender, will be ready for occupation after the Easter Holidays.

17.12.80

NO. 316 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state if there are buildings in Old Naval Hospital Road which were given planning permission on condition that they provided a specified number of garage spaces and has this been complied with and are these spaces being put to their intended use?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN

NO. 319 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, what are the plans for the area known as Maida Vale?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, the Maida Vale site was originally made available by the Government in 1958 for hotel development. Work commenced in 1962 but came to a stop some time later due to changes in the economic climate at the time which affected the financial position of the company undertaking the development. Their successors in title continue to hold the land for this purpose and last year engaged a firm of consultants to advise them on the economics of their proposals for a modern, self catering apartment hotel. The contents of the consultants' report were subsequently discussed with the Financial and Development Secretary. No decision has yet been taken but the matter is expected to be discussed again when the situation has been clarified.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 319 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, presumably this re-appraisal will not take another 22 years because I have noticed it has taken 22 years for these developers to engage consultants.

HON A J CANEPA:

I can undertake, Mr Speaker, that we will not allow this to go 22 years. I think that it should be possible to re-appraise the situation in the next few months having regard to the outcome of talks on the next Development Programme, on the one hand, and perhaps having regard to the rather more delicate matter of the re-opening of the frontier. I hope that the frontier will not take 22 years to reopen, but there we are.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, is any time condition imposed on this Company?

HON A J CANEPA:

I am not aware that there is a time condition, no.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is there any way that Government can impose a time condition?



HON A J CANEPA:

I think we would certainly ensure that if sufficient progress is not made then the right which this Company have is terminated and the site perhaps put out to tender again but there are certain conditions under which the Government could, in the past, in which it could have stepped in and taken over and I think I provided some details in the answer to Question No. 320 which I think was given as a written answer as to what the state of affairs was in the past.

HON G T RESTANO:

Can I take it then, Mr Speaker, that there is a firm commitment of Government that if development is not proceeded with sufficiently fast or doesn't commence within a specific period of time, Government will take action and take over the site?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, I think we will have to take action, we will do our best to expedite the matter.

17.12.80

NO. 326 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, has Government taken a decision to put up a prominent sign in the Departure Lounge at the Airport making it clear that the perfumery and beauty products being sold there are not Duty Free?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Yes, Sir. Two signs will be put up in the Departure Lounge. One will read "Duty Free" and will be fixed over the counter selling wines, spirits, cigarettes and tobacco. The second sign will read "Duty Paid" and will be fixed over the counter selling perfumery and beauty products.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 326 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

I am grateful for that, Mr Speaker. Can the Hon Financial and Development Secretary say when these signs will be put up?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I saw the signs yesterday and they have just got to be screwed in. I should think they will be up within the next day or so.

NO. 327 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state which commitments will be covered by the recent £1m loan bearing 10% tax free interest?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, as stated in the prospectus issued by the Government on 13th November, 1980, inviting applications for subscriptions to this loan, the proceeds will be applied towards the financing of development schemes generally. The loan moneys will be credited to the Improvement and Development Fund to enable it to meet commitments on the 1978/81 Development Programme.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 327 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, are there no specific areas which the loan will cover, areas of development, that is?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, it is extremely difficult to say that this or that project will be funded from this or that money. What one does is to prepare a list of projects showing what funds are required to complete them and then to work out how much is required and where the funds can come from and it is not usual to hypothecate any individual sums to specific projects. As money is required for a project it is taken out of the Improvement and Development Fund.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government amend the existing legislation so that Scooters off yachts visiting Gibraltar which do not require to be registered in their country of origin can land in Gibraltar?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

No, Sir. The Government does not consider such a change desirable.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 328 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister say why?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

For a number of reasons, Mr Speaker. Vehicles using our roads must per force conform to minimum basic safety standards, this is to safeguard the interest of the general public. Indeed, it is for this purpose that all motor vehicles using our roads require to be insured against Third Party risks. There cannot be any discrimination or preferential treatment in this matter. Moreover, our regulations have to conform with our obligations under the Geneva Convention on roads and motor transport.

HON G T RESTANO:

Will the Minister not agree, Mr Speaker, that the facility for scooters landing off yachts in, I would say, the majority of ports catering for yachts at least in the Western Mediterranean are there? Yachtsmen can unload their scooters, they do have this facility, they have this facility, I am told, very nearby in Spanish ports, they do also in French ports. Why cannot those yachtsmen have the same facility in Gibraltar?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Sir, the position in the law is that the Traffic (International Circulation) Regulations state that no motor vehicle, which definition includes a motor cycle, may be used in Gibraltar unless it is licensed in any other country or in Gibraltar. The longest uninterrupted period a vehicle can remain in Gibraltar with foreign registration is 180 days. The vehicle must display registration marks and international signs of the place of registration and must be insured against Third Party liability with an authorised insurer. The Motor Vehicles (Temporary Importation) Rules, booklet 5, requires adequate security to provide for the payment of import duty on default or breach of these regulations, there are also Customs connotations.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I agree that the vehicles should be insured and I think in most cases they are insured but it is not a question of insurance, it is a question of registration. A yacht may arrive in Gibraltar only for a 2 or 3 day visit and the normal facilities are that they can use their scooters in the area provided they are insured but not in Gibraltar, I ask again, why?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

They can use their vehicles, Mr Speaker. Provided the vehicle is insured and the vehicle is registered, of course, they can use their vehicles in Gibraltar provided that they fall within the laws of Gibraltar that require that a vehicle is insured with an accepted insurer. There is nothing at all to stop them landing their motor cycles in Gibraltar.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, surely the position must be that if a yacht or even a car arrives on the Mons Calpe with foreign registration plates or even without plates as far as the yacht is concerned as long as it can be identified as coming from a yacht, surely, as long as it is insured the Gibraltar Government should not put difficulties in the way of owners using their vehicles in Gibraltar because I would have thought that the evils that the Minister has spoken of can be very adequately catered for because it is so difficult to get them out once they are in. It should not be difficult to check up, surely, on foreign vehicles in Gibraltar, there are not that many.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

The question of landing a motor cycle off a yacht, Mr Speaker, if the motor cycle is registered in a country of origin which no doubt it would be, if it has an insurance policy, then of course there is nothing to prohibit that vehicle entering Gibraltar but if a motor cycle is not registered in any country and does not have an insurance policy then of course it cannot enter Gibraltar or for that matter any vehicle coming off the Mons Calpe cannot enter Gibraltar.

NO. 329 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government say what sort of response it has had to the 10% Tax Free Loan recently put on sale?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Yes, Sir. The response is encouraging, the total amount subscribed to the 12th December, 1980, was £754,100. The latest figure at close of play last night was £791,600.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 329 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Will the Government consider the possibility of increasing the amount of loan stock available in view of its needs to raise money for development in, in fact, it looks as if the original £1m is going to be exhausted?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Sir.

17.12.80

NO. 330 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state what provisions are being made for a customs control post at Marina Bay?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the original intention was to have the reporting station at the Marina Bay, but this was found to be impractical on further consideration. It is now proposed to set up a reporting station at the Commercial Wharf to clear all yachts arriving at Gibraltar from foreign. This would meet Customs, Immigration and Port requirements.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 330 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Will this, in fact, involve any additional staffing requirements for the customs control?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Sir.

NO. 331 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, would Government consider introducing TV Licence Saving Stamps?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

(In the absence of the Hon the Minister for Tourism and Postal Services)

Mr Speaker, Sir, since October this year the Government has been considering introducing TV Licence Saving Stamps and alternative means of enabling the public to have to meet the cost of Government issued licences in Gibraltar.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 331 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, the Government has been considering this since October, what is the position now?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

The position, Mr Speaker, is that the matter has been looked at, there has been some correspondence with the Accountant-General in this matter and there are certain aspects of value of stamps and possibly the issuing or the preparation of several cards for various licences, car licences is one, television licences the other that one can think of off hand.

HON W T SCOTT:

Electricity bills.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I doubt that very much, Mr Speaker, because that comes on a monthly issue and therefore we would have to have £20 stamps. It could well be a £5 stamp, a £1 stamp or an ordinary postage stamp affixed to a particular card, but so as not to provide the difficulty of change back into money which may be done, I don't know, we are thinking on the lines of being able to produce a card that may give you 20 weeks at £1 to cover a TV licence or whatever other licence we feel could be paid in this manner.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister say that, in principle, Government has accepted to adopt this scheme and all that is awaited is the particular administrative arrangements and that the people of Gibraltar can look forward to that in the near future?



HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, this was brought to my attention, as I say, in October but I understand from the Chief Minister that this has been under consideration for some time. The only thing we are looking at now, Mr Speaker, is do we print new stamps for this, do we use our own postage stamps for this and such details and to see what complication, if any, could arise from doing this but certainly I think the people may be able to look forward to this venture.

17.12.80

NO. 332 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government state what monies spent under the different heads of expenditure in the Improvement and Development Fund between 1st April, 1980, and 30th November, 1980, have emanated from local sources and which from United Kingdom aid funds?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission I will deal with this Question and Question No. 333 at the same time.

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, Can Government state the amounts actually spent on the development programme under the different heads of expenditure in the improvement and development fund numbered 101 to 113 head by head between 1st April, 1980, and 30th November, 1980?

ANSWERTHE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, recorded expenditure from the Improvement and Development Fund to 30th November is:-

<u>HEAD</u>	<u>ODA FUNDS</u>	<u>LOCAL FUNDS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
	£	£	£
101 Housing	1,122,959	603,581	1,726,540
102 Schools	1,117,521	103,758	1,221,279
103 Tourist Development	28,483	-	28,483
104 Miscellaneous Projects	246,152	313,945	560,137
105 General Services	111,782	109,813	221,595
106 Government Official Buildings	-	111,545	111,545
107 Port Development	541,387	195,083	736,470
108 Marina Development	-	27,072	27,072
109 Public Lighting	-	6,630	6,630
110 Electricity Service	1,638	198,858	200,496
111 Potable Water Service	129,341	70,468	199,809
112 Telephone Service	-	330,752	330,752
	<u>3,299,303</u>	<u>2,071,505</u>	<u>5,370,808</u>

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NOS. 332 AND 333 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can the Financial and Development Secretary say whether there is any chance at all of the Government figure for expenditure for this year on development of £10,157,000 being reached having regard to the fact that the total spent to 30th November, although obviously an improvement on last year, is still just over half that amount?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, on the basis of present monthly performance of expenditure, we think that there is every likelihood of the total expenditure on the Improvement and Development Fund reaching the £10.15m which is projected in the estimates.

HON P J ISOLA:

That will involve spending in four months over £4½m.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Yes, Mr Speaker, what I would point out is that the actual expenditure on on-going projects at the moment is running at about £0.8m a month and that in addition to that we have some fairly heavy expenditure to pay out for ECGD funds at the beginning of 1981, in either January or February, depending upon the date on which we sign contracts for projects.

HON P J ISOLA:

There is, of course, no truth, is there, Sir, in what one has heard that especially in the case of the new Girls' Comprehensive School which seems to be slipping a bit, that there is quite a lot of under-spending, that the contractors are being asked to submit bills as quickly as possible by the Government, is that so?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have certainly not asked the contractors for the Girls' school to submit any bills as quickly as possible although I would say that in general I do like bills submitted quickly and paid quickly.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask, in view of the fact that Government hopes to spend the whole of the £10m forecast for the year, am I to understand from this that the United Kingdom cash limits on spending on the development programme has been lifted or is the Gibraltar Government making up?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Sir, if we were to spend the £10.15m, the amount chargeable to ODA funds would be some £5.3m and we have been discussing during the past 10 days with the representative of ODA a lifting of the cash limit to enable us to receive that full amount.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does that mean that if the cash limits are not raised then the £10m will not be spent?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

No, Mr Speaker.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does it then mean that the Government will provide this from their own resources and will those resources be the Consolidated Fund?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the arrangement would be that we would pay out the funds and put it against an advance account for ODA to be met within the beginning of April, 1981.

HON P J ISOLA:

Has Government received assurances that if it does do that the money will be reimbursed and not made part of the new Development Programme? Did Government receive any assurances on that score because would not that be the possible result of such a move?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the only discussions that we have had is how to fund this amount of money which we expect to require this year. We have asked for supplementary provision to give us the amount of funds required. As a fall back to this and in the event of that not being agreed, and we have no reason to believe that it will not be agreed, but if it were not agreed, then we have made arrangements at the official level that we would set off the amount outstanding as an advance against ODA. That is the only discussion that we have held.

MR SPEAKER:

We are expanding the scope of the question.

HON P J ISOLA:

This is of importance, Mr Speaker, this is, in fact, the most important aspect of the economy of Gibraltar.

MR SPEAKER:

I have no doubt but it is question time.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I therefore ask, is the present position that if the United Kingdom cash limits are not raised the approximate £2m left on that particular side of hopeful receipt, the whole of the £2m will be met or is there still some money that can be met from United Kingdom aid funds at the moment during the current year?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

We have not exhausted United Kingdom aid funds at the moment for this year. The amount available is £4.4m and we have only disbursed some £3.3m on these figures.

HON P J ISOLA:

So that really, Mr Speaker, the amount that is being withheld is approximately £700,000, is that right, on the United Kingdom cash limits?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

It is £0.9m, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, on housing, I notice that the amount still to be spent is £1,100,000 if the amount estimated is to be completed by 31st March, 1980. That is a substantial amount, can the Financial and Development Secretary say whether there has been any slippage in the Housing Development Programme?

MR SPEAKER:

I will allow an answer of yes or no but if the answer is yes I will not allow discussion as to why, otherwise we expand the scope of the question.

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

I am not sure, Mr Speaker, whether the question is directed to me or to the Hon Minister. On one or two projects in housing there has been some slippage, on others they are going at a faster rate than was expected.

HON J BOSSANC:

The question of the cash limit, in fact, is as regards the availability of the amount of money from the ODA, but is there any implication at all that there has to be a limit on what the total spending should be or are we completely free to spend as much as we can?

HON FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY:

Mr Speaker, no, Sir. The cash limit is on the amount of money which ODA is prepared to make available in development grants this year, not only to Gibraltar but to every country that receives aid but there is no question of their restricting our spending on projects.

17.12.80

NO. 334 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government give details of the proposed additional improvements for the Arrival Hall at Waterport referred to in the answer to Question 229 of 1980?

ANSWER

THE HON THE FINANCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY

Mr Speaker, Sir, the separation of passengers into those with and those without luggage, has considerably speeded up clearance through Customs. It is now proposed to erect a screen inside the hall in a north/south direction and to channel large groups of passengers without luggage into the hall through the door on the north side of the building.

The screen would shield persons whose luggage is being checked from the view of the other passengers awaiting their turn and would permit passengers to wait under cover during inclement weather.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 334 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

I am glad to see some progress at last, Mr Speaker.

NO. 335 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government state whether there is a document actually signed by the parties that enshrines the terms of settlement arrived at between the Government, the contractors and consultants in relation to the Varyl Begg Estate and will the Government make such document, if existing, public or at least available to the Members of the Opposition?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, the comprehensive terms of settlement with the contractor, and the terms of settlement with the consultant, will be incorporated into formal agreements with each party. These are in the process of being finalised. The Government will make the agreements available for perusal by any Member of the Opposition who wishes to read them when they have been executed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 335 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, rightly, works are being carried out and are going on in the Varyl Begg Estate. Would Government ensure that it does not get into the position that it spends money, it pays out money, without having had a signed document and thus prevent problems arising in the future as to what has been agreed or what has not been agreed, so can the House have an assurance that this agreement will be signed in the very near future?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, some work has already been commenced on the Estate but there is preliminary work. I can give an assurance that every effort is being made to finalise this agreement as quickly as possible and that by the time the substantive work proceeds on the Estate, there will be written agreements, formal documents covering the work and the payment will be made in accordance with those documents.



17.12.80

NO. 336 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, will Government amend the Entertainments Ordinance so that Spanish films are made liable to censorship in the same way as English films and to provide guidelines for classification of Spanish films?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, Spanish films currently being exhibited in Gibraltar carry a Spanish certificate broadly equivalent to those given by the British Board of Film Censors. In practice, film exhibitors are now voluntarily indicating on the billboards at the cinemas the classification so given and are enforcing the requirement that young persons should not be allowed to attend the showing of films which in Spain have been classified as unsuitable for them.

Although legislation has been enacted that would impose legal control, the Government considers that the arrangement is being adequately observed and does not consider that it is at present necessary to bring the legislation into operation.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 336 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, does this mean, therefore, that Spanish films are being treated differently to English titled films that are classified insofar as there is a Committee, I understand, which looks at English films when it wants to and so forth but apparently does not do so in respect of Spanish films and is this fair to the industry in general and the public?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I am sorry I cannot give a direct answer to the question but I see no reason why the Committee could not look at films from more than one country of origin. I cannot say whether or not they do, I don't know.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, as I understand the written answer that was given to me on this matter, it was possible to do so with English films and not with Spanish films, that is how I understood the answer that was given to me and that is why I have asked this particular question. Is the position different then to what was given in the written answer to me?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, the position is different to the extent that Spanish films are not received in Gibraltar early enough. They do not arrive here as do other films that have been given a certificate by the British Board of Film Censors which need not be English films, naturally, they can be American or they can be Greek or Danish films or German films, but all those have been given a certificate by the British Board of Film Censors. Spanish films are not given such a certificate because they are not shown in the United Kingdom and therefore they do not come under the British Board of Film Censors. The procedure is that, by and large, the Government guides itself as to the suitability of an 'X' film being shown or not by reputable synopses of literature that is available and if in doubt as to the suitability of the film, then a pre-view is requested and as such films are usually in Gibraltar for a considerable period of time beforehand, arrangements can be made for these to be pre-viewed. In the case of Spanish films the position is not that straightforward. We have been asking for advance notice from the film exhibitors as to the programme of films that they have and for as much literature on these films to be provided and what has happened in cases where we are in doubt has been that arrangements have been made by some members of the Committee to go down to the early evening performance the first evening that the film is being shown to judge for ourselves, at least to monitor the situation as to what extent the film is suitable or not, this is as far as we are able to take it. At present it is an arrangement which I think, by and large, works and members of the Committee who have from time to time seen these Spanish films are satisfied on the whole that, by and large, the films are no less suitable for exhibition to adult audiences than are the generality of other 'X' films that are shown in Gibraltar.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask then, Mr Speaker, the Minister to get an assurance from the film exhibitors of Spanish films that even though they are not compelled under the Entertainments Ordinance to ask for a pre-view of films classified 'X', for example, as English films are, that they will voluntarily submit themselves to the same regulation and if not then will the Minister not agree that the law should be amended to treat everybody the same who are in the cinema business?

HON A J CANEPA:

They are doing this, Mr Speaker. This is being done by a voluntary arrangement and the position has been facilitated in the last few months by the fact that now the Spanish films themselves, right at the beginning of the film, do have some indication as to the certificate which they have received in Spain. This was not the case 6 or 9 months ago but since the summer this is the case and therefore the film exhibitors are now able to put on a billboard some indication as to the suitability of the film. Let me also add in fairness to them that their lives have not been made particularly easy in the past by parents, of all people, insisting in some cases in taking children in to see films which the film exhibitors themselves did not consider to be suitable.

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, has the Attorney-General considered taking proceedings under the Criminal Offences Ordinance in respect of posters of 'X' films which are clearly offensive and obscene and have any prosecutions been brought in this respect?

ANSWERTHE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

No, Sir, I have not. No such cases have been referred to my Chambers for consideration and no prosecutions have been brought.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 337 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, can I ask the Hon and Learned Member then to give instruction to the Police to keep their eyes open in respect of certain posters that are clearly obscene and offensive?

MR SPEAKER:

I am sure they do as we all do.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Hon and Learned Attorney-General to ask the Police to keep their eyes open and to bring to his notice the concern that I am sure must exist among Members of the House at the offence that is given to the public by these obscene and offensive posters that appear from time to time in our streets?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, of course, I will take note of the concern expressed by the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition. The position really is that any person who complains at the publication of obscene material should make their complaint to the Police and if he does the matter will be investigated but as I say I take note of the concern expressed by the Hon Member.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, that answer by the Hon and Learned Attorney-General worries me because does he not agree that the Police do have a responsibility in this case as indeed in other cases as, for example, when rubbish is in the streets, to take action themselves and not wait for members of the public to complain about a dog doing something in the street or rubbish or an obscene picture, they have an obligation, do they not, to initiate without complaint?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I think in a matter of this nature, a matter of an obscene publication, much depends on the fact that offence is given, that it causes offence to the general sense of propriety and I think people should be prepared to make complaints to the Police if they feel the law is being broken as indicative of the degree of offence that is taken. I will convey to the Commissioner of Police the fact that concern has been expressed in the House about the incidence of these publications.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, does the Hon Attorney-General then accept that we are plastered with obscene and offensive posters which certainly I haven't noticed but I suppose I have not gone out looking for them. Does the Hon Member accept that this is indeed the case?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

What I accept, Sir, is that there has been some concern expressed that some posters in town may give rise to offence. I am not going to say that I think that they are at this stage obscene, I do not form such views unless and until I receive a case which is put up for prosecution.

HON P J ISOIA:

Doesn't the Hon and Learned Attorney-General agree that there is some inconsistency if certain magazines are prohibited from being brought into Gibraltar and yet at the same time offensive posters are allowed to be looked at by everybody, young and old alike? I don't know whether the Hon and Learned Chief Minister enjoys his daughters watching these posters when they appear, I certainly wouldn't like it if I had young children.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, perhaps the Hon Leader of the Opposition could tell me where I can see them?

HON P J ISOLA:

Then I shall make my complaint, Mr Speaker, to the Chief Minister when I see one and rely on his judgement.

17.12.80

NO. 338 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, is Government now in a position to state whether the posts of Principal and Senior Members of staff for the Technical College will be advertised?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

No, Sir. The Government is first discussing with the Ministry of Defence, the terms on which the College will be transferred and hopes to reach early agreement on this.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 338 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, the way I understand it these posts should have been advertised in September, is this another case of slippage?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

No, Sir, this is not a case of slippage, this is a case of the Government seeking to reach satisfactory agreement with the Ministry of Defence on the terms on which the buildings will be handed over to the Government.

17.12.80

NO. 339 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

In view of the delay in the general review of pensions since December, 1978, can Government state what steps have been taken to consider separately the question of part-time service?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Mr Speaker, Government has already agreed in principle to consider separately the question of allowing part-time service to qualify for pension under certain conditions.

The Government has been in consultation with United Kingdom Authorities as to the practice there and the last correspondence was received on the 8 December, 1980.

Officials are now in a position to make a recommendation on the matter and it is expected that a submission will be made to the Government shortly.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 339 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Can the Hon Member give some indication when, in fact, the Government's own views will be available for consultation with Staff Associations which presumably will take place?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Sir, at this stage it is a matter in respect of which the Government wish to take time to consider the submissions made by the Officials.

HON J BOSSANO:

Wouldn't the Hon Member agree that the Government having accepted the principle two years' ago should now be in a position to say when they are likely to be able to make some concrete proposals to the Staff Associations on this matter who have been waiting with, I would have thought, rather patiently for two years to hear from Government?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

I am sure, Mr Speaker, the Government will move expeditiously but it will require time to consider the submissions.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I welcome the Hon Member's unjustified optimism on this question but could he say then whether there is a likelihood that the matter will be settled within the next month or two or not?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

No, I am sorry, Mr Speaker, I can't stipulate a time.

17.12.80

NO. 340 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Will Government consider altering the system of recruitment of nursing staff so as to eliminate the delays at present being encountered in their engagement because of the processing by the Public Service Commission?

ANSWER

THE HON THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

No, Sir. The processing by the Public Service Commission does not cause undue delay.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 340 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Hon and Learned Member aware, in fact, Mr Speaker, that there seems to be a time-lag affecting both new recruits, new entrants and people seeking re-engagement who have been previously in the Service and that, generally speaking, the Department is under establishment because of the gap that there is between the interviewing and the actual starting time?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, my understanding is that recruitment normally takes from 2 to 3 weeks from the date the candidate has been interviewed. There is only one case I know of which has taken longer.

HON J BOSSANO:

Would the Hon Member not agree that it would be preferable to have a system where people are able to start as soon as a vacancy occurs and that, in fact, it is undesirable that potential recruits to the Department should be lost to other employment because they are kept 2 or 3 weeks out of work?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Mr Speaker, I don't think there is any serious shortage caused by the time taken to recruit nursing staff.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is the Hon and Learned Member aware that this point has been represented to the administration on a number of previous occasions and if he is not will be investigate to establish that this is indeed the case?

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

As I have said, Mr Speaker, it is my understanding that there is not any serious problem caused by the process but I will certainly make inquiries.



NO. 341 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, what further steps is the Environmental Health Department taking with respect to the owners of the property at 143 Main Street in relation to the conditions of the roofs, ceilings and general state of the property?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Environmental Health Department has recently held a meeting with the owners in respect of premises No 143 Main Street, with a view to causing the Section 39 Order to be complied with, in the course of which the owners were informed that either works were put in hand within the next month or the Government would act in default as provided by the Public Health Ordinance, without prejudice to the Government's right to proceed back to Court.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 341 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

So the Government fully intends that unless that Order is complied with within 30 days or a month, it has every intention of effecting the repairs necessary and presumably charging the landlords for the costs involved?

HON J B PEREZ:

That is correct, Mr Speaker.

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, I welcome this statement and is this the policy that Government is going to pursue in the future where public health notices are not complied with by owners, of proceeding themselves in default and thus preventing the serious and dangerous public situation that arose recently in another property in Main Street?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think it is correct to say that the policy that Government will adopt is the one that I have outlined in answer to the question but I must make it clear that this would be in situations where you are dealing with a Section 39 Order, with dangerous premises. Obviously, Government has not got either the manpower nor the time to go and do non-compliances with nuisance orders but we definitely do intend to take strong action against non-compliances in connection with dangerous premises.

HON W T SCOTT:

Presumably, Mr Speaker, the action that the Government would propose taking because as the Hon Minister has just said the Public Works Department might not have sufficient labour or the capability to undertake the extent of the work, it would go out to tender supervised by the Government itself?

HON J B PEREZ:

That is the matter, Mr Speaker, that we are in fact considering.

HON W T SCOTT:

But whatever decision is taken there will be no further delay within the month as previously stated?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, as far as this particular property is concerned if the landlords do not comply with the Section 39 Order within a month, we will move in.

NO. 342 OF 1980

ORAI

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, is Government satisfied with the filing system at St Bernard's Hospital?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Government is never satisfied and is always looking for improvements. This applies to the filing system at St Bernard's Hospital.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 342 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

What improvement is the Minister considering implementing in that system?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the problem is that due to increased work and to the increased volume of files, we have the problem of a lack of space. We are looking to see if we can move our Records Office to an alternative site within St Bernard's Hospital and also we are looking at the possibility of improving the present filing system. May I just add, Mr Speaker, that in no way is this a reflection on the person at present in charge of the records.

17.12.80

NO. 343 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Are Charcuterie and Meat products imported into Gibraltar by yachts subject to inspection by the Environmental Health Department and are fees charged?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, charcuterie and meat products imported by yachts into Gibraltar and intended for sale for human consumption, in common with all other foodstuffs similarly intended, are subject to inspection by the Environmental Health Department either at the time of entry if prior notice is received, as is the case with major importers, or at the retail end in the course of routine inspections of food premises in the case of smaller, less well-organised, importers. No charge is, at present, made.

These arrangements are not considered satisfactory by Government and legislation is already in the process of preparation in order effectively to control imports.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 343 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Do I take it then, Mr Speaker, that charges under the new legislation will be levied?

HON J B PEREZ:

This is one of the factors that is included in the draft legislation, the question of fees.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, will these charcuterie and meat products be subject to the same conditions as other edible products are in that they must be accompanied by a veterinary certificate?

HON J B PEREZ:

This is what is, in fact, being proposed in the draft legislation.

NO. 344 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, does Government intend amending existing legislation in order to ensure that doctors employed in the Group Practice Medical Scheme must have had a minimum and specified period of experience?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, the answer to the Hon Members question is no, Sir. I can however assure him that every precaution is taken to ascertain the suitability of each candidate's experience and qualifications before a selection is made.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 344 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, may I point the Hon Minister in the direction of the law in the United Kingdom which is the National Health Service Vocational Training Regulations which will, in fact, become operational in February of next year and would he investigate the possibility of introducing legislation similar to that in Gibraltar?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, I am aware of the point raised by the Hon Questioner but the problem is that if we introduce something on those lines in Gibraltar, I am of the opinion that it will be unduly restrictive on our own local students who qualify in the United Kingdom and wish to return to Gibraltar. Let me, however, add that in the past, I am told, doctors who have been recruited into the GPMS invariably have been people with experience of 2 to 3 years although this is really a matter for the Public Service Commission, but in the case, for example, of Dr Correa and Dr Borge, if we were to place these restrictions I don't think we would encourage our local people to return to Gibraltar because they would therefore be staying for 2 to 3 years elsewhere and they may feel inclined not to return and I think that is a pity and it is contrary to my belief of what I would like to see with the GPMS.

HON G T RESTANO:

I don't think, Mr Speaker, that the Minister is very much aware of the law in the United Kingdom. Those three years are really a training programme so that doctors become experienced, the two years in the hospital and one year as training practice, and if the law is not introduced into Gibraltar we could get into the position where doctors who don't get a job in the United Kingdom because they haven't done their training, try to get employment in Gibraltar and we would be lowering the standards of the medical profession. For that reason, Mr Speaker, I would ask the Minister to investigate the possibilities.

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, for the benefit of the Hon Member, although I have given the answer as no, nevertheless I am prepared to look at it again.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is the Minister saying, in effect, that in order to help local students to return to Gibraltar to practice medicine, the Government is prepared to employ people in the GPMS, not of Gibraltar, who have not had the experience required in England and can he not deal with the Gibraltarian position by giving them jobs in the hospital as house doctors and not in the general service?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think the Hon Leader of the Opposition confuses the issue when he says to employ our local doctors as house doctors. The question seeks a change in legislation, the question that the Hon Mr Restano has raised. The present legislation is that contained in the Medical and Health Ordinance of 1973 which provides that any person, I am not going to quote the section I will explain what it is, any person who wishes to practice in Gibraltar or anybody who is suitable for recruitment for the GPMS, must be a doctor who is registered and able to practice in England, it is not a house doctor. After a student completes his studies he then has, compulsorily, even in the United Kingdom, to do a year as a house doctor in any case. It is after he completes that one year as a house officer that he is entitled to enrol in the United Kingdom, he is entitled to be registered. The answer is that in my view I do not think there is any need to change the law.

17.12.80

NO. 345 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Has Government now decided to leave the system of telephone appointments for the Health Centre on a permanent basis?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Sir, an ever increasing use is being made of this facility and it is apparent to me that it is here to stay. My only concern is that an increase in staff may be required and one must await the results of staff inspection in this respect.

NO. 346 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will the Minister for Municipal Services state when it is proposed to instal telephones in the personal offices of doctors at the Health Centre?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, recommendations have now been received from the Telephone Department and these are currently being discussed with the doctors at the Health Centre.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 346 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Will the Minister expand on the recommendations that have been received?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, the Hon. Questioner will recall that in my answer to Question 245 of 1980, I informed him that we had referred the matter to the Telephone Department on the 15th October. The proposal at the time was that the doctors wanted jack points to be put in each and every office. The information we have received from the Telephone Department is that it would be better, instead of having the jack points that we should rent a PABX 2 x 6. This system would enable the Department to have . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not expand too much otherwise we will start debating the issue. You have been asked whether you have accepted the recommendations or not exclusively. Isn't that right?

HON G T RESTANO:

What I asked was if he could expand on the recommendations received from the Telephone Department.

HON J B PEREZ:

We have been recommended instead of the jack points that were mentioned before, that we adopt a new PABX 2 x 6 and this proposal by the Telephone Department, in fact, if my information is correct was brought to the notice of doctors yesterday by the Director of Medical and Health Services and as soon as the doctors agree or disagree a decision will be taken and the Telephone Department will proceed accordingly.



HON G T RESTANO:

Does the Minister have an idea, if the doctors agree to this proposal, how long it will take for the PABX to be installed?

HON J B PEREZ:

The only thing I can say, Mr Speaker, to the Hon Member is that once a decision is taken by the Medical Department it is immediately communicated to the Telephone Department and then it is up to them.

HON G T RESTANO:

That, in fact, Mr Speaker, is precisely why the question was put to the Minister for Municipal Services.

17.12.80

NO. 347 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government confirm whether 3 washing machines were recently purchased for the new Nurses Home and if so were tenders published for these purchases?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, yes, Sir. A Government Notice inviting tenders for the items in question was published in the local press as well as in the Gibraltar Gazette of the 18 September, 1980.

THE HON G T RESTANO

In view of the fact that since the reply of the Minister for Medical and Health Services to Question 250 of 1980, a doctor in private practice has stated that in nearly 98% of cases where patients have been referred by his practice and admitted to St Bernard's Hospital, no discharge summaries have ever been received, would the Minister explain why he stated in his reply to Question 250 that as far as he was aware discharge summaries were sent in all cases?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, Sir, I refer the Hon Member to my answer to Question No 250 of 1980 in which I stated the Government's policy on the question of discharge summaries. The doctor in question has been asked to substantiate his allegations and the matter will be investigated.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 348 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, since the allegations have been made has the Minister himself not done any research?

MR SPEAKER:

I think it is a fair answer to a fair question. We must not preempt what can happen as a result of the investigation and the fact that the doctor is going to be asked to substantiate his allegations.

HON G T RESTANO:

But, Mr Speaker, since there has been this allegation, would the Minister not make . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

No, I think the inference in the answer to the question is clear, that since there has been an allegation they have to satisfy themselves that it is correct before they do anything else.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister. When he answered Question No. 250 of 1980, did he in fact have before him the number of discharge summaries that had been sent out by the hospital and can he give us that figure as at that date?

HON J B PEREZ:

The answer is no, Sir, I did not have the number of discharge summaries sent out. I have to act on the advice of the Director of Medical and Health Services and this is why I say that we will investigate the matter but it is no good just making a blank statement saying in 98% of cases. Once we are informed of the individual cases the matter will be investigated.

HON P J ISOLA:

I would like to clear this one up because it is a question of departmental responsibility, I suppose. The position is that as far as the Minister was concerned he relied entirely when he gave that answer on the information that he had been given and saw no figures as to numbers of discharge summaries and was provided with no figures, is that the position?

HON J B PEREZ:

That is the position. May I just add one very minor point, if I may. In fact, the invitation to investigate was made by me when I answered a supplementary question in November. I did say that if the allegations were made I would investigate, up to today I have yet not received any information and I am still waiting.

17.12.80

NO. 349 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Would Government make a comprehensive statement on the present position with regard to the possible merger of St Bernard's and the Naval Hospitals?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Yes, Sir. I shall be making a statement at a later stage in the proceedings.

17.12.80

NO. 350 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Has Government appointed a Consultant Education Psychologist from the UK on a part-time basis?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Mr Speaker, arrangements were made in April for a visit in November. This, however, did not prove possible. Financial provision has been made in next year's Estimates for regular visits by a Consultant Educational Psychologist.

17.12.80

NO. 351 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Mr Speaker, can Government state on how many occasions has the Community Paediatrician been consulted in relation to students in need of paediatric treatment?

I am sorry, Mr Speaker, but this is not how I phrased the question, I meant students in need of psychiatric treatment.

MR SPEAKER:

I am informed that it was a typing error when you submitted your question. You can ask the question you intended to ask but, of course, the Minister may not be able to answer.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The Minister cannot be expected to answer it. In fact, he could not understand the question.

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, the question I intended to ask was: Can Government state on how many occasions has the Community Paediatrician been consulted in relation to students in need of psychiatric treatment?

MR SPEAKER:

Is the Minister in a position to answer?

HON J B PEREZ:

I regret I am not, I had a feeling that the Hon Questioner wanted information on how many schoolchildren from the school health service had been referred to Dr. Benady and in fact that is the information I have with me. I am sorry but I will have to look into the matter which the Hon Questioner really wanted to ask about.

17.12.80

NO. 352 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Does Government intend taking any action, as reported in a local newspaper, on the exhibiting of caged wild birds?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Preliminary investigations of the newspaper reports on the exhibiting of caged wild birds indicate that the birds in question were either bred in captivity or imported from stocks also bred in captivity and they are, therefore, not strictly wild birds. In the absence of adequate proof that the birds in question are 'wild' or that they were captured within Gibraltar's jurisdiction, the Government is unable to take legal action. It will, however, continue in its efforts to protect wild life locally and enforce existing laws whenever necessary and possible.



17.12.80

NO. 353 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is Government aware of the difficulties encountered by the Medical Department in the prompt and accurate payment of salaries and allowances?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

The Government is not aware that salaries and allowances are not paid promptly and accurately as and when due. However, if the Hon Member is referring to the payment of arrears of salaries and allowances whenever these are reviewed, it is to be expected that because of the diversity of grades employed in the Medical and Public Health Department, it is inevitable that a reasonable measure of time has to be taken by the staff in question in the preparation of the necessary calculations needed to arrive at the sums payable.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 353 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, can the Hon Minister say whether the back payment due to the implementation of the 37½ hour week in April of this year is likely to be paid this month? Will he consider that a reasonable lapse of time?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, this is a matter which I already looked at before coming to the House today and in fact I have instructed the people concerned to do their utmost to ensure that these payments be made within the next few weeks.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, is the Hon Member aware that the Staff Side in the Medical Department have made representations previously suggesting that the payment of salaries and allowances should be transferred to the Treasury rather than being undertaken by the clerical staff in the Hospital who are required to do a number of other clerical duties and consequently do not acquire the expertise that the Treasury has because they are concentrating on just this task all the time?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am aware of these representations due to the fact that the Hon Mr Bossano has informed me about them and it is something that we are looking into.

17.12.80

NO. 354 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state whether the appointment of a seventh doctor at the Health Centre has been considered by Council of Ministers?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

No, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 354 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Is there any indication as to when Council of Ministers will be considering this subject?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am afraid that I cannot give a date to the Hon Member.

17.12.80

NO. 355 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government consider giving greater priority to improving the public lighting along South Barrack Road, opposite the Barracks, in order that the potential danger of an accident occurring is minimised?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Government has already in hand a number of schemes in order to improve public lighting in other areas and consideration will be given to this area in the next financial year.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 355 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, in answer to Question 301 of 1980 the Minister for Public Works already informed this House that the scheme was under consideration. My question now is whether Government will give that particular section of road which Government admits requires better lighting, to give that section of road better public lighting precisely in order to minimise the potential danger of an accident?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, as I have already said before the funds for this year are already catered for and it will be considered in the next financial year.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, I very sincerely hope that no accident occurs between now and the time that the Government decides to implement it.

17.12.80

NO. 356 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government state how many hours of power cuts there have been in the different districts during November?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Power Cuts - November, 1980

District	1	-	11 hrs	17 mins
"	2	-	10 hrs	44 mins
"	3	-	7 hrs	58 mins
"	4	-	9 hrs	58 mins
"	5	-	NIL	
"	6	-	8 hrs	28 mins
"	7	-	8 hrs	46 mins
"	8	-	11 hrs	40 mins
"	9	-	10 hrs	30 mins
"	10	-	7 hrs	7 mins
"	11	-	9 hrs	43 mins
"	12	-	NIL	

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 356 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I take it that the Government is dissatisfied with the situation?

HON DR R G VALARINC:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Government is not satisfied with the situation as long as power cuts continue but on the other hand power cuts during the month of November have shown a definite improvement on power cuts during the month of October.

HON P J ISOLA:

How do the power cuts in November compare to the powers cuts we have had in December? Is December an improvement on November or is it more or less the same?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, that is a completely different question. I was not asked for any figures about power cuts in December and I need notice of that question.

THE HON G T RESTANO

At what cost have the Christmas Lighting in Main Street been installed, how does such a cost compare with the installation of the past four years and furthermore what daily electricity in kilowatts, it is estimated will be consumed?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The cost of installing the Christmas Illuminations is expected to be of the order of £4,900.

Cost of installing Illuminations in 1979/80	£4,088.82
Cost of installing Illuminations in 1978/79	£3,644.99
Cost of installing Illuminations in 1977/78	*£1,490.94
*Wage bill reflects salary as at 1.10.76	
Cost of installing Illuminations in 1976/77	£2,105.83

The lights will be switched on daily between 6 pm and midnight except for Christmas and New Year's Eve when they are on until the following day. The total electrical load of the Illuminations is 86.265 kilowatts and the daily consumption is expected to be 517 units. This consumption is equivalent to the consumption of 6 cookers for similar periods.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 357 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Six cookers for a similar period during the hours of 6 pm and midnight. When we have so many power cuts and continue to have power cuts, is this not an unnecessary wastage of electricity?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, this is mere conjecture on the part of the Hon Member. I think that six cookers is a relative amount of electricity used for the benefit that these illuminations provide, especially to Main Street and the traders and for the children as well. I think it is a worthwhile exercise.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the Government aware that the best Christmas cheer they can give the people of Gibraltar and the children and so forth is to give them a continuous supply of electricity?

THE HON G T RESTANO

What is the present position with regard to the tenders for the new Generating Station and the 5 mgw Engine?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The closing date for tenders was the 29th October, 1980, and these are being evaluated by the Consultants and the Department.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 358 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, does the Minister have any explanation for the enormous variance between the two tenders received? Were the two tenders received for exactly the same amount of work or was there any difference?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, it would be wrong of me to comment on the difference in tenders in these two particular tenders. This is up to the Tender Board and not up to me.

HON G T RESTANO:

I am asking whether the two companies that tendered did so for the same thing?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, obviously we made the specifications and the two companies tendered for the same thing.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is there any indication as to when the decision will be taken?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, yes, the validity of tenders is up to the end of February. Evaluation should be completed in the new year, Sir.

HON P J ISOLA:

Have the consultants given the Government an indication as to what time they require for the evaluation of the tenders in terms of weeks, months or years?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the City Electrical Engineer has spent two weeks in the United Kingdom in consultation with our consultants Messrs Preece, Cardew and Rider evaluating the tenders and clarifying certain points with the tenderers and as far as Preece, Cardew and Rider is concerned the evaluation will be produced when they are ready to produce the necessary documents.

HON P J ISOLA:

I know that obviously the evaluation will be produced when the consultants are ready to produce it but the question I am asking is has the City Electrical Engineer or the Minister been told by the consultants the period of time they require to evaluate the tenders? It is a simple question.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I am sorry to have to repeat my answer which I have given before. I have said that evaluation should be completed in the new year and that validity of tenders will end before the end of February. Therefore, it shall be done within this period of time.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, the new year is twelve months. What I am asking the Minister is a short and simple question. He may not be able to answer it because he has not got the information. I am asking him simply, have the consultants informed his Head of Department the period of time that they are likely to require for the evaluation of the tenders? That is the only question I am asking. Can I have an answer to that?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, yes, it has to be completed before the end of February.

HON P J ISOLA:

Have the consultants told the Government that they will produce an evaluation before the end of February?

MR SPEAKER:

I think the implication is there. If the decision has to be taken before the end of February they must receive their advice from the consultants before that date.

HON P J ISOLA:

May I ask the Minister another question? Will the Government make a decision by the end of February if they haven't got the evaluation of Preece, Cardew and Rider by that date?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Sir, it is not Preece, Cardew and Rider who have to give the evaluation, the Government will get the evaluation before the end of February.

HON P J ISOLA:

How far, can the Minister state, if the evaluation is given by the end of February, the contract says sixty weeks, have the consultants indicated to the Government whether that period of sixty weeks can be met by the contractors having regard to the tenders that they have submitted?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, surely this will be in the evaluation of the tenders received.

HON A J HAYNES:

Who prepared the specifications for the tenders?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

The specifications were prepared by the consultants, Preece, Cardew and Rider in conjunction with the Department.

HON W T SCOTT:

Has the Minister had an assurance from both tenderers to this project that their prices offered in August or September will hold good until February?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Yes, Sir.



THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government give a full explanation of Capacity figures made in a Government statement and published in the Gibraltar Chronicle of the 5th December, 1980, and furthermore give the name-plate and actual output capacity of all the engines at the Generating Station?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The Government statement of the 4th December, 1980, published subsequently in the Gibraltar Chronicle of the 5th December, 1980, gave an available capacity of 14.5 mw, this would rise by an additional 2mw when the remaining 3 skid-mounted generators were connected to the system.

The plant in service consisted of sets 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13 and skid No. 1.

Whereas it is a simple matter to provide the name-plate rating of each unit, this is not so with regards to the in-service capacity which can vary. The capacity of any set depends on various factors since output may have to be limited in order to maintain certain operational parameters such as temperatures and pressures within prescribed limits.

Output also depends on the number of operational hours which a set has run between overhauls, therefore only average figures for in-service capacity can be given.

<u>ENGINE NO.</u>	<u>NAME-PLATE RATING (KW)</u>	<u>IN-SERVICE RATING (KW)</u>
4	750	600
5	800	650
7	800	650
8	1200	1100
9	2650	2000
10	2650	2200
11	2800	*-
12	2800	2200
13	4960	4500
Skid-mounted 1.	650	600

\*This is presently out of commission due to a broken crankshaft.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 359 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

First of all, Mr Speaker, what on earth has happened to Engines Nos. 1, 2 and 3?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, 1, 2, 3 and 6.

HON G T RESTANO:

I asked for 1, 2 and 3. No. 6 was scrapped about eight or ten years' ago.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

No. 6 was scrapped in 1970 during the IWBP Government when there was an accident and they never bothered to replace that engine, but, of course, the Hon Member will not question that. Nos. 1, 2 and 3 have now been scrapped because they were totally unreliable, they were producing only 400mw and they have been replaced by the skid-mounted sets which are much more reliable than the old engines which were in King's Bastion South. Let me say that any parts which are available from Nos. 1, 2 and 3 engines will be cannibalised and used for 5 and 7 engines.

HON G T RESTANO:

When were these three engines scrapped?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Engine No. 2 was scrapped in 1980 and Engines 1 and 3 were scrapped subsequently when the skid-mounted sets were brought into operation.

HON G T RESTANO:

In other words, all three were scrapped this year?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

All three have been scrapped this year because they had been totally unreliable, they give us very little power, they are highly expensive to run and spares have been tremendously difficult to get hold of.

HON G T RESTANO:

What was their capacity?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, their capacity was round about 400 for each engine. No. 6 engine's capacity was slightly higher.

HON G T RESTANO:

That means that 1.2 or 1.3 is what we have lost and we have gained the skid-mounted generators. In the Government statement we were led to believe that the skid-mounted generators produced 3mw each, how is it then that three only add up to 2mw?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the four skid-mounted generators running at peak will produce 750 but certainly what we try to do with most engines is to run them below their peak rating and they are running somewhere in the region of 600 to 650 for each skid generator. The Hon Mr Restano is trying to give a little turn to the situation. Nos. 1, 2 and 3 Engines were totally unreliable, for most of the time they were out of commission and were producing nothing at all.

HON G T RESTANO:

All I can say, Mr Speaker, is that that is certainly not the information that I received in front of the Minister when I visited the Generating Station last year.

HON P J ISOLA:

When the Government announced the importation of skid generators to improve the generating capacity of the station, can I ask why they did not announce that in fact Engines Nos. 1, 2 and 3 which have a 1.2mW capacity, had become useless and were no longer available to the public. Why was that not announced?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Engines 1, 2 and 3 were practically useless, they had given us very, very little help.

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked a simple question, why did not Government announce the fact that the three engines had been scrapped?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, it was certainly not relevant to the announcement.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Minister then another question. Did the Preece, Cardew and Rider Report recommend the scrapping of engines Nos. 1 to 8?

MR SPEAKER:

No, I will not allow that question.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can I put it another way. Does the Government consider it a satisfactory situation for Gibraltar, with a peak demand of 14.6mW when it is really cold, that with the skid generators the generating capacity should only be 16mW, having regard to the fact that when a gasket slips a bit of fluid or something goes wrong we are all subjected to power cuts, does the Government consider that a satisfactory situation for the people of Gibraltar to be in?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

As I said before, at the moment we have 14.5mW. We shall get an extra 2mW from the other skid-mounted engines and apart from this we have No. 11 engine which has been out of action due to a broken crankshaft. It is in the process of being re-assembled and it will be in commission from the middle to the end of January and this will produce another 2.2mW. This will mean a spare capacity from the point of view that the Member was talking about, of roughly, 4.2mW.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the position, as far as Gibraltar is concerned, that if Engine No. 13, which carry our best wishes at all times, if Engine No. 13 stops, is not the position that there must then inevitably be power cuts if it is cold and it is winter? From the figures given by the Government in the Gibraltar Chronicle would not that result in a drop of generating capacity of 4.9mW?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, Sir, there are various answers to this. First of all, as I said before, No. 11 is coming back, the skids will be in operation and not only that there is, as you well know and I have mentioned before in the House, a reduction of voltage which gives us extra power so should No. 5 go out and should No. 13 go out the others should be able to compensate for No. 13.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask the Hon Minister another question, the answer to which we will listen to very carefully. Can the Minister confidently inform the people of Gibraltar, once the skid generators are working, that they will get no more power cuts of an hour or an hour and a half? And if he cannot give us that promise, is that not because, basically, the Government has not got enough generating capacity for the needs of the population and for the needs of providing them with continuous power supply which we are all entitled to?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the Opposition are as unpredictable as women.

HON P J ISOLA:

The Minister should know.

HON DR R G VALARINO:

The Hon Member is talking about No. 13 but we could be able to cover No. 13 but that does not mean to say that another engine could be out at the same time and this could mean a shortfall in the electricity produced and therefore I cannot give the Hon Member the guarantee that he is asking for.

HON P J ISOLA:

In other words, will the Minister state that the position will not be as it was, for example, in 1976 and 1977 when power cuts, except in relation to industrial disputes, were unthinkable and did not occur. Am I right in asking the Minister that all he can give assurances to the people of Gibraltar is that the Government will do what it can to keep a continuous supply but of course Gibraltar must recognise that that is not possible in the circumstances of Gibraltar, that guarantees are not possible because the Government does not have enough generating capacity to provide for breakdowns in their various engines?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, the Government will do all in its power not to have power cuts but in no system can any Government say categorically that there are not going to be any power cuts and that engines are not going to develop faults. This is impossible.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is Government proud of its record?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

17.12.80

NO. 360 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government explain why the skid-mounted generators are as yet not operational given the fact that Government predicted that they would be soon after their arrival?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The first set of the skid-mounted generators has been operational since 24th November, 1980. The other three sets and transformers were sited on the 17th November, 1980. Preparatory work for final operation involved the control and protection wiring to the main switchboard at King's Bastion, the laying and connecting of fuel and fuel return pipe lines and the connection of the main power cables.

Some of this work was put in hand soon after the sets were brought on to site but industrial problems arose which delayed the work so that actual running and commissioning could not commence until the 11th December, 1980.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 360 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, this industrial action that the Minister speaks of, was no planning done with the workers at the Generating Station when the sets were ordered in order to avoid this sort of situation, were they not consulted in any way?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, I think it would be grossly unfair for me to go into an industrial dispute which has been solved, Sir.

HON G T RESTANO:

What I asked was, was there no planning done through the committee which has been set up in the Department in order to avoid problems, was this committee not consulted when the skid-mounted generators were acquired?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Neither the Department nor I can foresee any possibility that arises and any twist that can arise in the conditions.

HON G T RESTANO:

Is the Minister then saying that there was no consultation with the staff?

MR SPEAKER:

Let us not digress from the subject matter of the question.

HON P J ISOLA:

How much rent has been paid so far in respect of generators that are not operational?

HON DR R G VALARINO:

Mr Speaker, there are two things I would like to say. I would like to say that skid No. 1 is already working, skid No. 4 started working two days' ago and producing 600/650, skid No. 2 started working two days' ago and producing 600/650, skid No. 3 should be working today. The second part of the question, this is a completely different question, it has nothing to do with the original question and I need notice of it.

NO. 361 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

In view of the length of time before the new Girls' Comprehensive School is completed, would Government consider installing Instant Shower Heaters in the St Joseph's Annexe at the John Mackintosh Hall as a temporary measure?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

As the Girls' Comprehensive School is likely to be transferred to new premises in 1982 it is not felt appropriate to put in hand at this stage the installation of a hot water supply to the existing shower facilities in the St Joseph's Annexe at the John Mackintosh Hall.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 361 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr Speaker, I was merely asking for an instant shower heater. There is no hot water supply, it uses the same cold water and the water is only heated because there is an element in the heater. I am not asking for a whole installation. Would Government consider these temporary instant shower heaters?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

The Government will not consider it. The Girls' Comprehensive School has been like this for the past 14 years during which part of the time the Hon Leader of the Opposition was the Minister responsible for the Department of Education.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does the Minister not consider progress as part of his duties in a Department?

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.



17.12.80

NO. 362 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can the Minister for Education state how many qualified Nursery Teachers there are in our First Schools?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

There are sufficient numbers of Burnham qualified teachers who have specialised in the education of reception class children to teach all the classes of 4/5 year old pupils in our First Schools. Qualified Nursery Teachers (ie Nursery Nursing Education Board qualifications) can be employed only in Government Nursery Schools as they are not qualified in the sense of the Burnham Report for appointment in schools.

THE HON A T LODDO

Will Government consider granting the same subsidy to all school-children who are at present in receipt of subsidised school transport?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Subsidised transport is now based on public transport rates and in all cases, except Catalan Bay children of Middle and Secondary age and secondary boys attending Bayside Comprehensive School living south of a line from the bottom of Witham's Road to the Casino, parents are paid by cheque at the beginning of each term the equivalent of two out of the four journeys which need to be undertaken by pupils each day. In the case of the secondary boys attending Bayside School, Government pay for just one journey out of the four which need to be undertaken by pupils each day and a coach is hired at Government expense for the middle and secondary age children at Catalan Bay. It is intended, however, to provide for a 50% subsidy based on public transport rates to be paid to parents in the future in respect of all entitled children.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 363 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

Mr. Speaker, why should certain children be treated differently?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I presume that the Hon Member refers to the Catalan Bay children. This is an acquired right going back to the landslide days when we did not have a road there and this is why we intend to bring the whole question on the same basis.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the answer that everybody is going to be the same in the future or not?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

This is what we intend to do.

17.12.80

NO. 364 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Considering that the Adventure Play Leader has now been in Gibraltar for 7 months, can Government state when he will be engaged in the actual adventure playground?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

Following the Adventure Playleader's arrival in April, the first three months were spent in making all the necessary preparations and plans for the establishment of the adventure playground. After it was decided not to relocate the project at an alternative site, permission to proceed with the development of the original site was obtained at the end of July. Since that time the Adventure Playleader has been actively engaged in developing the site, acquiring essential equipment, tools and materials, fencing, storage accommodation, insurance and other requirements. At the beginning of September he started to work on a regular basis at the adventure playground and during the Autumn Term the playground has been operating for six days each week after school hours and on Saturdays. Average attendance during this period has been approximately sixty children per session. The Adventure Playleader is currently engaged in progressing the project by the acquisition and construction on the site of a suitable building for use as a play centre and by developing all other areas of work associated with the site, management and future development of the adventure playground.

17.12.80

NO. 365 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can Government say how many teachers there are at present in the following categories:

- a) Qualified Teachers
- b) Unqualified Teachers
- c) Part time Teachers
- d) Full time Supply Teachers, and
- e) Contract Teachers?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

At the present time there are 279 teachers employed in schools by the Department of Education of which 244 are qualified in the sense of the Burnham Report and the remaining 35 are unqualified. Of the total of 279 teachers, 11 are part-time, and 8 are full-time contract teachers. There are currently 4 full-time unqualified supply teachers.

NO. 366 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Will Government take the necessary steps to ensure that those cleaners who had a record of employment with the Education Department and who were recently excluded due to the method of selection chosen, are re-instated?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

As stated in the written answer to Question No. 258/1980, the method used to draw up the list of supply char-women was considered to be the fairest way of dealing with the matter in view of the number of ladies who were interested at the time. However, I am prepared to look into the possibility of adding to the list the names of those ladies who were previously excluded due to the method of selection chosen at the time.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 366 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

I am grateful to the Minister and I hope that once he has considered this he will find that he will be able not only to include those cleaners, 6 or 7, that were excluded, to include them in the list but also, perhaps, include them and categorise them in a way that they should be categorised, say, from 6 to 12. I hope the Minister will have due regard of this.

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I have said that I am prepared to look into the possibility of adding their names to the list, I shall do it the way I want to do it and not the way Mr Scott wants to do it.

HON P J ISOLA:

Could I ask the Minister if it is his intention or the Government's intention to perpetuate the system of selection of people in the public service by casting lots? Is that to be part of Government policy in the future?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

Mr Speaker, I do not think the Hon Leader of the Opposition is quite aware of what we are talking about. We are not talking about permanent people working in our schools, we are talking of people who are on a waiting list to supply when someone goes on leave or is sick. We are not talking of employing people on a permanent basis.

HON P J ISOLA:

Will this system be used, for example, with supply teachers? If there are more people who want to be teachers on supply than there are vacancies, will the Minister follow the same course or will the Director of Education use his discretion?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

My Department would consult with the GTA just as they consulted the TGWU with regard to the charwomen.

HON P J ISOLA:

May I ask the Minister that if the GTA should agree on a method of selection for supply teachers by lot, whether the Department will implement it?

MR SPEAKER:

That is a hypothetical question.

HON W T SCOTT:

Will the consideration which the Minister hopes to make be made earlier rather than later, can the Minister say that?

HON MAJOR F J DELLIPIANI:

I always make my considerations earlier rather than later.

THE HON W T SCOTT

What areas are being refurbished to accommodate families which the Housing Allocation Committee has recommended should be housed on social grounds and furthermore what is the total number of units and how many families have been so categorised?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

21 units are being provided at 49/51 Town Range, commonly known as the ex RASC Bakery, to accommodate families on the social cases list.

There are 46 families on this list at present.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 367 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Does the Government intend refurbishing any other premises to house, on the figures that the Minister has just given, the balance of 25 people on social grounds?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Government does not intend to provide particular premises or construct or refurbish, what Government will do is that on the vacancies arising of pre-war accommodation, those remaining social cases will be hopefully accommodated as and when vacancies arise in the pre-war category.

HON W T SCOTT:

Does the Minister have any idea what other areas might be available in the short term to Government precisely to refurbish them for people of this nature?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I have no idea of the area, Mr Speaker, what I can say to the Hon Member is that as houses become vacant normally we end up at the end of the exercise with pre-war accommodation which is suitable for social cases.

HON A J HAYNES:

Can the Minister give some indication of the length of time spent waiting classified as a social case of the longest standing members of the 47 you said are listed?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I have not got with me information to give the exactitude as to how long people on the social cases have been on the list. I would remind the Hon Member that it was about this time last year that we gave out 41 units at the Filipino Hostel so I would assume that the people we are talking of possibly could be people who have been on the social list for 2 or 3 years but I would not wish to be pegged down to that because there could be the odd cases who have been longer and have not wanted the Filipino Hostel.

HON A J HAYNES:

Surely, Mr Speaker, when somebody is classified as a social case or someone who needs housing on social grounds, there is a sense of urgency in that and will Government ensure that people who are classified as social cases and are recommended for housing on those grounds, that those people find somewhere as soon as possible?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, we do our utmost to try and accommodate not only the social cases that are 2 or 3 years waiting but even people who have been waiting for much longer periods and are not social cases. However, we do try to accommodate them as best we can but there is a housing problem.



THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state whether the modernisation programme at Tank Ramp, Willis's Area and Lime Kiln Steps will house more people than before?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Yes, Sir, it will.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 368 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

How many?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Sir, in answer to Question 270 it was stated that the number of families housed and subsequently decanted in these areas was 43 ie, 11 from Tank Ramp, 13 from the Willis's Area and 19 from Lime Kiln Steps. The number of families which will be accommodated after modernisation is 54, made up as follows:- 16 at Tank Ramp, 9 in the Willis's Area, and 29 in Lime Kiln Steps.

HON A J HAYNES:

How many of these 54 families will be two-member families in the bedsitters?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

That, Mr Speaker, I cannot say and I will remind the Hon Member that you cannot say that two bedrooms is for two members. There are instances where a family, husband and wife and two children of equal sex would obtain 3RKB, on the other hand the same amount of people with a different sex would be 4RKB. One cannot specify exactly the number of people, it will be the number of families housed adequately.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, since one can say of a two-bedroomed house that maybe it will house two people or maybe it will house three, depending on the composition of that family, you can say that that flat will not be given to a family with more constituent parts.

MR SPEAKER:

That is a hypothetical question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, when one builds a house which has got three rooms it is fair to assume that since it is designed to have one bedroom or two bedrooms or whatever, one can safely say we will allow either a 3-person family or a 5-person family to live here. What I am asking for is the 54 units must have an optimum maximum number and also a minimum number and if they are, what are those two numbers? Can he give me an indication as to whether these 54 families are 54 10-person families or 54 small families?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I don't think the Hon Member understood what I said earlier on. One cannot say that and I repeat it and I hope I make myself understood. There are instances where a 2-bedroomed flat which is a 3RKB, we are talking of bedrooms but a family is entitled to have one or two people sleeping in the same bedroom. Two people of the same sex can share a bedroom but in instances if they are of different sex then they require a single bedroom each so therefore you can have a family composition of, say, four, ie husband, wife, son and daughter, they would require a 4RKB, whereas a husband, wife, two daughters and one son would be 4RKB. Probably if the Hon Member can come to my office I will explain in detail.

HON A J HAYNES:

I find the term '54 families' as opposed to 43 families may be misleading.

MR SPEAKER:

The answer you are being given is that due to the conditions under which the houses are going to be allocated to families of different composition he cannot give you the information you have asked for.

HON J BOSSANO:

Can the Minister confirm, in fact, that the whole question of the housing list is treated as family units so that the number of housing applicants is not related to the number of individuals in the family? We are talking about the number of units required and the number of people on the waiting list, we are not talking about individuals but family units.

HON P J ISOLA:

Is the position then that instead of 43 housing units there would be 54 housing units so that these developments that have taken and continue to take a long time are going to improve the housing stock of Gibraltar by 11 units and is the Government satisfied with this performance?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Government is very satisfied, Mr Speaker, and I would ask the Hon and Learned Leader of the Opposition to pay a visit to the areas that have been modernised and to see what were previously slums turned into very attractive housing and people are very satisfied with the return they are getting.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, that may be so but it hardly helps the position of the large number of people on the waiting list.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, let me preface this question by saying that I should declare an interest since subsequent to asking this question I have been approached to handle some cases which do seem to be similar to the one I am referring to.

Will Government undertake to have a full report made by the Family Care Unit before issuing legal proceedings for eviction in order to avoid any repetition of the case involving Mrs Sookraj?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

The Housing Department requests reports from the Family Care Unit of the Department of Labour and Social Security on alleged social cases, and these, when received, are considered by the Housing Advisory Committee who make recommendations to the Housing Allocation Committee and/or the Minister for Housing.

In the case of Mrs Sookraj (nee Bebeagua) and her four children, the Housing Department was informed by the Police, on 6 August, 1980, that they had recently arrived from UK, and were at 33A Town Range-4.

As Mrs Sookraj was not an authorised person to reside in these premises a Notice under Section 223A of the Criminal Offences Ordinance was served upon her on 12 August, 1980, requesting and requiring her to leave the premises within 24 hours after service of the Notice. Mrs Sookraj failed to comply with the Notice so the case was referred to the Law Officers' Department for necessary action.

An Order for Possession was obtained in the Supreme Court on 12 September, 1980, but in view of the particular circumstances of the case it has not yet been enforced.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 369 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, that does not really answer my question, what I am saying is if the Police do come and inform the Housing Department that there is a squatter or they allege there is a squatter then before the Housing Department gives notice to the Attorney-General, shouldn't they go to the Family Care Unit to enquire because we are talking about making people homeless and Government is not a landlord without a social conscience.

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked whether before any action is taken to evict people whether a report from the Family Care Unit should be sought.

HON A J CANEPA:

As the Minister responsible for the Family Care Unit I should warn the House that it may not be a straightforward matter for the Family Care Unit to prepare a report at the drop of a hat, they are involved in investigating many social cases. I do not know whether what the Hon Member is proposing is that they should drop the work that is being carried out on all the other social cases and investigate this one to the detriment of the other social cases who may be waiting for an investigation for 6 or 7 months.

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, it is apparent to me that the Government are not satisfied with the machinery which took Mrs Sookraj to the brink of eviction and that is why, having gone through all the process of getting an Order to get her out, they have not acted on it.

MR SPEAKER:

We are debating and I must not allow that to happen. You must ask a question.

HON A J HAYNES:

Let me repeat the question, I believe that there may be some difficulties as outlined by the Member but I believe that there is a need to consider proposals along these lines and I ask the Government at least for some measure. I have now two cases which are going in exactly the same way. I only hope that as in the case of Mrs Sookraj they will be stopped.

MR SPEAKER:

We are debating and we must not do this at question time.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I am baffled, quite honestly, by the Hon Mr Haynes' attitude because if in the case of Mrs Sookraj . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

I must make the same observation to you as I made to Mr Haynes. You are being asked whether you are prepared to get a report from the Family Care Unit, yes or no? It is as simple as that.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

With respect, Sir, it could be yes or no. In these circumstances all social cases are investigated by the Family Care Unit but if somebody comes from the United Kingdom and goes into premises and it is brought to our attention . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

You are being asked whether before taking a decision to evict or not to evict, whether you are prepared to get a report from the Family Care Unit?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, as Minister for Housing I am not prepared to do it. I do not think we can allow people to come, take up accommodation, and expect sympathy when other people in similar circumstances are not being afforded housing.

HON P J ISOLA:

I think what my Hon and Learned Colleague is trying to ask the Government is to use a bit of compassion in this type of case. Will the Government not put the machinery of eviction automatically into process without making some sort of inquiry as to the circumstances for the situation that has arisen in the same way as the Government does, I believe, in a lot of other areas in Gibraltar?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the answer is no. I cannot allow people to take the law into their own hands. I am not prepared to accept that.

17.12.80

NO. 370 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government ensure that every effort is made to find an alternative site/s for clothes lines at Varyl Begg?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Representations have been received from tenants at Varyl Begg and the matter is being considered.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 370 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Did not the Government envisage this problem on the Varyl Begg Estate and did they not make any contingency arrangement for clothes to be hung by the tenants of the Estate?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, there are other Estates that have not got drying areas, not that I say that Varyl Begg Estate should not have them but the matter is now being brought to light and it is being considered.

HON P J ISOLA:

That contingency did not come into the consideration of the Government until the tenants have started shouting about it, is that the position?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, this matter was considered. We knew very well that the pitched roofs would be depriving the tenants of drying areas and the matter is being looked at to try and alleviate the situation.

HON P J ISOLA:

But the position is that although the Government knew that the tenants would be deprived of drying areas they nevertheless did not address their attention to providing them with alternative drying areas until they have started shouting at the fact that they have been deprived, is that the position?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, our main priority was to try and stop the leaking roofs, the drying areas were secondary in our consideration.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Will Government state whether or not the Housing Department are consulted as to their housing composition requirements in respect of Housing projects to be undertaken by the Public Works Department and what is the nature of such consultation?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

The Housing Department is consulted by the Public Works Department in respect of the desirable mix at the planning stage of housing projects, and there is good liaison between the Public Works Department staff and the Housing staff on this matter before plans are put forward for approval.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 371 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Mr Speaker, I cannot believe that this is so. This comes back to supplementaries to Question No. 368 which we have just discussed earlier on. I am asking whether, though Mr Bossano talks about families and not people, I think that it is important when one talks of families . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

We must not make the subject matter of each question a debate.

HON A J HAYNES:

What is the optimum family number that the Housing Department try and have? What numerical composition is the most common in families?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

It depends entirely, Sir. If houses are being built in a particular area, the liaison between Housing and Public Works Department is that if we want to decant another building so that the modernisation programme can continue then, of course, we look at the new building to try and house what we are trying to decant. This is the way it goes. If it is not going to be used for decanting purposes then one would look as to whether we require more bedsitters, do we require in a given area three rooms, four rooms, and that is the kind of liaison that we have.

HON J BOSSANO:

Is it in fact the case that the Housing Department knows how many units of each size it requires for the number of people on the waiting list and is this information made available to the Public Works Department when they plan the houses they need to build? That, I think, is the information the Hon Mr Haynes is asking for.



HON H J ZAMMITT:

I think I have answered that in my general reply, Mr Speaker.

NO. 372 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Can the Minister for Sport say what made him accept elected representatives to his Sports Committee as opposed to nominated ones?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

During my visit to UK I called upon the Department of the Environment (Ministry for Sport) and the Sports Council.

I was advised that the setting up of a Gibraltar Sports Council could only be achieved by:-

- i) The nomination of members by the Minister for Sport
- ii) Members should be completely independent of any sport.

Under the circumstances and requirements of Gibraltar the advice given was for the formation of a Committee, which should not be called "Sports Council", drawn up of members either nominated by the Minister for Sport or elected representatives of Associations having direct concern with facilities afforded by Government.

With this in view a meeting was held with the Chairman of the Gibraltar Sports Federation and it was agreed that the Executive Committee of the Federation (7 in total) would be nominated to serve on the Gibraltar Sports Committee.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 372 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I just ask the Minister whether the Government proposes to introduce a motion in the House to revert the decision of the House at the last meeting on the issue of the Sports Committee? The House has resolved the sort of Sports Committee we should have.

NO. 373 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Why cannot students from the Boys' Comprehensive School use the showering facilities at the Victoria Stadium?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Students from the Boys' Comprehensive School using the indoor playing facilities can and do use the showers available to users of the indoor facilities at the Victoria Stadium Sports Centre. Students using the outdoor playing facilities use the showering facilities within the school. In order that students could use the 'outdoor' showers at the Stadium, as from 9 am, it would be necessary to rearrange the cleaning schedule, change the cleaner's conditions of service and engage one additional part-time cleaner.

The school is studying the positioning and cost of additional showering facilities within the school premises and proposes to request that provision be made in the 1981/82 Estimates.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 373 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

But why should they make provision in the school when you have already got provision in the Victoria Stadium?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member referred to the Stadium staff as the "empire" and if the Hon Member wants to inflate the empire more then we have to change the cleaning duties of this particular cleaner in the outdoor facilities and engage another part-time cleaner and have to change their conditions of service, ie from 7 to 9 am, then from 2 pm to 4 pm and from 4 pm to 5 pm so as to allow the facilities to be used not only by schools but by consecutive sport that commences at the Stadium after 5 pm and thereby enlarging the empire at the Stadium which is so highly criticised.

HON W T SCOTT:

I would have thought, Mr Speaker, that on this particular question the priority of Government would have been to make as much use of the Stadium as possible?

MR SPEAKER:

We are not discussing that.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does not the Minister accept that if there are showering facilities there and there are people using the Victoria Stadium, they should be allowed to use the showering facilities and is not the position that the Minister should arrange the allocation or disposition of the staff to enable that to be done?

MR SPEAKER:

The Minister has said that but he says that he needs extra funds and until such time as they are voted he cannot implement it. That is the way I have read the answer.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I said that the "empire" at the Stadium had been so highly criticised that here is one case that if a service is wanted it has to be provided at the expense of being called a "kingdom" or an "empire".

NO. 374 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A T LODDO

Why cannot schoolchildren make use of the Stadium facilities during all the school hours?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

It is not possible for schoolchildren to make use of all the Stadium facilities during all the school hours because essential maintenance has to be carried out to the playing facilities. It is considered necessary, practicable and more economical to carry out weekday maintenance during normal working hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 374 OF 1980

HON A T LODDO:

One would think, would not the Minister agree, that since school starts at 9 am it would seem a bit silly to have the sporting activities at school start at 10 am instead of at 9 am? I know I am again pressing on his empire but I would like an answer. Doesn't the Minister agree that it would be more reasonable to start sporting activities in school at 9 am considering that the Sports Stadium was primarily focussed on the use to be made of it by school children?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, for the information of the Hon Member, the Stadium is open to schools as from 9 am. The outdoor playing facilities are available from 9 am. The indoor playing facilities are available as from 10 am. This is on account of the cleaning requirements because the Stadium is used until very late at night and accordingly it has to be cleaned up between the hours of 8 am to 10 am but the outdoor playing facilities are available to the schools as from 9 am.

NO. 375 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

Will Government introduce breathalyser tests for drivers suspected of being under the influence of drink?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

At present there is no evidence to suggest a need for this type of test equipment in Gibraltar but the matter is under constant review.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 375 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

I think, Mr Speaker, since the question was drafted, and reading today's Chronicle, it should perhaps be not breathalyser tests but electronic breath testing machines. I am surprised with the answer of the Minister that there is no need. I think there is always a need for certain preventive equipment to stop drivers driving under the influence of drink. Would the Minister not consider introducing electronic equipment? One would not need to buy too many of them.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the information I have is that from 1st June to 1st December this year there were 27 cases involving arrests as a result of driving under the influence of drink or drugs. Out of the 27, 19 cases were taken to court, out of those 19 cases, 6 resulted in being acquitted, 1 is awaiting trial and 12 convicted. I do not think one can say that there is a need to have to bring any kind of machinery to test one's incapability of being able to drive. I would say that the situation of the law as it stands in Gibraltar is, to my mind, quite satisfactory at this stage.

HON G T RESTANO:

I would have thought, Mr Speaker, and perhaps the Minister would give me an answer to that, that this depends very much on how active the police are on this matter.

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are now debating.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the Minister has said that there is no need and I am questioning that. On the evidence that he has before him, he says 27 have come up in the last twelve months but surely the reason that there may only have been 27 cases is that the police may not have been actively engaged in stopping people who are driving a bit suspiciously, would the Minister not agree with that?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, Mr Speaker, I cannot agree with that at all. If the Hon Member is aware, the powers of arrest under the breathalyser system is what is known as contributory power of arrest, in other words, the police can only use a breathalyser in the United Kingdom when something has been seen to be wrong in the method of driving. It is not that they can use the breathalyser when people walk down the streets, there must be some circumstances warranting that. In Gibraltar the circumstances are that a person can be under the influence of drink or drugs to such an extent as not to have proper control of the vehicle. The difference between a breathalyser and our test is that you could be stopped with a breathalyser after having had one whisky and have positive results in the breathalyser but you are still not incapable of having proper control of the vehicle. In Gibraltar whether you have had a milk stout or thirty whiskies the question is, is that person able to have proper control of the vehicle and a medical examination takes place and the evidence is given in court and, of course, people are convicted or acquitted.

HON G T RESTANO:

Surely, the Minister must be aware of the comments of the Stipendiary Magistrate who said in a case where he had to acquit a person, that he felt that such type of test would be of great benefit to him when they were brought in front of him by the police.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

This came to my attention but I am told that the Stipendiary Magistrate, although making a comment, was not really pressing for that particular test other than making a passing remark but I think the Hon Attorney-General may be able to enlighten us further on that issue.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

What the Stipendiary Magistrate said was not to suggest the introduction of a breathalyser test. My information is that he was comparing breathalyser testing with our law which is the driving under the influence of drink or drugs law. He was not indicating a preference for the one or the other.

HON G T RESTANO:

Would the Government consider, now it seems to be electronic equipment which does not require the blood and urine tests, would the Government seriously consider now amending the law and using this type of equipment?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Government will always consider any legislation which is to the benefit of the community but I must emphasise that I do not think that Gibraltar's history of driving under the influence is as bad as to warrant a drastic change in our laws.

HON G T RESTANO:

One final question, Mr Speaker. Would the Government, before the next House and perhaps at the next House, inform the House how much this sort of equipment would cost if it were purchased, in other words, make an investigation and let the House know at the next meeting?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Yes, I think I can commit myself to find out what the expenses involved would be.

HON A J HAYNES:

Did the Minister say in his original answer that he had no evidence to show that the present state of the law is unsatisfactory?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, I did not say it was unsatisfactory, what I said was that the circumstances in Gibraltar of being able to establish if a person is under the influence of drink or drugs is slightly different to that of the United Kingdom.

MR SPEAKER:

The original answer was that at present there is no evidence to suggest a need for this type of test.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is the House aware that the British Medical Association in England at the time when the English law was similar to ours, held that the clinical test which is the test that we have now, was unsatisfactory?

MR SPEAKER:

I think we are talking at cross purposes. The Minister said that there is no need for this type of test equipment in Gibraltar, not that the evidence is insufficient.

HON A J HAYNES:

Is the Minister aware of the BMA findings on the clinical tests?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

No, I am not aware of the BMA tests at all, Sir.



HON A J HAYNES:

It might be of some help, since they emphatically state that the clinical tests must be carried out in full and is not sensitive enough to definitively state that somebody is drunk unless that state of drunkenness is quite extreme. Unless you are rolling drunk the clinical tests cannot be 100% sure of finding you to be drunk and that, Sir, I submit, is unsatisfactory and if the Minister agrees that it is unsatisfactory then, perhaps, he will press the matter with more urgency.

HON H. J. ZAMMITT:

I could not possibly say that I agree it is unsatisfactory. My experience in the past is one of coordination, that Doctors have examined individuals, but as I say it is not that one has to be drunk it is under the influence and not to have proper control of the vehicle. One could exaggerate and say that one could be completely drunk and yet have control of the vehicle but that is the evidence that the court must be afforded by the medical officer carrying out the particular test and it is up to the court to accept or refuse the evidence afforded by the medical profession.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, I am quite aware of the legal position as to whether somebody is capable or incapable of driving a car. The court obviously . . .

MR SPEAKER:

If you want some information you are free to ask for the information. This is question time and if we want to debate the question as to which particular test is needed for Gibraltar we can debate that in a motion but at question time we must limit ourselves.

HON A J HAYNES:

Would the House consider it satisfactory to know that as a result of fairly arbitrary medical measures, some people might be convicted innocently and since the offence carries a statutory period of one year's loss of licence, I would ask the House to consider the matter more thoroughly.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, I think, if anything, the evidence as afforded today under our Traffice Ordinance, if anything it goes very much in favour of the person who is pretty well under the influence of drink but it is difficult to substantiate it.

17.12.80

NO. 376 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state why it is not possible for Government to designate selected places for the parking of trailers and why they allow derelict trailers parked in public thoroughfares?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN

17.12.80

NO. 377 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON G T RESTANO

What permanent arrangements does Government intend to implement so that: a) access to the hospital is made absolutely free for doctors and hospital staff, and b) sufficient parking facilities are made available to the general public visiting St Bernard's Hospital?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

Due to absence of space it is not possible to provide additional or further parking facilities to either staff or visitors to St Bernard's Hospital. Since the recent increased police activity, hospital staff have expressed satisfaction at the position. The unsatisfactory position in early November was caused by lack of consideration by visitors to the hospital who were parking vehicles with total disregard to the convenience of others.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 377 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

I take that point but does Government have absolutely no idea as to parking spaces being made available for visitors?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member may recall that Government provided more than 50 parking spaces behind Arengo's Palace.

HON G T RESTANO:

Does the Government think that this is sufficient?

MR SPEAKER:

I think the answer has been made very clear, due to lack of space it is impossible to provide additional parking facilities. Next question.

THE HON W T SCOTT

Can Government state what further legal action it can take with respect to the barrier at Cornwall's Lane having regard to the proceedings it has already instituted?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND SPORT

In the case of the Cornwall's Lane barrier no legal action is necessary as works to comply with the Nuisance Order in question are already in hand.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 378 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Is there a time limit imposed, Mr Speaker, to effect the necessary work?

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I do not know about a time limit, Mr Speaker, all I can say is that the next step in the situation when no action follows a Nuisance Order or a warning letter is to proceed again to the Magistrates' Court under Section 85 with a view to obtaining conviction and a fine. I do not know if it is a month or three weeks. I am told that the work is in hand.

HON W T SCOTT:

The point is that we have had Nuisance Orders of this nature so, I understand, many times before and that certain landlords comply only to a very minor extent and thus procrastinate the time element involved. I am looking for a time period within which the repairs can be effected.

HON H J ZAMMITT:

I am afraid I haven't got the information, Mr Speaker, but I will find out and I will inform the Hon Member.

HON ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Perhaps I could assist. A Nuisance Order would have a time limit specified in it. If one reached the point where and one does not always reach the point, but if one did reach the point where the Magistrates' Court proceedings were not efficacious, there is power to go to the Supreme Court as we have done in the past but that is a step we would take if we thought it was necessary on the facts of the case.

17.12.80

NO. 379 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state why the Post Office needs to rent or hire transport to carry out its services and how much this is costing?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN

17.12.80

NO. 380 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

In view of the obvious need of good political public relations for Gibraltar in the United Kingdom will Government consider extending the activities of the Gibraltar Office in London in this direction?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN

17.12.80

NO. 381 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what it is estimated will represent in money the commission due to be paid to Bermans in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year respectively after the £20,000 already paid to them have been recouped?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN

17.12.80

NO. 382 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state how much in cash the 5% commission to be paid to Bermans on the sales of souvenirs is estimated will amount to yearly and for how long will Government have to carry on paying this commission?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN



17.12.80

NO. 383 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state how much Government will be paying Bermans for the maintenance of the exhibitions at St Michael's Cave, Upper Galleries and the Tower of Homage and how many persons will be travelling how many times a year at Government expense to carry out the maintenance?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN

17.12.80

NO. 384 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state judging by hotel occupancy so far how the  
Tourist Trade is doing this winter?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN

17.12.80

NO. 385 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can Government state what is the forecast from the Tourist Trade this coming summer based on the bookings received up to now?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN

17.12.80

NO. 386 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON MAJOR R J PELIZA

Can the acting Minister for Tourism state if he has made any progress in connection with the formation of a Tourist Advisory Board?

QUESTION WITHDRAWN

NO. 387 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government consider re-defining the parking areas available to the residents of Schomberg by altering the angle of these parking bays with a view to increasing the number of these bays?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the existing standard parking bay must be able to accommodate both large and small vehicles, it is doubtful whether, by adjusting the angle of parking, extra spaces will be achieved, bearing in mind that vehicles must have sufficient room to manoeuvre into and out of the bays.

Furthermore, in case of emergencies, fire etc, the access lane must be wide enough to allow a quick escape. The adjustment of the angle of parking to accommodate more cars would reduce the width of the access road and would give rise to a lowering of safety standards.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 387 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, Sir, the Minister did say it was doubtful. Would the Minister take steps, in fact, to ensure either the one or the other, that there is no doubt, that there is room for more parking spaces or that there is not room for more parking spaces, that is what I am asking the Minister.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

As I have said it is considered that it will give hardly any extra room and this will be considerably offset to the detriment by the lack of manoeuvrability and access space. I am still willing to look at it further but I don't think that very much will come out of it.

17.12.80

NO. 388 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government confirm that the water cistern at Anderson House has been cleaned and is now operational?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the underground cistern at Anderson House has been cleaned and was certified ready for use on 14th November, 1980. The electric water pump has been repaired and is now functioning.

17.12.80

NO. 389 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, what further progress can Government report on with respect to the completion and handing over of the new Public Works Garage?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, a Partial Completion Certificate was issued for the 28 November, 1980. This covered the Main Building only and was subject to the completion of outstanding items.

It should be noted that partial handover of areas of the building were effected in August to allow Public Works Department to instal plinths and bases for machine tools and erect work benches - this is continuing.

It is anticipated that full completion will be in mid January when the external area will be completed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 389 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Will the Minister confirm to this House that the delay in the completion of the Public Works Garage will not adversely affect the completion of the Girls' Comprehensive School?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I should think it will not make any difference.

NO. 390 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government state the cost of constructing the two small benches and the flowerbed at Governor's Parade and will Government consider reprovding this historical 'ball-playing' area elsewhere within the same vicinity?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the works at the small Piazza, Governor's Parade, included the manufacture of two replica concrete seats to match the existing ones, a small flowerbed and repairs to the surrounding paving including the replacement of a defective manhole. On completion, all the seats in the Piazza were painted.

The works were charged to the General Road Maintenance Vote but from records of labour distribution, the order of cost was £350.

The works were undertaken after the residents of the properties surrounding the Piazza complained about the misuse of the area. Consequently, the reprovision of the 'ball-playing' area is not under consideration.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 390 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, I understand from my Hon Colleague on my right who is a resident that he didn't complain. Am I to take it that the Government has been selective in listening to complaints?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

We were given a letter which a reasonable number of people had written in complaining that that area was being used, in their view, to its detriment for the playing of football etc, and they asked that something might be done to prevent it by notices or whatever you would like to do, being put up to stop ball playing. If the Hon Mr Restano enjoys ball playing there then I am afraid he will have to go somewhere else instead.

HON W T SCOTT:

Mr Speaker, this area has been used precisely for that purpose and other playing purposes, in fact, by children historically now for generations and I think that Government should have considered this point.



HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I would not say that it has been used for generations. Since it was made, a little Piazza it was never intended to be a ball playing area, it was intended to be a beautiful little area in Gibraltar perhaps with open air cafes. I don't think the idea of open air cafes and a ball playing area are very compatible.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, but since there isn't any cafe or any other area does not Government . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

No, we are not going to debate whether the place should be used for a ball playing area.

HON P J ISOLA:

What we are asking is whether he should reprovide it. Did the Minister consult with the Childrens' Union?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The Childrens' Union did not make any representations.

HON G T RESTANO:

The Minister did say that the cost was £350. Is this the overall total cost of just the materials or the materials used and labour?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Materials used is not very great, Sir, it is only a small quantity of cement for the actual making. It is basically the labour, I should say it is about £300 labour and £50 material.

HON G T RESTANO:

I wonder whether the Minister is correct there because I think they were working there for at least a month and I can't see two people working there full time for a month at least only getting £300. Would the Minister make inquiries about that because on top of that you have got the materials cost.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, my figures are taken from the work sheets. I do not think it is accurate to say that two men were working there full time for a month. There was a considerable period of time in which no work was being done, they had all cleared off for Ramadam but, of course, there was the hole in the centre of the Piazza.

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government state what defects have been found in the completed works at Casemates Hostel?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, certain defects have been found in the completed works at Casemates Hostel. These can be split into 4 headings:

- (a) Those defects caused either wholly or partially by the Contractor.
- (b) Those caused as a result of unforeseen circumstances.
- (c) Those caused by the occupants themselves.
- (d) Those caused by vandalism.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 391 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, can the Government say what is being done about the defects caused by the Contractor, are these being put right by the Contractor?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes, Sir, the works by the contractor in the dormitories, there was flaking paint of the ceilings and walls, this is actually being contested at the moment between the Public Works and the contractor. If appears that it was caused by rain water percolating through the roof structure to the upper dormitories and both rain water and salt water percolating through the balconies at first floor level. The contractor maintains the problems in the upper dormitories is through inherent dampness within the roof structures which has resulted from several years of rain water penetrating the exposed roof areas. Public Works partly agrees with this but also believe that some of the rain water has percolated into the structure since the constructor has been in possession of the site. The flat roof was completely exposed between August, 1979 and January, 1980 due to late arrival of the roof sheets. Welded floors lifting in isolated areas of the vynl sheet flooring, this is being repaired. The plastic laminate is lifting to some of the work tops in the kitchens, doors and windows are sticking and require easing and adjusting. Slight leaks on water pipes have been found and these are currently being repaired by the contractor under the maintenance period.

HON J BOSSANO:

In fact, Mr Speaker, can the Hon Member say what sort of inspection there is in completed contracts before the Government accepts it because we seem to be facing situations, the Hon Member would agree, that we seem to have a situation where there is tendency for Government contractors to apparently finish work that is not up to the standard the Government requires.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The normal situation, Sir, is that work is taken at its face value for a certificate of completion but there is usually a one year or at least a 6 month maintenance period and if any faults arise in that time they are then laid at the contractor's door and the onus is on him to replace or repair anything that is wrong. It is obvious, for example, that certain things will appear at face value to be alright on day one but because the workmanship has not been as good as it should have been, perhaps, by day 80 or 90 then the faults begin to appear. They are then laid at the contractor's door and under the maintenance arrangement he has to repair them at his expense.

17.12.80

NO. 392 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government give an explanation for the inordinate delay in executing the present road works at King's Yard Lane?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, King's Yard Lane is now open to vehicular traffic. Delays in completion occurred as a result of the complexity of existing services which were encountered during the course of the excavations for the new sewer. \*Some of the existing service pipes were very old and fractured, when disturbed, so that repairs were constantly having to be made as the work proceeded, resulting in an over-run to the original period of 18 weeks envisaged and as arranged for the road closure. The finished surfacing will not be laid until settlement of the excavations has taken place - normally a period of about 6 months. It is not in the Question, Sir, but I don't think there is any inordinate delay.

NO. 393 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government undertake to clean and restore the historic pathway to the Upper Rock from Devil's Gap Steps?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Yes, Sir, it is proposed to clean up this area before Christmas. Further repairs required will be carried out early in the new year.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 393 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Why has Government allowed it to become so dilapidated and even dangerous?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

There are many areas in the Upper Rock, Sir, which are in need of repair and it is not possible, with the rather limited labour force that we have, to do all of them all the time. This is the reason that some of them fall into disrepair but we try to keep up as best we can.

HON A J HAYNES:

Would not the Government agree that it is cheaper to maintain something tidy which has not been destroyed rather than having to go through the expense of refurbishing it completely once it has gone to ruin?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think that is a question that might be debatable, Sir.

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government give an account of the works undertaken at Casola Buildings since 16th November, 1980?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Yes, Sir, the works undertaken at Casola's Buildings since 16th November, 1980, are as follows:-

- (a) Placing of 14 in No. new tarpaulins on the roof.
- (b) Empty flats have been sealed off.
- (c) Make safe measures have been carried out to all corridors in danger.
- (d) Partial rehabilitation of communal toilets to allow for sanitary use.
- (e) Due to strong gale winds on 8th December, 1980, all tarpaulins on the roof had to be refixed.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 394 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

No internal work, I take it, has been done, then? Is any envisaged?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

The communal toilets, I don't know if you want to call those internal and the corridors in danger also might be considered internal. There were representations by one tenant and an inspection with a view to effecting repairs for the kitchen and corridor was carried out. However, the tenant later declined to allow for these safe measures to be taken.

HON A J HAYNES:

When these abandoned flats were sealed were they emptied of rubbish first?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

That I couldn't say, Sir. I will inquire and let the Hon Questioner know.

17.12.80

NO. 395 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, can Government state what figures it has available, as at 30th November, 1980, for job vacancies?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr Speaker, on 30th November, 1980, the Department of Labour and Social Security had 23 notified job vacancies. By 10th December three of these vacancies had been filled, six cancelled and a further five opened, leaving a balance of 19.

NO. 396 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, can Government give a breakdown of unemployment figures in the different categories as at 30th November, 1980?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, unemployment figures as at end of November, 1980, were as follows:-

<u>BRITISH</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>
Adults	:	Males	64
		Females	<u>42</u>
			106
Juveniles	:	Males	13
		Females	<u>28</u>
			41
			147
 <u>ALIENS</u>			
Adults	:	Males	107
		Females	<u>14</u>
			121
			<u>121</u>
			<u>268</u>

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 396 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

I see that there is quite an increase, Mr Speaker, particularly in the figures for the adult males. The figures from February were 38, figures for May 23, September 76, it shot up, and then again it shot up to 107. Can the Government state what particular reasons other than the more obvious ones there have been on the moratorium for this very sharp increase since May?

HON A J CANEPA:

There are two main reasons, Mr Speaker. The first is due mainly to the further redundancies resulting from the recession in the construction industry and the second one, and to a lesser extent, is due to the seasonal laying off of hotel workers.

HON W T SCOTT:

What period of time would Government expect these unemployed aliens to remain in Gibraltar and be subject to the supplementary benefits or unemployment benefits?



HON A J CANEPA:

They are entitled to receive unemployment benefit for 13 weeks and it is only fair and reasonable that they should be allowed to remain in Gibraltar for at least those 13 weeks. Subsequent to that the action taken may well depend on their employment prospects. Thus, depending on the time of the year, if there were to be a number of people unemployed, say, in June, and they are hotel workers, their employment prospects are very much brighter with the imminence of the summer season and then the Department of Labour and Social Security would exercise its discretion to see whether they should be allowed to remain another week or two beyond the 13 weeks to see whether they can get a job but normally it is 13 weeks.

HON W T SCOTT:

I see also, Mr Speaker, that on the British adults for females, that has also gone up slightly, not very much, by 4 since February of this year. Can Government give some reason for this?

HON A J CANEPA:

I don't think there is a particular problem. There is no serious problem, there is a fair turnover, it is a case of some people taking up a job for limited periods of time, giving it up and then perhaps taking on a job later on but there is none of what I would call underlying seriousness involved here, there isn't any.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, would the Member agree, in fact, with the allegations that the real unemployment figure is something like 500 because there are that many more people who do not register?

HON A J CANEPA:

I don't think that that is the case any longer, I think it used to be the case about 5 years ago but that is not the case any longer. I have no evidence to indicate to that. I imagine that among aliens there are a few people who do not register because perhaps they do not wish their presence in Gibraltar to go documented, shall we say, but all the indications that we have in the Labour Department are that the problem is not a great deal more serious than these figures would tend to indicate. Five years ago, yes, I would agree that our records did not reflect a very accurate picture, I think they do now.

HON J BOSSANO:

Can the Minister say whether people can continue to register even if they are not entitled to unemployment benefit?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, they can, in fact.

HON J BOSSANO:

And such people would be included in the figures that he has made available?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, that was not the case previously. Up to about five years ago only those people actually in receipt of unemployment benefit were recorded in the figures for unemployed, now regardless of whether they are getting unemployment benefit, supplementary benefit or no benefit at all, they are recorded as unemployed.

HON J BOSSANO:

Can I ask whether in fact, apart from the unemployment created in the construction industry of which we are all aware, the seasonal numbers out of work is higher than average for this time of the year?

HON A J CANEPA:

It is certainly higher than last year because last year was a particularly good year for the hotel industry including the winter and virtually no workers in the hotel industry became unemployed but compared to previous years I would say that the pattern is not greatly different and since the Hon Member has asked about the average I would say it is pretty well the same.

NO. 397 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government state what progress has been made with the other Official Employers with respect to the amended motion passed at the last meeting of this House dealing with industrial training?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, it is intended, in the first instance, to discuss the matter with the other official departments in the forum of the Gibraltar Official Employers Apprentices Board at its next meeting in the new year.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 397 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

Sir, would Government have any indication whether a final decision would be reached in this forum to make the scheme available to prospective apprentices at the next entrance examinations which would be presumably immediately after the summer? Would Government work towards this target?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes; we can certainly work towards that target. I think at the first meeting what is likely to happen will be that there will be a preliminary exchange of views from the various employing departments, including the UK Departments, on this matter. Having been acquainted as they have been with the substance of the motion I would also hope that it might be possible by the time that the Board next meets that a Hansard of the debate might be available because I think that that would also be useful to the members of the Board and then I imagine there will be a preliminary exchange of views and, perhaps, some reference back to the employing departments before the matter crystallises.

HON W T SCOTT:

We look forward to that date, Mr Speaker.

NO. 398 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Is Government aware that the moratorium on construction work for the UK departments has been replaced by a policy of severe constraints which to all intents and purposes has the same effect?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Yes, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 398 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, then in view of the fact that one of the main reasons given by the Government in a motion in the last House of Assembly was that the moratorium was being lifted, will they reconsider their position since they are now aware that it has not been lifted, it has simply been renamed?

HON A J CANEPA:

The position as we understand it, Mr Speaker, is that in practical terms the policy of severe constraints means much the same as the moratorium which it has replaced. Our information is that existing contract arrangements on work for the United Kingdom Departments can be proceeded with but no new works will be started or additional expenditure incurred at least until the end of the present financial year, in other words, until the end of March. The position, Mr Speaker, is that the Government also will be putting out to tender two substantial projects early in 1981, there is the extension to the Air Terminal and there is modernisation of housing at Castle Road, Road to the Lines, a project which is going to cost about £ $\frac{1}{2}$ m. Another major project, of course, is the new power station in respect of which we expect the main contractor and the sub-contractors to be drawing up their labour requirements in the first half of 1981 and therefore I would say that these three projects, taken together, should absorb a great deal of the labour that is now redundant.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, will the Minister then keep the situation under review in the light of what he has said and if he finds that it is failing to provide sufficient work for the industry, will he consider what additional measures should be taken?

HON A J CANEPA:

I can undertake to do that, Mr Speaker. By then we should also have some indication as to what the position will be about the next development programme.

NO. 399 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON. P J ISOLA

Sir, in view of a recent statement by Government that possession of a site for development as a multi-storey car park will not actually be available to a developer for a period of three years ought not the Government to consider an alternative site for a multi-storey car park that can be built upon more speedily?

ANSWER

THE HON. THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the siting of a multi-storey car park has been carefully considered by the planning authorities. The specialised nature of this type of building calls for a site of considerable size and its location must be related to other factors: a project of this nature would not be economically viable otherwise. These requirements limit the choice of sites that could be considered for this purpose. The conclusion which the Development and Planning Commission therefore came to after prolonged study was that there was no other suitable site readily available.

I may add that the Commission would naturally consider any practical suggestion for an alternative site.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 399 OF 1980

HON. P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, does not the Minister agree, having regard to the terms of the Government announcement and having regard to the time in which a developer has to build under the proposed licence that the Government will grant, that in fact the completed multi-storey car park will not be available for use till 1987 and is that going to give any comfort for the alleviation of the serious car parking problems that we have in Gibraltar?

HON. A J CANEPA:

I am not going to argue about the date of 1987, Mr Speaker, one thing that I can say is that no multi-storey car park is going to be built at Casemates within the next three years and that in itself is not going to give comfort or relief in respect of a car parking problem, we are aware of that, of course, we are aware of that and there is no use kidding ourselves about it, but there is no other site available in Gibraltar where, in addition to the need for a substantial number of car parking spaces, you could also have the supporting commercial development by way of offices and shops that is also necessary to ensure that such a project becomes a viable proposition. For instance, only last Friday, as a result of the proposal coming from a certain quarter and I won't mention where the quarter was from, the Development and Planning Commission considered whether a multi-storey car park should not be built on Alameda Grand Parade which is the one large remaining open space

for the enjoyment of the people of Gibraltar. A consideration there, quite apart from other aspects about the fact that this is an open space which is used for religious processions, for military parades, for a fair, hopefully, some day and so on, quite apart from that, one of the considerations about the viability of such a project is whether offices and shops, commercial development, that is what we are advised by the National Car Parks Association people, whether office accommodation and shops would be of any interest to commercial developers in that area, in the South district. The conclusion that we came to was that that is hardly likely to be the case so unless the Hon Member can identify, which I would be very grateful because it would be for the general benefit of Gibraltar and not just of the Government in office, any site which can be made readily available, I am afraid that the position is that we are stuck.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, where does the Government get the idea that in order for a multi-storey car park to be viable, the Hon Member has mentioned the National Car Parks, you need a commercial area? There are many instances of car parks run by . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

The Minister has said that they had been advised by the National Car Parks Association.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does the Government accept that sort of advice in a place like Gibraltar where there is no comparison anywhere in England to the sort of demand in Gibraltar except the city of London?

HON A J CANEPA:

I will go further. The advice that we have is that there is virtually nowhere in Europe where a multi-storey car park can be built in isolation without sustaining very substantial deficits, that is the information that we have, it may be wrong.

HON P J ISOLA:

But is not the answer, Mr Speaker, in a place like Gibraltar, for the Government to put out a site for tender without any commercial development purely as a multi-storey car park and see what happens because is the Minister confident, for example, that he will get takers who have to start off with re-provisioning seven quarters which the Government has estimated at £300,000 but if we take the Government estimates for Woodford Cottage it is . . . . .

MR SPEAKER:

Order. We must not have speeches.

HON A J CANEPA:

Let the Hon Member not bring Woodford Cottage into it because he is not in possession of the facts. It is an important factor, Mr Speaker, which I think is relevant and that is the question of reprovisioning.

MR SPEAKER:

I stopped him on the question of Woodford Cottage and I do not want you to elaborate on it.

HON A J CANEPA:

No, I am not talking about Woodford Cottage I am talking about the cost of reprovisioning the seven married quarters at Casemates. Betterment has to be taken into account. The cost of reprovisioning seven married quarters is not something that has to be met from scratch, only the extent to which there is no betterment. The difference between the betterment factor in rebuilding seven married quarters and the cost of those quarters, that is what would have to be met by the developer. It is a severe constraint, I accept it, yes.

HON P J ISOLA:

That is what I am asking the Minister. Is he at all confident that putting out a site for tender which puts the developer into paying, I would say, at a conservative estimate, £300,000, is the Minister confident that such a developer will come forward and do this sort of thing?

HON A J CANEPA:

Mr Speaker, people have shown interest with considerable financial backing. I only wish the site could be made available next month and not in three years time.

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, could I ask the Hon Member why it is that it cannot be made available earlier than in three years?

HON A J CANEPA:

It could well be that if the developer were able to reprovide the seven quarters beforehand, I am sure that the Ministry of Defence would consider the matter but the fact is that the Ministry of Defence themselves who, having regard to the commitment that the Government has given in regard to reprovisioning, have included those seven married quarters in their next build for married quarters, they themselves cannot provide them within three years but if the developer could do so before then, then I think the Ministry of Defence would accept that.

HON J BOSSANO:

So in fact the three years is because that is the earliest time within which the Ministry of Defence themselves can reprovide the quarters?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask, Mr Speaker, is the position then that the site for these seven married quarters is now available for building upon?

HON A J CANEPA:

The position, Mr Speaker, is that the Ministry of Defence have included that in their feasibility study for the next build of 70-plus married quarters.

HON P J ISOLA:

Can the Minister tell us what, in his view, would be the earliest date for this development to be completed? Is the estimate of six years from now not an unreasonable one?

HON A J CANEPA:

I would not hazard a guess, Mr Speaker, I am not an expert really.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, if it is going to take so long to have a multi-storey car park at Casemates, why is it not possible to build a multi-storey car park opposite Ocean Heights where one, I think, some time in the past was envisaged?

HON A J CANEPA:

For a start, Mr Speaker, I would say that the area in question is rather small, it is not very large, secondly, there might be serious town planning objections because of the City Walls, that could be a constraint.

HON A T LODDO:

Has Government considered the Old Command Education Centre?

HON A J CANEPA:

The Old Command Education Centre is currently the subject of very serious consideration by the Development and Planning Commission. I think I indicated as much in a written answer that I gave to the Questioner at the last meeting of the House including for a multi-storey car park purposes but its access to that area right in the centre of town is also an inhibiting factor.



HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, the Hon Member said, in fact, that the reason why the possibility of a multi-storey car park at the Alameda Parade, quite apart from anything else, would be that it would not be commercially viable because it would not be attractive for development as offices and shops as well. Without finding out whether anybody would be interested in this, how is he able to judge this?

HON A J CANEPA:

The members of the Development and Planning Commission, who are not infallible, consider that the indications are that the demand that there is for office accommodation and for shops is not in that part of town. There is a great demand for office accommodation in the centre of town, near Casemates, for instance, or in Governor's Parade. We have identified the present Fortress Sergeants' Mess as a site that would be very suitable for that purpose. These are the indications that we have and therefore that is why we consider, we may be wrong, that people would not be interested in having offices or shops at Alameda Grand Parade to support the multi-storey car park apart from any principle as to whether that is the correct use to which to put that plan.

17.12.80

NO. 400 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, can Government now confirm that the Naval Hockey Ground will not be used for car parking and can Government further state on what terms the Ministry of Defence agreed to release the Naval Hockey Ground for parking of motor cars?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, insofar as the first part of the question is concerned I have nothing to add to the statement made by the Chief Minister during the course of a debate on this matter at the last meeting of the House.

With regard to the second part the MOD's agreement to relinquish the grounds in question was conditional on the reprovisioning of the existing facilities in other areas as soon as possible both on an interim and long-term basis.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 400 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Can I ask, was that to be the reprovision of these facilities for the MOD?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, there is a continuing MOD requirement for such sporting facilities.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does Government have another area to reprovision them on an interim basis?

HON A J CANEPA:

There was another area under consideration up at Europa. On a long term basis there was also talk which the MOD have accepted, in principle, that the two Football Naval Grounds could be reprovisioned on a long term basis on the foreshore of HMS Rooke through further reclamation, they would accept that in principle.

HON P J ISOLA:

Yes, but the reprovisioning of the Naval Ground at Europa, was that going to be paid for by the Gibraltar Government and does the Government know the cost of that?

HON A J CANEPA:

Yes, we did have a figure about the cost of that, £80,000, and it would have been paid for from the proceeds of a paying car park.

HON P J ISOLA:

Was that the area that the Government had envisaged to give school children who were playing in Naval Ground in the town area, that is where they were going to play, at Europa? Did the Government have plans for transporting them there or are they going to walk?

HON A J CANEPA:

I accept the difficulty and also the Naval authorities also have objections for the same reasons. They require for their sailors to have these facilities available and they were not particularly happy about having to transport them all the way up there. Yes, it was a problem.

HON P J ISOLA:

So that in truth and in fact, am I right in thinking that the use of the Naval Hockey Ground for parking was a little more than a dream on the part of the Government?

HON A J CANEPA:

Not as much of a dream as the opening of the frontier.

NO. 401 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON W T SCOTT

Sir, will Government not agree that there has been slippage on the construction of the Air Terminal Extension and will Government inform this House on the steps it is taking and will take to accelerate this development?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the Airport Terminal building had to be completely redesigned due to the high apron reprovisioning costs required by MOD for the 45' - 0" eastern extension planned.

The working drawings and contract documents for the re-planned northern extension are now being finalised and it is hoped to go out to tender during January next year.

To accelerate this project, materials and equipment have been pre-ordered, eg, steelwork, cladding and roofing, baggage handling equipment, baggage weighing machines and floor finishes.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 301 OF 1980

HON W T SCOTT:

When does the Government envisage, if it is going out to tender in 1981, when will it be placed in a position to award the tender and when does it anticipate the contract being completed and the extension of the Airport being functional?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I should imagine that the tender will have a four-week life, there will be 3/4 weeks evaluation so work should probably start in March, it will probably be a six to nine month job.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Sir, can Government state what has caused the slippage in the proposed development at Catalan Bay?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Sir, the slippage in the proposed development at Catalan Bay has been caused by a change in the original decision of developing the site as an extension of Medview Terrace by adapting existing contract drawings and documents of the prototype design.

At the request of the Catalan Bay Committee, consideration was given for an alternative design which would still be in keeping with the architectural character of the village but which could provide 12 units in the first phase, incorporating a housing mix that would relate to the demands set by the family composition of those at the top of the housing waiting list, this is obviously the housing waiting list at Catalan Bay.

In consultation with the Catalan Bay Committee, it was decided to proceed with such a scheme. This has of course led to a need for a new design and the production of new contract drawings and documents with the consequent delays in a starting date.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 402 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, how much, in fact, does it cost the Government to have the new bills of survey, the contracts and so on done again because, presumably, the Government went ahead with the scheme without consulting the villagers, then they were told afterwards having spent the money on doing all the projects and now they have got to do it again because, presumably, the villagers were not consulted in the first place. What is the cost of this?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Sir, there was no question of doing anything again, the question was that Medview Terrace was built some time ago and the idea was to take the actual designs as they were and build another block with the same design, so no costs were involved whatsoever in that at all. Costs have only been involved in the designing of the new block, so there is no question of money having been spent and then thrown away and wasted because there was a change of mind, it was simply that the change of mind meant that we were not getting something gratis.

HON G T RESTANO:

When, in fact, did the villagers make their representations for a change of plan?

HON P J ISOLA:

At election time.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I think the Hon Mr Isola is wrong, the change of mind was some-  
time in September, 1979, and we had the new ideas ready by about  
December, 1979.

HON P J ISOLA:

Were those the plans that were shown to the villagers?

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

Yes.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I have many more questions to ask on this but I must  
do some research and I will reserve the right to ask further ques-  
tions at the next meeting of the House because I am not absolutely  
convinced at the Minister's answers.

HON M K FEATHERSTONE:

I am very pleased to answer any questions the Hon Member cares to  
put.

MR SPEAKER:

Provided they can be asked within the six months rules, not other-  
wise.

NO. 403 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Can Government say what is the total number of housing units it proposes to include in the 1981/84 Development Programme?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Sir, the Government is in the process of submitting its proposals for the next Development Programme to HMG covering a five-year plan period between 1981 and 1986. At this early stage therefore I regret that I cannot state the number of housing units which the Government proposes to include in the next programme. I will say however that housing will continue to carry the highest priority in line with the Government's commitment given in its Election Manifesto and subsequently in this House.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 403 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, I assume that the Hon Member is not willing to make information available in case, in fact, the thing does not materialise. It isn't that the Government doesn't know how many houses it would need in the next five years to resolve the housing problem I take it?

HON A J CANEPA:

There are doubts about the number of houses that are actually required to solve the housing problem. I can say this, Mr Speaker, that there is a total of around 13 housing projects or phases which are currently earmarked for development in the next plan period.

HON J BOSSANO:

In fact, Mr Speaker, are we talking of a five year programme of the order of, say, 100 houses a year? Are we talking about 500 or 600 houses or are we talking about the sort of experience we have had in the last 4 or 5 years where the output has been considerably below what was the average for the decade from 1970 to 1980?

HON A J CANEPA:

I think we are aiming at the sort of figures that the Hon Member has mentioned.

NO. 404 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON A J HAYNES

Sir, will Government state whether the proposed new prison will have facilities for an Attendance Centre?

ANSWER

THE HON THE MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

No, Sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 404 OF 1980

HON A J HAYNES:

Why Not?

HON A J CANEPA:

I understand, Mr Speaker, that it is the general practice not to use penal establishments other than for the custody of offenders, persons awaiting trial and civil prisoners. It would not benefit the prospects of rehabilitation of the juvenile to carry out his attendance periods in a custodial environment.

HON A J HAYNES:

Sir, since we have already heard that this Government doesn't do everything that is desirable or everything that is desirable but not essential, since they have the opportunity to look into the Government facilities for offenders, they should avail themselves of the opportunity of larger spaces to provide an Attendance Centre though albeit I accept that most prisons don't have one, surely it would be a good opportunity to make advantage of the space?

HON A J CANEPA:

What the new prison will, of course, provide, Mr Speaker, will be calls for juveniles who are actually detained, certainly, there will be better provision for that than what there is in the existing prison but it runs against all established practice to even contemplate having an Attendance Centre in any way connected or linked or adjacent to a prison.

HON A J HAYNES:

Surely, it is possible, I believe, to have an Attendance Centre which is isolated even though it is in the same area. Is it not possible to have it isolated from the prison itself?



HON A J CANEPA:

Apart from the fact, Mr Speaker, as to whether it is the right thing to do, in principle, and I disagree with the Hon Member, I think there must be no suggestion whatsoever, having regard to what an Attendance Centre should be providing, that it should be in the same environment as the prison. Quite apart from that, I can tell the Hon Member that the area that may become available in the Governor's Cottage Camp is not that extensive.

MR SPEAKER:

Next question.

NO. 405 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

Since the Victoria Hotel is recognised by Government as suitable accommodation under the Labour From Abroad (Accommodation) Ordinance will Government conduct an investigation into the complaints of long term residents of this Hotel?

ANSWERTHE HON THE MINISTER FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Speaker, the Government recognises the Victoria Hotel as licensed hotel accommodation and, as such, accepts it as accommodation for foreign workers, who choose to reside there, in order to facilitate their stay in Gibraltar and hence allow them to be able to take up employment locally.

The Labour from Abroad (Exemption of Premises) Rules 1974 expressly exempts the Victoria Hotel from the provision of the Labour from Abroad (Accommodation) Ordinance. This means that no complaints in connection with this Ordinance can be investigated. However, the residents of this Hotel are given the protection offered by the Public Health Ordinance and all other ordinances enforced by the Environmental Health Department and which are applicable to these premises and this has been the case throughout.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 405 OF 1980

HON J BOSSANO:

Mr Speaker, surely the exemption is not intended to have the effect of providing lower standards in Hotels than are required in Hostels.

HON J B PEREZ:

That is correct.

HON J BOSSANO:

Therefore, Mr Speaker, would the Hon Member not agree that it is legitimate to expect an Hotel that doesn't have to comply with the standards laid down by Hostels to be able to provide its residents with a type of accommodation and the sort of services that they would at least expect to get in a Hostel?

HON J B PEREZ:

Mr Speaker, the Government has and is still considering ways of applying the Labour from Abroad (Accommodation) Ordinance and Rules to the Victoria Hotel but there is a risk that if the premises cease to be exempted, the owners will not seek registration under the main Ordinance with the result that it will then be illegal for the premises to be used as accommodation for foreign labour with the obvious adverse effect on the contracts of employment and hence permits of residence of the residents of this Hotel. Coming directly to the point which the Hon Questioner

raises, that I accept, but if I may draw his attention to the fact that throughout the years the Environmental Health Department has in fact taken action against the owners of the Hotel and I can give him details. In 1978 there was one abatement notice, 1979 two notices, 1980 there were five notices, one of the notices was in respect of 12 items and in connection with the restaurant on 7th November, 1979, 7 summonses were taken, a fine was imposed by the Court of £80 and on 12th March, 1980, 8 summonses were taken and fines totalling £650 were imposed but the basic idea with the Victoria Hotel is that it is supposed to be temporary accommodation to enable alien workers who come to Gibraltar to obtain employment but the problem is that some of them bring their wives over with the resultant problem that the Hostels do not cater for women.

HON J BOSSANO:

I accept that, Mr Speaker, but would the Hon Member not agree that a place that is exempt from the requirements of the Ordinance nevertheless should be subject to some sort of investigation and control by Government to make sure that it provides accommodation of a standard that is considered to be acceptable to Government in respect of Hostels? If it is exempt from the direct control as Hostels are nevertheless it must be considered the equivalent of a Hostel, I imagine, and would the Minister not agree that it is desirable that Government should be in a position to exercise some control over immigrant labour living in these places as it has over immigrant labour living in other places?

HON J B PEREZ:

I agree with the Hon Member. The only thing is that I would reiterate the problem and the simple answer is that the Victoria Hotel should not be exempted, that is the simple answer, and let the full Labour from Abroad (Accommodation) Ordinance apply but if we do that the landlord would not register and therefore we will have to reaccommodate the Moroccan workers. The workers remain at the Hostel but what do we do with the women and that is the problem that we have.

THE HON G T RESTANO

Mr Speaker, will Government state whether it intends to perpetuate the situation whereby the Mayor of Gibraltar is not an elected Member of the House of Assembly and furthermore would Government not agree that such a situation is against the spirit of the Constitution?

May I add, Mr Speaker, that there was an oversight on my part in the drafting of this. Of course, you yourself are not an elected Member and, of course, you are eligible to be Mayor. Perhaps, it should have read: "is not a Member of the House".

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, the answer to the first part of the question is no. As to the second part, I would prefer to put it the other way about, and more positively, ie that it is the spirit of the Constitution that the Mayor should be a Member of the House.

I am surprised that the Honourable Member has not been kept informed by the Leader of the Opposition. Earlier this year I agreed with him that the spirit of the Constitution was that the Mayor should be a Member of the House of Assembly and stated that it was my intention that a motion for the election of a Member as Mayor should be put to the House of Assembly in due course.

I have since kept this matter under review but the serious accident suffered by Mr Abecasis has put an undue strain on the work-load of other Ministers and this has been an important factor.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Serfaty for the excellent job he is doing as Mayor, as he did for so many years as a Member of this House.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 406 OF 1980

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, I would like to associate myself with those last remarks of the Chief Minister. I think that Mr Serfaty has been a very good Mayor. However, the reason why the question was put was that to my mind it was certainly a breach of the Constitution and it is no reflection on Mr Serfaty but, of course, I feel that if the Constitution says that the Mayor should be a Member of the House of Assembly, he should be a Member of the House of Assembly and, in fact, the question has not been put before because we have realised the difficulties and we have gone along with it and it is now, I think, high time that a change was made and I would ask the Chief Minister whether he intends to make that change in the near future?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I have said that I agree that it is in the spirit of the Constitution that he should be an elected Member. Equally, I am advised that it is not contrary to the Constitution that the person who was an elected Member continues until somebody else is appointed and I have stated the reason why somebody else has not yet been appointed.

HON G T RESTANO:

May I just ask for clarification, Mr Speaker. When Mr Speaker was Mayor I believe that after every election he was re-elected Mayor, is that not correct?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I don't know.

MR SPEAKER:

It is not for me to answer questions but simply to give the information if the House wants it.

HON G T RESTANO:

Certainly, I remember that was the case.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It does not necessarily follow that if he had not been re-elected he would not have continued to be Mayor.

HON P J ISOLA:

May I say, Sir, that I have, of course, kept my Hon Friend informed of what happened at my meeting with the Chief Minister back in March of this year. May I say that if the spirit of the Constitution is, as I have no doubt about it that it is, that the Mayor should be a Member of this House and the matter is raised in the House as it has been, may I ask the Chief Minister that in those circumstances he should really be proposing a motion in this respect in the not too distant future otherwise the Constitution could be brought into disrepute and I am sure the Chief Minister as indeed other Members of this House, would not like that to occur.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I do not accept that the Constitution will come into disrepute, I have given the reason why I have not make an earlier appointment, I have said that I have kept the matter under review and I will not go any further.

HON J BOSSANO:

Can I ask the Hon and Learned Chief Minister whether he would not agree that one should consider the possibility of debating the desirability of continuing to have such a requirement, that it should be an elected Member of the House?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I entirely agree but that, of course, is in the Constitution and amending the Constitution involves many other amendments and I think that that is a major task but it is a comfort to know that that is the feeling of some Members. Apart from not being against the letter of the Constitution because there is no provision as to the ceasing of being a Mayor, I think that in the circumstances that I have explained the matter must remain there for the time being and if Members opposite want to bring a motion of censure they can do so any time they like.

HON P J ISOLA:

No, Mr Speaker, it is not a question of a motion of censure but may I say that from this side of the House we will have no part with a breach of the spirit of the Constitution, if not the wording of the Constitution. We will play no part, if Mr Bossano wants to play the game, well, he is welcome to it but we on this side of the House are not prepared to accept the situation which involves a breach of the Constitution or even the spirit of the Constitution.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

There are many things that Members on the other side of the House do that we would never take part or try to associate ourselves with but we do not bring them here.

HON G T RESTANO:

Mr Speaker, the Chief Minister has said that it is not a breach of the Constitution. I would just like to clarify that.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

If the Hon Member will give way. I did not say that it was not a breach of the Constitution, I said that I was advised that it was not a breach of the Constitution.

HON G T RESTANO:

Fair enough, that he was advised that it was not a breach of the Constitution. Surely, when the House is dissolved, all the parties therein and all those who held office during the term of the House, their jobs finish, is that not correct?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Neither the Speaker, Mayor or Ministers.

HON G T RESTANO:

Until such time as there is an election.

HON A J CANEPA:

No, until a new Government is appointed.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Anyhow, the advise I have is that the Constitution is completely silent as to the ceasing. It only refers to the appointment of a Mayor who has to be a Member of the House, it doesn't say anything more.

17.12.80

NO. 407 OF 1980

ORAL

THE HON J BOSSANO

When will Government be making financial provision for the payment of retrospection to GBC staff?

ANSWER

THE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, financial provision for this purpose already exists under Head 27 - 1980 Pay Settlement. The necessary re-allocation of funds has already been approved to enable the early payment of arrears to be made.



THE HON P J ISOLA

Sir, in view of the fact that the Chairman of the Committee set up to inquire into the Public Works Department has stated that from his Committee's point of view he sees no objection to the report that his Committee will submit to the Governor being made public, will Government agree in advance of the report to make the same public?

ANSWERTHE HON THE CHIEF MINISTER

Sir, the Government will consider the question of publication when the report is received.

I will say at this stage that I am in principle favourably disposed to publication but I cannot commit the Government now.

SUPPLEMENTARY TO QUESTION NO. 408 OF 1980

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, is the Chief Minister aware of the danger now, having said what he has said, that if he refuses to make public the report, that the reasons for refusing to make them public will be suspect?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

There are many things that are suspect in this world and I am not prepared to make any further comments.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does this mean, Sir, that the Chief Minister is once more going to ask this House to vote a considerable amount of money, I think it is coming up in the proceedings of this House, and giving no satisfaction as to the publication of a report which the public are being asked to pay for?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Mr Speaker, Sir, I said I was favourably inclined, I note the Hon Member's views and I will take them into consideration.

HON P J ISOLA:

Sir, is the Chief Minister aware that the Members of the Opposition have been asked by the Committee to cooperate with the Committee and give their views on the Public Works Department and would he not agree that it would be unfair to expect the Opposition to cooperate with the Committee without having any assurances that at least they will be able to see the report once it is made public and would the Chief Minister prefer that the Opposition do not cooperate with the Committee?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

The last question is absolutely superfluous. I was asked whether it would be made public beforehand and I said no.

HON P J ISOLA:

Does the Chief Minister expect the Opposition to continue to cooperate with the Committee, giving them the benefit of their views, without having any assurances that at least the Opposition will be allowed to see the report that this Committee which is said to be independent and which we believe is independent is going to make?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

Certainly, anything that arose in the report in which the cooperation of the Opposition had taken part would certainly be available to them in any case. I am not going to go the whole way to say that it will be published before I know what the report says but certainly anything in which the Opposition have cooperated will be made public and I hope their cooperation will be available because what we want is a better Public Works Department for the future for Gibraltar.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, that is obviously the reason why we have agreed and have spent already some time with the Committee of Investigation. Do I have it from what the Chief Minister has said that in matters which we raise with the Committee and discuss with the Committee that any part of the report that deals with those matters will be made available to the Opposition?

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

It does not mean the whole spectrum and I am not prepared to say that. I say any matter on which the views of the Opposition have had any bearing on any part of the report, certainly, but I am not going to say that because it would be very easy at the next meeting for Members opposite to come with a whole spectrum and say: "Well, I got the undertaking, I have got it all now", it is not as simple as that as I am sure the Hon Leader of the Opposition should appreciate that by now. I am certainly prepared to say that any recommendations of the Opposition that are relevant or come into the report, certainly, and I am just trying to safeguard my position. I said initially that I am inclined for publication.

HON P J ISOLA:

Mr Speaker, can the Chief Minister reassure us a bit more on this. It is not a question of just letting us have little bits of what we said with which the Committee might agree, it is a question of allowing people who contribute to the work of the Committee to see the report. I have no doubt that Heads of Departments of the Public Works Department and other officials who contribute to the work of

the Committee will be allowed to see the report. We will certainly have to consider our position in this, in cooperating with the Committee, unless we can have clear assurances that the report that comes out will be shown to Members of the Opposition.

HON CHIEF MINISTER:

I have said I am favourably inclined to publication, generally, and therefore more inclined to give it to the Opposition. I think we may be arguing about nothing now.